

NEGOTIATION OF COLONIAL AND POST COLONIAL BORDERS IN JOSEPH CONRAD'S HEART OF DARKNESS

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Abstract

The current study aims at exploring colonial and post-colonial borders in Joseph Conrad's Heart of Darkness and demonstrating the representation and deconstruction of the colonial images of indigenous African masses. The purpose of the study is to show that the text negotiates colonial as well as post-colonial borders. It is argued that while deconstructing colonial imperialism, Joseph Conrad has explicitly raised his voice against the exploitation of the native Africans and thus evoked a post-colonial perspective in the high time of colonialism. Studying the novel wearing a colonial/post-colonial lens demonstrates that Conrad has produced an anti-racist and anti-colonial narrative that denounces inhuman treatment of the native subjected people and claims justice for them. This qualitative study carried out the analysis of the novel using content analysis and thick descriptive method to address the research questions. The present study carried out wearing the lens of postcolonial theory explores the colonial and postcolonial dimensions of Heart of Darkness to analyze how the novel written in the high time of colonialism had postcolonial elements in it. It is found that the novel negotiates the borders of colonialism and post-colonialism simultaneously.

Key-words: Negotiation, Colonial, Post-Colonial, deconstruction, indigenous, imperialism, descriptive method.

Introduction

Joseph Conrad's modern classic, Heart of Darkness today after decades of its publications is still being scrutinized from various perspectives as this novel is enormously rich in meanings and has proved an inexhaustible source of knowledge and significance in various disciplines. Since it deals with the issues of colonialism and its impacts upon both colonizer and the colonized, its significance has not diminished even in the present day because the history of colonialism far from being over with the independence of once colonized countries is continuing to exist and affect the post-colonial conditions of these countries. The present study carried out wearing the lens of postcolonial theory explores the colonial and postcolonial dimensions of Heart of Darkness with the aim to analyze how the novel written in the high time of colonialism had post-colonial elements in it.

The novel narrates the journey of Marlow, the narrator-character that figures in more than one novel of Conrad, through the dark African Jungle, thick and impenetrable as it is at many points symbolically representing many-layered natures of colonialism. Marlow undertakes this hazardous journey in search of Kurtz, once a noble European man who was the paragon of the Western ideal and had gone to the dark African continent to spread the light of civilization, but on the contrary, allured by the "unspeakable rites" and unrestrained opportunities of exploiting the native people, imposed violence upon them, and subjugated them in the worst exploitative manner. Although the book has many references to the so-called good work of civilization being done by the corporate imperialist powers and references galore can be cited in favor of the ambiguous pro-imperialistic projection of the civilizing work, yet the book has an undeniable claim as a bitter attack on imperialism and the immoral treatment of the European colonizers in Africa in the 19th century. These

conflicting images of colonialism and post-colonialism are responsible for the undying fame of the book, so little surprise that it is still being explored for a variety of research.

In the 21st century when colonialism has transformed itself into new forms: neo-colonialism or economic colonialism, a form of colonialism in which the colonizer exploits the weaker nation by manipulating its economic structures, the Heart of Darkness continues to assert its importance by revealing the fundamental conflict between the white and non-white, powerful and the weaker. The novel lays bare how behind the seemingly ethical, humanitarian, and democratic intentions of the European colonial powers, the real motive of these nations is to keep the Asian and African nations down by exploiting their material resources. The present study using post-colonial theory as the conceptual framework will look into the text of the novel to reveal its nexus with the post-colonial as well as the colonial world.

The post-colonial theory demands equality and justice for all. It does not contend with seeing the world divided into haves and have nots. Colonialism had sharply divided the world into two parts: economically and technologically advanced Europe and economically as well as intellectually impoverished rest of the world, especially Asia and Africa. The 19th century British Prime Minister William Gladstone stated that “justice delayed is justice denied”. The British Prime Minister’s famous quote has unconsidered irony in it as it is paradoxical to that of Gladstone’s own various leadership positions and appointments within the largest colonizer power and dealer of injustice to non-European nations and indigenous people worldwide. The statement seems to have universal appeal as the promise it contains seems to disregard any racial, national, ethnic, cultural, or anthropological origins of the people and seeks to provide everyone anywhere in the world the justice, the justice in its all forms, but on the other hand thorough study at the colonized world confirms that the indigenous population living in backward countries for centuries have been denied justice. They have been rather subjected to cruel treatments: their lands were snatched, their resources looted, their indigenous languages suppressed, their cultures obliterated and their socio-political, as well as religious systems, badly destroyed. The post-colonial theory with its contributors from across the world, particularly from the third world and even “fourth world” (the term used for indigenous peoples of the world like native Americans, afro-Americans, etc) has not only raised the voice of the hitherto silenced peoples but also taken up the task of addressing wrongs done to the indigenous people during the high time of colonization. Conrad’s Heart of Darkness is replete with images of ill-treatment of the natives of Congo at the hands of the so-called harbinger of light and civilization from Europe. It, therefore, exposes the ruthless exploitations of economic resources as well as the enslavement of the black Africans, demonstrating that the real motive of the European enlightenment campaign was not to remove the darkness of ignorance, barbarism, primitive inhuman rites, and the savage ways of living associated with the black populations of the African continent rather the white men had gone there with expansionist designs. Drunk in power politics, the European nations having advanced technology and scientific inventions to aid their imperialist desires voyaged out to the far-off African territory and occupied their land, resources, and people to enrich the home country behind. However, the impression they gave to the world out through different kinds of discourses they produced, was that they had been out to enlighten and empower the weaker people. What they actually did in the guise of civilizing the primitive people was to deprive them of their own religion, culture, and identity by imposing upon them the white language, religion, cultures, traditions, and government system.

Significance of the Study

The themes of the novel clearly indicate that despite being white, Conrad, at heart, was an anti-colonial and anti-racist writer. This study is significant because it demonstrates how the novel gives voice to the issues and concerns of the native Africans and depicts the reality of

the process of enlightenment of the Africans. This study signifies that *Heart of Darkness* has the potential to be studied at both colonial and post-colonial levels because it abounds in references with both the colonial and post-colonial perspectives. One of the significant points of the study is that it conjoins the colonial and post-colonial techniques and methods of reading and demonstrates that *Heart of Darkness* has a unique position as it negotiates the borders of colonial and post-colonial realities.

Aims and Objectives of the Study

1. To find out borders on the colonial and post-colonial territories from the *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad.
2. To investigate the exploitation of the resources of the natives on the part of the white by claiming to civilize them.
3. To unveil the racist and dehumanized doctrines of the European colonial powers by raising a post-colonial voice in the colonial era.

Research Questions

1. How can *Heart of Darkness* be read as a colonial and post-colonial narrative simultaneously?
2. How does the novel raise the post-colonial issues and voices of the colonized people in the colonial era?
3. How does Joseph Conrad, standing on the borders of colonial and post-colonial territories, negotiate the two conflicting ideologies of the white and the indigenous?

Literature Review

Heart of Darkness has attracted a great deal of literary criticism since its publication, and the critics, theorists, and academics have explored every aspect of this novel. However, with the new literary theories coming in and the socio-political circumstances continuing to be influenced by the long history of colonialism, the novel's appeal to the modern reader has not diminished. It is stated whether the novel is more about psychological explorations of the souls of the demoralized and degenerated colonizers, of which Kurtz is an ideal example, or is it more about the ways the colored people remain obsessed with the savage ways of living that they cannot leave behind even after they have been tried to be transformed into civilized human beings by the harbingers of the civilization, that is, the white Europeans who embarked upon the noble mission of changing the lives of those noble savages whom nature had kept away from the light of civilization for centuries and who were destined to live like the brutes in the heart of the darkness.

Terry Eagleton (1996), a literary critic and a Marxist, was of the opinion that the basic structure of the novel was ambivalent in nature; neither had it demonstrated the author's exclusive rejection of the western ways of domination of the black people nor did it project the view that he had explicit sympathies for the deprived lot of the subalterns. It cannot be said with any degree of certainty that Conrad had a colonialist or anti-colonialist bent of mind, rather like a true artist whose foremost objective is to portray reality not the way he wanted it to be but the way it was there in the starkly realistic form.

The title of *Heart of Darkness* is metaphorical: Africa is shown as a dark continent but this darkness originally comes from Europe. The darkness of the title could also refer to the darkness of the Congo's colonizers, their mistreatment of the natives or the geographic location of the Belgian Congo, and the color of its citizens. The blackness has its implications for both the colonizers and the colonized: the European heart is as black as the African skin.

Edward Said (1994), one of the most authentic and towering critics of Colonial literature, points out in one of his seminal works, *"Culture and Imperialism"* that the basic structure of the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized is that of filiation and affiliation. The colonizer occupies the land and resources of the colonized and exploits them in every possible way but he does make an impression upon the colonized of being his well-wisher and guardian of his interests. The colonized, far from feeling exploited of any sort, develops a relationship of enduring filiation with the colonizer, thinking his presence a blessing and even the prospect of leaving the company of the colonizer makes him depressed as, for example, Kurtz's intended weeps and looks with pensive eyes upon Kurtz when he is being taken away from the heart of the darkness.

As Marlow, when he is stepping into the land of those whom he feels sympathetic towards because of their brutal exploitation at the hands of the so-called saviors of the world, thinks that his real challenge starts because he cannot easily decide whether the colonial practice is good or not, therefore, he remains ambivalent for most of the part.

Conrad's narrative makes it possible for the readers to analyze the text in two different dimensions; first, it allows the readers to interpret it from the imperialist perspective and secondly from the post-colonial lens.

Colonial & Postcolonial Analysis of Heart of Darkness

Keith Booker (1996) in his analysis of the Heart of Darkness states that "the book deals with issues such as imperialism, capitalism, race, and gender that were very much at the forefront of the turn-of-the-century European mind. Conrad's ambivalent treatment of these issues is extremely representative of the way they were treated in any number of European dispersions of the time". Booker's use of the word "ambivalent" indicates that Conrad's attitude towards colonialism was not very obvious: he was caught between depicting the good and the bad aspects of colonialism. For sure, he was divided as to whether colonialism was a benevolent enterprise as it claimed to be or it was a pernicious influence upon those whose territories the Europeans were occupying. Hence, he was ambivalent in his treatment of the subject. The reading of Heart of Darkness also confirms this rather ambivalent response of Conrad to the ill-treatment, humiliation, and exploitation of the indigenous people. However, the novel contains a sufficient number of mutilated images of the black people to illustrate that the European nations were engaged in something more than merely civilizing the people.

Chinua Achebe (2006), one of the foremost post-colonial African novelists, in his "An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's Heart of Darkness" also feels disillusioned with Conrad's depiction of the indigenous people and calls Conrad a racist writer. Achebe, himself a writer of a number of memorable post-colonial novels and also a prominent figure in the post-colonial academia, feels convinced that Joseph Conrad was going no service to the black Africans by projecting their mute, savage images, rather his depiction of the indigenous population was much in line with the European imagination of the dark people, therefore, rejecting Conrad's racist attitude towards the Africans, he calls him a pro-imperialist writer. The research takes issues with Achebe and strongly believes that Achebe had missed the other side of the picture because the thorough reading of the novel exposes that Conrad had deconstructed binary oppositions of colonialism by subverting the general idea of the Europeans towards Africa in the 19th century.

European philosophical system is heavily based upon binary oppositions and it produces knowledge by defining the reality in terms of categorization of the phenomenon. The European enterprise of colonialism was also in need of a supporting ideology that could justify and legitimize the European imperialist enterprises into Asian and African countries in particular and in other parts of the world in general. The ideological cushion was provided by the field of Orientalism, a body of knowledge that categorized the world into imagined

boundaries demarcating the world into imagined the Orient and the west. Not only was the world divided into geographical regions, but also these regions were characterized by a set of values, ideologies, and systems of life. Heart of Darkness gives us an insight into this categorization of the people, lands, and system of life practiced by the people living across the world. Behind dividing the people into different categories, and defining them according to their anthropological origins was the philosophy of colonialism without understanding.

Colonialism is just not about the lasting, though, an ambivalent relationship of the colonizer and the colonized; it is also, so to speak, about the whole range of ideas from economic to spiritual that overtly or implicitly transforms the lives of the colored people.

The colonizers, the white Europeans, mostly educated and cunning, believed themselves superior to the rest of the world because they considered their culture, religion, country, and ancestors far better than the people of the rest of the world. So, they treated them with all kinds of discrimination. This racial prejudice as well as national pride leads them to treat the non-white people as the “others”, less human than they, and therefore fit to be ruled over. The binary oppositions, which are at the heart of western political thought, are also central to the thematic and formal structure of Heart of darkness. Dividing the people between “us” (the white colonizer) and “them” (the non-white colonized), the colonial masters create an unbridgeable difference between what they are and what the others cannot be, therefore, the white have the right to rule over the brown people. These antithetical, though complementary, paradigms are so clearly manifested in the relations of the two.

Conrad has maintained objectivity by distancing himself from the narrative through the fictional creation. Marlow reflects on a broader scale what the writer himself felt about the whole process of exploitation. Marlow, the narrator of the novel, while narrating the events of the novel and commenting upon them from the highly subjective point of view presents at once the objectification of Conrad’s own personality as well as the writer’s subjective involvement in a phenomenon that has worldwide significance. Marlow, as a white man and a narrator of the novel, would have the inclination towards hiding immoral activities of the Europeans from his listeners since colonialism at its worst proves the corruptions of the European in Africa, but instead of hiding the ignoble deeds of the fellow Europeans. Marlow details them in a horrifying way, wondering if he himself would fall victim to the irresistible attraction of the exotic charm of the native customs if he stayed too long with them. In Heart of Darkness, the natives of Congo remain mysterious and fantastic creatures in Marlow’s imagination unless he encounters them and finds them quite human, just like himself feeling a great deal of sympathy for their miserable plight for which he considers the Europeans responsible.

The excerpt is typical of Conrad’s ambivalent attitude towards what he encountered in the heart of Africa and couldn’t completely comprehend as the deconstruction of this small passage reveals the inconsistencies and ambiguities inherent in the colonial narrative: he feels a bond of humanity towards the natives when he finds them quite like himself except their color, but not bringing himself to accept their fullest humanity reduces them to merely “black shadows” as if they had something about them which made them less human than Marlow himself. The terrible disease and starvation, they were suffering from, make him feel sorry at the dehumanizing treatment meted out to them because such treatment was inconceivable for a European subject, however, again his response to this shocking sight is marked by confusion and ambivalence. He fails to define them as normal human beings having their own agency; however, one thing he is sure of is that the present miserable condition of the indigenous people is because of their petrification under the tyrant control of the Europeans. He is fully aware of the bitter reality that the European colonizers in their unrestrained lust for ivory perpetrate violence upon them from time to time in order to keep them under

control. This violence, however, in deconstructive analysis, comes up as reflective of the white master's own sense of weakness and insecurity because he feels uncertain about his own rule, always fearing that if the natives decided to break free from slavery by taking up arms against them, they will be exposed to danger and ultimate destruction. This witnessing of violence being unleashed upon the defenseless black people fills him with a sense of sympathy and horror for these people. He cannot fail to realize that the Europeans destroy both the natives and their jungle, thus causing irrevocable harm to what we call "ecological balance". He equates this reckless behavior of the colonizers with the devilish forces who are always bent upon doing mischief with anything that they come across.

The choice of diction in the passage quoted above reflects the intensity of horror Conrad feels at discovering the foolish and tormenting ways the Europeans have taken against innocent black people. Marlow associates the presence of the white man in the black jungle, among the black people with the presence of evil among them, the devil that has come to stay with them with the impression of being their friend, well-wisher, but, in reality, to deceive them and loot their material wealth. This devil, the devil of colonialism in the midst of the 19th century, was palpably present everywhere in the world and had especially dominated all parts of Africa to benefit from their territories.

In this connection, Edward Said's historical analysis of the land grabbing mentality of the European nation shows that they had this one motive – of expanding the empire and appropriating the resources – dominant over any other consideration: these nations had gone crazy to maximize their profit markets by hook or crook. This unscrupulous brutality committed by the powerful nations over the weaker ones is one of the major points of post-colonial theory and practice as it can be seen in Edward Said's theoretical and Joseph Conrad's creative art. The purpose of both of them is the same: justice, the justice that Africans had been denied for so long. Conrad seeks to speak, in the post-colonial vein, to the vast and horrific social and psychological suffering, ruthless exploitation, brutal violence, and dehumanizing enslavement done to the powerless victims of colonization around the world. It challenges, though ambivalently the superiority of the dominant western perspective and seeks to reposition and empower the marginalized and subordinated "other" (Smith, 2012).

The observations of Greenwood and Levin (2007), while articulating the impacts of colonialism on the world population that the areas of the world most ruthlessly exploited by colonizing nations, mostly white and European in origin, could never get out of the brutal effects of the terrible state of colonization and the same can be easily verified from the condition of the African masses who were surviving in the most depressing conditions: they had scanty food, poor lodging, unhealthy nutrition, etc. Marlow is against this sorry state of affairs the Africans are made to suffer from. On more than one occasion does Marlow voice his disgust against such discrimination. One such occasion is when he confronts Kurtz's beloved waiting for him back home, that whether he should tell her the truth and break her heart or tell a lie and save her illusion.

One reason for Marlow's ambivalent position and thoughts is his own race: white European male. He feels ashamed when he realizes the violence Kurtz had done upon the natives and the immoral activities he had indulged in during his stay among the natives, because he identifies himself with Kurtz as a white man, though he recoils from him as well because of the former's indescribable acts of corruption. Whatever Marlow has described of his journey up the Congo, and the wide range of conflicting emotions he experiences during this journey cannot fully convey the impact Marlow had felt on his soul. In his own words describing the truth of journey in its entirety is impossible, "No, it is impossible to convey the life-sensation of any given epoch of one's existence, - that which makes its truth, its meaning - its subtle and penetrating essence. It is impossible. We live, as we dream - alone" Marlow seems to

convey the idea through his hesitation from speaking the truth to the people back home that the white citizens back in European countries are unaware of the horrific socio-political implications of the process of colonization, and are deliberately kept unaware of the reality of the exploitative and dehumanizing aspects of the capitalist, colonialist enterprise.

Violence in all its forms-physical, emotional, psychological- is a vital part of colonialism for the Europeans, for without violence they would fail to control the masses, therefore, *Heart of Darkness* has a lot of violence to portray. In one episode, for example, involving a native who is supposed to have caused a fire, Marlow tells how that native was beaten harshly. He tells the heart-rending account of the insignificant episode. This example is one of the many in the novel in which the natives were subjected to extreme violence for little mistakes they committed unintentionally. Importantly such episodes are highly subversive, for they convey the horrors of the colonial rule through the observations and comments of a white man, Marlow, thus leaving no room for any doubt. Conrad introduces the white man's cruelty through the white man narration. The Europeans, knowing no other means to keep the natives under, use violence to frighten them. Marlow notes: "Black figures strolled about listlessly, pouring water on the glow when proceeded a sound of hissing; steam ascended in the moonlight, the beaten nigger groaned somewhere. 'What a row the brute makes!' said the indefatigable man with the mustaches, appearing near us. 'Serve him right. Transgression – punishment – bang! Pitiless, pitiless. That's the only way. This will prevent all conflagrations for the future'".

Marlow feels deep pity for these vulnerable black figures, having nothing to defend themselves against the unreasonable violence of the white. What Marlow can do to redeem these feeble creatures is to describe them as the dark side of Europe. In this way, he tries to awaken the world's conscience against this irrational use of extreme violence upon the indigenous people. The wretched situation of the African people is thought to be the result of historical distance from Europe, and thus Europe is conceptualized as a "civilized, enlightened state of intelligence and ability of the African" (Brannigan 146), whereas this research has an opposite claim to make: that there is no distance between Europe and Africa as the novel deconstructs any such belief and constructs a counter belief that Africa is, in one sense, the darker side of Europe.

Additionally, the natives are addressed as black shapes or shadows as if they were something less than human beings. Since they are called without proper names and without any distinct human identity, this is an obvious dehumanization of the natives; however, Conrad's purpose in not assigning the natives proper names is to project the European imagination about the black natives as they are no more than a creature or cannibal for the European. The European image of cannibal African faces is defeated when Marlow actually meets a group of men who save Marlow on the river, thus deconstructing the European perverted imagination of the black man. Such unrealistic images of the African natives were disseminated by the white discourses simply to describe them as the "others". Marlow, before meeting a group of men, did not have any real idea whether they were cannibals or not because he had not seen any such event in Congo where the natives would eat human flesh. Although Marlow does not come across any such act of cannibalism, Marlow being a white man and a citizen of Europe, could not help fearing the black natives because of the stories of African cannibalism he had heard and instinctively believed in. This is how the European discourses had misrepresented the African masses in the imagination of the European man and such knowledge production had corrupted the image of the black Africans, portraying them as the enemies of humanity and civilization. Marlow's experience, however, not only belies such false images propagated by the Europeans but also presents Africans as objects of pity.

Marlow in his characteristic manner remains ambivalent in his description of cannibalism and despite the fact that he does not confront any gruesome act of cannibalism, yet rather than sweepingly denying the existence of cannibalism in Africa, gives ambivalent cannibalism through the central character of the novella. It shows that reality is constructed through discourses by the dominance of the Europeans. They made exist what actually did not and by doing so their purpose was to justify their rule over the Africans. This discursive nature of reality is, on one hand, the cause of the propagation of distorted reality about the African natives and, on the other hand, demonstrates the Europeans use of language in order to construct false truths.

As a part of colonial strategies, the language had a major role to play in legitimizing colonial rule over Africa by portraying them as what they were not. However, one clear example of the deconstruction of colonial discourses in *Heart of Darkness* is Conrad's avoidance of depicting Africans as cannibals. Paradoxically, Conrad refuses to conform to the Europeans imagined view of the black Africans as cannibals, rather deconstructs this image in an effort to tell that the Europeans had constructed this image only to establish their hegemony over Africa.

On the contrary, Edward Said is of the opinion that imperialism was inevitable through the end of the 19th century because of the commercial, capitalistic and expansionist designs of the Europeans, but Conrad clearly criticizes the brutal application of these capitalistic and hegemonic ideologies in order to exploit the Africans.

Heart of Darkness is a clear indictment of the use of violence and power against those who were in no position to resist this heartless aggression. It is through the character of white man Kurtz, fully degenerated and demoralized in the heart of Africa, that Conrad has revealed the cruel face of violence and brutality. Kurtz who is the chief of the inner station is said to have a lot of abilities from art to music, but because of having stayed for too much time within the heart of darkness i.e. Africa, he has become one like them, even worse than the so-called primitive natives, as he has indulged himself in ruthless exploitation of ivory and does not care for the European values of goodness and humanity.

Kurtz believes that he has the right to control and command the black masses the way he likes because he has innate racial superiority over these creatures. Therefore, he does not flinch from perpetrating inexplicable cruelties upon them. Marlow, however, disapproves of such callous treatments of the natives, and denounces Kurtz for this, although he had soft feelings for him. Kurtz is, no doubt a strong symbol of colonial order and governance, because he administers the colonial rule with violence, spreading fear among the subjected people, forcing them to bend and bow before him. He has even become a demi-god there, authoritative and unchallengeable. It is a rule to bow before him and offer sacrifices to him. In order to instill fear in the hearts of the natives and perpetuate his authoritative rule over them, he crossed all the limits: he has got the blood of the native shed; his shack has a number of skulls hanging which symbolize his brutal treatment of the natives.

"The unspeakable rites" associated with the primitive natives are, ironically, performed by a so-called civilized white man, indicating that the power-hungry Europeans can do anything and cross any human limit to fulfill their lust. On first seeing the skulls, Marlow cannot understand what all that was simply because he would not have thought such a thing possible, but when he realizes the situation, he is filled with horror, shock, and disbelief.

Conclusion

In the light of the comprehensive discussion of the various aspects of the *Heart of Darkness* from colonial and post-colonial perspectives, it is concluded that Conrad talks of the futility of the project of European colonization because this enterprise was based on ruthless exploitation of the native people, however, the consequences of the violence committed by

the Europeans were horrible for themselves as well as can be seen from the savage state of Kurtz. In order to subvert and deconstruct the colonial images of the native Africans and to lend a greater degree of reliability to the narration, Conrad chooses Marlow as the narrator, observer, and commentator to explain the realities of European colonialism, that is, the situation of the natives is narrated through Marlow who is also a European and white man. By doing so Conrad has not only maintained an objective viewpoint of the reality of colonization but has also unveiled the macabre face of the colonizer. Booker (1996) has succinctly summed up the case of Conrad projection of his own views through Marlow's observations "Conrad's Charlie Marlow is openly critical of much of the European activity that he sees in Africa, especially of the brutal treatment of many of the Africans by their European masters. As to Achebe's objection upon Conrad that he had deprived the native African of speech, agency of their own and had thus written a colonial novel, it is contended that Conrad does not let the native speak because he had European reader in mind primarily and then, perhaps, more importantly, he makes Marlow consistently speak on behalf of the natives by giving voice to their concerns. The silence of the natives can be interpreted as their silent resistance against European colonialism because by that time violent aggression against colonial masters had started nowhere in the colonial world. Their silence, however, finds a better voice through Marlow who does not consider the natives as savages or cannibals unlike the traditional European view of them and thus deconstructs the essential and colonial discursive realities about the native Africans. Conrad dismantles the native Africans as a savage figure by subverting the Europeans' Colonial discourses in Heart of Darkness by writing a realistic novel based on his own lived experiences of Congo. Through his subversive post-colonial narrative, Heart of Darkness, Conrad enables the readers, especially the European readers, that Africa's suffering and pain are caused by European colonization. Finally, it can be claimed now, on the basis of the colonial as well as post-colonial analysis of the novel, that Heart of Darkness is a classic novel that negotiates the borders of colonial and post-colonial realities.

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