

I. Introduction

Conrad's Biography

Joseph Conrad, an English novelist and short-story writer, was born in Berdichev, in the Ukraine, in a region that had once been a part of Poland, but was then under Russian rule. His father Apollo Korzeniowski was an aristocrat without lands, a poet and translator of English and French literature. By 1869 Conrad's both parents had died of tuberculosis, and he was sent to Switzerland to his maternal uncle Tadeusz Bobrowski, who was to be a continuing influence on his life. Conrad attended schools in Krakow and persuaded his uncle to let him go to the sea. In the mid-1870s he joined the French merchant marine as an apprentice, and made between 1875 and 1878 three voyages to the West Indies.

After being wounded in a duel or of a self-inflicted gunshot in the chest, Conrad continued his career at the sea in the British merchant navy for 16 years. He rose through the ranks from common seaman to first mate, and by 1886 he obtained his master mariner's certificate, commanding his own ship, *Otago*. Witnessing the forces of the sea, Conrad developed a deterministic view of the world, which he expressed in a letter in 1897:

What makes mankind tragic is not that they are the victims of nature, it is that they are conscious of it. To be part of the animal kingdom under the conditions of this earth is very well but soon as you know of your slavery, the pain, the anger, the strife, the tragedy begins. (*The Life and Letters...* 7)

Conrad sailed to many parts of the world, including Australia, various parts of the Indian Ocean, Borneo, the Malay states, South America and the South Pacific Island. In 1890 he sailed in Africa up the Congo River. The journey provided much

material for his novel *Heart of Darkness*. However, the fabled East Indies particularly attracted Conrad and it became the setting of many of his stories. By 1894 Conrad's sea life was over. During the long journeys he had started to write and Conrad decided to devote himself entirely to literature. At the age of 36 Conrad settled down in England.

In 1896, Conrad married Jessie George, an English woman, by whom he had two sons. He moved to Ashford, Kent. Except trips to France, Italy, Poland, and to the United States in 1923, Conrad lived in his new home country. Last years of his life were shadowed by rheumatism. He refused an offer of knighthood in 1924 as he had earlier declined honorary degrees from five universities. Conrad died of a heart attack on August 3, 1924 and was buried in Canterbury. Conrad's influence upon 20th-century literature was wide. Ernest Hemingway expressed special admiration for the author, and his impact is seen in among others in the work of F. Scott Fitzgerald, Arthur Koestler, Jean-Paul Sartre, T.S. Eliot, Marcel Proust, Andre Malraux, Louis-Ferdinand Celine, and Graham Greene. Several of Conrad's stories have been filmed. The most famous adaptations include Alfred Hitchcock's *The Sabotage* (1936), Richard Brook's *Lord Jim* (1964), and Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse Now* (1979), based on *Heart of Darkness*.

Joseph Conrad's visit to the Belgian Congo from 1890-1894 had both positive and negative effects on his life. The aspect of the voyage was the fact that he was able to write a famous novel filled with chilling commentary about his daily experiences among the natives of the Congo. On the other hand, while in the Congo he underwent a physical and mental breakdown that would affect his health for the rest of his life. When Conrad returned from the Congo to resettle in London, his mind and thoughts were fragmented, and he went into exile for several reasons, including political,

aesthetic, and personal (Karl 308). Thus, Conrad ended a sea career that spanned twenty years, from which he was able to achieve success in imaginative fiction writing.

Conrad's literary career can be divided into three major periods. The first phase of his career was concerned with getting accustomed to a literary culture that was still strange to him. However, Conrad was mature beyond his years and a great writer as well, so it came as no surprise that he received favorable reviews for his first two novels, *Almayer's Folly* and *An Outcast of the Islands*. In these works, Conrad's use of settings in the Far East established his reputation for exotic fiction, which paralleled the likes of Robert Louis Stevenson and Rudyard Kipling (Knowles 11).

The major phase of Conrad's career began in 1897 with his novel, *The Nigger of the Narcissus*. This story is full of detail and it represents his "in between" position as a writer. It is the introduction to the prime of his career, in which he is relating his blend of styles, which include "cultivated English" and underlying French literary techniques, to an English audience. During the years from 1898 to 1902, Conrad became family man with the birth of his son, but this time period is also arguably the most prolific part of his career. During this time, he continued his struggle to negotiate with his English cultural identity and audience with novels such as *Youth*, *Lord Jim* and *Heart of Darkness*. In each novel, Conrad used the character Marlow to find an English identity and voice among other things (Knowles 11-13).

Conrad's Aesthetics

During his first phase of writing, Conrad narrated the story in the nineteenth-century manner, as if he were the omniscient author who is in charge of the plot. Such narration is obvious in *Almayer's Folly* (1895), *An Outcast of the Islands* (1896) and *The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'* (1897). Later on he adopted the indirect mode of

narration that liberated him from the “impotent state” he had fallen into while trying to write *The Rescuer*. The other two novels considered *Nostramo* (1904) and *Under Western Eyes* (1911) also depend on unusual methods of narration. *Nostramo* begins with a series of shifts backwards and forwards in time which contemporary readers found difficult to follow. *Under Western Eyes* is narrated by an English teacher of languages, to whose western eyes the violence and passion of Russian lives are supposed to be almost behind comprehension. During this period from *Heart of Darkness* in 1899 to *Under Western Eyes* in 1911, Conrad’s extra-ordinary invasions in technique helped him to explore deep-seated personal problems, and to link these to the cultural crises of the time which eventually produced such great works of modernism. H.M. Daleski follows Thomas Moser in arguing that Conrad’s major achievement is to be found in this period, and this view is probably now held by a majority of critics. In his important biography, *Joseph Conrad: The Three Lives* (1979), Frederick R. Karl says that the completion of *Under western Eyes* marked the end of an era. Afterwards, little of Conrad’s fiction was again so intensely personal:

Conrad had, in fact, reached out for what every artist must do: to dip so deeply into his psyche for what he fears most that he endangers himself: and then, once close to extinction, having discovered what he can do, he either frees himself or cracks up. Only a major artist can perform this way, since the journey into himself must be intense. (14)

Conrad’s odd way of using oblique symbolism was both his greatest strength and weakness. In *Heart of Darkness*, it worked to his advantage because Marlow’s storytelling does not blatantly inform the audience about the atrocities in the Congo. If Conrad would have come forth with the absolute truth about the brutal regime of King Leopold II in the Congo through his character Marlow, he might have been less

believable. *Heart of Darkness* is a deeply symbolic text that is full of paradoxes. Conrad's aim in his novel was to make a symbolic use of colours. Throughout the text, he makes constant references of white and black, of light and dark. He confuses the two by giving different characteristics than we would usually associate with the terms. Not only does the title make a reference to the dark and gloomy way of life in the heart of Africa, it also signifies the corruption of Kurtz (another important character apart from Marlow) and touches upon many other examples of moral and physical darkness (Watts 47). As with *Heart of Darkness*, *Lord Jim* offers a heavy usage of symbols, which again, are hard to decipher the meaning of. Similarly, *Nostromo* includes one of Conrad's most suggestive symbols, the silver mine. In the story the Italian Nostromo ("our man") is destroyed for his appetite for adventure and glory, but with his death the secret of the silver is lost forever.

In *Heart of Darkness*, Leavis says, words such as 'inscrutable', 'inconceivable' and 'unspeakable' are overworked, and that nothing is added to the mystery of the Congo by sentences such as 'It was the stillness of an implacable force brooding over an inscrutable intention'. Leavis comments:

The same vocabulary, the same adjectival insistence upon inexpressible and incomprehensible mystery, is applied to the evocation of human profundities and spiritual horrors; to magnify a thrilled sense of the unspeakable potentialities of the human soul. The actual effect is not magnify but rather to muffle. (*The Great Tradition* 177)

Conrad introduces the characters through which he brings the idea of imperialism, the conquest of the earth by various means, to the forefront. Throughout the novel *Heart of Darkness*, Conrad records his experiences by using characters like Kurtz and

Marlow to paint the clear picture of the harsh reality of imperialist control. Conrad presents his protagonist who progresses through complex social relationship, and therefore is able to construct a working set of beliefs that enables him to find his place in the larger society. In *Lord Jim*, Conrad traces the maturation process of a young man as he encounters numerous obstacles on his way to becoming an adult. As with *Heart of Darkness*, *Lord Jim* offers the glimpse of the tragic faults of mankind when he includes blood thirsty pirates as essential characters in the plot.

The central theme in most of his works is the search for self-possession. In his two lives as seaman and artist, he often experienced a personal insecurity, a radical uncertainty about his own identity. He had a positive horror of losing his self-possession. In his *Conrad: A psychoanalytic Biography* (1967), Dr. Bernard Meyer argues that “It would appear certain the tenuousness of the sense of self and the reparative reliance on fetishism pervading Conrad’s fiction was a projection of identical elements in his own personality” (20). Conrad’s fascination with spiritual disintegration can be seen in his treatment of Kurtz in *Heart of Darkness*, Charles Gould in *Nostramo* and Rajumov in *Under Western Eyes*. Another important theme usually found in his works is the relation between moral idealism and material interest; and what the bitter irony he always presents is the victory of material interest over moral idealism which can be seen in *Heart of Darkness*, *Victory*, *Nostramo* and *Under Western Eyes*.

Joseph’s Conrad’s literature is consistent with his gloomy nature, which is predominantly a result of his early experiences as a child and his own disordered young manhood. Basically all of his novels are filled with dark irony, so even if they ended well, Conrad’s method of storytelling makes the tale seem disturbing. In

Conrad, it seems that no one can escape his fate and the evil that is inevitably part of it.

Colonialism in *Victory*

The novel revolves around Axel Heyst, a character who, after his father's death, resolves to lead a life free of commitment, refusing to take roots in any specific place. The father's last advice to his son, to enable him to avoid pain, is: "Look on make no sound" (142). Hence Heyst decides to travel and avoids forming any attachment with either place or others, thus putting into practice the tenets of his father's teachings: to remain uninvolved in society, to be a mere observer and not a participant in societal activities. The endeavor, however, is doomed to fail, since "No man is an island entire of itself" (9) and for all his attempts not to be involved, Heyst continually experiences the impossibility of absolute detachment.

In the novel, Heyst makes three impulsive attempts to form relationships: two with human beings, Morrison and Lena, and one with a place, when he decides to take up residence on the island of Samburan. He becomes the indirect cause of the deaths of the first two, and is himself annihilated by the island.

Heyst's ultimate decision to settle on Samburan coincides with his impulsive involvement in the life of the bankrupt merchant Morrison. His attempt to save Morrison is thwarted by the reality of England, that other island, and a materialistic and an increasing materialistic and increasing imperialistic social structure. This active and impulsive participation in social life constitutes an unconscious rebellion against his father's admirations. His interference with the existence of Morrison - to whom he gives a new chance in life through the materialistic medium that money is - only results in the annihilation of the latter. His attempt to create a new woman out of Lena is defeated by forces triggered by society in the shape of Schomberg, the hotel

keeper. His attitude to the place he chooses to settle in Samburan island shows parallels with western colonial spirit. Motivated by idealistic intentions which at heart echo the missionary spirit of Western culture, he causes the colonization of the island, reshaping it in the image of industrial Western society. Whereas initially his purpose had been to be a wanderer with no specific abode, by settling down in Samburan, he not only becomes the colonizer, an integral member of the community, but also introduces into the place that he so drastically alters, the alien and destructive forces of an exploitative society. For all the well-meant rebellion inherent in Heyst's activity, he cannot withstand or evade the chaotic, disorderly world of contingencies which ultimately arrives to engulf him in the form of Mr. Jones, Ricardo and Pedro.

Heyst's Samburan is now a centre for corruption. Nature in Samburan has suffered from man's transgressions, and death has become not an attribute of man alone, but a universal reality that prevails in the environment. Heist transforms Samburan into a kind of star from which his utopian ideals will supposedly be different to the rest of the region, and leave no place uncontaminated by his lethal utopia. The desolation implies that the island has become a mirror image of western industrial area. The black jetty is an indication of man's violation of the integrity of the island, suggesting that both the island's and Heyst's integrity and insularity have been irrevocably broken. The blackness of the jetty is echoed in the color of the coal for which the Tropical Belt Company decided to mine in the area. With the industrialization, however, the quest for gold and treasure has relegated its place to a more prosaic quest for the commodity ensuring the perpetuation of industrial activities. The irony is that the Tropical Belt Coal Company's project falls and the result is that the entire process initiated by Heyst to remodel or recreate Samburan in the image of its European conquerors has been futile as far as the colonialists are

concerned. Hence, it is the gigantic sign announcing the proprietary rights of the Western capitalist power, and the natural order of the environment has been buried. Heyst's motives echo the widespread Western attitude that sees its own way of life as the only correct one and that endeavors, peacefully or forcibly, to impose the same lifestyle upon what it deems to be the alien, the unknown, and therefore the unnatural, that which needs to be reformed and restrained, since the unknown at liberty is threatening and frightening.

Heyst, for all his loneliness, finds himself obliged to come into contact with society, to go to Timor, where he meets Morrison. It is this casual encounter that triggers off the ensuing tragedy. Morrison, who pines in London for his brig, the *Capricorn*, cannot survive in the English climate and dies when he goes to his native country to promote Heyst's coal mining project.

It is another impulse that leads to Heyst's involvement with Lena, the orchestra girl with the irresistibly seductive siren-like voice. They share an unrealistic romanticism, in that Heyst impetuously assumes the role of the knight in shining armour rescuing the damsel in distress, and believes that he can save her from the fate worse than death that awaits her. Like Heyst, Lena is under a misapprehension too. She unquestioningly accepts the fiction of Heyst as a knight in shining armour. Heyst takes the girl to the island, and gives her a new identity: she is to be called Lena. Since she is misappropriated from her legitimate possessors, Zangiaco and Schomberg, the two representatives of societal activity, it is fitting that furious hotel-keeper should dispatch his avenging army to Samburan. But Jones, Ricardo and Pedro are the elements that have already been introduced into the island by Western colonizer and that perhaps explains their surprising success in reaching Samburan. Like Heyst, they are westerners foreign to the region and have come to exploit it, but

unlike Heyst, who only causes the volcano to puff intermittently and threateningly, the different degrees of violence they bring with them unleash the ferocity latent in the island and in nature.

In the end all characters fail to survive and like Morrison who in a way had sacrificed himself for the sake of his benefactor and died of gratitude, Lena is killed, presumably to save her own savior, but Heyst's inability to face the prevalent destruction he has caused renders her rather quixotic sacrifice null and void. What is left is the island and nature, which have not only the ability to outlive human beings, but can also revitalize themselves. The volcano metaphorically erupts and Samburan takes her revenge through a purging fire that annihilates every thing created by man, and nature obliterates all traces of the colonizers on the island. If victory there is, it is the ultimate victory of the island and of nature.

Key Concerns of the Thesis

The present study will be based on colonial studies, with a main focus and considerable concern on Said's theory concerning orientalism. The chapter that follows will elaborate the fundamental aspects of the colonialism in relation to newer considerations such as 'colonialism and discourse', and 'colonialism and knowledge'. The analysis part that forms the third chapter is an attempt to relate the major theoretical issue at hand to the text.

II. Colonialism and Its Aspects

Colonialism: An Introduction

Colonialism and imperialism are used interchangeably. The word colonialism, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED), comes from the Roman ‘colonia’ which meant ‘farm’ or ‘settlement’, and referred to Romans who settled in other lands but still retained their citizenship. Accordingly, the OED describes it as:

a settlement in a new country ... a body of people who settle in a new locality, forming a community subject to or connected with their parent state; the community so formed, consisting of the original settlers and their descendents and successors, as long as the connection with the parent state is kept up. (90)

Colonialism was not an identical process in different parts of the world but everywhere it locked the original inhabitants and the new comers into the most complex and traumatic relationships in human history. Colonialism can be defined as the conquest and control of other people’s lands and goods. But colonialism in this sense is not merely the expansion of various European powers into Asia, Africa or the Americas from the sixteenth century onwards; it has been a recurrent and widespread feature of human history. At its height in the second century A.D., the Roman Empire stretched from Armenia to the Atlantis. Under Genghis Khan in the thirteenth century, the Mongols conquered the Middle East as well as China. The Aztec Empire was established when, from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries, one of the various ethnic groups who settled in the valley of Mexico subjugated the others. Aztec’s extracted tributes in services and goods from conquered regions, as did the Inca Empire which was the largest pre-industrial state in the Americas. In the fifteenth century too, various kingdoms in southern India came under the control of the

Vijaynagara Empire, and the Ottoman Empire, which began as a minor Islamic principality in what is now western Turkey, extended itself over most of Asia Minor and the Balkans. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, it still extended from the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean, and the Chinese Empire was larger than anything Europe had seen. According to Ania Loomba:

Modern European colonialism cannot be sealed off from these earlier histories of contact—the Crusades, or the Moorish invasion of Spain, the legendary exploits of Mongol rulers or the fabled wealth of the Incas or the Mughals were real or imagined fuel for the European journeys to different parts of the world.(3)

And yet, these newer European travels ushered in new and different kinds of colonial practices which altered the whole globe in a way that these other colonialisms did not. Earlier colonialisms were pre-capitalist, and modern colonialism was established alongside capitalism in Western Europe. Modern colonialism did more than extract tribute, goods and wealth from the countries that it conquered – it restructured the economies of the latter, drawing them into a complex relationship with their own so that there was a flow of human and natural resources between colonized and colonial countries. This flow worked in both directions – slaves and indentured labour as well as raw materials were transported to manufacture goods in the metropolis, or in other locations for metropolitan consumption, but the colonies also provided captive markets for European goods.

The essential point is that although European colonialisms involved a variety of techniques and patterns of domination, penetrating deep into some societies and involving a comparatively superficial contact with others, all of them produced the economic balance that was necessary for the growth of European capitalism and

industry. Thus we could say that colonialism was the mid wife that assisted at the birth of European capitalism, or that without colonial expansion the transition to capitalism could not have taken place in Europe.

Boehmer is leery about the ways in which capitalism and imperialism might be misconstrued. Pointing out to their somewhat penetrable genesis he posits:

The distinction between pre-capitalist and capitalist colonialisms is often made by referring to the latter as imperialism. This is somewhat misleading, because imperialism, like colonialism, stretches back to a pre-capitalist past. Imperial Russia, for example, was pre-capitalist, as was Imperial Spain. Some commentators place imperialism as prior to colonialism. (*Colonial and Postcolonial Literature* 3)

For Raymond Williams, too, the historical perspective has a potential to locate imperialism in better light:

Like 'colonialism', this concept too is best understood not by trying to pin it down to a single semantic meaning but by relating its shifting meanings to historical processes. Early in its usage in the English language it simply means 'command or superior power'. (*Keywords, A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* 131)

The OED defines 'imperial' as simply 'pertaining to empire', and 'imperialism' as the rule of an emperor, especially when despotic or arbitrary; the principal or spirit of empire, advocacy of what are held to be imperial interests.

In the early twentieth century, Lenin and Kautsky (among other writers) gave a new meaning to the word 'imperialism' by linking it to a particular stage of the development of capitalism. In *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1947),

Lenin argued that the growth of ‘finance-capitalism’ and industry in the Western countries had created ‘an enormous super abundance of capital’. This money could not be profitably invested at home where labour was limited. The colonies lacked capital but were abundant in labour and human resources. Therefore it needed to move out and subordinate non-industrialized countries to sustain its own growth. Lenin thus predicted that in due course the rest of the world would be absorbed by European finance capitalists. This global system was called ‘imperialism’ and constituted a particular stage of capitalist development – the highest in Lenin’s understanding because rivalry between the various imperial wars would catalyze their destruction and the demise of capitalism. It is this Leninist definition that allows some people to argue that capitalism is the distinguishing feature between colonialism and imperialism.

Direct rule is not necessary for imperialism in this sense, because the economic (and social) relations of dependency and control ensure both captive labour as well as markets for European industry as well as goods. Sometimes the words ‘neo-imperialism’ or ‘neo-colonialism’ are used to describe these situations. In as much as the growth of European industry and finance- capital was achieved through colonial domination in the first place, we can also see that imperialism (in this sense) is the highest stage of colonialism as the take over of territory, appropriation of material resources, exploitation of labour and interference with political and cultural structures of another territory or nation, and imperialism as a global system.

Thus, imperialism, colonialism and the differences between them are defined differently depending on their historical mutations. “One useful way of distinguishing between them,” says Loomba, “might be to not separate them in temporal but in spatial terms and to think of imperialism or neo-imperialism as the phenomenon that

originates in the metropolis, the process which leads to domination and control” (6). Its result or what happens in the colonies as a consequence of imperial domination is colonialism or neo-colonialism. Thus the imperial country is the ‘metropole’ from which power flows, and the colony or neo- colony or the place which it penetrates and controls. Imperialism can function without formal colonies (as in United States’ imperialism today) but colonialism cannot.

Orientalism: A Colonial Discourse

Foucault connects knowledge with the operation of power and this Foucaultian insight is found in Said’s *Orientalism*, which points out the extent to which ‘knowledge’ about ‘the Orient’ as it was produced and circulated in Europe was an ideological accompaniment of colonial ‘power’. This is a book not about non-Western cultures, but about the Western representation of these cultures, particularly in the scholarly discipline was created alongside the European penetration into the ‘Near East’ and how it was nurtured and supported by various other disciplines such as philology, history, anthropology, philosophy, archeology and literature.

Orientalism uses the concept of discourse to re-order the study of colonialism. It examines how the formal study of the ‘Orient’, along with key literary and cultural texts, consolidated certain ways of seeing and thinking which in turn contributed to the functioning of colonial power. Said explains in his *Orientalism* that certain texts are accorded:

The authority of academics, instructions, and governments Most important, such texts can create not only knowledge but also the very reality they appear to describe. In time such knowledge and reality produce a tradition, or what Michel Foucault calls a discourse, whose material presence or weight, not the originality of a given author, is

really responsible for the texts produced out of it. (94)

Orientalism can be said to inaugurate a new kind of study of colonialism. Said argues that representations of the 'Orient' in European literary texts, travelogues and other writings contributed to the creation of a dichotomy between Europe and its 'other', a dichotomy that was central to the creation of European culture as well as to the maintenance and extension of European hegemony over other lands. Said's project is to show how 'knowledge' about non-Europeans was part of the process of maintaining power over them. Said argued that knowledge of the East could never be innocent or 'objective' because it was produced by human beings who were necessarily imbedded in colonial history and relationships. Some such point had also been made, albeit less 'theoretically', by the Indian nationalist Bipin Chandra Pal earlier in this century when he pointed out that:

When the European scientist studies the physical features of our land, when he mensurates our fields, trigonometrates our altitude and undulations, investigates our animal, our vegetable or our mineral kingdoms, the records of his study are accepted as true and authoritative. But the study of man belongs altogether to a different plane Here also the eyes sees, the ear hears, but the real meaning of what is seen or heard is supplied not by the senses but by the understanding, which interprets what is heard in the light of its own peculiar experiences and associations. (8-9)

Said's basic thesis is that Orientalism, or the 'study' of the Orient, 'was ultimately a political vision of reality whose structure promoted a binary opposition between the familiar, the West "us" and the unfamiliar, the East the "other"'. Said shows that this opposition is crucial to European self conception: if colonized people are irrational,

Europeans are rational; if the former are barbaric, sensual, and lazy, Europe is civilization itself, with its sexual appetite under control and its dominant ethic that of hard work; if the Orient is static, Europe can be seen as developing and marching ahead; and if Orient is feminine the Europe is masculine. This dialectic between self and other, derived in part from deconstruction, has been hugely influential in subsequent studies of colonial discourses in other places – critics have traced it as informing colonial attitudes towards Africans, Native Americans, and other non-European people. Since *Orientalism*, colonial discourse studies have analyzed a wide range of cultural texts and practices such as art works, atlases, cinema, scientific systems, museums, educational institutions, advertisements, psychiatric and other medical practices, geology, patterns of clothing, and ideas concerning beauty.

Despite the enormous influence of *Orientalism*, the book has evolved much hostility as well as criticisms, not only from Orientalists themselves, but also from others fundamentally sympathetic to Said's project. One recurring critique is that, according to Porter, "*Orientalism* suggests that a binary opposition between East and West has been a more or less static feature of Western discourses from classical Greece to the present day ('*Orientalism* and its problems' 179-193). Porter concludes that the book is seen to flatter historical nuances into a fixed East versus West divide. According to this view, attitudes to non European fluctuated greatly, not only within any given context. Ahmed also accuses Said of homogenizing the West, but the grounds of his criticism are that Said does not sufficiently connect Orientalist knowledge production to colonial history and its connectives with the development of capitalism (*In Theory* 3-25). Instead, it is suggested, he inflates the importance of literary, ideological and discursive aspects at the expense of more institutional or material realities, and hence implies that colonialism was largely an ideological

construct. Critics have pointed out too that Said's analysis concentrates, almost exclusively, on canonical Western literary texts. A third, most frequent charge is that Said ignores the self-representations of the colonized and focuses on the imposition of colonial power rather than on the resistances to it. By doing so, he promotes a static modal of colonial relations in which "colonial power and discourse is possessed entirely by the colonizer and therefore there is no room for negotiation or change" (Bhabha 200).

Foucault suggests that power manifests not in a downward flow from the top of the social hierarchy to those below but extends itself in a capillary fashion- it is part of daily action, speech and everyday life. Edward Said has himself said he finds such an understanding of power disabling for politically engaged criticism (*The World, the Text and the Critic* 245). Some commentators find an irreconcilable contradiction between Said's use of Foucaultian perspectives to critique the operations of colonial discourse, and his political commitment to the possibility of social change. Others have insisted that such contradictions can in fact be productive in dismantling previously secure methods of analysis. Ania Loomba asserts:

Orientalism is primarily concerned with how the Orient was 'constructed' by Western literature, travel writing and systems of studying East, and not with how such a construction was received and dismantled by colonial subjects.(51)

However, it would be unfair to conclude that just because Said does not venture into the latter territory, he necessarily suggests that the colonialist's discourse is all pervasive. Those who study modes and ideas of domination cannot necessary be accused of being complicit with it – Said's own critique, and the work of other scholars before him such as Raymond Schwab, are themselves proof that orientalist

thought can be challenged. Elsewhere Said discusses anti-imperialist theorist such as Fanon in order to think about resistance in the present context. But colonial authority, like any other, becomes legitimized through a process during which it constantly has to negotiate with the people it seeks to control, and therefore the presence of these people is a crucial factor in studying authority itself. Foucault's own work suggests that domination and resistance are inextricably linked. So Said's story about how a body of texts constructed the East is necessarily incomplete without some sense of the specific people, cultures, and situations about which such a discourse was constructed.

Colonialism and Knowledge

Colonialism reshaped existing structures of human knowledge. No branch of learning was left untouched by the colonial experience. Like ideology, it arose from 'material circumstances' and was material in its effect. A crucial effect of this process was gathering and ordering of information about the lands and peoples visited by, and later subject to, the colonial powers. Travel writing was an important means of producing "Europe's differentiated conception of itself in relation to something it became possible to call the rest of the world" (Pratt 5).

The definition of civilization and barbarian rests on the reproduction of irreconcilable difference between 'black' and 'white', self and other. The late medieval European figure of the 'wild man', who lived in forests, on the outer edges of civilization, and was hairy, nude, violent, lacking in moral sense, and excessively sensual, expressed all manner of cultural anxieties. He and his female counterpart were 'other s' who existed outside civil society, and yet they constantly threatened to enter and disrupt this society. Such myths interested with images of foreigners (from Africa, the Islamic world and India) with whom medieval Europeans (and earlier Greco- Roman societies) had some contact. It is important to remember that the

images of Africans, Turks, Muslims, barbarians, and other categories had circulated for a long time before colonialism. These images often appear to coincide with the construction of the 'other' in colonialist discourse. For example, the twelfth and thirteenth century image of Muslims as barbaric, degenerate, tyrannical and promiscuous seems identical with the Orientalist images Said identifies in *Orientalism*. As a matter of fact, all these images about the other were molded and remolded through various histories of contact. Colonialism was perhaps the most important crucible for their affirmation as well as reconstruction.

Colonialism expanded the contact between Europeans and non- Europeans, generating a flood of images and ideas on an unprecedented scale. Europeans who traveled outwards took with them certain previous images of the people they expected to encounter. Loomba points out that the actual encounters necessitated both the continuity and a reshaping of these images:

continuity because previously held notions about the inferiority of non- Europeans provided a justification for European settlements, trading practices, religious missions and military activities- and reshaping in order to adjust images to specific colonial practices” . Thus, for example, the old term ‘anthropology’ (used by the Roman writer Pliny the Elder in his *Natural History* to refer to human beings who ate their own kind) was applied by Columbus to those Indians who were called ‘Caribs’. (58)

The increasing knowledge about the diversity of peoples and lands was reconciled by stereotyping. Stereotyping involves a reduction of images and ideas to simple and manageable form; rather than simple ignorance or lack of ‘real’ knowledge, it is a method of processing information. The function of stereotypes is to perpetuate an

artificial sense of difference between ‘self’ and ‘other’ (Gilman 18). The travel collections produced in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries do not actually reproduce non-European as monoliths. They note specific eating habits, religious beliefs, clothing and social organization in ways that mark the beginning of anthropological studies.

The discourse of ‘race’ was the product of Western science in the eighteenth century. The nature of and reason for differences in skin color had been debated for centuries within Europe: was blackness a product of climate and environment, or was it a God-ordained sign of sinfulness? Scientific discourse suggested that since the skin color of specific races did not change when their members moved to a new location (an idea which had been noted in Hakluyt’s late sixteenth century collection of voyages), therefore it was a biological and natural difference. Thus races were now seen to be the expression of a biological (and therefore immutable) hierarchy. The important point is that science didn’t shed any of the earlier suppositions about inferior races: thus, race explained not simply people’s skin color, but also their civilizational and cultural attributes. ‘Nature’ thus explained and linked black skin, a small brain, and savagery! Darwin’s theory of the evolution of the species represented a genuine advance for science and yet it was used to bolster ideas of racial supremacy: in his *Descent of Man* (1871), Darwin wrote: “Extinction and race with raceWhen civilized nations come into contact with barbarians the struggle is short” (quoted by Young 18). Hence, races and nations were concepts that developed in connection with one another.

Over time, color, hair type, skull shape and size, facial angles, or brain size were variously taken up by scientific discourses as the most accurate index of racial differences. As recently as 1994, Charles Murray and Richard J. Herrnstein’s *The Bell*

Curve suggested discrepancy between black and white Americans on the standardized IQ tests was due to natural or genetic causes. But critics pointed out that precisely such arguments about natural inferiority are used to explain away the continuing cycle of poverty in which “almost 45 percent of black children are trapped in the United States” (Gates 10).

Dominant scientific ideologies about race and gender have historically propped up each other. In the mid-nineteenth century, the new science of anthropometry pronounced Caucasian women to be closer to Africans than white men were, and supposedly female traits were used to describe ‘the lower races’ (Stepan 43). Accordingly African women occupied the lowest rung of the racial ladder. When African men began to be treated for schizophrenia and confined to lunatic asylums:

African womenwere said not to have reached the level of self-Awareness required to go mad, and in colonial literature on psychology and psychopathology, the African women represented the happy “primitive” state of pre-colonial Africa. (Vaughan 22)

Thus even madness (here seen an attribute of a ‘complex’ mind) becomes an index of the ascent of human beings towards modernity, in which African women are seen to lag behind their men who themselves slowly follow Europeans. Scientific language was authoritative and powerful precisely because it presented itself as value free, neutral and universal (Stepan and Gilman). For this reason, it was extremely difficult to challenge its claims. To some extent, European scientists’ own racial and political identities prevented them from radically questioning scientific theories of racial difference, and on the other hand, people who access to scientific training and their objections were dismissed as unscientific. The scientific text was increasingly purged of figurative language and overtly moral and political arguments in order to present

itself as purely 'factual'. Thus its biases with respect to both gender and race could aggressively be presented as objective truths.

The growth of modern western knowledge systems and the histories of most 'disciplines' can be seen to be embedded within and shaped by colonial discourses. The development or reproduction of even those knowledge system that appear to be too abstract to have an ideological inflection, such as mathematics, can also be connected to the imperialist project (Bishop). To that extent, we may say that all discourses are the colonialist discourses. At one level, such a conclusion simply underlines the Marxist notion that all ideas are inter-dependent with economic and social reality. But at another level, it also alerts us to an aspect of social reality – i.e. colonially honed ideas of cultural and racial difference – which does not sufficiently inflect Marxist history. It in fact highlights how ideas contribute to the creation of social systems. By pointing out how deeply its knowledge systems were imbricated in racial and colonialist perspectives, scholars such as Bernal, Said or Spivak have contributed to, indeed extended, the discrediting of the project of the European Enlightenment by post-structuralists such as Foucault.

It is important to remember that colonialist production of knowledge was not a simple process. It necessarily included a clash with and a marginalization of the knowledge and belief systems of those who were conquered, as also with some oppositional views at home. Colonialist knowledges were produced also via negotiation with or an incorporation of indigenous ideas. At a very practical level, colonialists were dependent upon natives for their access to the 'new' lands and their secrets. As Caliban reminds Prospero, he showed the latter 'all the qualities of the island/ The fresh springs, brine-pits, barren place and fertile' (I, ii). But historically, Prospero represented his knowledge of the island as 'discovery'.

Discovery in the colonial context often consisted of appropriating local knowledges. Colonial landscapes were, after all, penetrated, mapped and annexed literally on the shoulders of local inhabitants. At other times, colonialists' projects made use of local knowledge but also brought Western ideas to bear both upon the nature and culture of colonized lands: for example, British Engineers in India could only complete their bridges and dams by consulting local experts.

Concepts like 'contact zone' or its cultural transactions complicate and nuance our understanding of colonial encounters. They underline the fact that although colonialism engendered ideologies of difference, in practice it also brought different people into intimate contact with one another. Different colonial regimes tried to maintain cultural and racial segregation precisely because, practice, the interactions between colonizing and colonized people constantly challenged any neat division between races and cultures. The result was a mixing, a 'hybridity' which became an important theme within colonial discourse theories. As Aime Cesaire asks, 'has colonialism really placed civilizations in contact?I answer no.... No human contact, but relations of domination and submission...' (*Discourse on Colonialism* 11- 21). We need to remember that large sections of colonized people in many parts of the world had no or little direct 'contact' with their foreign oppressors. Yet of course their lives were materially and ideologically reshaped by the latter. Colonialism thus refracted the production of knowledge and structured the condition for its dissemination and reception. The process by which it did so testify both to colonial power and to its complex interactions with "other" epistemologies, ideologies and ways of seeing.

Colonialism and Literature

Literature's pivotal role in both colonial and anti-colonial discourses has begun to be explored. Ever since Plato, it has been acknowledged that literature mediates between the real and the imaginary. Marxist and post-structuralist debates on ideology increasingly try to define the nature of this mediation. If language and 'signs' are the sites where different ideologies intersect and clash with one another, then literary texts, being complex clusters of languages and signs, can be identified as extremely fecund sites for such ideological interactions. Moreover, they also show the complex articulation between a single individual, social context and the play of language. Literary texts circulate in society not just because of their intrinsic merit, but because they are part of other institutions such as the market, or the education system. Via these institutions, they play a crucial role in constructing a culture authority for the colonizers, both in the metropolis and in the colonies. However, literary texts do not simply reflect dominant ideologies, but encode the tensions, complexities and nuances within colonial cultures. Literature is an important 'contact zone', to use Marry Louise Pratt's term, where 'transculturation' takes place in all its complexity. Literature written on both sides of the colonial divide often absorbs, appropriates, and inscribes aspects of the 'other' culture, creating new genres, ideas and identities in the process. Finally literature is also an important means of appropriating, inverting or challenging dominant means of representation and colonial ideologies.

We have already seen how travelers' tales in the European Renaissance were an amalgam of fiction, attitudes received from earlier times, and new observations. Encounters with what lies outside its own boundaries are central to the formation of any culture: the line that separates inside and outside, the 'self' and the 'other' is not

fixed but always shifting. The vast new worlds encountered by European travelers were interpreted by them through ideological filters or ways of seeing, provided by their own cultures and societies. It is not just travel tales which are shaped by cross culture encounters but even those pieces of writing which appear to be inward looking , or dealing with the private rather than public concerns . The lovers in John Donne's poems, for example, explicitly demarcate their private space from the fast expanding outer world. In 'The Sunne Rising ', even the sun becomes a peeping Tom, a 'busy old fool '. Such a retreat both testifies to the growing ideology of coupledness in this period and challenges its Protestant version. But the withdrawal into privacy and the celebration of sexuality can only be expressed by images culled from contemporary geographical expansion . The female body is described in terms of the new geography, as in Donne's "Love's Progress":

The Nose (like to the first Meridian) runs
 Not 'twixt and East and West, but 'twixt to suns:
 It leaves a cheek, a rosie Hemisphere
 On either side, and then directs us where
 Upon islands fortunate we fall,
 Not faynte Canaries, but Ambrosiall,
 Her swelling lips ... and the stretght Hellespent betwane
 The Sestos and Abydos of her breasts...
 And sailing towards her India, in that way
 Shall at her fair Atlantick Navell stay... (Donne 181)

The lovers' relationship is worked out in terms of the colonialists 'interaction with the lands they 'discover as in "To his Mistress going to Bed":

Licence my roaving hands, and let them go

Before, behind, between, above, below,
 O my America! My new found – land,
 My kingdome , safeliest when with one man man'd,
 My Myne of precious stones: My empiric,
 How blest am I in this discovering thee. (Donne 184)

The colonial contact is not just 'reflected' in the language or imagery of literary texts; it is not just a backdrop or 'context' against which human dramas are enacted, but a central aspect of what these texts have to say about identity, relationships and culture. Moreover, in the second poem by Donne, sexual and colonial relationships become analogous to each other. Donne's male lover is the active discoverer of the female body, and desires to explore it in the same manner as the European 'adventurer' who penetrates and takes possession of lands which are seen as passive, or awaiting discovery. Here, the sexual promise of the woman's body indicates the wealth promised by the colonies – hence, in the first poem the lover/ colonist traverses her body/ the globe to reach her 'India', the seat of riches. But the woman / land analogy also employs a reverse logic as the riches promised by the colonies signify both the joys of the female body as well as its status as a legitimate object for male possession.

According to Ania Loomba:

Literary texts are crucial to the formation of colonial discourses precisely because they work imaginatively and upon people as individuals. But literary texts do not simply reflect dominant ideologies; they also militate against them, or contain elements which cannot be reconciled to them. Such complexity is not necessarily a matter of authorial intention. Plays such as *Othello* and *The Tempest* thus evoke contemporary ideas about the bestiality or incivility of non-

Europeans. But we can differ about whether they do so in order to endorse dominant attitudes to 'race' and culture or to question them. Does *Othello* serve as a warning against inter-racial love, or an indictment of the society which does not allow it? Does *The Tempest* endorse Prospero's view of Caliban as a bestial savage, or does it depict the dehumanization of colonial rule? It is difficult to establish Shakespeare's intentions, but we can certainly see how these plays have been read differently by people over time and in different places.

(74)

The study of colonialism in relation to literature and of literature in relation to colonialism has thus opened up important new ways of looking at both. Even more important perhaps is the way in which recent literary and critical theory has influenced social analysis. Developments in literary and cultural criticism have not only demanded that literary texts be read in fuller, more contextualized ways, but conversely, have also suggested that social and historical processes are textual because they can only be recuperated through their representation, and these representations involve ideological and rhetorical strategies as much as do fictional texts. The analogy of text and textile may be useful here: critical analysis teases out the warp and woof of any text, literary or historical, in order to see how it was put together in the first place. Colonialism, according to these ways of reading, should be analyzed as if it were a text, composed of representational as well as material practices and available to us via a range of discourses such as scientific, economic, literary and historical writings, official papers, art and music, cultural traditions, popular narratives, and even rumors.

Race, Class and Colonialism

Caste was of course a concept that became familiar in England from colonial experiences in India, and it marked a social, economic and religious hierarchy overlaid with connotations of purity and pollution, similar to those that shape the idea of race. Robert Young points out that ‘If, according to Marxism, race should be properly understood as class, it is clear that for the British upper classes class was increasingly thought of in terms of race’. There have been two broad tendencies in analysis of race and ethnicity: the first, which stems from Marxist analysis, can be referred to as the ‘economic’ because it regards social groupings, including racial ones, as largely determined and explained by economic structures and processes. Colonialism was the means through which capitalism achieved its global expansion. Racism simply facilitated this process, and functioned as a conduit through which the labor of colonized people was appropriated. The second approach, which has been called ‘sociological’, and derives partly from the work of Max Weber, argues that economic explanations are insufficient for understanding the racial features of colonized societies. Similarly, Ania Loomba asserts, “We should not reduce these approaches to watertight compartments, because each includes complex and nuanced debates, but on the whole, the former privileges class, and the latter race in understanding colonial social formations” (124-25).

The ideology of racial superiority translated easily into class terms. The superiority of the white races, one colonist argued, clearly implied that ‘the black men must forever remain cheap labor and slaves’. Certain sections of people were thus racially identified as the natural working classes. Miles illustrates this process by examining how the racial ideologies with which British colonizers arrived in Kenya structured capitalist development there. First of all, Africans were dispossessed from

the best lands, and settled in adjacent reserves. Such a process was facilitated by the creation of African chiefs, contrary to the custom hitherto prevailing in most Kenyan communities. Land that was considered unused by Africans was appropriated after being defined as 'waste'. Local populations were often nomadic, so lands that lay unused at a particular time were potentially available for future use, but the new order curbed their movements and confined them to specific areas. After acquiring land, colonists needed to recruit labor. The different methods employed all required the intervention of the colonial state. The new 'chiefs' were commissioned to supply men to construct roads, railways and docks and act as porters, away from their place of residence. The fees paid were low, and refusal was treated with harsh punishment. The colonists also developed a 'squatter system' whereby African communities were encouraged to live on European lands in return for a certain quantum of labor power. Finally cash taxes were imposed, which Africans were forced to raise by selling their labor for a wage. 'Chiefs' were also used to persuade Africans to enter the labor force, and these measures were defended on the grounds that they would eliminate 'idleness and vice' among the local population. Thus the imperial mission, based on a hierarchy of races, coincided perfectly with the economic needs of the colonists. In the process, divisions between different African groups and tribes were also emphasized by creating particular sub- divisions and attributing particular kinds of skills and shortcomings to them. Thus the process of 'class formation was shaped by racialization' (Miles 111).

Loomba contends that the precise intersection of racial ideologies with the process of class formation depended upon the kinds of societies which colonial powers penetrated and the specific racial ideologies that emerged there; a dialectical perspective helps us understand just colonial but the post colonial world as well. The

race relations that are put into place during colonialism survive long after many of the economic structures underlying them have changed. The devaluation of African slaves still haunts their descendants in metropolitan societies, the inequalities of colonial rule still structure wages and opportunities, the racial stereotypes that we identified earlier still circulate, and contemporary global imbalances are built upon these inequities that were consolidated during the colonial era. A complex amalgam of economic and racial factors operates in anchoring the present to the past.

In recent years, there has been considerable work around the dynamic intersection of race and in specific contemporary situations, and especially postwar Britain. Race is fundamental to the formation of the working classes in general and to the experiences of black labor in particular. A pioneering study pointed out that the class relations within which black working class people exist, function as race relations. The two are inseparable:

Race is the modality in which class is lived. It is also a medium in which class relations are experienced. This ...has consequences for the whole class, where relation to their conditions of existence is now systematically transformed by race. (Hall et al. 394)

Many anti-colonial intellectuals had previously grappled with this connection between race and class, which is why even the Marxists among them found Negritude so compelling. They needed to foreground the question of race because, as Aime Cesaire put it, 'Marx is all right, but we need to complete Marx' (1972, 70). Cesaire writes the colonial encounter as an equation: 'colonisation= "thingification" (21). For him, this 'thingification', or the reduction of the colonized person into an object was achieved not by turning her/him into 'an instrument of production', but also, by Western

accounts (including some racial or socially progressive accounts). Loomba concludes:

If Marx needed to be 'completed', Freud and his legacy also needed to be re-written

(133).

III. Heyst and Colonisation

Victory: The Story

Victory reveals Joseph Conrad's characteristic sense of the isolated consciousness. In the novel, he focuses on a man whose solitary life on an island in the South Seas reflects his spiritual position. He is about 35 years old with broad chest, bald forehead, long moustaches and polite manner. As a consequence of doing a kindness for a man named Morrison, Heyst becomes "manager on the spot of the Tropical Belt Coal Company, with offices in London and Amsterdam." This operation soon goes bust, leaving Heyst "a forgotten cast-off, derelict manager of a wrecked, collapsed, vanished enterprise," content to live in near solitude on his island with only the occasional and mostly silent company of Wang and his Chinese wife (14, 17).

Occasionally Heyst ventures to another, more populous island, where Schomberg, a big, manly, bearded creature of the Teutonic persuasion, is busy with his hotel. When Morrison goes home to England and dies, Schomberg spreads the rumor that Heyst somehow has killed him, a "horrible calumny" that comes to obsess Heyst because, as he says, "the power of calumny grows with time: It's insidious and penetrating. It can even destroy one's faith in oneself – dry-rot the soul" (50). At the hotel Heyst meets Lena, not yet 20, who has come to Schomberg's hotel as "a performer in a ladies orchestra" (42). Schomberg lusts after her and pursues her menacingly. She is terrified, and Heyst comes to the rescue, spirited her away to Samburan:

It's easy to imagine Schomberg's humiliation, his shocked fury, when he discovered that the girl who had for weeks resisted his attacks, his prayers, and his fiercest protestations, had been snatched from under

his nose by 'that Swede,' apparently without any trouble worth speaking of. (35)

When three strange, scary drifters arrive at his hotel, Schomberg sees in them the instruments of his revenge. He tells them that Heyst has a fortune on the island, gives them directions and sends them off. They are: a sallow, cynical man known only as Mr. Jones, who claims to be a gentleman; Martin Ricardo to whom life is not matter of passive renunciation, but of a particularly active warfare; and Pedro, "a creature with an antediluvian lower jaw, hairy like a mastodon, and formed like a prehistoric ape" (82).

The three make their way to island, where important things have happened: Lena and Heyst have fallen in love, have begun sleeping together and have established an enclave of innocence and goodness in a world that is "evil upon the whole." As soon as the three arrive, Heyst understands "that this visit could bode nothing pleasant." He tells Lena: "Here they are, the envoys of the outer world, here they are before you ... evil intelligence, instinctively savagery, arm in arm" (195). Like Heyst, they are Westerners foreign to the region and have come to exploit it; the different degrees of violence they bring with them unleash the ferocity latent in the island in nature. Tragedy takes place when Lena is killed, presumably to save her own savior, but Heyst's inability to face the prevalent destruction he has caused renders her rather quixotic sacrifice null and void. What remains is the island and nature, which have not only the ability to outlive human beings. In the end there erupts a volcano annihilating everything created by men, including all traces of the colonizer.

Axel Heyst and his Spiritualism

In the novel, Axel Heyst is portrayed as a wanderer with no specific abode. He is out of everybody's way, "as if he is perched on the highest peak of the Himalayas, and in a sense as conspicuous" (1-2). Everyone in that part of the world knows him, dwelling on little island, Samburan. The narrator describes his isolation on Samburan:

Axel Heyst, perched on it immovably, was surrounded, instead of the imponderable stormy and transparent ocean of air merging into infinity, by a tepid, shallow sea, His most frequent visitors were shadows, shadows of clouds, relieving the monotony of the inanimate, brooding sunshine of the tropics and at night leveled at him, from amongst the clear stars, a dull red glow, expanding and collapsing spasmodically like the end of a gigantic cigar puffed at intermittently in the dark. (2)

For fifteen years Heyst has wandered, invariably courteous and unapproachable, and in return is generally considered a "queer chap" (75). He has started off on these travels after the death of his father; an expatriated Swede who dies in London, dissatisfied with his country and angry with the entire world, which has instinctively rejected his wisdom:

Thinker, stylist, and man of the world in his time, the elder Heyst had begun by coveting all the joys For more than sixty years he had dragged on this painful earth of ours the most weary, the most uneasy soul that civilization has ever fashioned to its ends of disillusion and regret. (75)

Heyst has never known his mother, but he keeps his father's pale, distinguished face in affectionate memory. For three years, after leaving school at the age of eighteen he

has lived with his father. Three years of such companionship at that plastic and impressionable age are bound to leave in Heyst a profound mistrust of life. After his father's death, Heyst starts on his travels to "look on and never make a sound" (143).

He attempts his best to live a perfect solitary life:

Heyst was not conscious of either friends or of enemies. It was the very essence of his life to be a solitary achievement, accomplished not by hermit-like withdrawal with its silence and immobility, but by a system of restless wondering, by the detachment of an impermanent dweller amongst changing scenes. In this scheme he had perceived the means of passing through life without suffering and almost without a single care in the world- invulnerable because elusive. (74)

People in general have observed the seeming indifference of Heyst to earthly matters like wealth and profits, "We doubted whether he had any visions of wealth – for himself, at any rate. What he seemed mostly concerned for was the "stride forward," as he expressed it, in the general organization of the universe, apparently (3). He was heard by more than a hundred persons in the islands talking of a "great stride forward for these regions." The convinced wave of the hand which accompanied the phrase suggested tropical distances being impelled onward. In connection with the finished courtesy of his manner, it was persuasive, or at any rate silencing – for a time, at least. "Nobody cared to argue with him when he talked in this strain. His earnestness could do no harm to anybody. There was no danger of anyone taking seriously his dream of tropical coal, so what was the use of hurting his feelings?"(3-4).

Moreover, the tendency of his purposeless wanderings becomes clear when we consider the narrative description as quoted below:

He was not a traveler. A traveler arrives and departs. I met a man once – the manager of the branch of the Oriental Banking Corporation in Malacca – to whom Heyst exclaimed, in no connection with anything in particular: I am enchanted with these islands!” (4)

All that is known about him creates an illusory impression that Heyst is a saint with no connection with anything in particular. However before long this saintly image of the protagonist is replaced by his real motives and he is found a usurper and a colonizer.

Axel Heyst as the Colonizer of Samburan Island

With the missionary spirit of Western culture, Axel Heyst causes the colonization of the Samburan Island, reshaping it in the image of industrial Western society. Whereas initially his purpose has been to be a wanderer with no specific abode by settling down in Samburan, he not only becomes the colonizer but also introduces into the place the alien and destructive forces of an exploitative society. Heyst’s island is now a centre for corruption. Nature in Samburan has been raped just like the way Britain and French colonies destroyed the purity and wilderness of Africa:

That black jetty, sticking out of the jungle into the empty sea; these roof- ridges of deserted houses peeping dismally above the grass! Ough! The gigantic and funeral blackboard sign of the Tropical Belt Coal Company, still emerging from a wild growth of bushes like an inscription stuck above a grave figured by the heap of unsold coal at the shore end of the wharf, added to the general desolation. (4)

Such exploitative activities create a wilderness, a waste over- powered by the ascendancy of death that changes Samburan’s location in the world. On the new map:

Samburan was represented as the central spot of the Eastern Hemisphere with its name engraved in enormous capitals. Heavy lines radiated from it in all direction through the tropics, figuring mysterious and effective star- lines of influence or lines of distance, or something of that sort. (5)

The depiction of the desolation implies that the island has become a mirror of Western Industrial areas. The blackness of the jetty is echoed in the color of the coal for which the Tropical Belt Coal Company decides to mine in the area. With industrialization, however, the quest for gold and treasure has relegated its place to a more prosaic quest for the commodity ensuring the perpetuation of industrial activities. Heyst transfers the island into the central spot for Eastern Hemisphere. This colonizing attitude of Heyst is obvious when the narrator says:

From the first he had selected Samburan, or Round Island, for the central station. Some copies of the prospectus issued in Europe, having found their way out East, were passed from hand to hand. We greatly admired the map which accompanied them for the edification of the shareholders. On it Samburan was represented as the central spot of the Eastern Hemisphere with its name engraved in enormous capitals. Heavy lines radiated from it in all directions through the tropics, figuring a mysterious and effective star – lines of influence or lines of distance, or some thing of that sort. Company promoters have an imagination of their own. There is no more romantic temperament on earth than the temperament of a company promoter. Engineers came out, coolies were imported, bungalows were put up on Samburan, a gallery driven into the hill side, and actually some coal got out. (19)

The irony is that the Tropical Belt Coal Company's project falls and, as a consequence, the entire process initiated by Heyst to recreate Samburan in the image of its European conquerors remains futile as far as the colonialists are concerned.

Heyst's identity as a colonizer is revealed when he reaches the magical island called Samburan:

Roughly speaking, a circle with a radius of eight hundred miles drawn round a point in North Borneo was in Heyst's case a magical circle. It just touched Manila, and he had been seen there. It just touched Saigon, and he was likewise seen there once. Perhaps these were his attempts to break out. If so, they were failures. The enchantment must have been an unbreakable one. The manager – the man who heard the exclamation – had been so impressed by the tone, fervor, rapture, what you will, or perhaps by the incongruity of it that he had related the experience to more than one person. (15)

To every person he encounters and to the ones who speculate about his kind, Heyst receives a range of appellation and ratings. These ratings like “stride forward”, “queer chap”, “hard facts”, “utopist” show the parallels of the images of the western colonizers and perpetrators of the formal colonies as viewed by the natives of the colonies.

Morrison: The Victim of Heyst's Colonization

Morrison is owner and master of the Capricorn, trading brig, and is understood to be doing well with her, except for the drawback of too much altruism. He is the dearly beloved friend of a quantity of God-forsaken villages up dark creeks and obscure bays, where he traded for “produce” (7). He often sails through awfully dangerous channels up to some miserable settlement, only to find a very hungry

population clamoring for rice. Most of the places he traded with were unknown not only to geography but also to the traders' special lore which is transmitted by word of mouth, without ostentation, and forms the stock of mysterious local knowledge.

One day Heyst meets Morrison in Delli and finds him in big trouble. Morrison has come the week before into Delli, and the Portuguese authorities, on some pretence of irregularity in his papers, has inflicted a fine upon him and has arrested his brig. Portuguese officials propose him to sell the brig at auction which meant ruin for Morrison. Heyst consoles him and assures him that he would help him: "Oh! If that's the case I would be very happy if you'd allow me to be of use!" (12). This remark surprises Morrison. Morrison thinks as if god has come to him in the form of Heyst. To him, this wandering Heyst, seems the very last person to be the agent of Providence in an affair concerned with money.

In the early form of colonization, the colonizers employed their Christianity as a main tool terming it as god's will to bring light to the dark, a theme related to what Kipling describes as 'the white man's burden'. This idea is also reflected in the way Morrison expresses his feeling of gratitude to Heyst for his help:

Forgive me, Heyst. You must have been sent by God in answer to my prayer. But I have been nearly off my chump for three days with worry; and it suddenly struck me: 'What if it's the Devil who has sent him?' (13)

Heyst's response to Morrison sounds much like the colonizer's tool of polite and courteous language, "I have no connection with the super natural nobody has sent me. I just happened along" (13). Apparently, Heyst behaves as if he is helping with his problem by lending him much needed money but behind the curtain, his purpose is

to bring Morrison under his control. Polite and courteous language is the major colonizing tool for Heyst.

In this tangle of strong feelings Morrison's gratitude insists on Heyst's partnership in the great discovery. Ultimately they become partners. In course of business, Heyst sends Morrison to London to promote Heyst's business of coal. However, once in London, Morrison dies out of cold. Morrison can't adjust with cold and gloomy climate and the people around in London. After couple of days in London, Morrison writes a letter to Heyst saying, "London was cold and gloomy, that he did not like either the men or things, that he was as lonely as a crow in a strange country" (18).

Shortly after Morrison's death, the Tropical Belt Coal Company is born and, in fact, all the credit for the establishment of the company goes to Morrison. Heyst achieves his goal at the cost of Morrison's death. At this stage, it can be presumed that Heyst has used Morrison for his interests, and it could well have been long premeditated by him. Schomberg, portrayed as a hotel keeper and somewhat evildoer, by Conrad, has rightly pointed out about Heyst's nature when he comments, "That's what comes of having anything to do with that fellow. He squeezes you dry like a lemon, then chuck you out – sends you home to die. Take warning by Morrison" (19).

In retrospect, Heyst manifests his will to govern by 'redeeming' Morrison through financing, later by invading his trade being himself a partner in the deal and finally by causing Morrison's extinction. Morrison's death in many ways symbolizes the loss of the colonized's identities. It also highlights one of the several strategies and machinations the colonizers exercise.

Wang, the Oriental: A Colonial Discourse

Wang 'The Chinaman', to use narrator's word, is believed to be in East Indies since a long time as the servant to white men. When Heyst encountered him he is shown as a coolie, 'not a common' one for his service to white men for long. The agreement between him and Heyst is based on a few words on the day "when the last batch of mine coolies was leaving Samburan" (145).

The narrator reveals very little about his identity and, whenever he does, he drops scanty information on piecemeal to create a mysterious image of him. The reader has to rely on what the characters say about him and most of what they say has a negative picture of Wang, the oriental, "Of the crowd of imported Chinese laborers, one at least had remained in Samburan, solitary and strange, like a swallow left behind at the migrating season of his tribe" (145). The difference between Heyst, 55, "broad chest, bald forehead, long moustaches, polite manner" (138) and Wang - 'yellow' thin face, clothed in a mysterious stolidity and reserved, "he did not seem to resent not being spoken to, except in single words at rate ... half a dozen" – is remarkable(148). It is not only the difference of Heyst and Wang but also that of the civilized and the raw. Wang's inscrutability (a notion about orient still commonplace among westerners of Conrad's day) surfaces from time to time. The picture of Wang as 'strange', 'mysterious', 'exotic' is almost a European invention, Conradian, and as Said has maintained in his introduction to *Orientalism*, "The orient had been since antiquity a place of romantic exotic beings" (1). In addition, Wang (the East) has helped to define Heyst (the West), his contrasting image, idea, personality and experience. Heyst with bald forehead (of a Caucasian origin, round skull, broad face, image of white eugenicists' definition of white races) and polite manner is contrasted

with yellow thin face, 'harsh voice' (258), a description that presents a subhuman image of Wang.

Wang's ancestors are far away, his parents are dead, and his elder brother is a soldier in the Yamen of some Mandarin, away in Formosa. His only tie in the world is the Alfuro woman, in exchange for whom he had given away some considerable part of his hard earned substance; and his duty could be to no one but himself.

The narrator reveals the identity of Alfuro woman in the same manner as of Wang. There is very little about her, as if the marginal space given to her description was meant. He depicts her as a shy, wild creature, "The couple lived at the edge of the forest, and she could sometimes be seen gazing towards the bungalow shading her eyes with her hand. Even from a distance she appeared to be a shy, wild creature" (146). This citation reveals the narrator's dehumanizing attitude towards Alfuro woman. She is denied the designation of a human and instead termed "wild creature" with no significant value.

In a sharp contrast, Lena, representative of the West, is portrayed as a fine lady with extraordinary beauty and soothing voice, a point which becomes clear when we consider the way in which Heyst addresses her, "My dear Lena, you don't know your own advantages. Why, your voice alone would be enough to make you unforgettable!" (204). In response to the above citations, it can be argued that Conrad wants to prove the superiority of the West to the East by propagating stereotypical, barbaric, uncivilized, mysterious images of Easterners.

Wang, who is a picture of a dominated with dominated and docile character, works as a gardener to Heyst, and makes his master pay for the vegetables which he raises to satisfy his instinct. The author's pure satire to Wang's obedience and simplicity is visible when the narrator says, "Heyst envied the Chinaman's obedience

to his instincts, the powerful simplicity of purpose which made his existence appear almost automatic in the mysterious precision of its facts” (148). The word ‘envy’ shows the deliberate ridicule or intended humor of the narrator. It is not so much about Heyst’s ‘envy’ as about the Chinaman’s obedience; “The powerful simplicity” of his purpose speaks of the automatized life Wang is living under his master, Heyst.

Similarly, the next oriental image the writer ascribes to Wang is that of a ghost when Heyst charges him for stealing revolver. At this point the narratorial description follows:

There was nothing to prevent that ghostly Chinaman from materializing suddenly at the foot of the stairs, or any where, at any moment, and toppling him over with a dead sure shot. (211)

Apart from his looks, his voice is not free from repudiation. Lena, for example, comments, “The way he talks in his harsh voice frightens me. I don’t like all these foreign people” (258). Contrary to this, Heyst is cast in positive terms as a courteous and polite speaker: His politeness is visible when he addresses to Lena:

“Excuse me,” ... “but that horrible female has done something to you. She has pinched you, hasn’t she? I am sure she pinched you just now, when she stood by your chair I am she pinched your arm most cruelly I am grieved to say that I don’t know. But can I do anything? What would you wish me to do? Pray command me.” (59-60)

This remark moves Lena profoundly. When she was looking down, “very still, without color, without glances, without voice ...”, it was Heyst who brought her life back, with his courteous tone and embellishing praises (59).

One thing that is obvious from the above excerpts is that Conrad intends to put that Westerners as ‘civilized’ as opposed to the uncivilized Easterners in all demeanors including the style and manner of speech and politeness.

Even Pedro, Ricardo and John, portrayed as the villainous roles in the story share the similar opinion concerning Wang. Despite the humiliation they are undergoing due to the presence of Heyst, the superior white, they form a rather low image of Wang, who is represented as almost sub human. This, despite the fact that they have been the victim of the superior white’s marginalization and subjugation themselves. As Heyst proposes Mr. Jones, Ricardo, and Pedro to move onto the prospective apartment Mr. Jones has this slighting remark about Wang, “The Chinaman and that ... ungrateful servant of yours, with the broken head, can load the things and come along after us” (199). Descriptions such as ‘The broken head’, ‘savage’, ‘ghost’ images to name a few from a number of referents used are frequently to downsize the person of Wang. These stereotypes show how the White supremacists viewed the other races – black as ‘savage’, ‘barbaric’ of arbitrary will or ‘passion’, ‘passive’, ‘unfit for self-governance’, along with the further divisions including, Irish as “pot-bellied, ‘bow-legged’ and ‘abortively featured’, simian, brutish; Italians as “sneaking and cowardly Sicilians who have lawless passions, the cutthroat practices, ‘port’, ‘ruffians’; Jews as ‘decadent white man’, ‘pervasive’, ‘lecherous’, ‘those bulging satyr eyes – the protruding fearfully sensual lips, and also animal jaw, ‘high-bridged nose’” (Jacobson, *The Political History of Whiteness*). New epistemological system of difference – a new visual economy- keys not only to cues of skin color, but to facial angle, head size and shape, physiognomy, hair and eye color and physique which become the determiners of who Wang is.

IV. Conclusion

Conrad's *Victory* can be studied as a colonial discourse in that it embodies the differences between the East and the West. For its projection of Wang as oriental, 'exotic' and 'inferior other' dominated by the West- the 'superior one' in a 'third World' backdrop of the Caribbean- the East Indies, *Victory* is a revelation of the colonial gambit of the latent being of Heyst, a person who pretends to be unconcerned with the mundane interests. Heyst, the Swede, embodies colonies such as England, Spain, France, Sweden and other European imperial powers; Wang, the colonized Asia, Africa, the Middle East, the Caribbean and the Latin America. Similarly, Samburan of the East Indies constitutes the possibility of a spatial context of the colonized land, the other possibilities being the characters of three different belongings- Asian, Latin and the European. Evidently so, the protagonist bears all the virtues with which the colonizers are typified such as that of a true Christian missionary- philanthropist, civilizer of the barbaric, savior of the doomed and so on. The Latino, like Pedro and Ricardo, receives the attribute of the uncivilized, and more so Wang, the Asian. Nevertheless before long Heyst's true self is revealed in the form of an empire builder, one who makes Samburan the industrial center by establishing The Tropical Belt Coal Company. Not only does he make the island an imperial center, but also starts exercising his power first over the weaklings like Morrison, who is in desperate need of money, and then Wang.

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