

THE DUALISTIC MODE OF THE DIVIDED HEROISM IN HEART OF DARKNESS AND SEASON OF MIGRATION TO THE NORTH

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ABSTRACT: *This paper analyses the Dualistic Mode of the Divided Heroism in Heart Darkness and Season of Migration to the North. Heart of Darkness is a novel by the Polish-British novelist Joseph Conrad, about a voyage up the Congo River into the Congo Free State, in the heart of Africa, by the story's narrator Marlow. Marlow tells his story to friends aboard a boat anchored on the River Thames, London, England. And in Season of Migration to the North the unnamed narrator has returned to his native village in the Sudan after seven years in England furthering his education. On his arrival home, the Narrator encounters a new villager named Mustafa Sa'eed who exhibits none of the adulation for his achievements that most others do, and he displays an antagonistically aloof nature. Mustafa betrays his past one drunken evening by wistfully reciting poetry in fluent English, leaving the narrator resolute to discover the stranger's identity. The story of Mustafa's troubled past in Europe, and in particular his love affairs with British women, form the center of the novel. The narrator then discovers that the stranger, Mustafa Sa'eed, awakens in him great curiosity, despair and anger, as Mustafa emerges as his doppelganger. The novel has also been related in many senses to Heart of Darkness by the author Joseph Conrad. Both novels explore cultural hybridity, cross-colonial experiences, and orientalism. The paper tries to clarify the divided heroism in Heart of Darkness through Kurtz and Marlowe, while in Season of Migration to the North through the anonymous narrator and Mustafa Saeed.*

KEYWORDS: Dualism, Heroes, Characters, Cultural Identity

INTRODUCTION

The novel *Heart of Darkness* holds a somewhat pessimistic view of human nature and suggests that, despite surface appearances, human nature remains overwhelmingly subject to instinctual passions, emotions, and appetites that essentially, it remains primitive. These primitive impulses are fully awakened in people like Kurtz in the midst of Africa, the so-called Dark Continent. In the general discourse of the age in which this novella was written, Africa was viewed very much as a hotbed of primitivism and savagery. However, it is the morally corrupt, materialistic, greedy Europeans who rush to plunder Africa's people and its natural resources that are seen as being the worst of all in this story. Marlow issues a sobering reminder at the very start of the book that London, the heart of one of the supposedly most modern and advanced civilizations, is not necessarily as refined as it seems, or certainly has not been in the past: 'And this also,' said Marlow suddenly, 'has been one of the dark places of the earth.' Therefore London, and not Africa, is the first place to be linked with the idea of darkness, and the suggestion of darkness returns at the end of the novel, overspreading the Thames. The behavior of the Europeans in Africa certainly seems to confirm the idea that they are really no more civilized than the natives whom they oppress. The novel gives a picture of human nature as being as vast and deep as any continent. This is apparent, for example, when Marlow finds

himself responding to the primitive dancing and singing among the natives. He feels the primitive tug in himself, because, as he says: The mind of man is capable of anything - because everything is in it, all the past as well as all the future. In other words, human nature is seen to be all encompassing. It can take in at least the veneer of civilized sophistication while still retaining primal impulses. Sober, relatively well-balanced individuals like Marlow can become aware of this duality without giving way to extreme emotions, but such an awareness is seen to have a terrible effect on a person like Kurtz, who is creative, passionate, idealistic in a word, unstable. Interestingly, the novella also hints at a contrary view to this idea of human nature as being wide and deep, in the depiction of the general manager and the brick maker. Tayeb Saleh's writing is drawn from his experience of communal village life that is centered on people and their complex relationships. "At various levels and with varying degrees of psychoanalytic emphasis, he deals with themes of reality and illusion, the cultural dissonance between the West and the exotic orient, the harmony and conflict of brotherhood, and the individual's responsibility to find a fusion between his or her contradictions" . It can be said that the motifs of his books are derived from his Islamic background and his experience of modern Africa, both pre- and post-colonial. *Mawsim al-Hijra ila al-Shamal* was published in Arabic in 1966, and in English as *Season of Migration to the North* in 1969. It is narrated by a young man who returns to his village of Wad Hamad in the northern Shamaliyah province in Sudan, after studying in Europe for seven years, eager to make a contribution to the new postcolonial life of his country. Once back, the narrator discovers a stranger among the familiar faces of childhood: the enigmatic Mustafa Sa'eed. Sa'eed takes the young man into his confidence, "telling him the story of his own years in London in the early part of the twentieth century, of his brilliant career as an economist, and of the series of fraught and deadly relationships with European women that led to a terrible public reckoning and his return to his native land."

The novel was adapted into a theater production in Israel. *Urs' al-Zayn* (published in English as "The Wedding of Zein") is a comic novella published in 1969 centering on the unlikely nuptials of the town eccentric Zein. Tall and odd-looking, with just two teeth in his mouth, Zein has made a reputation for himself as the man who falls in love over and over with girls who promptly marry other men- to the point where mothers seek him out in hopes that he will draw the eye of available suitors to their eligible daughters.^[1] "The Wedding of Zein" was made into a drama in Libya and won Kuwaiti filmmaker Khalid Siddiq an award in the Cannes Festival in the late 1970s. the year he stroke up the yearly award Yearly Award, Endorsed by Tayeb Salih during his life and organized by Abdelkarim Mirghani Cultural Centre, Omdurman, Sudan. A group of Salih's friends and fans formed a committee to honour him in 1998. The committee collected \$ 20,000 for Tayeb Salih's personal use. However, he indicated his desire to utilize the money in launching a cultural initiative that supports literary life in Sudan. Abdelkarim Mirghani Cultural Centre's Board of Trustees established an independent secretariat to administer the Prize award and the associated activities. A committee of writers and academics in Sudan receives and evaluates the participating novels, and selects the winners. The winners are announced on the 21st of October of each year and the winning titles are published by Abdelkarim Mirghani Cultural Centre. The award of the Prize is usually accompanied by a conference on various aspects of Sudanese literature.

DISCUSSION

In *Heart of Darkness* Joseph Conrad's Duality of Human Nature Civilized. Savage the women of Kurtz's life are opposite yet akin in their beauty and love for Kurtz. The intended is the embodiment of light, "all the sad light of the cloudy evening had taken refuge on her forehead. This fair hair, this pale visage, this pure brow, seemed surrounded by an ashy halo". While the tribal woman is the embodiment of primitive darkness, "savage and superb, wild-eyed and magnificent; there was something ominous and stately in her deliberate progress". We see similarity in "She put out her arms... stretching them back and with clasped pale hands across the fading and narrow sheen of the window... resembling in this gesture another one, tragic also... stretching bare brown arms over the glitter of the infernal stream, the stream of darkness". Kurtz's Intended V. Tribal Woman Conclusion of Duality This is a dominant form of duality within *Heart of Darkness* because the "White" men are supposed to be civil while the African's are called savage. When in reality of the story, the white men are the savages in the way they treat the African people. Kurtz V. Marlow Kurtz loses all morals to the wilderness whereas Marlow does not give in to primitive lusts. However, Marlow is tempted, and that is why he is haunted by Kurtz. Kurtz represents complete savagery, lack of strength, and darkness all things that Marlow is trying to combat and make sense of. By examining Kurtz's soul, Marlow has to examine his own soul as well. By drawing connections between Marlow and Kurtz, and the savage woman and the Intended, Conrad gives the impression that maybe the line that separate darkness from light, savagery from civilization, and right from wrong isn't necessarily clear. *Heart of Darkness* (1899) is a novella^[1] by Polish-British novelist Joseph Conrad, about a voyage up the Congo River into the Congo Free State, in the heart of Africa, by the story's narrator Marlow. Marlow tells his story to friends aboard a boat anchored on the River Thames, London, England. This setting provides the frame for Marlow's story of his obsession with the ivory trader Kurtz, which enables Conrad to create a parallel between London and Africa as places of darkness. Central to Conrad's work is the idea that there is little difference between so-called civilized people and those described as savages; *Heart of Darkness* raises important questions about imperialism and racism. Originally published as a three-part serial story in *Blackwood's Magazine*, the novella *Heart of Darkness* has been variously published and translated into many languages. In 1998, the Modern Library ranked *Heart of Darkness* as the sixty-seventh of the hundred in English of the twentieth century. Joseph Conrad acknowledged that *Heart of Darkness* was in part based on his own experiences during his travels in Africa. In 1890, at the age of 32, he was appointed by a Belgian trading company to serve as the captain of a steamer on the Congo River. Conrad, who was born in Poland and later settled in England, had eagerly anticipated the voyage, having decided to become a sailor at an early age. While sailing up the Congo River from one station to another, the captain became ill, Conrad assumed command of the boat and guided the ship to the trading company's innermost station. He reportedly became disillusioned with Imperialism, after witnessing the cruelty and corruption perpetrated by the European companies in the area. The novella's main narrator, Charles Marlow, is believed to have been based upon the author.[2] There have been many proposed sources for the character of the antagonist, Kurtz. Georges-Antoine Klein, an agent who became ill and later died aboard Conrad's steamer, has been identified by scholars and literary critics as one basis for Kurtz. The principal figures involved in the disastrous "rear column" of the Emin Pasha Relief Expedition, have also been identified as likely sources, including column leader Edmund Musgrave Barttelot, slave trader Tippu Tip and the expedition's overall leader, Welsh explorer Henry Morton Stanley. Adam Hochschild, in *King Leopold's Ghost*, believes that the Belgian soldier Léon Rom is the most important influence on the character. When Conrad

began to write the novella, eight years after returning from Africa, he drew inspiration from his travel journals. In his words, *Heart of Darkness* is "a wild story of a journalist who becomes manager of a station in the (African) interior and makes himself worshipped by a tribe of savages. "I call your own kind self to witness the last pages of *Heart of Darkness* where the interview of the man and the girl locks in as it were the whole 30000 words of narrative description into one suggestive view of a whole phase of life and makes of that story something quite on another plane than an anecdote of a man who went mad in the Centre of Africa."^[3]

Season of Migration to the North (Mawsim al-Hiğra ilā ash-Shamāl) is a classic post-colonial Sudanese novel by the novelist Tayeb Salih. Originally published in Arabic in 1966, it has since been translated into more than twenty languages. The novel is a counter narrative to *Heart of Darkness*. It was described by Edward Said as one of the ten great novels in Arabic literature. The unnamed narrator has returned to his native village in the Sudan after seven years in England furthering his education. On his arrival home, the Narrator encounters a new villager named Mustafa Sa'eed who exhibits none of the adulation for his achievements that most others do, and he displays an antagonistically aloof nature. Mustafa betrays his past one drunken evening by wistfully reciting poetry in fluent English, leaving the narrator resolute to discover the stranger's identity. The Narrator later asks Mustafa about his past, and Mustafa tells the Narrator much of his story, often saying "I am no Othello, Othello was a lie," as well as "I am a lie." The Narrator becomes fascinated by Mustafa, and he learns that Mustafa was also a precocious student educated in the west but he held a violent, hateful and complex relationship with his western identity and acquaintances. The story of Mustafa's troubled past in Europe, and in particular his love affairs with British women, form the center of the novel. The narrator then discovers that the stranger, Mustafa Sa'eed, awakens in him great curiosity, despair and anger, as Mustafa emerges as his doppelgänger. The stories of Mustafa's past life in England, and the repercussions on the village around him, taking their toll on the narrator, who is driven to the very edge of sanity. In the final chapter, the Narrator is floating in the Nile, precariously between life and death, and makes the conscious choice to rid himself of Mustafa's lingering presence, and to stand as an influential individual in his own right. The novel has also been related in many senses to *Heart of Darkness* by author Joseph Conrad. Both novels explore cultural hybridity, cross-colonial experiences, and orientalism. *Season of Migration to the North* focuses on the Marlow-like narrator's account of the story of the brilliant and promising Mustafa Sa'eed, whose journey north to the European "heart of light" England from his Sudanese village is a deliberate reversal of Kurtz's journey into the heart of darkness the Congo. Sa'eed's experience in England, similar to Kurtz's in Africa, is marked by self-loathing, despair, and a desire for annihilation. Having spent seven years in jail for the murder of his English wife, Jean Morris, and having also been responsible for the suicide of three other women whom he had seduced and abandoned, Sa'eed retreats to a village near Khartoum in the Sudan where, before committing suicide, he befriends the Marlow-like narrator and makes him the guardian of his sons and wife, the keeper of his flame, and the repository of his enigmatic life. *Season* explicitly evokes the ambiance, ambivalence, and ambiguity of Conrad's novel, but implicitly refers to the discrepancies evident in Conrad's attempts to criticize the culture of imperialism in his work. In *Season*, however, Salih transposes Conrad's invidious implication of the "blank space" that is Africa to Marlow, Kurtz, and the "pilgrims," to suggest that Sa'eed's encounter in England is precisely the same, but in reverse. Here, Sa'eed is the Kurtz-figure, coming face-to-face with the "horror" of his own spiritual and physical exile. Frederic Jameson describes such an interpretation as "the rewriting or restructuration of a prior historical or ideological subtext, it being always understood that the 'subtext' is immediately present as such, not some common-sense external reality, nor even the conventional narratives of history

manuals, but rather must itself always be (re)constructed after the fact." Thus the "paradox" of the "subtext," as Jameson puts it, "may be summed in this, that the literary work or cultural object, as though for the first time, brings into being that very situation to which it is also, at one and the same time, a reaction." Sa'eed's intimations of his difference from others begins early: "I was like something rounded, made of rubber: you throw it in the water it doesn't get wet, you throw it on the ground and it bounces back". This detachment, even dispassionate rationalization, marks Sa'eed's felt difference from others, a moral hollow at the core of his being. Indeed, as he notes, "This is a fact in my life: the way chance has placed people in my path who gave me a helping hand at every stage, people for whom I had no feelings of gratitude; I used to take their help as though it were some duty they were performing for me". Sa'eed's misapprehension of his own inviolability is the first indication of the central consequence of his attempt at assimilation in the West, an attempt that correspondingly distances him from his own people and culture. As Frantz Fanon observes, "Every colonized people in other words, every people in whose soul an inferiority complex has been created by the death and burial of its local cultural originality finds itself face to face with the language of the civilizing nation; that is, with the culture of the mother country. The colonized is elevated above his jungle status in proportion to his adoption of the mother country's standards."^[4] Mawsim al-Hijra ila al-Shamal was published in Arabic in 1966, and in English as *Season of Migration to the North* in 1969. It is narrated by a young man who returns to his village of Wad Hamad in the northern Shamaliyah province in Sudan, after studying in Europe for seven years^[5]. Salih achieved immediate acclaim when *Season of Migration to the North* was first published in Beirut. In 2001, the book was declared "the most important Arabic novel of the 20th century" by the Arab Literary Academy. The novel was banned in Saleh's native Sudan for several years despite the fact that it won him prominence and fame worldwide.^[6]

CONCLUSION

Heart of Darkness is criticized in postcolonial studies, particularly by the Nigerian novelist Chinua Achebe, who is considered to be "patriarch of the African Novel". In his 1975 public lecture "An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*", Achebe described Conrad's novella as "an offensive and deplorable book" that de-humanized Africans. Achebe argued that Conrad, "blinkered...with xenophobia", incorrectly depicted Africa as the antithesis of Europe and civilization, ignoring the artistic accomplishments of the Fang people who lived in the Congo River basin at the time of the book's publication. Since the book promoted and continues to promote a prejudiced image of Africa that "depersonalizes a portion of the human race," he concluded that it should not be considered a great work of art. Salih posits Sa'eed's methodical seduction and abandonment of the English women Ann Hammond, Sheila Greenwood, Isabella Seymore and the murder of his wife, as acts of atonement for his moral exile, for his own preference for the West. For the women, Sa'eed represents a "curiosity," the fatal attraction of the mysterious East, the same attraction that provokes Marlow to explore the "blank space" on the map; the same enticement that finally devours Kurtz. It is an attraction formed from the very principles of the Eurocentric desire to conquer, control, and civilize other nations and cultures. When Isabella Seymore asks Sa'eed whether he is African or Asian, he responds: 'I'm like Othello ArabAfrican,' I said to her. 'Yes,' she said, looking into my face. 'Your nose is like the noses of Arabs in pictures, but your hair isn't soft and jet black like that of Arabs.' 'Yes, that's me. My face is Arab like the desert of the Empty Quarter, while my head is African and teems with a mischievous childishness'. Isabella's frame of reference is the

territorial map of England's colonies in Africa and Asia and Sa'eed's response is deliberately suggestive of his recognition of the English attitude toward its colonial subjects children in need of discipline and guidance. Isabella, for instance, "would hear me out in silence, a Christian sympathy in her eyes, There came a moment when I felt I had been transformed in her eyes into a naked, primitive creature, a spear in one hand and arrows in the other, hunting elephants and lions in the jungle" . The ideological suppositions of colonialism, reiterated in the stereotypical image of himself that Saeed perceives in Isabella's response to his tall tales of Africa, insistently recalls Kurtz's lie. The paper comes to conclude that the dualistic mod of the divided heroism is apparent the Kurtz and Marlow in Heart of Darkness, whereas the unnamed narrator and Mustafa Saeed share the heroism in Season of Migration to the North. They appear as stereotypical elements in both novels.

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