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**Imperialism in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness***

*An Extended Essay Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for a  
Master's Degree in Literature and Civilisation*

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# Dedication

*In the memory of my MOM, may she rest in peace and mercy.*

*To my tender, helpful and generous FATHER.*

*To my sisters, their husbands and kids. To my brothers, their wives and kids.*

*To Djamel, Khaled, Riyad, Adel, Houcine, Bilal, Amine and Redouane.*

*To my best friends Djamila, Soumia, Yasmina, Malika, Zahra and Wafaa.*

*To all my relatives.*

*I dedicate this work*

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## **Abstract**

Imperialism and the colonial movements towards the third world, the cruel policy of exploitation of both human beings and their land and wealth have often depicted in literary works, Imperialism in *Heart of Darkness* is the theme I have discussed in my dissertation which is divided into two chapters. The general introduction is about Imperialism as a concept and its policy towards the weak nations. The first chapter is untitled Hypocrisy of Imperialism, it is about the hypocrite lies the Europeans imperial countries maintained in order to invade Africa and so many other areas in the world. After introducing what is meant by hypocrisy I start to discuss the distinction between Conquest, colonization and Imperialism according to what was mentioned in Conrad's novella *Heart of Darkness* as a first subtitle of the first chapter. The second sub-theme is The White Man's Burden, the concept that gives the white race the right to interfere, control and exploit the other non-white people in the name civilization. Darwinism, the Natural Selection which classifies the creatures into superior and inferior, even the human being is classified according to his body form and skin color, it makes the white men the best race and he is able to exploit the other races for his service. A conclusion for the chapter that all these theories are tools to convince the Africans that they are inferior to the European colonial men. The second chapter is about Corruption of Imperialism, after introducing the idea that Imperial thought has caused corruption on both the colonizer and the colonized people, the first sub-title is Psychological Transformation especially about Kurtz the second main character who changes from a kind, intellectual and a civilized European man to a cruel, authoritative and savage person. I discuss also Greed for Ivory as a second sub-title in the second chapter. It is about the blind pursuit of desire of Kurtz, the pilgrims and all the European characters in the story for becoming rich and leaving their first noble aim to come to Africa which is civilizing its natives. The third sub-title is the

religious aspect of the story. The hypocrite faith of Kurtz when he asks the natives to worship him as a god and about the pilgrims who come to spread Christianity but once they arrive to Africa they turn to pagans worshipping ivory. The last sub-theme I discuss is Corruption of the African Image. Imperialism denies the existence of an African civilization or identity. Most of the events make the native inhabitants in an inferior and passive position. Which makes them obliged to accept any other civilization although it does not suit their owns. The General conclusion is as a reply or an answer for the research question. As a final result of the work.

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# **GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

Modern British writers tackled new themes inspired from the colonial movement in African and Asian countries which were considered as developing or third-world countries in comparison to Britain. Most of the works represented the way the Westerns defined themselves comparatively with the Africans and how this discourse affected attitudes and behaviours towards people from less powerful communities. Generally, literature during the colonial period was a tool to impose power on those weak nations.

Joseph Conrad is famous for his works *Lord Jim* and *Heart of Darkness*. He is originally from Ukraine, but after joining the British merchant navy, he could anglicize his name and rise into the rank of commander on his own ship. In most of his works, he ventured in universal themes like loneliness, moral corruption and the effects of European Imperialism. He represented his own view through the character Captain Marlow in both *Lord Jim* (1900) and *Heart of Darkness* (1902). *Heart of Darkness* is about a group of men on an English ship on the Thames River. The first narrator is anonymous but later Marlow becomes the protagonist and the narrator of his own experience in the Congo. The story is a vivid example of the imperial exploitation.

“The sun never set on the British Empire” is the slogan imperial Britain used to describe its vast colonies. It is one of the themes Conrad has depicted in his novella *Heart of Darkness* to show his loyalty to the British Empire which aimed to enlarge its territories beyond the seas. In 1900, the British Empire could cover one-fifth of the world of different faiths and ethnic groups. More than 7.6 million square miles and 24 million people were under its domination. With the new system of trade, financial services, communications, migration patterns, naval and military power, Britain became the centre of the world. The British imperial state is imposing the power on weak nations and controlling them and even exploiting them and their wealth.



Being a citizen from a third world country make us look for the reason why we live in backwardness despite the richness of our land. And how could the western imperial states dominate our history, present life and even our future. I have a personal experience with such topic when I went to the South of Algeria looking for a job in oil exploitation companies. I remarked the special behaviour towards the foreign experts rather than the natives, and how they impose themselves in our land and on our properties. It is a hypocrisy to think that they give us charity and help us to exploit our resources. I try to unveil the tools the imperial nations especially England maintained in order to be the first power all over the world.

Some of the characters of the novella *Heart of Darkness* represent the imperial thought and attitude towards Africans. The way they look to them in an inferior view in a side and the greed for their wealth and domination in another side and the hypocrite tools they used in order to pretend that they want to help, teach and civilize them.

This extended essay discusses the topic of Imperialism in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*; therefore, a general research question is raised,

what are the main principles and aims of Imperialism in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*?

Other sub-questions are connected to each chapter. Chapter one tries to answer the following question: What does the imperial man do to convince the natives that he is superior to them and so as he is responsible on them and their wealth? Whereas chapter two rises the following question: What is the impact of imperialism on both the colonizer and the colonized people?

For each query, there is a suggested hypothesis, as initial answers to research questions concerning imperialism as an ideology and Joseph Conrad and his characters as samples of the European imperial men.

Imperialism aims to exploit and oppress non-white people.

The imperial man creates hypocrite ways to expand the natives land, wealth and even brains. Imperialism caused corruption on both the colonizer and the colonized.

My research work is divided into two chapters. Each chapter depicts a sub-theme. The first chapter discusses the Hypocrisy of Imperialism in which I try to deal with Conquest and Colonization, The White Man's Burden and Darwinism and the natural selection.

The second chapter deals with Corruption of Imperialism. Psychological transformation, Greed for Ivory, Faithfulness and Corruption of the Image of Africa.

**CHAPTER ONE**

**HYPOCRISY  
OF  
IMPERIALISM**

## II. 1. Introduction

The term Imperialism has been subjected to a wide ideological shift in political, economic, cultural, social and religious aspects which occurred during the nineteenth and twentieth century. It was a result of lot of plans and agendas to create an atmosphere to realize the wanted goals the Western powers wished to achieve. It began with unethical strategies and delineations with the spread of new notions and concepts to justify the imperial policy which lead to catastrophic effects on both the colonizer and the colonized. Decline in ethics and values, dehumanization and exploitation of weak people in their own land, a total rejection for their identity, customs and beliefs. This ideology has strongly impacted the colonizer too and caused a corruption for his health, morality and value as a civilized man.

Hypocrisy is pretending to be what one is not and showing behaviour that contradicts what one claims to believe or feel. Imperialism has been often depicted in literary works for its hypocrisy and impact on European nations and members during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Some authors supported the ideology of dominating the world while others unveiled the hypocrite side of this new mode of invasion. Joseph Conrad was one of those who treated this theme in his works which were based on his personal experiences in different areas as a sea man in both *Heart of Darkness* and *Lord Jim*.

Conrad is more famous for his masterpiece of *Heart of darkness*. He portrays a journey of his mouthpiece Marlow as an indirect narrator for his experience in Congo, or as it is named the heart of Africa, one of the richest regions but it was described as a source of backwardness and primitiveness. His choice of words and expressions and even the themes was affected by his loyalty for the imperialistic approach as a European white man who joined the colonial movement in Africa under the name of civilizing the native inhabitants. Through *Heart of Darkness*, Conrad tries to justify their political, economic, social and even religious

factors to colonize Africa as part of the law and criticize the cruelty, oppression and dehumanization practiced by the whites towards the land owners. There is a general assumption that imperialism was a trick by the Europeans and British imperialism to control the political, economic, social and cultural aspects of the weak nations. For performing this project, the imperial states were obliged to rationalize their interference by spreading new ideologies; theories and notions over the Western society in order to gain a popular supports and underdeveloped societies so as they surrender and be passive for the idea of being governed by foreign forces on their own land.

The White Man's Burden and Darwinism or what is called Social Selection are among these justifications. *Heart of Darkness* explores the dark side of the imperial policy in Africa, how they manipulate to exploit the African human and natural richness through hypocrite promises. How were miserably the native people treated by the Europeans and what was the impact of this new ideology on the white imperials themselves.

There is a general recognition that imperialism has an old origin. The desire of expanding a foreign land existed so many centuries with the conquest of the great empires as the Romans who invaded England violently and this was a tool in which Conrad used to find a distinction between the antique colonization which aimed to kill and torture and the modern imperial colonization which aims to help and civilized the invaded nation.

## **I. 2. Conquest, Colonization and Imperialism**

Conquest is the act of taking control of a country using force. While colonization is a political system of controlling or governing influence of a nation over a dependent country, territory, or people. By the beginning of the story, Marlow the narrator and the representative of Joseph Conrad's view starts telling his experience in Africa the dark part of the world. He initiates by talking about the history of colonialism which was derived from the human desire

to conquer the earth and construct empire. He gives an example about the history of British and conquest looking to the river he said:

The old river in its broad reach rested unruffled at the decline of day, after ages of good service done to the race that peopled its banks, spread out in the tranquil dignity of a waterway leading to the uttermost ends of the earth...Hunters for gold or pursuers of fame, they all had gone out on that stream, bearing the sword, and often the torch, messengers of the might within the land, bearers of a spark from the sacred fire. What greatness had not floated on the ebb of that river into the mystery of an unknown earth! The dreams of men, the seed of commonwealth, the germs of empires. (Conrad 2)

Marlow puts a difference between the ancient Roman conquest of Britain which was “robbery with violence” (Conrad 13) and murder on a large scale. He sees that conquest can be tolerable only if it aims to construct the conquered country. For him the ancient Romans were conquerors but they used brute force and killed lot of people. The conquest must be for those primitive people. According to him colonist are better than conquerors, the Romans were “no colonists” (Conrad 13) but conquerors because their administration “was merely a squeeze” (Conrad 13) using “brute force” (Conrad 13) to invade England.

Marlow sees that what saves the English colonists is efficiency the devotion to efficiency. But the Romans were not much account, really. They were no colonists; their administration was merely a squeeze...they were conquerors, and for that you want only brute force nothing to boast of, when you have it, since your strength is just an accident arising from the weakness of others. They grabbed what they could get for the sake of what was to be got. It was just robbery with violence, aggravated murder on a great scale, and men going at it blind.

So conqueror invades a foreign land using violence however colonizer is efficient for the sake of helping the colonized people. Marlow states that the white man has a moral duty to help people in backward countries, and he has to be successful in his mission. Marlow's introduction of speech about the Roman conquest and their cruelty is an intelligent idea to give an excuse to the English colonization in Africa and defend his own imperial beliefs. He even gives an excuse for the robbery, violence, and aggravated murder which is practiced by the white men towards the blacks He justifies it as a part of colonial law. The common thing between the Romans and the English is having the "strength", English have industrialized weapons which the Africans are not able to produce. English want to impress their strength on them in order not to face a resistance or to prevent them to produce weapons and fight it. Marlow said that we can find "robbery, violence, and aggravated murder" (Conrad 13), in the institution of slavery as law to punish them or even murder them if they attempt to rebel against the master white man.

Six black men advanced in a file, toiling up the path. They walked erect and slow, balancing small baskets full of earth on their heads, and the clink kept time with their footsteps Black rags were wound round their loins, and the short ends behind waggled to and fro like tails. I could see every rib, the joints of their limbs were like knots in a rope; each had an iron collar on his neck, and all were connected together with a chain. (Conrad 10)

This is the first scene of robbery by the Company's chief Marlow witnesses when he arrives to the station. Marlow considers these actions normal because it is practiced with slaves and using violence is a part of the law. The "efficient" and "civilized" man can dehumanize people under the name of law. Marlow as a reflecting mirror of Conrad's belief legalizes slavery as a part of the imperial policy. Slavery was regarded for a long time as an important outcome for imperial states because the abolition of slavery was applied and this

trade was replaced by mastering the land but Conrad uses some expression that signify dominating the Africans as slaves in their home land. "Iron collar", "Marlow could see every rib" (Conrad 23) to portray how the natives were bad treated and malnourished and even let to death because of illnesses

David Ray Papke sees that "law plays a role in both the political and economic aspects of imperialism...The law's function seems largely to assist imperialist control...imperialists do more than merely use the law. They seize the very "right to define the law" (qtd. in Kanjilal 67). All these cruelties are part of the imperial rules the new modern type of conquest and colonization. It is just a way to satisfy their desire in dominating the other races. Marlow describes the English mastering as a form of "accidental strength" (Conrad 11) in order not to be challenged or resisted and "civilizing" the Africans as a noble mission. So using violence is legal. The narrator's discussion about the conquest and colonization and which one of them is associated with violence is contradictory, he finds himself describing the cruelty of the Europeans against the black people. The uncle of the manager for example points out that the manager can have a trader as a result no one can challenge the manager's authority. Kurtz decorates his fence with the heads of those who rebelled against him as a menace to threat any one wants to disobey him. The scenes of violence, murder and dehumanization show that there is no difference between conquering or colonizing a foreign land and a weak people. So there is no difference between what the imperial English does and what the Romans did so many centuries ago. Marlow states

The conquest of the earth, which mostly means taking it away from people with different coloured<sup>1</sup> skin or flatter noses, is not a pretty thing when you

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<sup>1</sup> In *Heart of Darkness*, Joseph Conrad writes some comments, and uses different expressions to describe coloured people; in particular he uses the words "nigger" and "negro". These are their definitions from the *Oxford Talking Dictionary*:

**Negro:** An individual (esp. a male) belonging to or descended from any of various peoples indigenous to Africa and characterized by black or dark skin, black tightly curled hair, and a broad flattish nose and full lips; a Black



think about it. The only good thing about it is the idea behind it....a real and powerful idea that men will unselfishly sacrifice themselves for something that men will bow down to and worship. (Conrad 13)

Marlow sees that the idea of conquering the earth is not tolerable only if it was associated with “efficiency” the “idea” of conquest which turns it into colonization that aims to civilize other races.

*Heart of Darkness* as a title for the novella signifies how Kurtz the civilized man corrupts his moral principles just in order to satisfy his desire to master and possess wealth. He loses his humanity while he pursues richness and authority. Kurtz represents the morality of the colonizers who become obsessed of ivory just when they arrive to Africa. He is an example of those who changed their plans to help and civilize primitive people. There is no purpose of being in Africa is to collect ivory. Kurtz is not the only one who was affected by this source of wealth. All the colonizers cannot resist the idea of being rich easily. Ivory becomes a worshiped thing as Jonah Raskin states, “There is the religion of ivory as well, the ivory to which the white traders pray” (Raskin 127). Ivory represents a good financial state and being a capital owner than just a worker. Conrad’s “The word ivory rang in the air, was whispered, was sighed. You would think they were praying to it” (Conrad 18). He shows how colonizers were greed for possessing it at the point of worshipping it. This justifies the use of violence and murder by the imperial colonizer. Marlow meets a Russian trader who was a friend of Kurtz, he describes the thirst of Kurtz for ivory who “wanted to shoot him one day” (Conrad 72) because the trader had a small amount of ivory the chief of the village near his house had given him but

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**Nigger:** (derived from the latin word “niger”) ... is considered racially offensive as used of people & now frequently avoided in other contexts.

Kurtz wanted it, and wouldn't hear reason. He declared he would shoot the trader unless he gave him the ivory and then cleared out of the country, because Kurtz could do so, and had a fancy for it, and there was nothing on earth to prevent him killing whom he jolly well pleased. (Conrad 71)

Marlow is shocked of his speech about Kurtz who can kill and torture without any mercy just like the other imperial men. Another event Marlow witnesses and tells his listeners about is that he saw ornamental balls on the fence of Kurtz's house, these balls are heads, Marlow says "I want you clearly to understand that there was nothing exactly profitable in these heads being there. They only showed that Mr. Kurtz lacked restraint in the gratification of his various lusts" (Conrad 96). He admits that he was displeased to see such things. The Russian trader tells him that these are the heads of natives who dared to rebel against Kurtz. Through these attitudes Kurtz became savage than the savages themselves, he has lost his humanity as well as his civilization as a European civilized man. He surrendered to his *Heart of Darkness* just like all the other colonizers became greedy for wealth and authority and these are the principles of the imperial thought. They are capable of losing their values and even their mental health to satisfy their desires and achieve their goals.

Readership and critics of the novella concluded that both Conrad and Marlow's own vantage vision are wrong because they explain all that colonialism corrupted by law. By the end of the story we conclude that there is no difference between the Roman conquest to England and the English colonization to Africa. The two are associated with violence, murder and torture. Conrad finds himself unconsciously driven to make the two similar. Colonization is more than invading a foreign land and oppressing its inhabitants; it impacts even the colonizer when he loses his moral values and human feeling. Kurtz the main character and the example of the greedy white imperial man damages his mental health just for being rich and master. His thirst to kill, possess and to dominate made him an abnormal man, he thinks that

he became a legend but in fact he classifies himself worst than the primitive savage Africans. Unfortunately his dreams lead him to his tragic death.

*Heart of Darkness* criticizes the impact of imperialism on the colonized people. It focuses also on the negative effects on the imperial man more. The harsh laws that torture and dehumanize the weak Africans made the colonizer in a worst place, just as any savage being. It corrupts the identity of both the exploiter and the exploited, it confirms for the white European that he is superior and has the total right to dominate and makes the black native in an inferior class with no right to challenge or rebel, the only way to survive is surrendering and obey. Through his narration Marlow show the heart of darkness of the imperial man. The novella discusses also the concepts imperialism established to realize its goals to dominate land and people beyond seas. These concepts and theories legalize its interference and control and even exploitation of the underdeveloped nations. Darwinism, the theory of evolution or the natural selection makes the white race superior than the other human races. It was taken as a justification for all the Westerns practice against the weak nations.

### **I. 3. The White Man's Burden in *Heart of Darkness***

*The White Man's Burden* is a title of Rudyard Kipling's poem<sup>2</sup> in which he aimed to encourage The United States during the war against the Philippine Islands (1899–1902) Kipling admitted through it the United State has the total right to invade this part of the world and rule it. He wrote the original copy for the first time as congratulation for Queen Victoria's reign in Diamond Jubilee celebration but his purpose was changed for pushing the United States to colonize the Philippine.

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<sup>2</sup> See appendix page 56

This poem gives rational justification for the American imperial ideology. He declared that the white man who is the European civilized man has a heavy burden to perform which is helping the other human beings who are weak and live in backwardness. It is a responsibility to make the others civilized. Just like the American concept of Manifest Destiny<sup>3</sup> which says that the Americans have a destiny to be the helpful nation for other weak such as the Africans. So this poem was a tool to spread these ideologies which serve the Western greed for authority and wealth of the other Asian and especially African continent in the name of civilization. The interpretation of this poem is the moral obligation to colonize and help the non-white races and improve their economy but in fact it was just a plane to exploit them and force them to accept another civilization which is completely different on theirs. For the British Empire for example they declared that primitive nations are incapable of governing their wealth and they need the help of power countries to push their economy forward. Also these people as it was widely recognized in the western culture at the contemporary period that people from the other races are half-devil and half-child so, they need to learn about Christianity as the religion of light and civilization. Kipling helped the American president Theodore Roosevelt to convince the anti-imperialist people to accept the invasion of the Philippine Islands. Later British named her expansions in the third world as a God's Empire on Earth.

Kipling's poem was criticized by Ernest Crosby who was an anti-imperialist author wrote a poem untitled "*The real White man's Burden*" in 1902, also Howard S Taylor wrote

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<sup>3</sup> Racial Anglo-Saxon provided a convenient justification for America's internal and external subjugation of "inferior" people.

*"The Poor Man's Burden"* in order to defend the working class domestic rights within an imperial political system. Then the British journalist E. D. Morel wrote about the brutality of Belgian imperialism in the Congo Free State his article was untitled *"The Black Man's Burden: The White Man in Africa, from the Fifteenth Century to World War I (1920)"* in which he criticized the struggle between the white man and the native people of Africa as a reaction against Kipling's poem.

William Easterly also criticized the concept of the white man's burden through his new book in which he asks the question: Why has the West's efforts to aid the Rest done so much ill and so little good? And he answers that "The Western interventions in poor countries from World Bank development projects to military "peace building" operations have been driven by Planners rather than Searchers" (Schaffner1). These Planners draw global blueprints in order to achieve utopian goals, beneficiaries needed little local knowledge and feedback to apply these plans.

Easterly unveils this game focusing on the activities of thesis most fully when focusing on the subset of bilateral and multilateral aid and development organizations. According to him as an economist in the World Bank he was a planner. He clarifies the goals of such institutions and how they implicate their programs. These searchers exist within these institutions and work on realizing this plans which is the corruption of the weak nations. Easterly focuses on the foreign aid successes in the health efforts like the vaccination campaigns and the Western failure to prevent the AIDS virus especially in Africa. Easterly declared that the Western efforts to find a solution to this disaster are slow since the politicians and the Western voters are not aware of the needs of Africans who are not yet sick. For him ideology, political and economic greed make this crisis less important than the implication of their programs even if a large number of people would suffer of their decisions.(Oxford University)

Conrad treats another concept which provided a suitable rational reason for the European invasion to Africa. The white man's burden is one of the most effective factors the Westerns prevented to do for the weak people. Backwardness, paganism, ignorance, diseases and tragic death all these disasters must be changed, Africans are not able to find solutions for their own troubles they need the help of the white civilized people. The white man has a heavy burden to solve the problems of humanity. This concept gives the Europeans the total authority and the right to interfere in the weak nations business and decisions. Hunt Hawkins declares for readers of *Heart of Darkness* in *Blackwood's Magazine* in 1899 would have readily understood this meaning of the 'idea.' The notion of the 'civilizing mission' was already well established, and in that year Kipling provided it with a catchy title in his poem "*The White Man's Burden*" (288). Kipling's *The White Man's Burden* the concept that gives the white man a heavy burden to "civilize" "savages" in primitive communities and have the right to invade and interfere to do this mission. In fact there is no noticeable civilization in these countries especially Africa Marlow lived in the era of imperialism it is logic to believe in the orthodox concepts which call for colonizing land of other people from other races and religions. Marlow's vision is influenced by the contemporary notions so he is not guilty in judging the policy of the Westerns in Africa. But he has no excuse to justify the cruel imperial laws by "civilizing" them. Because it is a general truth that imperialism aims to dominate the weak nations in order not to improve their economy and life conditions as well as to exploit them and their wealth and even corrupt their identity and believes.

These two stanzas are taken are the first lines from Rudyard Kipling's *The White Man's Burden*, "Take up the white man's burden", "wean the ignorant millions from their horrid ways." this concept is treated by Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* when he includes Marlow, Kurtz and the pilgrims who are missionaries to the Congo. Conrad's support to his nation's policy and his subjectivity as a European white author is splendidly seen in his work. He tries to

excuse the Western domination on the African states as a mission to help those who need to be civilized. Marlow is the protagonist of the novella; he represents Conrad's own vision towards the colonial rules and the situation the natives live because of the imperial policy in Congo the heart of Africa as he sees that using violence is one of the colonial efficient laws.

By the beginning of the story Marlow tries to create a distinction between the conquest and colonization. For him conquest is associated with violence, robbery and murder. While colonization is a noble action the Europeans do for the sake of helping the weak undeveloped nations in order to improve their way of living and being aware of the modern civilized world. Here he wants to justify his existence in Africa that the purpose of colonization is to construct the primitive societies and help them but the roman conquest aimed to invade England just to take away the land and kill it people. The white man has burden to civilize the savage people. This is a duty he is obliged perform. He can control them and interfere in their interior policies and even govern their wealth resources.

Marlow states that he had got a heavenly mission to civilize the Africans. Here he wants to declare his noble intentions to help the native inhabitants of Africa in order to improve their life and develop their economy. But later he says that he was an impostor which means that he is a colonizer who already planes to invade an African land, but he sees that his ethics and moral values had not change.

Marlow tells about an eloquent article written by Kurtz, in which he speaks about the authority of the whites and their capacity to help the native Africans, to change their primitive way of living and to accept civilization brought by Europeans. This document was addressed glowingly to the managers in order to make them obey the rules and not to attempt to challenge him as a dominant white man. "It was very simple, and at the end of that moving appeal to every altruistic sentiment it blazed at you, luminous and terrifying like a flash of

lightning in a serene sky:”Exterminate all the brutes! ”(Conrad 44). Kurtz entrusts Marlow, he gives him this report because he believes that he will preserve it. Marlow keeps that document as a memory although he does his effort to get rid of it in a certain way.

Another scene of the white man’s burden planes in the novella is when Marlow wants to farewell his aunt, he was taking a cup of tea and discussing about his coming travel to Africa. She told him that she is proud of him and wish him to be an emissary of civilization to the wild colonies: “She talked about 'weaning those ignorant millions from their horrid ways, till, upon my word, she made me quite uncomfortable” (Conrad 8). She tried to convince him of his mission as an invader which made him feel in his heavy burden.

Critics of *Heart of Darkness* see that Marlow as a representative of Conrad’s view is not right in giving an excuse to the English colonization the author uses his protagonist or narrator to justify the invasion by “efficiency” and unselfish “idea” (Conrad 13) as a support for the concept of the white man’s burden who pretends to help the weak undeveloped nations to cover his greed for domination and exploitation. It is illogic to send missionaries to a foreign land as lawmakers in order to kill and torture its people. It is only in the law of imperialism that gives the Westerns the right to use all the methods to realize their purposes.

#### **I. 4. The natural Selection in *Heart of Darkness***

Darwinism or the Theory of Evolution or as it is called The Natural Selection is a notion created by Charlie Darwin who proved that life of the creatures has descended from a common ancestor. Through ages these beneficial mutations accumulate and cause a new different species from the same ancestor. Social Darwinists applied the Darwinian thought on human being as a species. Their idea emerged in England and shifted to Europe and America by late 19th and early 20th centuries, it has always a great impact on political decisions, economic exploitations and social inequality because of the bad application of the Darwinian



notion of the Social Darwinism. They established a set of concepts according to the occidental benefits. They believe that some human beings are biologically superior to the others; the strongest or fittest should survive and flourish in society also the weak and unfit should be allowed to die. Through his theory he wanted to explain “the adaptedness of the organisms to their environments and the mutual adaptedness of the traits of organisms body parts, physiological processes, behaviours to one another” (Weber 11). Long time ago Aristotle long time ago had defined the biological adaptedness in a lyric way.

We are better provided with knowledge about perishable plants and animals than about the immortal heavenly bodies because we have grown up in their midst... its share of beauty” Aristotle, *Parts of Animals*. (qtd. Weber7).

He says also: "nature whose works are everywhere full of purposiveness and beauty" (*Parts of Animals* 1.5). The existence of different species live on an island, flowering plants in different colours and designs William Paley argued “adapted entities always have at least one property in common” (qtd Weber12). They have a *functional organization*, “an arrangement of components, processes, and behaviours that when properly combined allow the whole entity to do what it is supposed to do, and do it effectively. Functional organization” (Weber 12). Paley's argument is applied on the human species.

The theory of evolution created struggle between humans. For them White Europeans are the strongest nation because they had evolved faster than the other races so they are the fittest category which has an inherent right to rule the rests. As they could possess industry and technology especially in weapons they have the right to make non-European people. Social Darwinism was a tool to justify the imperial interference in the third world affairs and make the inferior category suffer of poverty and racism.

In his novella *Heart of Darkness*, Conrad tries to portray how the Europeans classify themselves superior as the fittest human species according to the Social Darwinism theory which is the application of Darwin's theory on the social issue which is based on the survival of the strong specie. Herbert Spencer an English 19<sup>th</sup> century philosopher who called for this application during the advancement of the technology, economy and government and military in Europe. The European white nation became improved comparing with the other cultures. The supporters of the social welfare saw that the survival must help the poor people, however those who were against this charity argued their opinion by the Social Darwinism Theory. An example of the cleaning out of the inferior genetics was during the World War II when the Nazis murdered lot of Jews under this philosophy. The social Darwinism was a justification for serious crimes dictators and criminals did. They made charity, morality and compassion absent.

This notion of feeling the self superior is presented in so many events and dialogues in the story. He narrates about the cruel behaviour of the whites towards the native inhabitants of Africa, how the imperial Europeans exploit the blacks as beings and their wealth just because they are primitive and coloured. Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* is a reflecting mirror for his personal experience in Congo. It is noticeable that most the scenes are similar to those he wrote about in his reports about the deeds of the white imperial men in Congo the Free State for the king Leopold. As a personal experience he uses the main character Marlow to express all that he had witnessed in this region. Conrad portrays the dehumanization the Africans suffered because of the European colonizer who made them believe in being in the inferior place. He clarifies how the colonizer classifies himself superior and has the right to exploit the native who also feels in inferiority and surrenders to the cruelty of the imperial power. Being civilized and white is a justification they use to dominate the Africans.

Joseph Conrad's subjectivity towards the British Empire as a civilized nation is shown through the narration of the protagonist Marlow who supports the ideology of the British imperialism. His sense of superiority and prejudice is reflected in so many scenes and dialogues despite his critic to the imperial oppressing policy.

Charlie Marlow sees the blacks from a vantage point:

Near the same tree two more bundles of acute angles sat with their legs drawn up. One, with his chin propped on his knees, stared at nothing, in an intolerable and appalling manner, his brother phantom rested its forehead, as if overcome with a great weariness; and all about others were scattered in every pose of contorted collapse, as in some picture of a massacre or a pestilence.  
(Conrad 12)

One can notice a vivid example about the impact of imperialism overworked slaves, mistreated and left to die of sickness, they are given no food, care or medicine, but the way Marlow looks for them is the worst effect of the imperial thought. He sees that they are "bundles", "creatures" and "phantoms" because of the harshness of the masters and the miserable state they became Marlow can't see or consider them as human beings.

He describes their suffering: "They were dying slowly, it was very clear. They were not enemies, they were not criminals, and they were nothing earthly now nothing but black shadows of disease and starvation, lying confusedly in the greenish gloom". (Conrad 20)

He sees the natives just black figures, they were dying slowly, crouching under the tree leaning against the trunks and clinging to the earth. Other quote that signifies Marlow's Darwinian notion is when he meets "A lot of people, mostly black and naked, moved about like ants" (Conrad 9). His sight is very gloomy and full of racism, he could even recognize them as human creatures he calls them ants. Insects, it is a very low position people can be described similar to.

The cannibal crews of Marlow's steamer are also treated as animals by its owners who are white. It is a disgusting scene how they are shabbily behaved and malnourished although they are efficient. Their efforts deserve to be appreciated because the whites depend on them in most of the hard works. So they need to be fed, but the white bosses don't care about their feelings of tire or hunger. Marlow sees that they are "exercising self-restraint" because they don't attack the whites and eat them.

The pilgrims also are affected by the imperial ideology; they represent its hypocrite side. They travel to Africa to teach the natives Christianity but in fact they find themselves driven to gather ivory and uses all the ways to reach their purpose of being wealthy. They give up their noble message in Africa. One of the most expressing attitudes about their hypocrisy is when they are worried that Kurtz was killed; they shouted lot of blacks along the shore as revenge later they knew that Kurtz is alive. When they arrived to the intact nation there was a man putting on patched clothes, Marlow describes him as a harlequin "a clown from the European theatre who dressed in multicoloured, patched clothes" (Conrad 48) the manager told him that they were attacked but Kurtz is good. Here we notice that they care just for the life of Kurtz, it doesn't matter the number of natives have been killed or injured in this massacre. This man started to talk about his experience with Kurtz the well-known and obeyed Kurtz. Marlow found a strange book a Russian in which he wrote some margin notes telling that the blacks attacked the steamer in order to prevent the white to take Kurtz because they don't want to lose him, it is a sign of Kurtz's precious value for all the members of station.

Marlow's inferior view towards the natives is clearly seen "I tell you,' he cried, 'this man has enlarged my mind ". (Conrad 48).Also when Marlow stumbles across a black man with a bullet-hole in the forehead he doesn't care about the dead man, he just cares about the agent in charge of the upkeep of the road doesn't do his work.

Marlow as a European who grew up during the era of gentry in addition to an imperial belief can't understand the natives' customs. He says that they prevent him to go ashore for their howl and dance near the ship, but he has to resist for his dedication to his work.

Marlow portrays the black who works as a fireman on the steamer as "improved specimen" (Conrad 33) who received knowledge by the whites, just as it is mentioned in the Darwinian theory. He also describes ironically Africans trying to speak as "violent babble of uncouth sounds" (Conrad 38) or "short grunting phrases" (Conrad 42).

Darwinism or the natural selection is one of the contemporary theories Conrad lived and he depicts in Marlow and the European characters vantage vision towards the native inhabitants of the Congo. Its acceptance by the Western influenced the European policies and even the member behaviour towards people from the other races. Herbert Spencer states that the authority of the whites on the other races was the result of inherited superiority, Charlie Darwin classified races into high and low species, strong and weak human beings. This paved the way and rationalized the European domination on the underdeveloped nations. *Heart of Darkness's* author has intelligently applied it in most of story scenes and events. Marlow is an example of the Darwinian belief because in most of his actions and attitudes, he considers the native inhabitants of Africa as nothing. He gives an excuse for all that the colonizers practiced against the blacks. For him it is legal to be harsh with them because they are not able to govern themselves, and cruelty is a part of the colonial law. Blacks are described as superstitious primitive beings and evil creature. He sees that the Africa is an atmosphere in which a healthy man can become an insane. He justifies the terrible moral state Kurtz shifted to the African landscape which is a region of cannibalism, paganism and ignorance, diseases and death. He justifies that wilderness and darkness of Africa causes cruelty.

## I. 5. Conclusion

Colonizers tried to hide their corrupt intentions using intelligent tools to convince the natives of their virtuousness and efforts to help them. Leopold II the king of Belgium for example the first colonizer of the Congo commissioned lots of projects and buildings. It is a symbol of the Belgium's imperial policy. These building are full of dead native men bones. This idea is tackled by Conrad in *Heart of Darkness* but in his own way when he describes the hut of Kurtz which is decorated of the natives' heads it just an application of the theory of the natural selection, The fittest has to survive while the bad one must be left to die.

# **CHAPTER TWO CORRUPTION OF IMPERIALISM**

## II. 1. Introduction

The Congo witnessed a bloody episode when it was invaded by Leopold with 19000 armed men. They enslaved the natives and raped their women. This oppression was with the existence of hundreds of protestant missionaries, these missionaries were just representing the hypocrite imperial policy in the area. They were criminals too, so many people and innocent children lost their hands and feet, they were tortured till the death. This is the authority Leopold impressed on the natives of his colony. His aim was to have the profit of billion dollars from this land. Congo this treasure mustn't be populated or at least its inhabitants must be under his power and for his service. He killed 50% of its population. All these crimes prove that the missionaries didn't do their real role as human right keepers. They were only one of the dirty lies the imperial westerns have told. *Heart of Darkness* is performance of these inhuman disasters, Conrad tries to criticize the hypocrisy and the corruption imperialism was made in the Congo which represent the heart of Africa.

In his novella *Heart of Darkness* Joseph Conrad tries to depict oppositional term as the white and the black, master and slave and civilized and savage. The two last concepts are related to human nature. He uses Thames River and Congo River as two areas in which humanity witnessed a conflict between those who think that they are civilized and can expand foreign lands populated of savage people. Conrad wants to distinct the Roman conquest to England as they consider them savages and can conquer their land in a hand and the white imperialism in Africa which aimed to civilize its primitive savage inhabitants in another hand. Europeans of the novella have a vantage view towards both the Romans whose conquest was associated with "the robbery, violence, and aggravated murder"(Conrad 13) and a superior outlook to the native blacks in Africa who need to be civilized.



In *Heart of Darkness* civilization has no relationship with being a white European cultured member and savagery has not the recognized meaning as it is known for being primitive barbarian and has a violent way of behavior. These two concepts have other meanings with the role the European characters played in the story they define them differently. They rationalize violence and torture which are related to savagery as legal means the white man uses to civilize them. They ignore their greed and thirst to be rich and dominant whatever the tools. Most of the events portray how the Europeans damaged their value and even their mental health for the sick of wealth and authority. They became more savage than the savages themselves. Kurtz the second main character represents all the good and the bad a white man can perform. He begins his journey as an ordinary colonizer. He has a duty to do which is helping the natives to change their way of living but he changes his plans just when he realizes that becoming a man of wealth and power is easy in such area. He starts to kill and torture anyone dares to challenge him. This harshness in behaving is more related to savagery. Pilgrims also represent the European hypocrite religious men who travel to Africa in order to clear paganism and teach the natives Christianity and enlighten their minds as a noble duty however they give up their mission and become interested in gathering ivory for their personal profit.

However, man-eaters or as they are called cannibals have good qualities, they work perfectly, they are quite obedient and they have a strong will. They are honest indeed. They are almost loyal to their cruel master Kurtz because they think of their inferiority. Even though they can attack the whites and eat them but they don't do because of their trueness.

Savagery of the white men and the kindness of the blacks are two effects imperialism caused. The psychological transformation, greed for ivory because of faithfulness and even

corruption of the African identity are all that the imperial policy brought to both the colonizer and the colonized people.

## II. 2. Psychological Transformation

So many critics see that the journey of “Heart of Darkness” is not just a physical voyage into the Congo River, it is a “sensitive and vivid travelogue” (qtd. Bhandari), as Guegard defined it as a psychological journey within Marlow’s soul who represent a European colonizer or explorer to an African colony. The word ‘heart’ is the symbol of a strategic or central thing within an infinite abstraction which is ‘darkness’ as Ian Watt interpreted in his paper *Impressionism and Symbolism in Heart of Darkness*. so the title of the novella would be understood as an entering to the human psyche though it narrates captain Marlow’s experience in the Belgian Congo. who noticed that darkness is not associated with the complexion colour or being uncivilized. He concludes by the end that the real darkness is in the European colonization as he described all that he witnessed of hypocrisy, ambiguity and moral confusion as a condemnation to savage exploitation of Africa.

From a psychological analysis point of view *Heart of Darkness* Conrad exposes the human nature, all his best and worst states and manners with himself and towards the people surrounding him. “Restraint!...the fact confronting me – the eye-popping fact.”(Conrad38). Conrad changes general recognitions related to the human psyche and his mental health because of the world changes made by the imperial ideology as depending on being civilized to be master on the other races more than being morally normal and ordinary.

Also, any human being has to be responsible on his behaviors. So what classify a person that he is civilized is acting and reacting as what the others do in a given situation. “Human secrets that baffle probability”(Conrad 37). He explores the human darkness which is driven by his

desire obsession for money and power. These unreal norms were depicted in so many scenes and actions by whites civilized people in the story.

In the very beginning of the novella when Marlow goes to visit the Company's doctor in order to have an examination. The doctor declares that he never met the explorers after their back home because of the internal changes that happen to them. He also asks him if his family had a past madness, Marlow becomes astonished and confused of the question but the doctor explains that he has a scientific research and he wants to apply his hypotheses on Marlow. He gave him a fore see that some of those explorers became mad or insane or at least they witnessed mental changes.

The American author Nathaniel Hawthorne said: “No man, for any considerable period, can wear one face to himself, and another to the multitude, without finally getting bewildered as to which may be true” (“Quotes about Masks”). His quote is an explanation to the ability of every one to show his attitudes and features which makes him acceptable as a member in society, but always there is something hidden which represents the true self. So the appearing character is just a lie or a mask he puts on. But they can't hide their reality for a long time because can appear suddenly and be clear for people surrounding him.

Mr. Kurtz represents the clash between good and evil within the human psyche. His transformation from an ordinary to a mystery man expresses that he was just putting a mask. He is sent by a shadowy company to the Congo as an ivory trader. Coming from an advanced European country and the possession of technology makes him feel superior to the natives. He turns himself as a demigod on the tribes next to his station. He unveils his reality as a cruel, greedy mad man. Kurtz becomes well known which makes the general manager of the station jealous of his fame and power and pushes him to plane how to downfall Kurtz.

Kurtz with his potential ambition, charisma, and eloquence he is a multitalented as painter, musician, writer and a promising politician can reach the place he wanted as a dominant leader. So many years before his trip to the Congo, he was an imperialist within the “White Man’s Burden” human helps. This function gives the reader a previous image about this mysterious character. Kurtz wrote a pamphlet about the civilization of the natives, He passes his strong horrifying message through his words. Kurtz puts a mask that he bears light and civilization to those primitive Africans. He uses his charisma to be a powerful dominant ruler on them and make them believe his lie. Kurtz has a personal philosophy says: “If you can’t beat them, join the attitude.” on how to pretend something to people and hide its reality

A sick man tells Marlow about Kurtz as he is a “remarkable man” (Conrad 307). Marlow becomes curious to hear more about the mysterious Kurtz. After visiting Kurtz’s cousin, the Belgian journalist, and Kurtz’s fiancée he concludes that Kurtz doesn’t seem the same one to each one of them. His cousin for example sees him a great musician, the journalist considers him a successful leader in politics, his betrothed thinks that she “know him best” (Conrad 352), all of them see that he is an enormous humanitarian. Kurtz is simply able in wearing the mask he needs in order to convince people around. Marina A. Kinney describes Kurtz’s the moral and psychological skills:

While Kurtz’s mind has given way to delusions of grandeur, he continues to be regarded as an exceptional man. While he possesses potential, his capacity for greatness is not achieved with the Company as his colleagues predicted. Rather, his distinction emerges as his madness manifests itself within the African wilderness (20).

Kenny tries to explain his capacity to adapt different roles in order to achieve his personal goals. He can perform more than one man. All these inner forces allow him to be the great hero of company especially within African primitive tribes.

Kurtz's view towards the natives is vantage he considers them just tools of work. Through his cruel behavior to them he corrupts his persona. He becomes narrow to his true self especially when he claims towards divinity. The remarkable modification occurred in Kurtz's psyche was described in an article by Suzanne Fields who states "The fictional hero was himself, larger than life, moving from idealism - from believing he was a civilizing force- to descending into the darkness of his own making in a carnival of barbarity" (70).

Marlow sees that Kurtz doesn't only use his intelligence and inner essence; he becomes twisted and mad because of the negative use of power. Marlow describes him as an insane man when he decorated his home with the heads of the disobedient natives.

Then I went carefully from post to post with my glass, and I saw my mistake. These round knobs were not ornamental but symbolic; they were expressive and puzzling, striking and disturbing- food for thought and also for vultures if there had been any looking down from the sky; but at all events for such ants were industrious enough to ascend the pole. They would have been more impressive, those heads on the stakes, if their faces had not been turned to the house. (Conrad 338)

For him Kurtz impaled these heads as a symbol for his divinity. Kurtz's physical illness was a reflection of his mental disease. Even during his death, he dies of his madness and true self slowly and painfully. His last word on the deathbed was "The horror! the horror!" (Conrad 351), as he realizes that wearing an unreal mask, following the desires and

losing the self control corrupt the human nature and make the darkness of his heart guide his deeds. Dianna Guadagnino a New York University student, wrote

The rape of the land, the consequences to the soul, the temptation of solitude, were a dark challenge, constructing moral dilemmas. Kurtz discovered 'He was empty inside.' His dying words, 'the horror, the horror' displays what he was inside at the end. (Guadagnino)

The first Kurtz is a man with ethics and principles, when he travels to Africa becomes a victim of his greed in a side and the darkness of the imperial thought in another side. Conrad's use of Kurtz as an example of those who witness a psychological transformation just because they came to Africa the land of wilderness and savagery. Mr. Kurtz fails to civilize the Savages, he begins his project by identifying himself with them and explain that the white man has the right to make profits of weak and uncivilized people like them for the sick of helping them and teaching them culture and religion. In fact, his efforts to convince them are for his benefits. He does nothing to improve their minds and way of living as he pretends. He promises them to clean primitiveness and savagery as a result he becomes more savage than the savage company with violently, brutally and with a blind greed for power and money. He fails to exercise his self-restraint, he just follows his desires. He even abandoned his *White man's burden* duty. Kurtz has a personal philosophy he has written "Exterminate all the brutes." It is a contradictory message for what he was calling for that the white man can be a Messiah for the pagans in Africa. He fails to be a humanity and kindness messenger. All this transformation was because of his selfishness and greed for ivory which represent a source of large incomes in this region.

## II. 3. Greed for Ivory

Kurtz aims to travel to Africa as an explorer, and to perform the great act of humanizing, improving, instructing the company. His thirst for authority makes him leave his philanthropic ideals and dominate the natives as a god. He pretends that he brought light of civilization to the heart of Africa. Until his death he believes that the Company should simply "Exterminate all the brutes!"

Kurtz lies to the company's humanistic noble mission. Using his force, he collects ivory more than all the other stations can get, Marlow states that "All Europe contributed to the making of Kurtz,"(Conrad13) Being on the head of the company gives Kurtz all the opportunities to satisfy his greed. He doesn't care about his image or how "noxious fools"(Conrad11) see him. His lust is more important than his prestige as a white missionary man, he is able to use violence to get more ivory he can, a young man informs Marlow that Kurtz has become completely fool of ivory, he doesn't tolerate any one challenge him or gather ivory more than him. He tells him about his personal experience with Kurtz the greedy man who wanted to shoot him unless he gives him his amount of ivory:

He declared he would shoot me unless I gave him the ivory and then cleared out of the country, because he could do so, and had a fancy for it, and there was nothing on earth to prevent him killing whom he jolly well pleased.(Conrad 84)

During his trip in this area Marlow realizes that not only Kurtz is obsessed of collecting ivory when he leaves with a sixty-man group along two hundred miles to the interior of the jungle. He is astonished that the natives were walking through the road. He tells his shipmates that if the Africans colonize England they can depopulate the English towns. Marlow asks a fat white man who was a companion during his voyage about the reason why

he is in such wild region. "I couldn't help asking him once what he meant by coming here at all. "To make money, of course. What do you think?" he said scornfully."(Conrad 15)

Marlow concludes that all the white missionaries have become hypocrite exploiters, The Belgian commercial companies ask its agents to gather ivory as much as they can, and send it to Europe. The manager and brick-maker one of those "faithless pilgrims" (Conrad 15) as Marlow calls them. They only focus their activities on gathering ivory. They become obsessed of ivory just like Kurtz. In *Heart of Darkness* ivory is a symbol of the hypocrite white men and the greedy commercial people who do anything to realize benefits with the use of the natives themselves.

Ivory is a symbol of the imperial exploitation of the white men in Africa. The whites that convince the natives that they had brought light and civilization, in fact nothing was presented for those Africans. Conrad's use of the symbol ivory in his work to explain how the greed for money can damage the exploited people's future, wealth and even identity in a hand and the colonizer's psyche, morality and religious principles in another hand. Conrad unveils the futility of the Belgian companies in Congo as an example but he also criticizes the British imperial government in Africa entire because his core issue is the greed of the imperial men whatever their nationality.

## **II. 4. Faithfulness**

The religious aspects represent an important theme, Joseph Conrad has discussed and criticized in his *Heart of Darkness*, mainly because of the way the imperials pretends that they are ready to clean paganism and teach the Africans Christianity and enlighten their minds. In another hand, how are these Europeans able to change their own morality and values.? *Heart of Darkness* treats the issue of their hypocrisy and untruthfulness.



Anna in her *Religious aspects of Heart of Darkness* states that divinities is a symbol of less developed culture, values decline and madness for that reason Conrad uses lot of metaphors and similes. For her, the cruel wilderness of the heart of Africa pushes people to be mad, so they are obliged to figure out other things to feel the sense of life according to the atmosphere they are in. Anna admits that all he wants to say is, that religion starts where reason fails and that believing is the last thing you can do, if you don't know what is going on.

Kurtz for instance, abandons his belief and ideal he has completely left his character as a civilized man, he only becomes interested in being the only dominant master in the area. He suffered of "The Megalomania" the crazy love of authority. He appoints himself a god just like "Jove" the Roman god. The natives and even some Europeans adore him and obey his orders. Kurtz is effected by the wild nature of Congo, he becomes greed and insane and psychologically sick.

Some other examples about the religious aspects depicted in *Heart of Darkness* as the two knitting women in the beginning of the story who were sitting in front of the office, one fat and the other small. They were knitting black wool.

Anna thinks that they represent the norms from the nordic myth "Edda": There, these women are sitting under the World tree Ydrassil. By knitting wool, they create human lives and their destiny. In this point of view, the Nordic and the Greek myths have lots of parallels: The old Greeks believed in the three goddesses of destiny, "Tyche", "Moira" and "Heimarmene". It seems like if they know Marlow's fate and remind him of the significant role he will have to play, when he enters the room . Kurtz is compared to a pitiful Jupiter: "Some of the pilgrims behind the stretcher carried his arms, two shot-guns, a heavy rifle and a light revolver- carbine - the thunder bolts of that pitiful Jupiter" (Conrad

135)

The megalomaniac Kurtz who puts himself a god on the natives exploits their primitiveness and ignorance to the weapons technology. They feel inferior and weak in front of his power and cruelty. They forcedly believe in his mightiness and greatness. He is a god but he can kill, torture and exploit them, they have no choice to resist him or disobey him.

Other example of faithless characters in the novella are the pilgrims.

“The pilgrims could be seen in knots gesticulating, discussing. Several had still their staves in their hands. I verily believe they took these sticks to bed with them.” (Conrad93)  
The pilgrims are not missionaries, they are just as the other agents, they don't perform any religious role. They travel with Marlow to the inner station looking for Kurtz in order to bring him to Europe. But they leave their mission. They hate each other because of the competition to be appointed in a trading post and have the opportunity to gather much more ivory.

Their function is “slave – driver”, “ back-biting”, they use long sticks to bit them. They treat them as animals. This behavior is against Christianity. Anna thinks that they represent the untruthfulness of imperialism and religion. They pretend to be missionaries, to help them finding god, but in fact, they just exploit them”. They are a vivid example of the cruelty, prejudice and greed of the whites and the hypocrisy, lie and injustice of the imperial policy towards weak people.

Through his work Conrad ignores that his expressions deny that the natives have their own rich identity. He just portrays them as passive servants who obey orders from a foreign authority. They are ready to accept a new culture, new customs and new beliefs which are completely different on theirs. Conrad was harshly criticized for this point; He was considered

a subjective author. And he also shared the imperials their corruption by corrupting the image of Africa.

## II. 5. Corruption of the African Image

Explorations of the Congo the heart of Africa were constantly failed. People tried hardly to travel to this rich area and most of them died trying. The cruel nature with ferocious animals, changeable weather, wary inhabitants and fatal diseases caused the failure of expeditions to the Congo. Most of the time explorers need native guides to cross the river because its violent sandbars can suddenly shift and change the river's watercourse. The power of sandbars can destroy any watercraft also crocodile's jaws are always opened and expecting people coming to their own area, but it did become more manageable. Putting permanent stations along the riverbanks was a solution made by determined nations.

Conrad portrayed landscape, villages and rivers in his *Conrad's Congo diary*. The village of Lulonga, at the confluence, was the last place he described. The period Joseph Conrad spent in Africa could shape his career. Conrad's writings about the cruel behavior and the greedy exploitation in Congo had a great impact on Western culture more than on the West's political and commercial activities in this area. Kurtz the main character of his novella *Heart of Darkness* was mentioned by the poet TS Eliot in his post WW I poem quoted's "cry that was no more than a breath – 'The horror! the horror!'" This novella as criticized by Palestinian critic Edward Said. It was "foundational to Said's entire career and project" as it was said by one of his biographers.

Joseph Conrad's 1902 novella *Heart of Darkness* marked a turning point in writings about "Congo" the name of an African treasure. A wild area, wide mysterious jungles and a long vast river, natural resources of rubber, gold and ivory with unspeakable inhabitants made

the Europeans greedy for this opportunity to make profits. All these aspects were portrayed in Conrad's story *Heart of Darkness* it focuses on portraying the image of Africa as "The other world," which opposes Europe's civilization, technology and its world domination.

Conrad depicts Africa in an inferior place even the landscape is different on Europe continent. By the beginning of the story, the narrator tells his experience on the River Thames, tranquil, resting, peacefully "at the decline of day after ages of good service done to the race that peopled its banks."(Conrad2). However *Heart of Darkness* setting is on the River Congo, which is described as an antithesis of the Thames. A trip on the River Congo is just like a journey to the antique ages "We are told that: Going up that river was like traveling back to the earliest beginnings of the world."(Conrad2)

Conrad tries to say that the two rivers are different. The one which is located in Europe is good, while the African is bad. But he ignores that the two rivers have the same ancestry. The Thames "has been one of the dark places of the earth." (Conrad2) It could fight the darkness and be in light and peace, the Congo River also faced its darkness but it is a victim of mad human beings.

Achebe sees that Conrad's evocation of the atmosphere in Africa is ponderous and fake-ritualistic repetition. Especially when he compares the two rivers in terms of silence and frenzy. "it was the stillness of an implacable force brooding over an inscrutable intention" (Conrad36) "The steamer toiled along slowly on the edge of a black and incomprehensible frenzy"(Conrad37). He plays with words, each time he brings new terms but he sticks on the same meaning. For example instead of repeating the adjective inscrutable he uses unspeakable or plain mysterious.

The eagle-eyed English critic F. R. Leavis admits that Conrad's "adjectival insistence upon inexpressible and incomprehensible mystery. "Mustn't be rejected as most of his critics considered it a stylistic flaw. As a writer Conrad tries to hypnotize his readers through his emotive words in recording scenes and events. Ordinary readers can examine Conrad's subjective messages in his *Heart of Darkness* and this pushes him to cover his ideology and the superior view towards the Africans using such way in order to attract his audience psychological predisposition. He made himself in the position of "purveyor of comforting myths"

Achebe criticized that furthermore the African nature, people were described negatively. As he said, "I must crave the indulgence of my reader to quote almost a whole page from about the middle of the stop when representatives of Europe in a steamer going down the Congo encounter the denizens of Africa".

We were wanderers on a prehistoric earth, on an earth that wore the aspect of an unknown planet.... We could not understand because we were too far and could not remember, because we were traveling in the night of first ages, of those ages that are gone, leaving hardly a sign -- and no memories. The earth seemed unearthly. We are accustomed to look upon the shackled form of a conquered monster, but there -- there you could look at a thing monstrous and free... -- you so remote from the night of first ages -- could comprehend.  
(Conrad 50)

*Heart of Darkness* is one of the fascinations holds over the Western mind: "What thrilled you was just the thought of their humanity -- like yours .... Ugly."(Conrad15)Africans are shown as nothing, other cruel description about the fireman,

And between whiles I had to look after the savage who was fireman. He was an improved specimen... instead of which he was hard at work, a thrall to strange witchcraft, full of improving knowledge.(Conrad)

Conrad as a romantic author should like “savages clapping their hands and stamping their feet” but he doesn’t do. Achebe sees that they are at their right place. He gave an example about a dog in a parody of breeches but Westerns see it normal. Conrad pretends that things must be in their suitable places but he doesn’t care about that in his description to the Africans. “Fine fellows -- cannibals --in their place,” (Conrad 106) Conrad tells that tragedy begins when things leave their natural place. He ignores that the Europeans of *Heart of Darkness* are not in their place.

Now and then a boat from the shore gave one a momentary contact with reality. It was paddled by black fellows... They wanted no excuse for being there. They were a great comfort to look at.(Conrad 30)

Here, Conrad portrays the cannibals in an assault way. His voice is presented by the narrator of the story Marlow, who seems that he is against or at least ironically criticizes the Europeans in *Heart of Darkness* but in fact nothing is clear. For Achebe if Conrad was interested in making a connection between himself and the moral and psychological malaise of his contemporary time his narration seems to Achebe totally wasted especially that we as readers and critics can judge his tone through his characters actions and opinions. It is clearly shown that both Conrad and Marlow similar and perform with a great confidence the same look towards things, notions and people in *Heart of Darkness*. Marlow represents the character who witnesses real events in a side and the English liberal man who was shocked by these facts in the Congo as a King Leopold colony in another side.

Marlow or Conrad brought a kind of liberalism which can touch a large readership of the best minds of the era not only in England but even in the whole Europe and America. Its aim is to create a kind of equality between the whites and the blacks. Albert Schweitzer is an extraordinary missionary; he provided brilliant musical and theological careers in Europe which serve the Africans. Schweitzer says: "The African is indeed my brother but my junior brother." He built a hospital for the service of his junior brothers with a good hygiene and medical practice just before the emergence of the germ theory which brought illnesses within humanity especially the backward nations as the Africans.

Conrad hasn't use the term "brother" as Schweitzer has done; he doesn't admit that there is a kinship between the superior whites and the inferior blacks. In the scene when Marlow's African helmsman was injured by a spear in his heart, he just looked at his white master disquietly. Chinua Achebe believes that Joseph Conrad is a racist author because he rationalizes the white racism through his *Heart of Darkness* as "normal way of thinking that its manifestations go completely unremarked".

*Heart of Darkness* readers would have the idea that Africa the primitive had received the charity of the whites, and this is not the principle point of the story. It is related more to the mental sickness of a greedy white man. One of Conrad's Scottish students informed Achebe that Africa is the place where Kurtz had disintegrated his mind. This is a ridiculousness of the message Conrad wanted to pass about Africa the landscape. Achebe sees that

The real question is the dehumanization of Africa and Africans which this age-long attitude has fostered and continues to foster in the world. And the question is whether a novel which celebrates this dehumanization, which depersonalizes

a portion of the human race, can be called a great work of art. My answer is:  
No, it cannot. I do not doubt Conrad's great talents. (Achebe)

Conrad is not guilty about the cotemporary ideologies and notions; he was born in 1857, the era the first groups of the Anglican missionaries came to Nigeria. The period when the black man was recognized as the lower specie of the human creature. But this doesn't justify his racism view towards the blacks or the niggers as he said: "A certain enormous buck nigger encountered in Haiti fixed my conception of blind, furious, unreasoning rage, as manifested in the human animal to the end of my days. Of the nigger I used to dream for years afterwards". Conrad may have a problem with niggers. He likes using this term and certainly he has a psychological goal. He often used words about blackness and darkness:

"A black figure stood up, strode on long black legs, waving long black arms. . . ." He finds interest in describing the black legs. When he was sixteen years old he encountered the first English man in Europe. He names him "my unforgettable Englishman" and portrayed him perfectly:

(his) calves exposed to the public gaze . . . dazzled the beholder by the splendor of their marble-like condition and their rich tone of young ivory. . . . The light of a headlong, exalted satisfaction with the world of men. . . illuminated his face. . . and triumphant eyes. In passing he cast a glance of kindly curiosity and a friendly gleam of big, sound, shiny teeth. . . his white calves twinkled sturdily.

His love to the Englishman is irrational and his hate to blacks is also irrational. It is abnormal to find these two senses in the same heart of an intellectual and talented man.



## **II. 6. Conclusion**

Conrad as a character can be a material of psychoanalytic critics. Bernard C. Meyer, M.D. had detail examined Conrad in his book *Dr. Meyer*. He talked about hair and hair-cutting. For him Conrad brought explosive thoughts through his description to the blacks and darkness because he called for racism and make it a normal attitude. Conrad's purpose is to please people through his work but he dehumanizes the blacks.

**GENERAL  
CONCLUSION**

Imperialism is indeed a hypocrite lie the Western created as an alternative solution of the abolition of slave trade which makes the lives of the blacks worse. It is enslaving the Africans in their own land and exploit their wealth under the name of colonialism that was rationalized with the creation and the spread of the White Man's Burden which gave the Europeans the right to interfere in what they call the primitive nations affairs and exploit their economic resources and even making their inhabitants as labors. Also, the emergence of the Darwinian theory which classifies the White European race as the superior human species and this allowed them to dominate the other races under the justification of the Natural selection.

Conrad's attitude towards Imperialism is not clear in his work *Heart of Darkness*. Sometimes he shows that he is with the imperial policy in the African continent, as he makes the natives in an inferior place and oppressed by the superior European master and this was interpreted as an influence by the concept of the White Man's burden. Also portraying the blacks as animals, shadows and sometimes as nothing is a dehumanization and a clear support to the theory of the Natural selection which call for making the best survive and let the others die. Most of these critics are Africans and anti-imperialistic authors.

But most of the time he criticizes as he narrates and describes the corruption made by the imperial thought and its impact on the colonizer who witnesses a psychological shift and loses his values, principles and even his mental health because of the greed for wealth possession and the desire of having the authority on the native inhabitants. Most of the European characters in the novella are missionaries and explorers but all of them left their plans to civilize the natives, help them and teach them Christianity. Once they arrived to the Congo they changed their aims into pursuing wealth whatever the tools, it proofs their faithfulness and hypocrite belief. Both of Kurtz, the European traders and the pilgrims became savages despite their civilization. Their greed blinded them and made them cruel towards the natives. They bit them torture and even were able to kill them for the sake of ivory.

Nigerian novelist Chinua Achebe has harshly criticized Conrad for his subjectivity and racist thought. For him, *Heart of Darkness* denies the identity of Africans and makes them passive and accepting other civilizations which is doesn't suit with their own. Achebe wrote a famous article about racism in Conrad's novella and tried to unveil his intention to corrupt the image of Africa. He wrote also a novel untitled "*Things Fall Apart*" as a reaction against Conrad's subjectivity and support to the British imperialism in Africa. Although his critics, Achebe is comprehensive with Conrad's attitude towards imperialism, as a European author, he must be judged according to his contemporary ideologies and assumptions especially that members who represent the anti-imperialism were the minor category in the British and the European societies in general.

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# Appendixes

## Summary

*Heart of Darkness* is about a group of men on an English ship on the Thames river. The first narrator is anonymous but later Marlow becomes the protagonist and the narrator of the story. Marlow starts talking about London during the Roman conquest and how it was a dark place. He shifted his narration into his voyage to the Congo as a fresh water sailor. His passion to exploration and obsession of maps drove him to live such experience. His aunt also encouraged him to go to Africa as she has a connection with the Administration Department of a seafaring and exploration company which works on collecting ivory. His journey with craziness began with his conversation with the doctor of the company's questions about madness and how people who traveled to Africa turned into mad persons. Marlow stated his voyage thinking about this puzzle, when he arrived he tried to make friendships with the first people he met as the accountant of the company especially when he heard that some of the company agent suicide. After ten days Marlow had to start his journey of 200-mile to the interior of the Congo, in order to work for a station run by Kurtz. During his voyage he met black people, he never described them as human beings, he used animalistic terms. When he arrived to the secondary station his ship was broken. He met the manager to oversee his work. During his waiting time he was hearing about Kurtz as an extraordinary man, the very known boss who fell ill. Marlow carried his voyage to the station with some European pilgrims, the cannibal crew and the manager. They faced an attack at night, the Pilgrims shoot back from the ship. The helmsman of the ship was killed, Marlow thought that Kurtz has perished in the attack. Marlow became more curious to meet this man. They meet a Russian man who told them that Kurtz is alive but ill. The natives refused to let him go back to Europe because he made himself their lord. This reinforced Marlow's curiosity to see him. Finally he arrived to Kurtz's hut which was surrounded by the tribe people. Kurtz entrusted Marlow with his files and papers and a photograph of his sweetheart. Kurtz died just few days later. Marlow

returned to England, he started a new quest about Kurtz's sweetheart. He could find her, she felt guilty because she was not next to her beloved. She asked Marlow about the last word Kurtz said, Marlow told her that it was her name, but in fact Kurtz was saying horror, horror during his last time

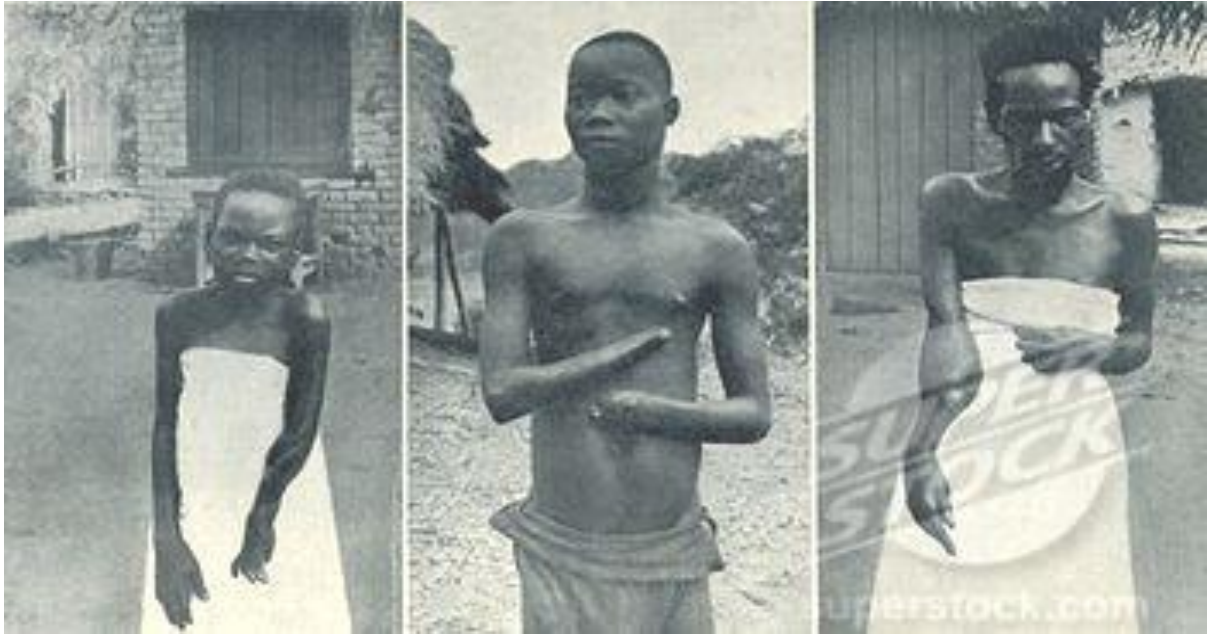


Photo from the Congo Circa 1890

*The White Man's Burden*

Take up the White Man's burden—  
Send forth the best ye breed—  
Go send your sons to exile  
To serve your captives' need  
To wait in heavy harness  
On fluttered folk and wild—  
Your new-caught, sullen peoples,  
Half devil and half child  
Take up the White Man's burden  
In patience to abide  
To veil the threat of terror  
And check the show of pride;  
By open speech and simple  
An hundred times made plain  
To seek another's profit  
And work another's gain  
Take up the White Man's burden—  
And reap his old reward:  
The blame of those ye better  
The hate of those ye guard—  
The cry of hosts ye humour  
(Ah slowly) to the light:  
"Why brought ye us from bondage,  
"Our loved Egyptian night?"  
Take up the White Man's burden-

Have done with childish days-  
The lightly proffered laurel,  
The easy, ungrudged praise.  
Comes now, to search your manhood  
Through all the thankless years,  
Cold-edged with dear-bought wisdom,  
The judgment of your peers!

By Rudyard Kipling

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_White\\_Man%27s\\_Burden](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_White_Man%27s_Burden)

