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# Degenerate Representation and Racism in *Heart of Darkness*

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## Abstract

*This paper has analyzed Joseph Conrad's Heart of Darkness from Orientalist perspective. The term "Orientalism" has been a critical tool after Edward Said described how understanding of Europe about the non-Europeans became a weapon of maintaining power over the latter. This research has applied analytical and interpretivist approaches in discussion. The objective is to pinpoint why and how colonial rulers in the novel stereotypically produce representations of the Orient (here African is included) and create a false illusion that the West is "self" and the East is "other". The selected text is analyzed in light of Edward Said's description of the stereotypes of Oriental land and race as strange, inferior and wild. The search shows that Conrad presents Africans as uncivilized people, living in backward condition. He derogatorily describes them in their physical appearance and social behavior. Congo land is presented as wild, uncommon and mysterious. Europeans in the novel express their obsession that they are intelligent, skilled and much superior to the native and try to justify the colonial rule as an effort to civilize the African race and develop the place.*

**Keywords:** colonialism, inferior, orientalism, representation, stereotype, wild etc.

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## Introduction

Orientalism in recent decades has been widely influential discourse after Edward Said published *Orientalism* first in 1979. In this book he argues that orientalism is “A style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between the ‘orient’ and the ‘occident’” (Said, 2003, p. 2), and further asserts that the Orient is a “system of ideological factions” (Said, 2003, p.21) between Western and Eastern world. The orientalist discourse was created by the Western colonialists to legitimize Western cultural and political superiority. It is the Western understanding that the East had grown out of a relationship of power with varying degrees of cultural hegemony (Said, 1995, pp. 321-325). According to Said the relationship between the two worlds and Western attitudes to the eastern peoples, cultures and land developed from European encounter with Islam in the Middle East, from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, and later the Western attitudes became a “A western style for dominating, restructuring and having authority over the orient” (p. 3). It also became a strategy of western hegemony and “A distribution of geopolitical awareness into aesthetic, scholarly economic, sociological, historical and philological text” (p. 12). After Said’s interpretation of Orientalism, it has been reconstructing and resisting term of eastern people to Western hegemony upon eastern ways of life.

Orientalism discourse as a dynamic exchange of power and domination became a style of interpretation about Eastern people among common individual authors of the colonization system. It got shaped by British, French, America rulers and intellectuals (p. 15). Orientalism ultimately became a political vision of reality and discourse developed to promote difference between the white people from Europe, the West, as “us” and the strange Orient, the East people as “them” (p. 44). Though Said puts forward several definitions of orientalism in introducing “Orientalism”: the term is based on the Orient’s special place in European western experience” (p. 1) in which the conception of Western is strength and Eastern simply a weakness. The attitude became a defining concept of the relation between the Occident and the Orient.

Edward Said’s *Orientalism* became and has been, after all, a political vision of reality between the European and the East- a binary relation of We and Them. This is because of the western fascination with the East. To this concept Radhakrishnan (1962), an eminent Indian philosopher has commented that the west always got attraction to “the glamour of the exotic” of the east and for the westerners it always becomes “a romantic puzzle to..., the home of adventures like those of the Arabian Nights, the abode of magic, the land of hearts’ desire” (p. 251). Since the time of colonialism, the East has also been depicted not only as

exotic, mysterious and alluring but as malignant, dark, threatening. In economic dazzlement, technological weakness and intellectual backwardness, the eastern people, according to Said, get much more duped with the discourse that colonialists or the white colored people are “superior to other kind of people” (Said, 2003, p.57) and they have got the power even to rule the rest of the world. It is assertively said that a white man is self-assertive and able to rule other. He could become a White Man because he was a White Man. The colonial rules strategically taught that Occidental could speak of Orientals and only the white man could identify and designate the non-whites. And the strategies deliberately distanced the non-whites from the white and practice in general separated the oriental from the Occidental white (Said, 1995, pp. 226-228). This is an Othering practice and it goes with stereotyping and degenerating the native in various ways and areas.

The political domination of the colonials grounded to control metropolitan language and the discourse became struggle for achievement of power in which truth itself is constituted. After colonialism, Edward Said argues, the Oriental becomes more Oriental, the westerner more western (Said, 1995, p. 89). What distinguishes Orientalism from other stereotyping and “othering” discourses is the European position of strength or domination in relation to the Orient. The “weak Orient” was contrasted with “the powerful Europe.” The Westerners are defined and introduced as rational, virtuous and mature, and they are therefore able to guide, teach and rule the irrational, depraved and childlike Oriental. As a result, the Oriental have been defined as something a European superficially judge, control and keep in discipline and therefore the easterner can be represented (Said, 1995, p. 40). The Eastern look what the Western rulers see and understand them, if not, as the former wants to define them.

In other words, European colonialists assumed and advocated that “East cannot represent themselves, they must be spoken for” (Said, 1995, p. 21). Then the colonialists befooled the eastern people with the discourse that the western have superiority, intellectuality and political as well as sociocultural advancement and they are in need of the eastern people and nonwhite ones for progress towards the westerns. Edward Said, however denounces it and announces that the negative images of Orientalist structures could be reproduced if the East starts to speak itself. And writing back to the west through re-analysis of the canonical texts like *Heart of Darkness* with the post-colonial perspective can be a better approach to resist the misrepresentation. Edward Said is one of the most powerful weapons of resistance to what the westerns said of the oriental people and how this kind of perspective is reflected in various texts written by western writers. The selected text is connected to the life of nonwhite

land, the Africa, and African peoples. And African land and peoples in Western orientalist concept are backward, underdeveloped, rather less civilized and strange in many ways. They represented the land and peoples in various stereotypical forms. In other words, the western colonizers monopolized their discourse as authentic one and the discourse got more powerful in convincing and dominating them. Their discourse became reliable and got authenticity even in the non-Western societies which perpetuated their own paradigms of the Other” (Mazrui, 2005, p. 79), by articulating their own experiences, their individual fantasies and imaginations irrespective of the real social reality that existed on the ground of the time the Western were there.

McLeod in *Beginning Postcolonialism* (2000) elaborates discourse in Orientalism and makes use of peculiar stereotypes and constructs particular images attributed to the Orient by employing inert and negative terms so as to establish myth about the Orients. The Orients are described static in nature. In the similar fashion, Europeans in Africa make efforts to develop a view that they are much concerned with the Orient and work with sincerity to civilize them and provide them with a good sense about life by bringing them into the ambition of developed culture of Europe. It is deemed to be apparently a justified and legal stance on part of the Europeans to ‘civilize’ the Orient. Richardson (2000), referring to the term representation, stated that Said has discussed ‘representation’ in a more general context in his *Orientalism* (1979, 2003) so as to understand the mode of representation of the non-European nations that reside in the European consciousness as inferior Other. From the explanation of what Edward Said observed on the colonialist approaches, orientation and endeavors in defining, describing and representing the colonized people and land in Indian subcontinent and African continent, it is essential to reread any colonized text by Western writer and write back about the misrepresentation of the native land and people. Therefore, *Heart of Darkness* is taken as a data for the analysis from the orientalist stereotypical representative perspective in this research.

### **Statement of Problem and Research Questions**

Many European novelists during and even after colonial time depicted the non-European people as wild, pathetic and ignorant. Western writers often degenerate the nature, habits and behavior of Eastern people. The latter are described as incapable of governing themselves and handle their affairs more active, proactive and prosperous ways. By assuming and inventing different stereotypes, many western writers make a ground to justify western

occupation of distant territories as western human responsibility to change the nonwhite. Such an advocacy was presented in most of the literary texts in colonial world. Stereotypical representation of the non-European nations and people have often been the area of interest for post-colonial writers in many literary texts. In light of such a theoretical representation of the colonized as inferior ‘Others’, this research paper aims to investigate how Joseph Conrad has represented the African natives in his canonical novel *Heart of Darkness*. The study analyses some representative depictions of misrepresentation of African characters and places in the novel from a postcolonial orientalist perspective of Edward Said. Since the text is written by a writer from colonizing nation and the presentation is from the intellectual orientation of the English people to colonize new land, this novel is assumed of loaded with colonial attitude and experience. And this study focuses on how colonized land and people are defined, depicted stereotypically and why such approaches have been misrepresentations of the native land and people. These issues are the statement of problem in this study. Why and how misrepresentations have been just an invented discourse of the colonizers for the justification of their colony and how the text is stereotypically represented the land and people of Africa in the novel are research questions.

### Literature Review

The review of literature focuses on what orientalism in general is about and how its concept of stereotypical representation of non-western land and people by Western writers have interpreted the colonial perspective. After Edward Said published his book *Orientalism* (1979, 2003), the outlooks to the colonialism and their representations have been different. Edward Said views the Orient as a special place where the West had its “richest, biggest and oldest colonies” that happened to be the main source of civilization as well as languages because the Westland also grows to be its cultural contestant and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other. In addition, the Orient has helped to ‘define Europe’ (Said, 2003, p. 1). In this connection, Bozdogan (1988) argued that a few of the artists remained inclined to enflame the Orient by labelling them with singular forms. In this regard, Edward Said (2009) says that scholars who write, teaches, or execute research about the Orient, whether they are sociologists, anthropologists, philologists or historians are the Orientalists and what they person do is ‘Orientalism’. Hawkins (1979) is about his analysis of *Heart of Darkness* and how Conrad seems and sounds to be imperialist in his characterization. Hawkins view that the white characters seem dominating native and colonizing power. Similarly, Cedric Watts (1983)

sees *Heart of Darkness* a portrait of the barbarity and savagery of Western civilization in vivid and cruel ways. It indicates that white people are not much sensitive to humanity.

Bozdogan (1988) comments that that such *Heart of Darkness* is so systematically and meditatively generated text... is set-up in such a way that it represents itself as representable” (p. 39). The text portrays the Orient as savage, uncivilized and barbaric .... the “accuracy of representational. . . may or may not be faithful to the actual experience” (p. 42). Chinua Achebe (1988), a well-known African novelist, has made elaborate analysis of the *Heart of Darkness* and labelled Conrad as a “a great stylist of modern fiction” (p.2). However, Achebe pungently satirizes Conrad an imperialist and indicates that the book “eliminates the African as human factor and parades in the most vulgar fashion, prejudices and insults from which a section of mankind has suffered untold agonies” (Achebe, 1988, p.10). Edward Said (1995) defends Conrad as a practical man to see Africa a land which is governed by incompetent people of land who are unable to change themselves and the Western presence is essential.

European writers have often labelled the land of the colonized nations as a mysterious territory that is in need to be explored. The land has captivated the mind of many intellectuals both spiritually and materialistically (Ibrahim, 2013). Western novelists played a very significant role in paving the way for the colonizers to colonize the people of a distant territory through their literary writings that are political in nature. Boehmer (2005) states, “The characterization of colonized people as secondary, abject, weak, feminine, and other to Europe, and in particular to England, was standard in British colonialist writing” (p. 77). Thus, it seems that the Western novelists remained quite eager to explore the peculiar characteristics of the Orient.

Corneille (2013) believes that Conrad used different literary devices like symbolism, situational paradox and ambiguity to reach his and criticizes the ways Conrad exposes imperialism in Africa. She makes a survey of opinion of different critics and comes to conclude that many western critics appreciate the way Conrad makes colonialism possible in difficult contexts in the hands of British people. Dinize (2002) makes studies of western colonialism in Africa as depicted in *Heart of Darkness* and makes conclusion that colonialism cannot become a benevolent governance but a corrupt one, which represents much of the colonial rules of British people. *Heart of Darkness* indicates an example of how they rule the natives.. The writer places *Heart of Darkness* within the postcolonial realism and declares that it is a sordid example of how colonizers treated the native and brought an unfavorable condition of relation between two peoples.

Clendinnen (2007) in her essay makes study on how power of British colonialism and

in Africa has been a dominant power to African culture, but the improper and inhuman ways of imposition that rather brings unexpected and catastrophic ends of general life of both the colonizers and the colonized (p.17). Likewise, Caryl Phillips (2003) receives of *Heart of Darkness* as a racist text because the people of the land are totally dominated by the new arrivals simply on the basis that they are non-white and are not in any ground similar to the white colonizers. Therefore, the novel for her is much “offensive and totally deplorable” and “thoroughgoing racist.” Clendinnen concludes her article with an assertion that the novel has many more layers of mist, that make the life of African people more complex and difficult. Similarly, Corneille (2013) views Conrad creating ambiguity and paradox of his experience in Congo and depicts his own confusions and failure of understanding the land and the native though the acceptance is shadowed with his pretext of benevolent efforts.

In “Othering of Africans in European Literature: A Postcolonial Analysis of Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*” Aziz Fatima, Anila Jamil, Sidrah Hanif analyze the construct of “Orientals” and “Others” as intended, interpreted and represented in Western colonial discourse on the theoretical principle of Edward Said in *Orientalism*. They view that the presentation of the condition in *Heart of Darkness* is a biased and misrepresented image of Africans as perceived, explained and understood in the West. The essay declares that how Europeans in the novels are depicted as superior and Africans as inferior “Orientals”. The Europeans are “othering” the Africans.

All the researches mentioned above are related mostly to imperial approach of Western people to define and dominate the native land and peoples. They have not concerned to explain and analyze how and why the text have stereotyped the land, people and their behaviors. Above researchers are less concerned to the Saidian perspective of how western ruler in the novel perceived the native characters and different geographical condition of Africa as representative clues to regard African uncivilized and backward and how they have been victim of misrepresentation. Therefore, the following paragraphs would discuss how Africa and Africans in *Heart of Darkness* are stereotypically misrepresented and racism on color is reflected in the text.

## Methodology

This research study is qualitative. The selected text has been analyzed by employing descriptive, analytical and interpretivist approaches. The text has been minutely examined and interpreted from a postcolonial perspective, particularly with Edward Said’s concept of



representation and race he has presented in his book *Orientalism* (1997, 2003). Said's concepts about orientalism are thoroughly viewed in order to understand the nature of representation and race. This is applied to interpret how the concept and mentality of European writer like Joseph Conrad is reflected to depict Africa and Africans in rather degenerate forms in *Heart of Darkness*.

## **Discussion and Analysis**

### **a. Stereotypical representation of the land and the natives**

Edward Said's concepts of 'Self' and 'Other' 'Us' and 'Them' in his book *Orientalism* have been thoroughly exploited from various angles in order to understand the nature of representation of the Africans as degenerate nation in *Heart of Darkness*. Joseph Conrad in the very beginning of the novel depicts the African land with peculiar characteristics that sound to be uncommon to the English characters. Conrad portrays the land as wild and strange. The military station established by the European colonialists seems to be 'like a needle in a bundle of hay--cold, fog, tempests, disease, exile, and death--death skulking in the air, in the water, in the bush. They must have been dying like flies here' (Conrad, 1918, p. 4). The land does not give any sense of familiarity in any form of geography and it naturally becomes a land of 'them' - of the native Africans, which now they are to control.

The narrator in the novel describes a kind of disfigured picture of the upper land towards the West saying "farther west, on the upper reaches the place of the monstrous town was still marked ominously on the sky, a brooding gloom in sunshine, a lurid glare under the stars" (Conrad, 1918, p.3). Marlow (the narrator) endorses it at once by stating that it 'has been one of the dark places of the earth' (Conrad, 1918, p.3). Thus, the novelist first attempts to make general readers and even the Europeans that any migrant who arrives there and desires to make his fortune there would not feel comfort and potentiality of finding opportunity because nothing in the land is favorable and comprehensive: 'there's no initiation either into such mysteries. He has to live in the midst of the incomprehensible, which is also detestable' (Conrad, 1918, p 4). The degenerate features of the land depiction help the European writers to portray with general assumption that the inhabitants of the land are less civilized. The wild and primitive conditions of living justify on the encroachment on the land and the ways the natives are living. It is necessary from the humanitarian ground and mission of benevolence to that the native should go with them where the Europeans go.



The protagonist of the novel, Marlow, describes that he had been trusted as a representative figure of European mission in the process of civilizing wild and uncivilized people in the world. He claims that he has been to various places to accomplish assigned works and his previous posting in Africa has been one of the most confidential experiences on performing his action and achieve success in any degenerate condition of African landscape. His walking in ‘sandbanks, marshes, forests, savages’ would be power to progress ahead (Conrad, 1918, p 4). In this description, African land is portrayed as strange and alien place with an image of ‘a sea the color of lead’ and ‘a sky the color of smoke’ (Conrad, 1918, p. 4), which seems to be hostile and unwelcoming to the new arrivals of another land. The expression, its tone and word selection in describing the land sounds to be degenerating the land of Africa and the civilized man would face hardship to civilize the people of wild land.

This kind of depiction of Africa and other land approached and controlled by European people, whether it is Australia or Africa, is common in literary writing of European intellectuals. The natives of the lands are mostly described and stereotyped as wild, uncivilized, ignorant and unskilled (Innes, 2007, p. 42). And in such lands the Europeans are to “face the darkness” of ‘sandbanks, marshes, forests, savages----precious little to eat fit for a civilized man’ (Conrad, 1918, p. 4) and they are narrated and even depicted as able people to face whatever degraded the geographical, sociocultural and human condition is in the newly visited land. Even if such land “stirs in the forest, in the jungles, in the hearts of wild men” (Conrad, 1918, p.4), it would not be impossible for them to control. According to Edward Said, Joseph Conrad is an expert in illustrating and portraying “unutterably corrupt, degenerate, irredeemable” (p. xxi). He presents Marlow such a representative European character who is grown-up, and experienced of travelling and exploring rivers and lakes and “be a blank space of delightful mystery (Conrad, 1918, p. 6). The delightful feeling in exploring is snobbishly presented as the character of an English travelled in a strange land and Marlow here represents English character and mission in Africa.

The distorted and degenerate images of land and people often get evoked from the main character in the novel. While looking in the map for exploration of new place and land, Marlow detects a river. Then, he resembles the shape of the river to an uncoiled snake that has captured a bird and gripped it (Conrad, 1918, p. 6). Whenever new and strange thing appears, the narrator rather uses ugly images of that and compares the place with such thing in European land. So is the case with the native Africans.

The natives of Africa are assumed of wild and aggressive creatures and needed to be

treated forcefully and cautiously as the ways humans use wild and powerful animals in ropes and chains. When Marlow sees Africans, he portrays them as degenerate and deformed. He once says, "I could see every rib of the natives, the joints of their limbs were like knots in a rope; each had an iron collar on neck, and all were connected with a chain whose bights swung between them rhythmically clinking", which he terms "ominous voice" (Conrad, 1918, p.15). This description sounds inhuman attitudes to humanity and Africans are not viewed as human beings, but animals which need chains to control and subdue. Otherwise, they might be destructive to the life of the capturers though they are in need for the latter's life. Marlow, while going towards Kurtz's station along with his company men, gets attacked by some natives. The natives assault Marlow and his team simply because the formers were in extreme fear of being severely harmed. The headman of the natives in order to terrify Marlow team approaches Marlow and tells Marlow that they would catch the men from the other tribesmen so as to eat them. Marlow really assumes that the natives are cannibals and later in his description Marlow describes the native headman as saying "catch 'im" and "snapped, with a bloodshot widening of his eyes and a flash of sharp teeth-- catch 'im. Give 'im to us" (Conrad, 1918, p.43). Further, in his own query "what would you do with them?" about the capture of another tribe Marlow again presents the headman say "Eat im!" (Conrad, 1918, p. 43). Marlow describes natives as cannibals and whatever scene of flesh eating of the native people is seen, he resembles to assumption of cannibalism. In Marlow's understanding the natives are really cannibals and the new arrivals there have to save themselves by behaving the natives as degenerate animal beings.

Though the new arrivals in Africa think that the African natives are to be treated in such a way, there are no concert evidences that the natives are naturally cruel, fierce and wild. Still, Marlow says that "they were called criminals" with "their meagre breasts panted together, the violently dilated nostrils quivered, the eyes stared stonily uphill" (Conrad, 1918, p.15). Such kind of depiction and assumption of the European writers about the African natives is a kind of colonial discourse and logicity of subjugating the native and make their servants, and make them work for their material fulfilment. The description of the people really humiliates the physiological characteristics of the people, some of which seem to be just "within six inches, without a glance, with that complete, deathlike indifference of unhappy savages" (Conrad, 1918, p.15). Of course, Africans are seen as disfigured and wild natives.

This way, the writer employs concrete imagery in order to create a magical impact of the scene in a way that would produce an evil charm in description. This type of distorted

description of Africa alludes to the biased motives and understanding of the European colonizers about this territory, which they subjugate and rule. The degenerate condition of the native and wildness of the land in their presentation and description would make them strong in the claim that material prosperity and human civility in 'African land is in urgent need and the European presence in the land and their leadership to rule people, manage the land and mechanize the life of the native there would be a strong justification of why they have arrived and why they need to stay and work there.

## **b. Racism**

Race often is used by various groups to either maintain power or to stress solidarity. In the 18th and 19th centuries, it was often used as a pretext by European colonial powers for slavery and/or the "white man's burden" to civilize the native. The following quote describes racism:

It was paddled by black fellows. You could see afar the white of their eyeballs glistening. They shouted, sang; their bodies streamed with perspiration; they had faces like grotesque masks – these chaps; but they had bone, muscle, a wild vitality, an intense energy of movement, that was as natural and true as the surf align their coast. (Conrad, 1918, p.14)

According to the above quotation, Conrad emphasized about the physical state of black people who are rowing the boat. The man does the work because he has a bone, muscle, wild and strong energy of vitality. Achebe in his book *An Analysis of Chinua Achebe's An Image of Africa Racism in Conrad's Heart of Darkness* argues that the racism in Conrad's novel had been overlooked simply because of the quality of Conrad's writing. Similarly Conrad is not under attack from critical analysts because his writing concealed damaging representations of Africa (Clare Clarke, p.11). Clarke sees that the issues of race and colonialism to the forefront in the novel, particularly after Achebe analyzed it from racial perspective (Clarke, p 12). Clarke further writes, "An Image of Africa puts forward an alternative narrative of the African continent and its people to counter the one presented by Conrad and the Western writers more widely". (Clarke, p12). The demarcation of two kinds of frivolities about races and the geographical features of differences between Europe and Africa or European and African is itself a racial attitude reflected and represented in the novel when Conrad makes Marlow say, "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—as is very proper for those who tackle a darkness." (Conrad, 1918, p.5). It is an attempt of exploiting

Africa, degenerating and dominating along with keeping it under the grip of the migrants.

Racial degeneration and humiliation are exposed in much biased attitudes and words of western visitors in the land. Marlow says:

But as I stood on this hillside, I foresaw that in the blinding sunshine of that land I would become acquainted with flabby, pretending, weak-eyed devil rapacious and pitiless folly ... Black shapes crouched, lay, sat between the trees leaning against the trunks, clinging to the earth, half coming out, half effaced within the dim light, in all the attitudes of pain, abandonment, and despair. (Conrad, 1918, p.15- 16).

He horribly describes the condition in which the native to him seem to be Satan, if not a cannibal, about which he says— “I looked at them with a swift quickening of interest – not because it occurred to me, I might be eaten by them ...” (Conrad, 1918, p.44). The white people in the African land realize that black people can make a row that “the brute makes!” (Conrad, 1918, p.26. In this sense the Africa and African land is not seen in the parallel condition of what a land to another differ in geographical features, not in itself it becomes materially cruel to a people who are different in color and shape. Therefore, the attitude of European invaders to African land is itself racially prejudiced and intentionally oriented to degenerate the land and people living there.

In Christopher Marlow’s realization, difficulty in understanding and explaining reasons of Kurtz’s disappearance in the jungle becomes a mystery in *Heart of Darkness* and it thematically deserves the spirit of the novel. The message in the novel is that the African land itself is muddle of darkness and any happening in the darkness is mysterious, wild and primitive, and it has been the “overwhelming realities of this strange world of plants, and water, and silence” (Conrad, 1918, p.38). This is a kind of boundary created between the western civilization and African and it has led the European to venture to explore the land though it is much cruel and challenging.

Further away, Marlow moves from civilization, the more intense feeling he gets in relation to the native people and the relation seems to be a “remote kinship with this wild and passionate uproar” (Conrad, 1918, p.36). In puzzle condition of relation with the native and people and land, Marlow also realizes the owner of the land to capture strangers to give hallucination and see the differences between what appear and what actually the thing and condition is in reality. He says, “When you have to attend to ... the mere incidents of the surface, the reality-the reality, I tell you-fades. The inner truth is hidden-luckily, luckily. But I felt it all the same; I felt often its mysterious stillness watching me ...” (Conrad, 1918, p.38).

Here he speaks of a “truth,” because it is a connection that transcends time and civilization, a common passion and savagery of human nature that the natives have retained throughout the ages in *Heart of Darkness*, common to all humanity, including Marlow and Kurtz. (Kesselring, 1997, p. 3). His journey and experience in accompaniment with Kurtz conclude that Marlow is more determinate in observation and experience in the land with people. It ultimately distracts him from the permanent attachment to Africa and becomes more inclined to go to his own civilization. Leaving them without achieving the message of changing the land is itself stereotypical degeneration of the land and people in *Heart of Darkness*.

Marlow and Willard begin their journeys with similar backgrounds. Marlow is a seaman with a purpose and determination for exploring better place and condition. He lives with European civilized standards and style. He once accepts that his mission to Africa is one of the best missions in Africa, “I had got a heavenly mission to civilize ...” (Conrad, 1918, p.6) and shows the confidence that he has got experiences of traveling and exploring in various oceans and became independent who claims “I always went my own road ...” [Conrad, 1918, p.6]). And he thinks he so much strong and determination and asserts “I flew around like mad to get ready ... show myself to my employers, and sign the contract” (Conrad, 1918, p.8). It is a kind of foreshadow feeling of what comes to befall in future and a kind of symbolic significance of what Africa in real sense wants to be: liberation from the imposition of external power on it.

When colonial rules in Congo established hegemony of power through stereotyping the Africans as weak, ignorant, backward and so on, it generated a comfortable zone in power politics and the rulers enjoyed various privileges in the land. For example, Kurtz talks about his fiancée as if she were a good for him to possess for ever and use her whenever he wishes to. While gazing upon her portrait, Marlow realizes that she does not have any critical ability to think of the consequences she would face after her acceptance to Kurtz, rather he thinks “she seemed ready to listen without mental reservation, without suspicion, without a thought for herself” (Conrad, 1918, p.71). Marlow’s gazing and brooding implies that he, like Kurtz, also wants to have ownership of native woman who does have no power to resist him but to be submissive, because native women, in their thinking do not have power to act independently but they act “without a thought for herself” (Conrad, 1918, p.71). This kind of mentality makes the colonizers act ruthlessly upon the native and use them as goods for their comfort.

Privileged behavior of the colonial rulers also reflects after writing a long report about the importance of living Africa and civilizing the natives. Kurtz writes in harsh words, “Exterminate all the brutes!” (Conrad, 1918, p. 51). Belgians in the land impose terror

over the natives, displaying shrunken heads which had become a reflection of western power upon the local people and “had ruined the district” (Conrad 1918, p. 57). ...Mr. Kurtz lacked restraint in the gratification of his various lusts” (Conrad, 1918, p.57) and this kind of uncontrolled desire in the land is because of unrestrained authority that let the colonizers do as they want to do. The description of the writer in the Congo area as a “prehistoric [and therefore primitive] earth . . . that wore an aspect of an unknown planet,” as well as “an accursed inheritance” full of “profound anguish and excessive toil” (Conrad, 1918, p. 37) also show this mentality. The rulers don’t show any sensibility to the native people, their needs and respect to their culture and way of life, and the native are ready to accept such attitudes and behaviors of the colonizers because the hegemonic approach in the native domination had already brainwashed the natives that they are creatures unable to think of and use wisdom to judge on their own before the colonizers. The colonizers in their descriptions of the land, people and their ways of life are of course degenerate in every aspect and the deliberate approach of stereotypically presenting the natives have misrepresented the native as well as the land in their fundamental characteristics. The White race from Europe completely dominates the land and shows extreme obsession of their racial power, wisdom and superiority upon Africans in the novel.

### **Conclusion**

*Heart of Darkness* has been thus a novel loaded much with White racial obsession and action. It has degenerated the natives in Africa in their physical appearance, geographical conditions, in general manners and practices of livelihood. The Western colonizers stereotypically present the native as downtrodden due to their ignorance, wildness, and exotic adaptation of livelihood and entertainment. Cunningly, European explorers in the novel intend and even succeed in generating ideas and condition there to subjugate the people and possess natural resources and make the native dependent followers of the invaders in the land. The natives are convinced to accept the discourse that they are really in backward in their thought and skills for livelihood. The novelist makes his endeavors to persuade the natives that they are less cultured and civilized in comparison to the Europeans, but are gradually progressing due to European arrivals and residence in the land. Therefore, the purpose behind white governance is to change the native condition as well as their standard of living. They claim that they have succeeded in depicting quite strange condition of the land to the native Africans and make them realize that are in need of economic assistance, formal education and cultural activities

similar to those that the colonizers have imported there. The colonizers' governance will enable the native to achieve material prosperity and be ever free from the stagnant condition of the land. This mission is tactfully disseminated by depicting degenerate condition of land and stereotypical representation of the African race and justify the need of colonization for native prosperity in the novel. These kinds of approaches in ruling and dominating the natives have privileged the Europeans to have easy access to the natural resources and mechanisms of the Congo state: the domination of the white race upon the black in Africa.

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