A PSYCHOANALYTIC READING OF JOSEPH CONRAD'S *HEART OF DARKNESS* FROM THE FROMMIAN PERSPECTIVE

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A PSYCHOANALYTIC READING OF JOSEPH CONRAD'S *HEART OF DARKNESS*

FROM THE FROMMIAN PERSPECTIVE

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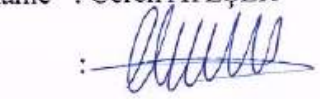
Signature : 

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ABSTRACT

A PSYCHOANALYTIC READING OF JOSEPH CONRAD'S *HEART OF DARKNESS* FROM THE FROMMIAN PERSPECTIVE

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This study of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* aims at a psychoanalytic reading of the relationship between Marlow and Kurtz, the two main characters of the novel, and the role of civilisation and nature duality play a great role in determining the fate of Marlow and Kurtz in the light of Frommian theory.

The first chapter presents a detailed exploration of the milestones of Conrad's life as well as his struggle for survival. Living within a Modernist milieu, Conrad investigates the situation of man in this world and also questions the meaning of life. As the representation of Conrad's perception of Western civilisation and reality, varying critical considerations, Freudian psychoanalysis included, of *Heart of Darkness* will be discussed to prepare the ground for

application of Frommian psychoanalysis to the novel.

The second chapter is an examination of Fromm and Frommian psychoanalysis. Attention is focused on the revised form of psychoanalysis after Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis and what Fromm himself has to say on the nature- man relationship, the nature of the individual and effects of civilisation on the individual.

The third chapter consists of a detailed reading of the novel from a Frommian psychoanalytic perspective. This reading explores the unconscious reasons in the psyche of Europeans, for their colonialist attitude and degradation in Congo. Kurtz's primitivity and violence is explained as a narcissistic behaviour, in Frommian terms, that represents the need to turn back to the security of the mother's womb. The idea of horror expressed by Kurtz at the end of his voyage to the dark realms of the human psyche, reflects man's loss of unity with nature in the modern world, his limitation by the impositions of the society and social institutions, and their repression on the human unconscious.

ÖZ

JOSEPH CONRAD'IN *KARANLIĞIN YÜREĞİ* ADLI ROMANININ FROMMCU PSİKANALİZ YÖNTEMİYLE İNCELENMESİ

ATEŞER, Ceren

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Bu tez, Conrad'ın *Karanlığın Yüreği* adlı eserindeki iki ana karakter, Marlow ve Kurtz'ü, bu iki karakter arasındaki ilişkiyi, ve karakterlerin bilinçaltını psikoanaliz yöntemiyle incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu okuma sayesinde, bu ilişkinin gelişimiyle beraber ortaya konulan doğanın ve medeniyetin insan psikolojisindeki rolü gibi sorular Frommcu psikoanaliz yöntemden yararlanılarak çözümlenmeye çalışılmıştır.

Birinci bölüm Conrad'ı anlamak için oluşturulmuştur. Yaşadığı dönemdeki savaş koşulları ve ağır hayat şartlarının Conrad üzerinde bıraktığı etkiler vurgulanmıştır. Modernist sanat akımının yöntem olarak kullanıldığı dönemde yazar olan Conrad, insanın dünyadaki konumu ve insan yaşamının anlamı gibi

konular üzerine kafa yormuştur. Conrad'ın Batı medeniyeti algısını gösteren eseri *Karanlığın Yüreği* Freud psikoanalizi dahil birçok eleştirel yaklaşıma konu olmuştur ve ikinci bölüm romanın Fromm psikonalizine giriş için altyapı oluşturmaktadır.

İkinci bölüm Erich Fromm'u ve onun psikoanaliz yöntemini anlatmaktadır. Bu bölümde ağırlık Fromm'un Sigmund Freud psikoanalizini yeniden yorumlamasına ve Freud psikoanalizini nasıl geliştirdiğine verilmiştir. Buna ek olarak Fromm'un doğa-insan ilişkisi, insan doğası ve medeniyetin insan üzerindeki etkilerini sorgulayan görüşlerine de yer verilmiştir.

Üçüncü bölümde romanın Fromm'un psikonaliz anlayışıyla detaylı okuması yapılmıştır. Bu okumada Avrupalıların Kongo'da yaptıkları sömürgeci ve aşağılayıcı davranışlarındaki bilinçaltı sebepler araştırılmıştır. Kurtz'ün sergilediği şiddet davranışları Fromm'cu yaklaşıma göre anne karnı huzuruna dönme isteğinden kaynaklı narsist davranışlar olarak tanımlanmıştır. İnsan psikolojisinin derinlerine inildiğinde görülen Kurtz'ün dehşet fikri, modern insanın doğayla olan bütünleşmesini kaybetmesini, sosyal sınırlandırmaların ve kurumların insanlar ve onların bilinçaltına yaptıkları dayatmaları vurgulamaktadır.

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INTRODUCTION

Economic fluctuations, unrest in policy, social conflicts and wars influenced literature, philosophy and the thought system of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Changing cultural values, the rapid rise in capitalism and industrialism, technological and scientific innovations changed people's expectations and lifestyles, which are paired by intellectual inclinations of the time. Writers of the period both affect the society and are affected by it. As a multinational novelist who lived in this period of transformation, Joseph Conrad was influenced by all the events changing not only England but the whole of Europe in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Joseph Conrad was born into a noble Polish family in 1857. As a Polish-born writer, Joseph Conrad's memories about his childhood are not pleasant. He was born into a strict debate between Poland and Russia; thus, his personality and ideas are "influenced by the events affecting France, Poland, and Russia during the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth centuries. These events would form the context for Conrad's life and also for much of his fiction." (Peters, 2006, p. 19) His father, Apollo Korzeniowski, was a nationalist writer, and translated the works of important writers from French and English into Polish, an occupation which provided the child Conrad with a wide range of writers to read. His father was exiled with his wife and four-year-old Joseph by the Russians for helping the anti-Russian rebellion. Because of the hard physical conditions of exile, both of

Conrad's parents died of tuberculosis and his "other relatives were either killed or imprisoned." (Peters, 2006, p. 24) Orphaned at the age of twelve, Joseph Conrad was sent for the care of his uncle; yet he never "recovered from psychological wounds . . . his loneliness was part of a deep-rooted melancholia attributable to the death of his parents." (Cox, 1977, p. 67) He started to work as a sailor when he was 16 years old, after which he committed himself to an adventurous life at sea. Furthermore, by means of his talent in sailing he gained British citizenship and learned English at the age of twenty one. His journeys to different territories of the world gave Conrad a chance to write about his adventurous experiences. As one of his most outstanding works, *Heart of Darkness* which brought him international fame, is an account of a journey he took to Congo.

The life and experiences of Joseph Conrad have a great influence on his writing career. Conrad wrote, in *A Personal Record,* that "a novelist lives in his work. He stands there, the only reality in an invented world, among imaginary things, happenings and people. Writing about them he is only writing about himself." (Meyer, 1967, p. 3) Joseph Conrad's personal history embraces a variety of different lifestyles: he was an adventurer, a sailor, a boatman and one of the most influential novelists in English literature. Each one of these identities is reflected in different characteristics of his writing. His view of life, in other words, conveys special features of all these personalities.

Peters identifies Conrad with Modernism, as his writing style which reflects "alienation, solitude, and epistemological uncertainty that so many of his characters experience speak" fits with its style and writing techniques as well as his ideas and concept of reality. He goes on to state that "they consistently try to give meaning and order in human existence." (Peters, 2006, p. 33) Having

experienced the difficulties of survival, Conrad "became conscious of human condition and explored man's freedom and responsibility in an absurd world." (Bala, 1990, p. 7) Conrad also scrutinizes his inner nature because, as Bala suggests, "man, frustrated by his experiences in the world, turns to his inner self to comprehend life's significance." (p. 24) According to Conrad, we draw a picture of our lives, and turn life into a meaningful one by working productively.

Conrad reveals his concept of human existence in the 'Author's Note' to his novel, *Chance*: "[t]he history of men on this earth since the beginning of ages may be resumed in one phrase of infinite poignancy: They were born, they suffered, they died. . . Yet it is a great tale." (Bala, 1990, p. 25) Throughout his writing, Conrad examines facts, enigmas and hidden motives of life and investigates the existential meaning lying beyond life itself. His experiences and his vision of tragic memories of childhood are reflected in his fiction; hence, he makes up his fictional works on the basis of his own concept of human experience and existence. The social and psychological facts that influenced Conrad's works are reflected in the settings, atmosphere and characters in his works. *Heart of Darkness*, is one of the most representative works of Joseph Conrad, which conveys the reader through a journey taken into the inner depths of the human psyche.

Heart of Darkness "was the second story in the *Youth* volume and appeared first in *Blackwood's Magazine*, 1899, in issues of February, March and April." (Sherry, 1973, p. 129) It is grounded on the real story of Conrad's trip to Congo in 1890. With the voice of Marlow, the narrator in the novel, Conrad expresses his concern with the human predicament in the universe and man's relation to his own self: "There is no doubt that Conrad's own experience in Congo had a profound

effect on him; he is reputed to have once told Edward Garnett, 'Before Congo I was just a mere animal,' and it is this effect that Conrad tries to transmit to his reader." (Peters, 2006, p. 54) By means of the voyage of Marlow into the depths of Congo for the aim of reaching at Kurtz, Conrad, in fact, dives into the unconscious of his character. According to Tessitore, "this journey is not merely one of Marlow's self-discovery . . . but the much greater journey of all civilisations from its present (Western European) state of development back to its primitive origins." (p. 91) As a modernist writer, Conrad focuses on individual problems but he associates them with the universal psychic experience that is signified through symbolism throughout the novel.

Revealing reality through symbols by analysing the unconscious of the writer and the characters in the novel is the subject of the twentieth century's psychoanalytic literary criticism which is based on the theories of Sigmund Freud. "Freud's view that works of literature, like dreams, express secret, unconscious desires led to criticism that interpreted literary works as a manifestation of the author neuroses." (Murfin, 1989, p. 265) Literature and all other forms of art are full of fantasies which reflect the unconscious wish fulfilment of the artist in respect to Freud's psychoanalytic approach, which is based on the libido theory. Freudian libido theory explains what evokes human action assuming that the nature of human behaviour is motivated by instinctual drives. Freud's concept "abstracts from a specific socio-political situation, the sexual repression of Victorian culture, and projects interpersonal conflict into the solitary world of the individual subject." (Elliott, 2002, p. 47) According to Freud, from early infancy to adulthood, the unconscious is present for all individuals. The repressed sexual desires from the age of infancy to adulthood remain as fixations in the

unconscious of the adult; furthermore these fixations become basic motivations for human behaviour in adult life. To sum up, for Freud, the energy that activates human behaviour is charged by sexual pleasure.

According to psychoanalytic literary criticism, the literary work addresses the unconscious of the reader "by translating its manifest elements into latent, unconscious determinants that constitute their suppressed meanings." (Abrams, 1999, p. 249) By means of psychoanalytic reading, thus, the critic reveals the latent content of the work and the unconscious of the writer. Freudian psychoanalysis defines the human psyche in layers: id, which contains "everything that is inherited, that is present at birth, that is laid down in the constitution- above all, therefore the instincts, which originate from the somatic organisation and which find a first psychical expression here (in the id) in forms unknown to us." (Freud, 1958, p. 144) According to Freud, the id is the supply of unconscious, instinctual and irrational desires. Ego, which "in relation to the id, . . . performs the task of self-preservation by gaining control over the demands of the instincts, by deciding whether they are to be allowed satisfaction, by postponing that satisfaction, to times and circumstances favourable in the external world or by suppressing their excitations entirely", is the second layer. Ego, in short, is the rational and conscious part that represses the instinctual and irrational desires in human psychic structure. (Freud, 1958, p. 145)

Freudian psychoanalysis has been revised, reformulated and developed in time by other psychoanalysts who followed his trend. As a neo-Freudian psychoanalyst Erich Fromm, for example, revises Freudian psychoanalysis by criticising Freud's libido theory in which the sexual desire plays the most important role for the motivation of human behaviour and his unconscious. They

have different perspectives about human nature: “Freud thinks that in human evolution the main driving force that is sexual energy undergoes an evolution which occurs from birth to puberty in the life of every individual.” (Chaudhuri, 1991, p. 155) Fromm, however, believes that “human nature . . . is moulded by cultural atmosphere and not by instinct” (Chaudhuri, 1991, p. 7) As opposed to Freud’s idea that “man is egoistic and self-centered, Fromm says that man is basically social, because from cradle to the grave man is involved in social situations.” (Chaudhuri, 1991, p. 7-8) Thus, depending upon Freud’s ideas basically, Erich Fromm drags psychoanalysis to a socio-biological base as he suggests that human behaviour is not only biologically but also sociologically motivated. Fromm believes that “psychoanalytic theory must be reformulated better to conceptualize the place of social and historical factors in self-constitution.” (Elliott, 2002, p. 47)

For Fromm, Freud’s work on psychoanalysis focuses on a specific situation which is the sexual repression of Victorian people. According to Freud, man is driven by two biological facts: one is his libidinous drives, the other is his drive for self-preservation. He believes that “Sublimation of instinct is an especially conspicuous feature of cultural evolution. . .” (Freud, 1962, p. 63) Erich Fromm opposes Freud’s idea which reduces psychoanalysis to sexual repression only. Fromm emphasizes, instead, the idea that man suffers from being a member of society. He claims that society depicts some certain character types that it privileges, and those who do not conform to this ideal are cast out from the society. According to Freudian psychoanalysis irrational instinctual desires are the product of the id which biologically exists for all individuals; however, Fromm supports the idea that “Man’s nature, his passions and anxieties, are cultural

products; as a matter of fact, man himself is the most important creation and achievement of the continuous human effort, the record of which we call history." (Fromm, 1965, p. 65) According to Fromm, human evolution results from cultural and social changes not from organic development.

Erich Fromm, like Conrad, is concerned with human existence and the evolution of human behaviour. His concept of psychoanalysis is based on the idea that the more man develops in civilisation, the more he furthers from the unification and harmony that prehistoric man had with nature; thus, human existence changes the system of ecological harmony between nature and its inhabitants. This new situation "brought two things to them; an increased feeling of strength and at the same time an increased isolation, doubt, scepticism." (Fromm, 1965, p. 65) Given the capacity for self awareness, reason and conscience, man tries to transcend nature, in the process of which he becomes from his original habitat. Although he is a part of nature, his self awareness dissociates him from nature by developing a sense of estrangement; moreover, his self-awareness leads him to the perception that he is not as powerful as he believed he was and his existence is limited by laws of nature.

Man is the only animal whose existence is problematic for himself. He desires to get over his existential problems and his eternal restlessness by indulging in facts that will give him a sense of belonging and satisfaction. According to Fromm, no matter how much man tries, he remains dissatisfied and the only solution that he can achieve to get over his problems is to face the truth of his pathetic loneliness both in nature and in society. At this point, man assumes "the fact that only by using his powers can he give meaning to his life. . . If he faces the truth without panic he will recognize that there is no meaning to life

except the meaning man gives his life by unfolding of his powers, by living productively." (Fromm, 1947, p. 32) In this respect, the dichotomy and the sense of disharmony that man feels in his alienation from nature leads him to an everlasting endeavour to revive the lost harmony and equilibrium with nature.

This endeavour is reflected in man's eternal struggle to fulfil his emotional vacuum, the hollowness and the endless void in his psychic being. In his struggle to (re)establish this artificial tie with life and to achieve new means of rootedness, man turns to his fellow men and his society. In this respect, man has to submit to one of three choices that are offered to him by society: either to retain his status in society by adopting himself to the norms of society without questioning, or to escape from his society, or to persist in living in it and trying to change the norms in line with his individual norms.

Fromm submits a new psychoanalytical approach which highlights the relation between the individual and society. This psychoanalytical theory, based on humanistic ideals, argues the problems of self, not only in relation to biological drives but also existential, historical and cultural improvement. Either way man engages in a pathological interaction with society that causes alienation or isolation of the individual/self from society. Consequently, man's existential alienation or loneliness, caused by the loss of disharmony with nature haunts man as a life-long problem resulting from suppressions brought upon him by society. Not only biological drives, as suggested by Freud, but social and cultural influences affect the motivation of human behaviour consequent to these restrictions that are stored as the fixations in the unconscious. Working mainly on non-organic drives of human behaviour, Erich Fromm's revision of psychoanalysis reveals the socio-biological components of the unconscious.

Depending upon Fromm's claim that literary psychoanalysis "aims to explore the hidden thought and to explain the distortions . . . [and that] psychological considerations play an important part in such analysis" in *The Revision of Psychoanalysis*, Frommian psychoanalysis is applied in this thesis to *Heart of Darkness* to reveal the unconscious of the main characters, Kurtz and Marlow, within the frame of social, cultural, biological and psychological influences on the human psyche. *Heart of Darkness* is the story of a journey up to the Congo River into the dark jungle of Congo. This metaphorical journey taken by the narrator, Marlow, recounts a spiritual voyage of self-discovery into depths of the human psyche. Marlow tries to understand his own nature by reaching to Kurtz, the manager of Central station of a European company in which he trades ivory, who has gone astray. As a member of the imperialist society, who went to Congo as an agent and submissive member of it, Kurtz represents the zenith of Western/European civilisation with his education and his artistic skills. In Congo, Kurtz functions as an important figure who helps Marlow penetrate deeper into human nature that helps him understand his own identity. Throughout this real voyage that he takes into the depths of the jungle, Marlow is exposed to human nature in both its primitive and civilised variations which lead him into a symbiotic relationship with his imperialist society. As the domineering part of this relationship, the imperialist culture uses him as a tool. Turning into his inner self, he discovers that man becomes the slave of civilisation and economic instrument for more money. As a true witness of this materialistic attitude of the civilised Europeans, Marlow, and as a European intellectual who transforms into a savage in the jungle, Kurtz, both supply enough material for analysing of *Heart of Darkness* from Frommian psychoanalytic perspective. According to Frommian

psychoanalysis, man who alienates from nature in the process of civilisation feels isolated and homeless in society, and he cannot turn back to nature properly as he has lost his pure touch with nature in this process. Kurtz, in this sense, exemplifies the civilised man for his problematic relationship with both society and nature for he can neither retain his social motives when freed from the norms and institutions of society, nor have the pure conscience to conform to nature totally. Thus he loses all control and evolves into an irrepressible tyrant. Marlow, on the other hand, can keep his sanity only by indulging himself in hardwork.

As opposed to Freudian readings of *Heart of Darkness* that consider Africa and dark jungles of Congo as the reflection of the human id, this thesis analyses the novel from Frommian perspective in terms of civilisation and nature dichotomy. Fromm identifies the civilising process with corruption that cuts man off from nature totally. In consequence of the loss of touch with nature, he believes, man becomes violent. In the first chapter of this thesis, after some introductory background information on Joseph Conrad's literary career and ideas, Freudian readings of *Heart of Darkness* will be referred. In the second chapter, Erich Fromm's revision of Freudian psychoanalysis in the developing process of humanistic psychoanalytic is discussed to provide a frame for the analysis of the novel from a Frommian perspective. The third chapter will mainly be dedicated to a Frommian reading of the novel especially from the perspective of Kurtz and Marlow's experiences with Africa. Finally it will be concluded that despite quite satisfactory psychoanalytic explanations of characters' unconscious, minds or drives from Freudian perspective, Frommian psychoanalysis explains such ambiguities as the nature of primitive and the mechanics of Kurtz's tragic transformation.

CHAPTER 1

CONRAD'S TRAUMATIC LIFE AND ITS REFLECTIONS IN HIS PERCEPTION OF REALITY

Joseph Conrad had a traumatic life that influenced his psychology deeply. The exile, illness, death, misery and other tragic events that marked his early life caused psychological problems from which he suffered throughout his life. Even though the suggested reasons are controversial, he is known to have committed suicide by shooting himself in the chest in 1878. Some of his biographers associate this attempt with a love affair, whereas others claim that it was despair over financial ruin, yet, it is a well established fact that Conrad suffered a heavy depression that reappears in many of his works throughout his life.

It is possible to trace influences of the psychological instabilities, in Conrad's concern with such issues as man's nature, his existence, the concept of civilisation, which appear as important themes in his fiction. In many of his novels and short stories he deals with man not as a social being, but in his relation to the universe: "His protagonists are heroes—lonely, doomed, overcome, yet unyielding. His view of life is founded on the inherent paradox that the individual is completely isolated in a universe in which he is somehow inextricably involved." (Bala, 1990, p. 31) Conrad hints at the reflection of his own past in his novels as follows:

> That which in their grown-up years may appear to the world about them as the most enigmatic side of their natures, and perhaps must remain forever obscure

> even to themselves, will be their unconscious response to the still voice of that inexorable past from which their works of fiction and their personalities are remotely derived. (Conrad, 1925, p. 21)

As suggested by Conrad himself, writing fiction is a process in which man moulds his imagination with his unconscious, his memories, his experiences and various impacts. The writing process, especially in fiction, is a kind of reflection in which memories and experiences that the writer has collected and stored in his mind throughout his life. In other words, biographical material always happens to be the main store for artist's subject matter in his work.

Born in a Poland under the occupation of the Russian army, Conrad grew up in an atmosphere of conflict between the Polish people and Russian troops. All revolutionary attempts by Polish people were responded to by harsh Russian reaction which ended up in execution or exile, as exemplified in Conrad's own family. Like many other Polish people, many of Conrad's own relatives were also imprisoned or killed. His father's death, especially, developed a pessimism that transformed, later, into a loss of belief in life as well as God, in Conrad: "I had an awful sensation of the inevitable. I had also moments of revolt which stripped off me some of my simple trust in the government of the universe." (Visiak, 1968, p. 32) All these sad memories of the oppressive Russian regime led Conrad into adopting revolutionary ideas of Marx and Engels that blame all the social problems on the capitalist and class system. The revolutionary ideas of the late nineteenth century are also reflected in Conrad's works, even though Conrad "remained suspicious of all political activity, and his dark, sceptical outlook on the world can be traced to his early experiences in Poland and Russia."(Peters, 2006, p. 24)

Even though he sympathises with these revolutionary ideas, due to his problematic experience of Russian occupation, Conrad's real ideals depend upon moral and national responsibilities formed especially under the influence of the books that he read aloud throughout his father's illness. Foreign writers and such Polish writers as Mickiewicz and Slowacki influenced him unconsciously during these reading hours. They were Mickiewicz and Slowacki, who had been "strong advocates of the idea of moral and national responsibility" that emerges as the main concern in Conrad's works (Bala, 1990, p. 32). Conrad's sense of guilt for leaving Poland is reflected in his work in the form of a strong belief in morality and national responsibility. His setting the majority of his novels in the colonised world is the reoccurrence of his childhood experience of Russian occupation, which provided him with the opportunity to observe colonialism from both sides objectively: that of the coloniser and of the colonised. That is why he can empathise with the Congolese people in *Heart of Darkness*, even though he was there as the agent of the coloniser.

Labelled as a Modernist writer, whose focus is on the individual rather than political, economic or social situations in the outer world, Conrad differs also from his Modernist contemporaries, in his handling of the individual; he works on the individual within the context of political, cultural and economic circumstances of the society. Actually, "Conrad resisted being associated with any particular literary movement because he felt that it restricted and compartmentalized a writer's work." (Peters, 2006, p. 31) For its shifting in time and space, using multiple narrators, applying flashbacks and foreshadowing techniques, his fiction fits in the general context of Modernist writing. Moreover, he adopts the Modernist world view that deals with the meaning of human existence and

individual's relation to the world. Peters reinforces Modernist aspects of his fiction:

> the alienation, solitude, and epistemological uncertainty that so many of his characters experience speaks of Conrad's Modernist world view, as they consistently try to find meaning and order in human existence while recognizing that such is never transcendent but merely contingent—merely a means to stave off chaos, anarchy, and nihilism. (Peters, 2006, p. 33)

Born in 1857, Conrad lived through the rise of the industrial age, technological improvements and their influence upon human life, all of which he reflects in his writing. The increasing power of technology in society, mechanisation, alienation and isolation of men are some of the recurring themes in his novels. By questioning the isolation of the individual in the modern world through his characters, he also identifies the modernist themes such as individual loneliness and rootlessness. Especially, in his non-fictional writing, Conrad reflects his ideas on human nature and man's place in the universe. His main aim, both as a man and as an artist, is an existential search for truth. In the Preface to *The Nigger of the "Narcissus"*, Conrad highlights that art is an attempt "to find in its forms, in its colours, in its light, in its shadows, in the aspects of matter and in the facts of life what of each is fundamental, what is enduring and essential. . . the very truth of their existence." (Conrad, 1984, p. x)

Conrad supposes that man is aware of his problematic existence in nature that is reminded to him eternally by the enigmatic reality in which he finds himself, in the modern world. Man fails to become a part of nature anymore, from which he is alienated eternally. Even though not consciously, unconsciously man is aware of his own existence as insignificant and absurd. Realisation of his loneliness and alienation from nature drives man into despair. In a letter to one of

his friends, Graham, Conrad points out that:

> Egoism is good, and altruism is good, and fidelity to nature would be the best of all, and systems could be built and rules could be made,—if we could only get rid of consciousness. 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 animal kingdom under the conditions of this earth is very well,—but as soon as you know of your slavery, the pain, the anger, the strife,—the tragedy begins. We can't return to nature, since we can't change our place in it. (Jean-Aubry, 1927, p. 226)

Man, according to Conrad, is aware of his own solitariness in nature, in line with Erich Fromm's ideas, Conrad also realizes that man is aware of his limitations.

Conrad's non-fictional writing reflects his queries on the meaning of universe, nature and human existence as well as man's consciousness and his hopes; therefore, Conrad "has established a positive humanism[1]" (Bala, 1990, p. 48). Joseph Conrad seems to believe that there can be no set of method for man to solve his existential problems, however, he emphasizes that man should face his problems and try to find solutions to overcome his existential solitariness. Conrad supposes that the best way to overcome the existential solitariness is hard work. Through his non-fictional works, Conrad concentrates on the benefits of work and the moral extension of responsibility as a method of survival.

Novels written by Conrad during the middle phase of his career are his best known and most mature works of his career. Among them, *Heart of Darkness* is a story of a journey up to the Congo River where Conrad himself made a voyage. In 1890, Joseph Conrad had a trip to Stanley Falls on Congo. The life conditions in Congo were so dreadful that European employees of the Company returned home before having completed their service. As a consequence of fever and dysentery,

[1] It adopts a holistic approach to human existence through investigations of meaning, values, freedom, tragedy, personal responsibility, human potential, spirituality, and self-actualization. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Humanistic_psychology)

living conditions were unacceptable. Conrad's health was also affected by the inconvenient circumstances especially the illnesses in Congo. His terrible experience with Congo, like that of Marlow, is another fact that led Conrad to reconsider the meaning of human existence.

Thomas Moser says that Conrad writes *Heart of Darkness* not only as "Conrad the artist", but also "Conrad the moralist, . . .Conrad the psychologist," and "Conrad the commentator on politics." (p. 38) Born into a colonised country and being in Congo on behalf of the colonisers, Conrad's text manifests the imperial power in Congo not only from the Europeans' perspective but from colonised Congo's perspective as well. Garnett claims that the novel is also an "analysis of the deterioration of the white man's *morale*, when he is let loose from European restraint, and planted down in the tropics as an emissary of light armed teeth, to make trade profits out of the subject races." (Garnett in Murfin, 1989, p. 97) In *Heart of Darkness*, he words his experiences in Congo and ideas on human baseness and degradation. The novel is the journey questioning the core of existence, morality and the self.

The African setting of the novel, especially through its references to the recurring images of Congo River and the jungle, offers important symbols for psychoanalytic reading of the novel. These images represent man's unconscious and Marlow's voyage up river is considered as a voyage to the depths of human unconscious. As the mouthpiece of Conrad, the narrator, Marlow, in the novel, functions as an intermediary between the conscious and unconscious in terms of psychoanalytic approach. And it is quite clear that "Marlow's journey into the primitive [unconscious]. . . is a journey into the primitive inner station of consciousness, an effort to encounter meaning in previously unexplored psychic

recesses." (McCall, 1968, p. 623) It is a psychological masterpiece concerning human nature by voyaging to depths of human psyche within the framework of organic and non-organic drives.

Levenson reinforces its psychological content by referring to *Heart of Darkness*, as a psychological masterpiece, that "was conceived in distinctly social and political terms, and well into its composition Conrad thought of it in this way. A work which has become perhaps the leading example of modern psychological fiction began with an expressed disregard for the fate of individuals." (p. 392) The novel is the exploration of human's unconscious and the search for self-knowledge. Among many other readings of *Heart of Darkness* from the perspective of Freudian psychoanalysis, Peker reads the novel as claiming that:

> Marlow is the voice of ego that communicates between the id and superego and civilizes the primal desires of the libidinous ego. The superego represents the ideals and beliefs of Western civilisation. Kurtz is the voice of the id, and we see how Marlow is drawn further towards the id by the various voices that describe Kurtz. (p. 26)

According to Freudian psychoanalysis, Conrad leads the reader to a search for the depths of the human unconscious which is shaped by instinctual, irrational libidinous desires.

As a neo-Freudian psychoanalyst, Erich Fromm revises Freudian psychoanalysis. Acording to Erich Fromm, the unconscious of man is mainly influenced by the social institutions, norms and social implications rather than instinctual, irrational desires. He bases his theory, which is going to be dicussed in the next chapter, upon man's loss of unification with nature which he problematizes in man's relationship with his society.

CHAPTER 2

ERICH FROMM AND HIS CONCEPT OF HUMANISTIC PSYCHOANALYSIS

Erich Fromm was born in Frankfurt, on 25th March 1900, as the only child of mentally retarded father and depressive mother, and lived a pious childhood within the Jewish belief. Reading the Holy Bible alienated him from the norms of his society as to enable him to consider them from an objective perspective. Thus, Fromm kept his distance from the bourgeois culture throughout his life as well as holding a critical stance against the capitalist worldview and norms of modern society. Brennen identifies Fromm's interest in psychology with his religious background: "[h]e was a passionate social critic who combined psychological insights with social theory; his socialist humanist theoretical framework was informed by his childhood Orthodox Jewish training." (Brennen, 2006, p. 8) He explores God's harmony and peace in this world as a reaction to the First World War. His childhood Jewish interest in God develops into an interest in Marxist revolutionary ideas in his adolescence.

His study of psychology, philosophy and sociology in Heidelberg University, where he gained a Ph.D at the age of twenty two, helped him to develop his intellectual ideas and inter-relate Marxist ideas with psychoanalysis. He studied on the relation between Marxism and psychoanalysis. As opposed to

the libido theory of Freud that privileges instinctual drives, Fromm gives priority to social drives in interpretation of the unconscious. Because of his innovative synthesis of Freud's libido theory with Marxism, he was criticised by his colleagues in Frankfurt Institute for Social Research, of which he was a member. Erich Fromm emigrated to the United States, on the eve of the World War II, after Hitler came to power in 1933, and he worked for the establishment of his school of psychoanalysis in the States until he died on 18th March 1980. Fromm's innovative method of psychoanalysis is a synthesis of Freud's scientific method with Marx's conception of human nature. He defines the mixed grounds of his theory as follows:

> Freud's vision was narrowed down by his mechanistic, materialistic philosophy which interpreted the needs of human nature as being essentially sexual ones. Marx's vision was a much wider one precisely because he saw the crippling effect of class society, and thus could have a vision of the uncrippled man and the possibilities for his development, once society had become entirely human. (1962, p. 26)

He introduces a new concept of psychoanalysis called humanistic psychoanalysis, by replacing Freud's mechanistic and materialistic sexual concern with Marx's humanistic ideas that criticize negative effects of class system upon individuals.

As the pioneer of it, psychoanalysis has mainly been associated with Sigmund Freud before Fromm. Dissatisfied with Freud's theories, however, Fromm dedicates himself to working on human evolution, individual and social character, human motivation and the concept of mental health to develop his own theory of psychoanalysis. The main interest of all three contemporaries, Freud, Marx and Fromm, is to explore nature of human behaviour but from different perspectives. Their concepts of human nature, the methods that they use and also

their ideas about the nature of human behaviour are different.

Freud believes that human behaviour is mainly based on instinctual drives, and he defines sexual energy that he calls libido as the basic drive for human behaviour. Libido is a power that is existent in all human beings, but its power to influence differs from individual to individual. It is "well known to students of psychology that Freud's criticism of society refers not to socio-economic structure of society but only to sexual morality." (Chaudhuri, 1991, p. 130) It is instinctual or biological drives that motivate human behaviour.

Marx, on the other hand, believes in an evolutionary process in the historical continuum in the consequence of which man is transformed by the conflicts and contradictions between classes within society. However, these conflicts are not ". . . matter of problems to be solved but of a state of domination and subjection to be ended by a total transformation of the conditions which give rise to it." (Miliband, 1977, p. 17) Marx supports the idea that at the very beginning of history, primitive man is fully dependent on nature just like a child's attachment to his mother. This bond between man and nature is restrictive for man. In process, however, the relationship between man and nature changes as the man starts to work and cultivate nature which means that nature is not the master, anymore. With his gaining power over nature, man begins a new process that leads him up to an independent being, thus, the hierarchy between man and nature is reversed in a way that opens way for the independent and powerful man to develop himself economically, intellectually and emotionally. The more he develops his economic and social forms, the more independent he becomes. According to Marxist ideology,

> [w]hen he [man] will have brought nature under his full and rational control, and when society will have lost its antagonistic class character, 'prehistory' will have ended, and a truly human history will begin in which free men plan and organize their exchange with nature, and in which the aim and end of all social life is not work and production, but the unfolding of man's powers as an end in itself. This is, for Marx, the realm of freedom in which man will be fully united with his fellow men and with nature. (Fromm, 1962, p. 37)

As there is the idea of progress in the basis of the Marxist theory, Marx is more optimistic in comparison to Freud. He believes that man can achieve perfection within this process sooner or later. The progression towards perfection is not for individuals only but leads up to the perfection of society. As claimed by Marx, the development of society is closely related with the development of its members. The progress goes forward to perfection; so, the idea of good individual and good society is not impossible, and Marx, an optimist, believes that there is always a sign of hope. In Marxist ideology, the system of production determines the human action in the social evolution. The effects of each system of production on individual and society are different from the others. Different economic levels lead to different psychological moods; still, "there is only one quasi-psychological premise in Marx's system: man must first of all eat and drink, have shelter and clothing" (Fromm, 1962, p. 41).

Both Freud and Fromm deal with the relation between human nature and society, however, from different perspectives. According to Tuebingen, Erich Fromm revised Freudian original concept of character in two aspects:

> First, the psychic energy canalized in man's character is no longer denied as libidinous (Fromm rejected Freud's libido theory); for Fromm psychic energy does not stem from an instinctual source – sexuality or life and death instincts; rather it originates in man's existential situation and gives rise to human needs as, for instance, the need for relatedness or for a sense of identity. For Fromm therefore man's character and passionate strivings are not rooted in sexuality or in a battle between life and death instincts, but rather in psychic needs which

> are common to all human beings. Second, in regard to character formation too, Fromm revised Freud's theory. Fromm saw character not as a result of instinctual drives but as the outcome of man's psychic needs being played out in a given historical situation. (p. 21)

Freud's idea, originating from the nineteenth-century materialism, supposes that "all important psychic phenomena must be rooted in (and caused by) corresponding physiological, somatic processes." (Fromm, 1990, p. 70) Freud believes, in other words, that human behaviour is mainly based on instinctual drives and ". . . that the whole of human civilisation. . . [is based] on the sublimation of the sexual instinct." (Jackson, 2000, p. 68) Erich Fromm suggests that the satisfaction of his passions, thirst and hunger does not ensure man's total satisfaction, thus, human nature can be defined not only within the frame of psychological analysis but also from historical and cultural perspectives. He furthers by asserting that human behaviours are not only motivated by their organic needs (such as instinctual drives) but also by their non-organic drives that are shaped by the social norms. So, the basic problem of psychoanalysis, for Fromm, is not the satisfaction or suppression of instinctual desires but to understand the relation between society and individual.

Erich Fromm's man is not as desperate as Freud's because human nature is, for him, neither good nor evil. It is full of possibilities and opportunities. These opportunities are largely shaped by non-organic drives such as social norms or society not the organic instinctual ones. Fromm adds the concepts of social character and social unconsciousness that takes the power of society on individual into consideration. As a matter of fact, Fromm is not against Freudian psychoanalysis but he enriches and enhances the Freudian theory.

There is the idea of nature and civilisation dichotomy in the basis of Erich Fromm's theory. Fromm's thesis originates from his critical understanding of the civilising process, a process during which, he believes, man loses his harmony with nature. This loss of harmony leads man to a different level of consciousness that makes him aware of this loss which he compensates by interacting with his fellow man and brotherliness. The loss of solidarity between man and his fellowmen in the modern age, however, brings him the sense of loneliness, homelessness, aggression and even insanity. Fromm suggests that existence for modern man "is essentially a negative event. He lacks the instinctive adaptation to nature, he lacks physical strength, he is the most helpless of all animals at birth, and in need of protection for much longer period of time than any of them." (Fromm, 1990, p. 24) Man should try to regain his unity with his fellow men as well as nature, Fromm suggests, to be able to get over these feelings of dissatisfaction. Despite his break with nature, man still belongs to animal species in respect to his body and its functions, however, animals continue their lives within the frame of biological laws of nature, in unity with nature. As the animals never transcend the nature, they never become aware of their existence and they have no reason to think about beyond their existence. Because of their never disrupted conformity with nature, animals can survive in nature easier than man who loses his guard in the process of evolution. Fromm defines man's break with nature as a long process during which he transforms from animal into man as follows:

> When the animal [the evolving man] transcends nature, when it transcends the purely passive role of the creature, when it becomes, biologically speaking, the most helpless animal, man is born. At this point, the animal has emancipated itself from nature by erect posture; the brain has grown far beyond what it was

> in the highest animal. The birth of man may have lasted for hundreds of thousands of years, but what matters is that a new species arose, transcending nature, that life became aware of itself. (Fromm, 1990, p. 23)

Human existence destroys natural harmony by man's transcending beyond his animal nature through his self awareness, reason and consciousness. He has to face, thus, sense of homelessness and dissatisfaction.

By stating that "[t]he emergence of man can be defined as occurring in the process of evolution where instinctive adaptation has reached its minimum" (Fromm, 1947, p. 28), Fromm indicates the fact that man becomes vulnerable in the process of transformation. His awareness of this brake with nature and sense of dissatisfaction urge man to find a new world in which he can feel at home. However,

> He cannot go back to the pre-human state of harmony with nature; he must proceed to develop his reason until he becomes the master of nature, and of himself. . .Having lost paradise, the unity with nature, he has become the eternal wanderer; he is impelled to go forward and with everlasting effort to make the unknown known by filling with answers the blank spaces of his knowledge. (Fromm, 1947, p. 29)

According to Fromm, no matter how much he tries, man remains dissatisfied and the only solution to his existential problems is facing the truth of his loneliness in nature.

Man's existence is based on his loss of the harmony with nature, his original home which he can never return back. Still living in nature from which he is divided, man feels partly divine partly animal; therefore, his existence is based on coping with these paradoxes and surviving in his subsequently created world (society) both physically and psychologically. Fromm identifies, in *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*, man's tendency to improve as follows, "[e]very new

state of disequilibrium forces man to seek for new equilibrium. Indeed, what has often been considered man's innate drive for progress is his attempt to find a new and if possible better equilibrium." (p. 254) The conflicts such as loneliness, powerlessness and isolation that man encounters while searching for new equilibrium, thus, reflect his deep need for new means that will make him feel at home again. Social life, in this sense, Fromm believes, becomes the new means of satisfaction for man. Social rules and norms in this process turn out to replace natural instincts in the formation of man's identity.

Fromm explains civilised man's situation through the metaphor of human birth. He parallels the basic tie between man and nature with that of the child in his mother's womb. As the child's existence begins in the mother's womb, where he is well-supplied with all his needs, his attachment to the mother does not end even after the birth. During his extra-uterine life that is much longer than any animal's, the child is still dependent upon mother for his physical needs. Erich Fromm defines, in *The Sane Society*, man's birth (his transition from intrauterine existence to extra-uterine life) not as an end but the continuation of the process of birth:

> It is, indeed, an important change from intrauterine into extra-uterine life; but in many respect the infant after birth is not different from the infant before birth; it cannot perceive things outside, cannot feed itself; it is completely dependent on the mother, and would perish without her help. Actually, the process of birth continues. The child begins to recognize outside objects, to react affectively, to grasp things and to co-ordinate his movements, to walk. . . Slowly, the growing person learns to love, to develop reason, to look at the world objectively. He begins to develop his powers; to acquire a sense of identity, to overcome the seduction of his senses for the sake of an integrated life. . . The whole life of the individual is nothing but the process of giving birth to himself; indeed, we should be fully born, when we die- although it is the tragic fate of most individuals to die before they are born. (Fromm, 1990, p. 26)

Thus, the child's dependence on his mother in the early years of his life is not to satisfy his physiologic needs but also his existential needs such as love, warmth and protection. The relationship between the child and the mother, in fact, is the unique unconditional relationship in life. The mother's love and care is not dependent on any material obligation, she cares for him because he is her child and her affection derives from her motherhood. The mother intermediates the child and his life at this early stage when he feels uprooted.

Allying man's childhood connection to his mother with primitive societies that live in harmony with nature, Fromm identifies the adulthood with civilised societies that are cut off from the nature. Like the child's attachment to mother that protects him from all harms and dangers, primitive people worship nature. Primitive man remains rooted in nature and identifies himself with nature as a part of it. He does not feel superior to animals and plants because he lives in harmony with other creature with which he shares the soil and the world. Primitive man sees animals and plants as individuals, furthermore, in many primitive cultures, man identifies himself with the animal and their totems are generally animal figures. With the use of fire and transition from primitive tools to more developed ones, the passive relationship and harmony of man with the animals and the plants turns out to be an active relationship.

The change in man's relationship with nature begins and is shaped, in fact, by man's developing economic activities: "He develops animal husbandry, learns to cultivate the land, achieves an ever-increasing skill in art and craftsmanship, exchanges his products for those of foreign countries and thus becomes a traveller and trader." (Fromm, 1990, p. 50) His belief system also changes in accordance with the economic developments. With change in his lifestyle towards a more

economic-based one, his idols also change. His new religious idols are made up of gold, stone or wood. These are the re-shaped forms of natural elements but they do not represent pure nature. Gradual change in these idols and gods reflect, in fact, the gradual loss of man's harmony with nature. His precise turn towards himself changes the names and the shapes of his gods which are in human shape, anymore. The gods he calls as 'Great Mother' who protect and feed him at the beginning transform, gradually, to fatherly gods who symbolise reason, strength and justice. They give way, at the final stage, to patriarchal religions that replace Mother Nature, who brings him into life, symbolising in a way man's total break with nature.

Man's loss of harmony with nature and his loneliness in this world appear as an important issue even in religious writings. In the Old Testament, human history begins with man's loss of paradise, "the soil in which he was rooted, and with which he felt one" (Fromm, 1990, p. 52) Since then man has been deprived of his unity with nature and has always been in search for a secure place, a paradise, as he once was in his mother's womb, but, he fails to reach the state of security no matter how hard he tries. Every step away from nature leads man into a sense of loss and dissatisfaction. In this respect, the satisfaction of man's instinctual desires as suggested by Freud, Fromm believes, does not solve his existential problems. He is in need and search for something more which is not organic but non-organic, thus he replaces Freud's concept of libido with spiritual derivations. As opposed to Freud, Fromm develops humanistic psychoanalysis. For him, "[a]fter he [man] has satisfied his animal needs, he is driven by his human needs", which Fromm defines as "the most powerful forces motivating man's behaviour [that] stem from the condition of his existence, the human

situation". (Fromm, 1990, p. 28) Man needs more than the satisfaction of his instinctual desires—hunger, thirst, need for sleep and sexual satisfaction— to cope with his existence. Erich Fromm lists these needs in *The Sane Society* as follows:

> . . .the need for relatedness, transcendence, rootedness, the need for a sense of identity and need for a frame of orientation and devotion. The great passions of man, his lust for power, his vanity, his search for truth, his passion for love and brotherliness, his destructiveness as well as his creativeness, every powerful desire which motivates man's actions, is rooted in this specific human source, not in the various stages of his libido as Freud's construction postulated.(Fromm, 1990, p. 67)

This hollowness besets him and never lets him go from the prison of loneliness to retain his sanity. Man has to conform with his outer world; however, "if he does it in a symbiotic or alienated way, he loses his independence and integrity; he is weak, suffers, becomes hostile, or apathetic; only if he can relate himself to others in a loving way does he feel one with them" (Fromm, 1990, p. 68). The demand for uniting with nature and other creatures is a prerequisite for psychological self-fulfilment. Fromm believes that human behaviour is shaped by his fellowmen, his society and his relation to nature. Brennen indicates Fromm's idea by saying that: "Incorporating insights of both Freud and Marx, in *The Sane Society*, Fromm details fundamental concepts of humanistic psychoanalysis, which insists that basic human passions are not bound to instinctive needs but rather are rooted in the human need to relate to nature" (2006, p. 8). This need constitutes the essence of all passions, even love, with which man is able to relating and uniting himself to another entity. This unification is possible, for Fromm, to achieve in different ways.

> Man can attempt to become one with the world by submission to a person, to a group, to an institution, to God. In this way he transcends the separateness of his individual existence by becoming part of somebody or something bigger

> than himself, and experiences his identity in connection with the power to which he has submitted." (Fromm, 1990, p. 30)

On contrary to this possibility, man can strive for uniting himself with outer world and his fellow man by using power over them and making himself superior to others. At this point two-sided relatedness emerges: submissive side and dominative side. They are bound on each other with strict ties because they become dependent on each other in the process of which they lose their original integrity. In this relationship, the dominant side mostly oppresses the submissive side. The dominant shows off his superiority over the other again and again to such an extent that one step further begins the process of narcissism. Narcissism is defined as an important pathology in man's relation to others in Fromm's psychoanalysis.

In *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*, Erich Fromm describes narcissism "as a state of experience in which only the person himself, his body, his needs, his feelings, his thoughts, his property, everything and everybody pertaining to him are experienced as fully real, while everybody and everything that does not form part of the person or is not an object of his needs is not interesting, is not fully real" (p. 227-28). The narcissistic character perceives the world in a different way than the normal one. He loses his objective perspective of life, especially, in relation to those that do not belong to him. The only valuable things for him are the ones which are within his own frame of significance and under his control.

As a dominant figure in his subjective world, the narcissistic person attains the sense of self-confidence and security by implying his superiority over his submissive subjects. Any threat to his narcissistic existence, he feels, is a threat to

his sense of security and his identity, thus he reacts to any potential threat and his reaction to the threat will not be normal but very aggressive. Furthermore, his aggression will be so intense that he can never forgive and even he wishes to take revenge from the ones who harm his narcissistic existence. This is a syndrome special to all narcissistic people. They are mostly known for their motives of satisfying their narcissistic desires; otherwise, they most probably lose their sanity.

The most important aspect of the narcissistic person is the unquestionable reality of his own self. Nobody is authorized to suspect his strength, genius and personality. As he believes to be the best, he is closed to any kind of criticism about his identity and individuality. In fact, the process of formation of narcissistic behaviour and the process of the growth of an infant follow the same pattern. The baby when it is born, and even long after, retains its connection with life through its mother. He looks at the world and conceives the world through the perspective of his mother. In this respect, the first words of infants are generally 'mother'. An infant fails to identify itself separate from its mother, thus the words that follow 'mother' are generally dad, grandpa or something-body around him. This process is followed by his realisation of his sense of separateness from the people around him, even his mother. He realises his own identity at last, hence one of his last words is 'I'. This process of self-realisation begins, paradoxically, the process of alienation also. He feels unique and lonely in this world. His process of growing up is allied with the process of search for overcoming his loneliness and he starts establishing relationship with other people. He wants to belong to something with which he can identify himself. It may be a religion, a group or a class in which he can prove himself. He actually wants to have a place in the society; furthermore,

he wants to be the strongest, the most intelligent even the most popular person in his society. He thinks that when he reaches the level of the best, he can cover the hollowness and loneliness in the depths of his psyche. The demands for the best and having superiority over others lead him to narcissism. For Fromm, as Tuebingen indicates, narcissism is "neither a fixation on a pregenital stage of development, nor a regression to it, but the outcome of an identification with economic and social structures in which domination is the ruling principle." (p. 21) His property, his behaviours, his job and his entity are over the entire world; so, he does not feel any obligation to turn to his inner-self and think about his existence. Every individual's normal need to contact his fellow men that is essential for establishing roots with life ends in pathologic personalities in narcissism.

The sense of identity and narcissism are not the same thing. The sense of identity connects one to life. The self-realisation is quite important for acquiring the sense of identity. This is possible only "by making the individual free politically and economically, by teaching him to think of himself and freeing him from an authoritarian pressure" (Fromm, 1990, p. 62). Acquiring the sense of identity means drawing one's own frame of life without any restriction. For some people, it is even more important than physical survival. Narcissism, on the other hand, is the definition of ones' identity with reference to his/her strength over other people. The narcissistic person conceives an illusory identity and lives in this illusion. The basic problem of man, as it can be seen in narcissism, is in fact a sense of rootlessness in the world.

Remaining sane and reaching complete satisfaction is the basic aim of the civilised man. Erich Fromm points out that the human evolution is not an organic

but non-organic evolution; it is a cultural change and development. The more he culturally develops, the more he disunites from nature. Man becomes more and more artificial to achieve a sense of rootedness.

> Any regression today from freedom into artificial rootedness in state or race is a sign of mental illness. . . Mental health cannot be defined in terms of the adjustment of the individual to his society, but, on the contrary that it must be defined in terms of the adjustment of society to the needs of man. (Fromm, 1990, p. 72)

Civilised man's mental health is not only an individual matter but social norms or structures affect the mental health of man; thus, "[t]he social character shapes the behaviour of members of a society so that they function purposively within that society and they also find satisfaction in doing so." (Brennen, 2006, p. 9) The function of society over human psychology is in fact two-sided; it can either develop mental health or disturb man's psychology.

> A healthy society furthers man's capacity to love his fellow men, to work creatively, to develop his reason and objectivity, to have a sense of self which is based on the experience of his own productive powers. An unhealthy society is one which creates mutual hostility, distrust, which transforms man into an instrument of use and exploitation for others, which deprives him of a sense of self, except inasmuch as he submits to others or becomes an automaton. " (Fromm, 1990, p. 72-73)

As a means of protecting his status in society, man generally tries to adapt the norms of society, but sometimes rebels against the society and its norms. In this respect; man whether tries to escape from his society or he persists in living in it and tries to change the norms according to his individual norms. The person who rebels against social norms is called most probably as anarchist by the society.

To sum up, Fromm submits a new psychoanalysis which indicates the relation between individual and society. His humanistic psychoanalysis argues the

problems of self, linking with the domination of the society. The pathological interaction between society and self causes alienation or isolation of individual from the society; furthermore, the society forces man to obey its rules otherwise it excludes him. Consequently, the mental health of man is closely related with the society and its norms. In modern societies, man is suppressed by the social norms, and thus alienated.

Heart of Darkness works out on human nature and the drives behind human behaviour. It also focuses on the evolution of the human nature that "is neither biologically fixed and innate sum total derives nor is it a lifeless shadow of cultural patterns to which it adapts itself smoothly; it is the product of human evolution, but it also certain inherent mechanisms and laws." (Fromm, 1965, p. 37) Analysing the characters of Kurtz and Marlow within the framework of Frommian psychoanalysis and investigating the effects and impositions of social norms on the characters in *Heart of Darkness* will enable the reader to understand the work thoroughly.

CHAPTER 3

HEART OF DARKNESS: A VOYAGE TO HUMAN NATURE

Published in 1902, *Heart of Darkness* is categorised with Conrad's two other novels, *Lord Jim* and *Nostromo*, which are considered to be ". . . the most explicit exponents of existential humanism and represent the culmination of Conrad's genius." (Bala, 1990, p. 93) Through his two European characters that he sets into interaction with colonial Africa, Joseph Conrad investigates the moral values of the Western world. Conrad's critical attitude to the idea of civilisation that is generally presented as superior to the primitive, questions the basic values of Western culture. As a European who travels to different parts of the world, Conrad reflects his real observations of contradictory European discourse of civilising the natives of the colonised places. By inserting Marlow as his mouthpiece in the novel, Conrad questions the moral standards of the Western world through Kurtz as well as the other European agents.

Considering Conrad's main concern with morality, the surface journey that Marlow, the narrator, takes to the black forests of Africa symbolises, deep down, a journey that is taken to the darkness of human soul. As Guerard suggests, Marlow is not only a narrator who explains the details of the voyage to Africa but "recounting [also] a spiritual voyage of self-discovery." (Guerard, 1958, p. 38) Throughout the story, Marlow is fixated at the idea of reaching Kurtz whom he

considers as the target of his search for the inner nature of man and achieving meaning for his existence in the universe. The only answer he achieves, however, at the end of the story, is that man is isolated and alienated in the universe.

Marlow's voyage, according to Guerard, is in fact a voyage in the process of which he realises the primitive in the depths of civilised man's psyche that is identified with Kurtz, "a white man and sometime idealist who had fully responded to the wilderness". Marlow realises, in Guerard's terms again, the "potential" primitivity in the depths of every European's psyche, that is represented by even the most civilised of the European, Kurtz. Marlow returns, after this experience, "to Europe a changed and more knowing man." (p. 38-39)

The story begins with Marlow sitting on the deck of the ship waiting for the tide to set off sail, with four men, the boat owner, a lawyer, an accountant and an unnamed narrator, on the river Thames. Marlow narrates a previous journey that he took to Congo years ago when he was young, and the unnamed narrator transmits the story of Marlow to the reader. Marlow's and his audiences' isolations from the rest of the world because of the tide, influence them in a way to group together and come closer to each other. Marlow's sitting position while narrating his tale, at this point, represents his internal wisdom. He is portrayed as "lifting one arm from the elbow, the palm of the hand outwards, so that, with his legs folded before him, he had the pose of a Buddha preaching in European clothes and without a lotus –flower" (Conrad, 1999, p. 34). W. B Stein suggests that with his Buddha-idol-like posture, he seems as "he is ready to contemplate the chaos out of which order or chaos comes." (p. 235) The journey to the inner self has to be made in isolation. Buddha means "the awakened one" and also Buddha refers to "the enlightened one" (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gautama_Buddha); thus,

with his Buddha-like figure as an explorer of the human enigma, he represents the greatest example of self-exploration. While narrating the story, Marlow revives the past journey he took into his inner self with every aspect of his memory.

Marlow's story, in fact, begins before his setting off his journey to Africa, through his contact with his fellow men in Europe, who reflect their prejudiced opinion of the African in every instance. Even Marlow himself explains his reasons for his desire to see Africa, Congo and Congo River which he resembled a snake on the map, "the snake [that] had charmed him" (Conrad, 1999, p. 36), is used as another metaphor for Africa. He takes up the job as a riverboat captain and he sets off his journey to Africa as a voyage from the civilised Europe to the unknown and the uncivilised Africa. In fact, Marlow meets the African black people even before reaching the continent because of native crew that will work in boat. Observing these natives' easy-adaptation to the exhausting conditions on the boat, Marlow feels at ease in a life without chaos until he remembers the man-of-war shelling the continent of the coast on his way to Africa. (Conrad, 1999, p. 41) Marlow recognises the difference between loneliness and frightening absurdity of the man-of-war that was shelling the continent with no reason and the naturalness of the Africans.

Considered from the perspective of Fromm's psychoanalysis, this juxtaposition of civilised Europeans with primitive Africans refers to the corruption of man's natural being consequent to social restrictions. Both Marlow and Kurtz, and the other European agents in Africa conform to Fromm's three models of man's relation to society whereas all the natives represent man's harmonious existence with nature. Even though all these Europeans are decent individuals within social atmosphere in Europe, they all lose control in Africa.

The setting of the company's Outer Station which appals and disappoints Marlow when he comes upon the waste and decay of the station and the machinery that is all perished. Machinery, in fact, functions as an important symbol for the corrupting image of civilisation, for technology is considered to be one of the greatest achievements of civilisation. All the machinery which is left to decay as its becoming useless in African circumstances represent their owners' moral decay and their inability to function back in the nature (Conrad, 1999, p. 46). Marlow's personality as a deeply perceptive character, as opposed to ordinary Europeans, is important in reflecting Europeans' unjust and cruel treatment of the natives. Marlow's shock, thus, is doubled afterwards when he sees the black men who are working in appalling condition as slaves who are "nothing earthly now-nothing but black shadows of disease and starvation" (Conrad, 1999, p. 44). The inhuman condition to which natives are degraded by Europeans is the paradigm of the civilised Europeans' alienation from their own natural selves. Marlow feels that ". . . he has entered the gloomy circle of some inferno, an unnatural and absurd world where men have become inhuman." (Bala, 1990, p. 100) Recognising the misery of native people, Marlow realizes that he too is the passive member of this cruel exploitation and he believes that the Europeans in Congo

> . . .were no colonists; their administration was merely a squeeze, and nothing more, I suspect. They were conquerors, and for that you want only brute force—nothing to boast of, when you have it, since your strength is just an accident arising from the weakness from the others. . . It was just the robbery with violence, aggravated murder in a great scale, and men doing at it blind—as is very proper for those who tackle a darkness. (Conrad, 1999, p. 34)

As opposed to the terrible condition of the black people around him, the Company's chief accountant is neatly dressed, with his white cuffs, jacket and

trousers, as apparitions of his whiteness- his "improvement". After staying with the accountant for ten days, Marlow realizes that the white clothes do not demonstrate accountant's benevolence but disguise his inner darkness because the accountant treats the natives cruelly. Furthermore, Marlow feels guilty as he is a member of Europeans as the only cause of this misery and spoil that is being carried in Congo.

Turner's claim that "As members of society, most of us see only what we expect to see [. . .] what we are conditioned to see. . ." (1967, p. 6) supports Erich Fromm's idea that the non-organic social drives are as important as organic (instinctual) drives in shaping our personalities or behaviours. To secure their place in society, individuals try to conform to the norms of society. As an extension of this conformity, all the Europeans feel obliged to internalize the bias created by the social norms such as the black people are dark and the white ones bring them to light. By reflecting this biased attitude of Europeans' through Marlow's, a non-conformist European's perspective, *Heart of Darkness* makes the reader conceive that the black is in fact not dark, moreover, they enlighten Europeans by reflecting to Europeans their own inner darkness. The manager, for example, another important representative of the European society in the novel, is a hypocrite who consents to Kurtz's death in the depths of the jungle under the pretence of worrying for him, whom he sees as a threat to his position in the company. The manager, whose attitude annoys Marlow at first, for he does not ask Marlow to sit down after his twenty-mile walk later confirms that his steamer had sunk. The manager's noticeable hostility towards Marlow at the beginning proves to be originating from his seeing Marlow as a threat.

It is not only the manger, who consents to destruction of others just to secure his position in society, from Frommian perspective, but all the Europeans in Africa represent this idea to certain extends. All the agents in station whom Marlow calls ‘pilgrims’, for example, are materialists who are in Africa for profit in some way. For Marlow, “they were all waiting—all the sixteen or twenty pilgrims of them—for something. . . The only real feeling was a desire to get appointed to a trading-post where ivory was to be had, so that they could earn percentages.” (Conrad, 1999, p. 52) The station is full of men tramping aimlessly. Their only wish in Africa is the accumulation of wealth without working as they are the sons of colonising and corruptive society.

The brick-maker is another ally and example of this corruption, Marlow realises the manager’s aim to take advantage over the unfortunate condition of Kurtz when he overhears him talking to the brick-maker, whose own situation in the station is problematic. He is employed for making of bricks, however, “there wasn’t a fragment of a brick anywhere in the station, and he had been there more than a year—waiting.” (Conrad, 1999, p. 51-52) Like his other fellow Europeans, the brick maker also does not work; they are all waiting for something that they also do not know. Their only aim is to make more money without doing any work at all.

The uncle of the manager, who comes to the station, as the leader of the Eldorado Exploring Expedition, exemplifies another aspect of European corruption as the leader of a group after spoil rather than exploring the continent. From Marlow’s perspective, he is a fortune-hunter and he and his group were there just to exploit Congo, “[t]o tear treasure out of the bowels of the land was their desire, with no more moral purpose at the back of it than there is in burglars

breaking into a safe." (Conrad, 1999, p. 58) From the conversation between the nephew and the uncle, Marlow realises that both of them are slaves to the ambition for power and material gain and that the good fame and success of Kurtz who is exporting huge quantities of ivory frighten both uncle and the nephew. Faced so unexpectedly with the naked truth of materialism, hypocrisy and corruption of all the Europeans that he met in Africa so far, inspires Marlow with a desire to reach Kurtz whom he believes will provide him with an answer about the nature of progress in terms of primitivity and the civilized dichotomy.

The voyage that Marlow takes to the inner station in the depths of the jungle to save Kurtz is a symbolical journey that he takes to human unconscious. As opposed to civilised Europeans whose basic motive is the social drives, in Frommian terms, Africa represents nature. The deeper Marlow goes into the continent, the more he realizes the oneness of human nature with only difference that man's nature gets corrupt in the process of adapting to social norms whereas primitives whose harmony with nature is never corrupt. The journey that Marlow sets off up to river after repairing his steamer, takes two months and this journey is defined in the metaphor of a journey that is taken to the times when all and everything was in harmony. Marlow feels as if he was going back "to the earliest beginnings of the world, when vegetation rioted on the earth and the big trees were kings." (Conrad, 1999, p. 61) The journey that he takes to the impenetrable forest—the very nature, is defined as a journey that is taken back to the times when man was not conscious of his existence. He explains his enigmatic experience as that "you thought yourself bewitched and cut off for ever from everything you had know once—somewhere—far away—in another existence perhaps." (Conrad, 1999, p. 61) Considered from Frommian perspective as a

whole, Marlow's voyage since its beginning from the civilised Europe through African coast to inland represents a journey from progress backward to regress into pre-social human existence. The materialism and hypocrisy that Marlow has been witnessing throughout his journey is the existential hollowness that is caused by man's break with nature. Kurtz, however, when Marlow meets him in the end, leads Marlow to hopelessness for he realises man's loss of chance to re-harmonised with nature at all.

As the steamer moves towards the depths of Congo and Marlow's perception of reality becomes more and more unearthly, Kurtz becomes the only target at which all the explanations to this enigmatic reality lie. It turns out to be a journey "towards Kurtz" (Conrad, 1999, p. 63). With his crew, Marlow is floating "on prehistoric earth, on an earth that wore the aspect of an unknown planet." (Conrad, 1999, p. 63) Surrounded by millions of trees and plants, Marlow feels like a prehistoric man living in conformity with nature. According to Beth Sharon Ash, "Marlow wanted Kurtz to mirror back to him an idealized image of their shared beliefs. But Marlow now experiences the crumbling of that ideal" (p. 134).

Kurtz comes to Africa, to Congo, with the aim of spreading the light of civilisation to Africa. "[T]he International Society for the Suppression of Savage Customs had intrusted him with making a report, for its future guidance." (Conrad, 1999, p. 77) He is employed for preparing a report about "the savages" in Africa. He is also "a great musician . . ., a painter who wrote for the papers, or else a journalist who could paint. . . He was a universal genius." (Conrad, 1999, p. 100) However, like all other Europeans, he becomes the representative of the greedy teeth of European wheel as "all Europe had contributed to the making of Kurtz." (Conrad, 1999, p. 77) The image of Kurtz, in this sense, annihilates all the

progressive ideals of western culture. Considered again according to Fromm's humanistic psychoanalysis that problematizes man's loss of harmony with nature, Kurtz represents not only the corruptive influence of this loss but the impossibility of regaining it back. Watt evaluates Kurtz's extreme cruelty in Africa as an extremely civilised intellectual European as a very good example of unreliability of progress when he says that "his [Kurtz's] career is intended to show how the best can fall and that the most advanced ideas of political reform can be capable of infinite degradation when removed from the controlling power of the policeman and the butcher, or public opinion." (Watt, 2000, p. 91) Although he is "a prodigy," "an emissary of pity and science and progress" "and a gang of virtue" (Conrad, 1999, p. 53) in European standards, Kurtz behaves like a savage whose only aim is to own the most and the best of ivory, in the absence of the restraint of European social norms.

Ivory, though it is white, is the dark symbol of the rapacious wishes of European representatives in Congo, also the primary object of Kurtz's desire in Africa, and this ivory, according to Marlow, "had caressed him [Mr. Kurtz], . . . it had taken him, loved him, embraced him, got into his veins consumed his flesh, and sealed his soul to its own by the inconceivable ceremonies of some devilish initiation." (Conrad, 1999, p. 76) Isolated from the European social norms and routine of organised society, Kurtz creates his own powerful kingdom within the African natives in jungle. As opposed to his improving material wealth and power, Kurtz's health and soul are decaying in Congo. His station is depicted as a "long decaying building on the summit was half buried in the high grass; the large holes in the peaked roof gaped black from afar; the jungle and the woods made a background." (Conrad, 1999, p. 80) The depiction of his station, in fact, is

symbolical of Kurtz's internal decay. The price that he pays for the psychological evolution— man's transformation from his primitive self to the existential status in which he becomes conscious of his existence, in Frommian terms, is the loss of his human essence. Kurtz represents human narcissism which originates from a pathological inclination in civilised man's psyche in the civilising process as explained in the previous chapter from Frommian perspective. By creating his own matrix, in this sense, Kurtz defines his own territory in Central station that he secures all to himself. As explained by Fromm, this narcissistic possesiveness is reflection of a kind of desire to turn back to his unity with nature that is explained in the metaphor of retreating back to the mother's womb's security. Even though Kurtz achieves the circumstances and freedom to reunite with nature within Congolese natives, he conveys with himself at the same time his civilised consciousness. This consciousness under the circumstances comes up as a pathological inclination into narcissism. Kurtz's narcissistic inclination is reflected not only in his insane attempts at gathering ivory as much as possible but in his constant stating that "[m]y Intended, my ivory, my station, my river, my—" (Conrad, 1999, p. 76).

Reading *Heart of Darkness* from the Freudian perspective, John Tessitore identifies Kurtz's involvement into primitivity and his cruelty with instinctual drives by saying that "Kurtz's relentless and brutal pursuit of ivory illustrates the exercise of primitive instincts, instincts which are deeply rooted in the pleasure principle." (p. 96) As opposed to this idea that defines Kurtz's cruelty as a quality that all human beings own by birth, Fromm believes that "goodness is innate in man, is his birth-right and that human imperfection is the product of social conditions." (Chaudhuri, 1991, p. 109)

As an intellectual member of an ideally progressed society, Kurtz is in search of fulfilling "the hollow at the core" (Conrad, 1999, p. 86) as phrased by Conrad. His turning to his inner self under his circumstances as civilised man, however, fails. Kurtz dies within the terror by shrieking "the horror, the horror" (Conrad, 1999, p. 97). The reality that horrifies Kurtz, in the end, is the spiritual darkness of modern man that he has to admit after his innitiation with the primitive. In the consequence of his contact with "the savages" whom he came to civilise, he realises his own irreversable primitivity and cruelty as a civilised man. The modern man, in fact, is alienated and isolated from his natural essence, his real self, within the boundries of his social existence. From the perspective of another critic, Cedric Watts, who considers *Heart of Darkness* in Freudian terms, Kurtz represents human id. He claims that "[t]he presentation of Mr. Kurtz in *Heart of Darkness* may suggest the Freudian conflict-model of the self by indicating that his civilised qualities were sublimated versions of repressed barbaric powers which, in the wilderness, can display their original lustful and murderous nature." (p. 89) As opposed to Frommian psychoanalysis that is optimistic about human nature, Freud believes in the instinctive irrational desires and murderous nature of man which comes up under the convenient circumstances. Viewed in Frommian terms, however, Kurtz's narcissistic attitude and destructive inclination is not innate but caused in the process of the formation of his identity by society. Kurtz comes to Africa for gaining more money as an imposition of society because Kurtz and his Intended's engagement "had been dissaproved by her [his Intended's] people be [as] [h]e is not rich enough. . ." (Conrad, 1999, p. 103) His poverty, with the social impositon of gaining more and more material leads him into a narcissistic, greedy and murderous creature.

Kurtz exemplifies civilised man's paradoxical existence that he turns to his fellow men to compensate for his loss of unification with nature in return for adapting social restrictions and norms. The horror that Kurtz cites just before his death is the horror of his realisation of the pure nature of man that is corrupt by the greedy, lustful and murderous ideas that are imposed on him by society.

His aggression, hunger for acquisition, will to power and his narcissism are all the results of imposition of Western civilisation. He is the production of European norms, in fact

> He is Europe, searching for power, maneuvering for advantage; and he finds the lever in colonial adventure of ivory. No wonder, then, that Kurtz's hunger for acquisition is so overwhelming. Supremacy over all he seeks: supremacy over things, people, and finally, values. Having gratified forbidden desires, he is free of civilised taboos. In the Congo, he can do anything. (Karl, 1989, p. 128)

Kurtz is not born as a destructively narcissistic person. As hinted by his fiancée who reveals Kurtz's rejection by her family for not being wealthy enough, Kurtz's transformation from a total decent person within the social norms of society into a tyrant occurs according to Frommian psychoanalysis in the process of his struggle to adapt his organic norms to non-organic expectations of society in which he has to survive. Lindley defines the process of social man's deviation from providing his essential needs into having more and more material as follows: "As fallen creatures we tend to confuse the material with the substantial, and thus to spend our lives trying to make ourselves more real by accumulating and consuming things less real – lifeless ivory, for example – in order to feed an unappeasable appetite." (Lindley, 2010, 182) He goes on identifying this possessive attitude with evil as that "[e]vil is thus a form of possession, even if the victim is

‘possessed’ by an aspect of himself: Kurtz, for example, by his hunger for ivory, fame or whatever. It is entirely possible, in other words, to be your own demon.” (2010, p. 181) Kurtz’s narcissistic pathology drives him into an endless pattern that makes him want more and more. The slave-like cycle that dominates Kurtz leads him aggression and destruction. Considered from Frommian perspective, this aggression and destructiveness are not natural, non-organic drives. In *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*, Fromm says: “The fact that the least civilised societies like the hunter-gatherers and early agriculturalists show less destructiveness than the more-developed ones speaks against the idea that destructiveness is a part of human nature.” (p. 204) In fact, Fromm points out that destructiveness and cruelty are not instinctive drives in human nature. Recent scientific research proves that animals show little aggression in their natural habitat. Even though animals fight with their own species, it is in non-destructive way whereas the animals enclosed in zoo show great aggression and destructiveness. This fact explains human aggression as the consequence of his captivity within social structures, cultural norms and civilisation that is built upon his loss of his natural habitat and his harmony with nature which he never recovers. (http://www.ehow.com/about_6133644_animal-behavior-captivity.html) This loss of harmony with nature is reflected, especially in modern world, through aggressive behaviours that derive from the lust for money and property. In *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*, Fromm reassures the peaceful cohabitation of the primitive man as that

> prehistoric hunters and agriculturalists had no opportunity to develop a passionate striving for property or envy of the haves, because there was no private property to hold on to and no important economic differences to cause envy. On the contrary, their way of life was conducive to the development of

cooperation and peaceful living. (p. 185)

In the modern world, however, the society force man both to dedicate himself to gaining more and more material on one hand, and to adapt social norms that require restraint on the other, thus, the modern "civilised savage is far worse than the plain barbarian." (Goonetilleke, 1990, p. 79)

Kurtz, as the typical representative of European greed, is, as Lindley claims, "the embodiment of a European culture that devours resources and subject peoples to satisfy its material desires" (Lindley, 2010, p. 183). With this background, as one of the most improved Europeans, Kurtz has to face the paradoxical dilemma of his narcissistic escape into nature which represents the security of mother's womb in Frommian terms. He reaches ultimate freedom from social norms within Congolese jungles as well as retains his civilised power with which he submits the natives to himself. The power that he gets from his European and the narcissistic side to such an extent that the natives "adored him . . . he came to them with thunder and lightning, you know—and they had never seen anything like it—and very terrible." (Conrad, 1999, p. 84) Within the Congolese darkness, Kurtz feels that he is secure as he was in his mother's womb for he did not have to struggle with social obligations as in Europe. He creates his own kingdom in Congo, "Kurtz becomes the chief, even the god of his newly chosen people."(Firchow, 2000, p. 88) As in Frommian definition of narcissism, he secures his dominance by submitting the natives to his power by his gun. By gaining gigantic lot of ivory and appetite for more power over the Congolese, Kurtz tries to satisfy his spiritual hunger. Moreover, the skeleton heads that surround his station as ornaments symbolise the extremity that the civilised might

go when they are free from the restraining institutions of society. Marlow speculates over this frame of mind in the person of Kurtz as follows:

> They only showed that Mr. Kurtz lacked restraint in the gratification of his various lusts, that there was something wanting in him—some small matter which, when the pressing need arose, could not be found under his magnificent eloquence. Whether he knew of this deficiency himself I can't say. I think the knowledge came to him at last—only at the very last. But the wilderness had found him out early, and had taken on him a terrible vengeance for the fantastic invasion. I think it had whispered to him things about himself which he did not know, things of which he had no conception till he took counsel with this great solitude- and the whisper had proved irresistibly fascinating. It echoed loudly within him because he was hollow at the core. (Conrad, 1999, p. 85-86)

Thus, Marlow explains Kurtz's going astray in all aspects of his existence as the surfacing of the spiritual hunger of all "white men" consequent to their cutting off from nature.

Marlow, as the mouthpiece of Conrad, functions in the novel not only as a narrator but as an intermediary between the two realities that are represented by the natural— Africa, jungle, the natives, and unnatural— European civilisation, corruption and colonisers. Categorised from the perspective of Frommian psychoanalysis, in other words, those who are living according to their organic drives in conformity with nature and those who destroy, exploit and oppress with non-organic drives cut off from nature.

The Congo journey for which Marlow is motivated by exotic boyish desires transforms him into a mature person who can avoid the destiny of many Europeans in Africa by devoting himself to duty, discipline and order as a seaman. Marlow shares the sense of isolation and alienation in the universe, with all other Europeans. Rather than behaving irrationally like other Europeans to suppress his alienation, however, "[h]is alienation is further increased by the absurd and

entirely irrational behaviour of his fellow Europeans. Marlow realizes the uselessness of the white presence in Africa. The more he learns of their corruption, the more he is estranged from them." (Bala, 1990, p. 100) Marlow, like many of his fellow Europeans, is employed by the mission of "civilising the brutes" in Africa, for example by his aunt. His personal observations since his arrival to the coast of Africa reveal a completely different reality. The more he proceeds to the inner Africa, the more he is convinced about the Europeans' hypocritical camouflaging of their real aim of exploiting and colonising the continent by bringing civilisation there. For Marlow, whites in Congo are "a flabby, pretending, weak-eyed devil of rapacious and pitiless folly."(Conrad, 1999, p. 44) The violence, greed and ambition that Marlow observes in whites lead him to empathise with the natives of Congo. Lindley reassures the destructive existence of Europeans in Africa, in the novel, as that "[t]he imperial enterprises in Africa are constantly represented in terms of emptiness, non-entity, consuming, greed and hunger, and the gravitational drift toward oblivion" (Lindley, 2010, p. 177).

Hard-work, in this context, becomes the only means for Marlow to retain his sanity, irritated especially by the corruption, hypocrisy and entriques that he witnesses at the central station, Marlow wants to occupy his mind by repairing his steamer. However, he does not have rivets, many of which he saw in the outer station, as the only thing that he needs for repairing his steamer. Afterwards, he realizes that his search for rivets is being impeded by the manager. He laments, in grief, about his steamboat:

> She had given me a chance to come out a bit—to find out what I could do. No, I don't like work. I had rather laze about and think of all the fine things that can

> be done, I don't like work—no man does—but I like what is in the work,—the chance to find yourself. Your own reality—for yourself, not for others—what no other man can ever know. They can only see the mere show, and never can tell what it really means. (Conrad, 1999, p. 56-57)

Marlow's dedication and desire to occupy his mind by work conforms to Fromm's assumption that ". . . by using his own powers can he [man] give meaning to his life. . . If he faces the truth without panic he will recognize that there is no meaning to life except the meaning man gives his life by the unfolding of his powers, by living productively." (1947, p. 32) Joseph Conrad reveals, in a letter that he writes to Poradowska, his ideas about hard-work which are in line with those of Fromm's. He says that

> One becomes useful only on realizing the utter insignificance of the individual in the scheme of the universe. When one well understands that in oneself one is nothing and that a man is worth neither more nor less than work he accomplishes with honesty of purpose and means, and with the strict limits of his duty towards society, only then is one the master of his conscience, with the right to call himself a man. Otherwise, were he more attractive than Prince Charming, richer than Midas, wiser than Doctor Faust himself, the two-legged featherless creature is only a despicable thing sunk in the mud of all the passions. (Gee and Sturm. Eds., 1940, p. 45-46)

He suggests that in a hostile and futile existence, work provides man with the chance to keep his sanity and survive. Work is, as suggested by Bala in Conradian terminology "a fit alternative to despair and cynicism. . . [it] is something which stands between man and the vast indifference of things." (Bala, 1990, p. 47) He believes that with the assistance of hard work, man can create a balance between the routine everyday life and the chaotic world outside, thus, man can preserve his sanity.

Marlow manages to remain sane under these hard circumstances, yet it is not so easy for him to avoid the strain of this extraordinary experience with Kurtz

gone wild as one of the most civilised Europeans on one hand, and the cannibals, full of restraint, on the other. Marlow admits his identification with Kurtz in his indulgence with "dark forces of nature" while his narrating this experience to his audience in Buddha-wisdom years later:

> Being alone in the wilderness, it [Kurtz's soul] had looked within itself, and, by heavens! I tell you, it had gone mad. I had—for my sins, I suppose—to go through the ordeal of looking into it myself. . . He struggled with himself, too. I saw it- I heard it. I saw the inconceivable mystery of a soul that knew no restraint, no faith, and no fear, yet struggling blindly with itself. (Conrad, 1999, p. 94)

Marlow is terrified with the extremity of savagery that a civilised European is able to commit. Kurtz is transformed for Marlow beyond not only a European fellow but also a primitive of Africa also into an apparition. "I had to deal with a being to whom I could not appeal in the name of anything high or low. I had. . . to invoke him—himself— his own exalted and incredible degradation. . . He had kicked himself loose of the earth. Confound the man! He had kicked the very earth to pieces." (Conrad, 1999, p. 94) He is nothing more than an evil source of darkness. It is an "impenetrable darkness" that Marlow defines as "I [Marlow] looked at him as you peer down at a man who is lying at the bottom of precipice where the sun never shines." (Conrad, 1999, p. 97)

Conrad's depiction of Marlow as a wise man, in the figure of Buddha, as opposed to ordinary Europeans reflects his perception of two different modes of existence. Watt quotes Conrad by saying that ". . . there are only two options of living in this world—the one option is as an idiot who does not see or think the other as a convict who sees and thinks." (Watt, 2000, p. 8) Marlow, in this context, falls under the second category not only in his realisation of the hollowness of

Western civilisation but has to deal with and carry Kurtz's legacy back to Europe. Through his experience with Kurtz—as well as other Europeans in Africa and those back in Europe— Marlow achieves a complete knowledge about himself and nature of human kind, all together. For Bala, Marlow turns out to be the bearer of Kurtz's "last words as a message . . . to the world." (Bala, 1990, p. 120) With his last words, according to Marlow, Kurtz not only explains what has happened to him but also what will happen in future to other people in European civilisation. Marlow believes that these words are confession of Kurtz and he says:

> This is the reason why I affirm that Kurtz was a remarkable man. He [Kurtz] had something to say. He said it. Since I had peeped over the edge myself, I understand better the meaning of his stare, that could not see the flame of the candle, but was wide enough to embrace the whole universe, piercing enough to penetrate all the hearts that beta in the darkness. He had summed up—he had judged. 'The horror!' (Conrad, 1999, p. 98)

Considered from Frommian perspective Marlow realises the destructive influence of society on individuals in the process of adaptation. He approves and admires Kurtz in this sense for being truthful in going to the extreme of his cruelty as opposed to other Europeans hypocrisy. The voyage that Kurtz takes to the depths of jungle, in fact, is the voyage that he takes back to his psyche. He is unable, however, in the process, as suggested by Fromm, to "go back to the pre-human state of harmony with nature, and he does not know where he will arrive if he goes forward." (1992, The Anatomy, p. 254) Kurtz's search for mother's-womb-like security in harmony with nature within the Congolese jungle ends up in corruption and degradation.

Marlow reveals his approval of Kurtz by confessing that he "made a last stride, he [Kurtz] had stepped over the edge, while I had been permitted to draw back my hesitating foot." (Conrad, 1999, p. 98) Goonetilleke indicates to the same fact by defining Kurtz's journey to the depths of his inner self, his psyche, as a unique experience which is difficult for many Europeans to take.

> Kurtz chose evil, but he was man enough to make a choice and is peculiarly honest in acting by it. It is to this humanness and honesty in Kurtz that Marlow turns 'for relief'; this is why he prefers 'nightmare' of Kurtz to the 'nightmare' of the other colonial employees, though it is far more unsettling. Conrad's view here accords with T.S Eliot's: So far as we are human, what we do must be either good or evil; so far as we do evil or good, we are human; and it is better, in a paradoxical way, to do evil than to do nothing: at least we exist. It is true to say that the glory of man is his capacity for salvation; it is also true to say that his glory is his capacity for damnation. (p. 81)

Marlow turns out to be the only European who learns through Kurtz's experience with the "heart of darkness" that victimises him in Conrad's words as "a convict who sees and thinks." (Watt, 2000, p. 8)

After the death of Kurtz, Marlow turns to Europe as a changed man who is aware of the corrupting influence of society and its institutions upon human psyche. The people that he witnesses hurrying through the streets in Brussels remind him the artificiality of their existence once again. He reveals his own estrangement from the society and his loss of belief in civilisation as follows,

> I found myself back in the sepulchral city resenting the sight of people hurrying through the streets to filch a little money from each other, to devour their infamous cookery, to gulp their unwholesome beer, to dream their insignificant and silly dreams. They trespassed upon my thoughts. They were intruders whose knowledge of life was to me an irritating pretence, because I felt so sure they could not possibly know the things I knew. Their bearing, which was simply the bearing of commonplace individuals going about their business in the assurance of perfect safety, was offensive to me like the outrageous flaunting of folly in the face of a danger it is unable to comprehend. (Conrad, 1999, p. 99)

His improved consciousness through his experience in Africa secures Marlow from the indulgent reality of his fellow Europeans. Because of their lack of contact with deeper truths about human nature, their lives are simple and silly, according to Marlow. Brown defines Marlow's changing view of the Western culture through the metaphor of Brussels, the Western metropolis that is identified with light, at the beginning, in terms of change of its image as that ". . . (Western metropolis as civilised place of light) is displaced by another (Western metropolis as a horrific place of darkness)." (Brown, 2000, p. 15) According to Marlow, his European fellow-men, who associate them with light, cannot realise their state in life and world; moreover, they are unaware of their loneliness in modern world and also unaware of their loss of harmony with nature.

Marlow's close observations of the natives either on land or on the ship as crew and his deep speculation over their nature empower his disappointment with and loss of belief in his fellow Europeans. Despite his exceptional wisdom, Marlow, too, comes to Africa with the typical prejudices of Europeans which is reflected, especially in his identification of the natives with animal imagery. Marlow uses the imagery of ants for explaining the behaviours of Africans as they always do their works together. He also despises the appearance of specimen by resembling him to a dog. In the further phases of his voyage while they are travelling up to the depths of Africa, Marlow undergoes a terrifying transformation in his perception of natives. Hearing the voice of the natives within this enigmatic primitivity of African jungles, it occurs to Marlow, all of a sudden, the natives have some relation with humans. "It was unearthly, and the men were—No, they were not inhuman. Well, you know, that was the worst of it—this suspicion of their not being inhuman . . . what thrilled you was. . . the thought of

remote kinship with this wild and passionate uproar. ” (Conrad, 1999, p. 63-64) This perception is the turning point towards change in Marlow’s understanding of African’s as evil. The more he goes to inner Africa, the more he is infatuated by natives. The “wild and gorgeous apparition of a woman” (Conrad, 1999, p. 88), Kurtz’s native mistress, mesmerises him with her natural pride and confidence as that

> she walked with measured steps. . . treading the earth proudly, with a slight jingle and flash of barbarous ornaments. She carried her head high; her hair was done in the shape of a helmet. . . She was savage and superb, wild—eyed and magnificent; there was something ominous and stately in her deliberate progress. . . .Her face had a tragic and fierce aspect of wild sorrow and of dumb pain mingled with . . .fear. . . (Conrad, 1999, p. 88-89)

Marlow begins his journey, as reflected in the othering images he associates with them, with the typical prejudiced European conception of African natives. Later, however, his othering discourse changes towards concepts covering more positive images as follows: “ . . . shouted, sang; their bodies streamed with perspiration; they had faces like grotesque masks—these chaps; but they had bone, muscle, a wild vitality, an energy of movement, that was as natural and true as the surf along their coast.” (Conrad, 1999, p. 41) His perception of natives, confused with their human and inhuman images, is exemplified by considerations of the helmsman, a cannibal native who has been on ship with Marlow alongside with a few of his other native fellowmen. He and the others work in really difficult circumstances as there is not enough to feed on, on the board, except for some hippopotamus meat that is thrown by Marlow into the river for its heavy smell as it is rotten. Despite his enthusiasm to do his job properly, he, for Marlow, “sported a pair of brass earrings, wore a blue cloth wrapper from the waist to the ankles, and thought

all the world himself. He was the most unstable kind of fool I had ever seen."(Conrad, 1999, p. 72) Marlow considers him all throughout for his primitive nativity, especially in terms of his attempts at trying to adapt himself to western appearance.

Later, when his steamboat is attacked, however, the helmsman challenges attacks in order to protect Marlow, in the process of which he is hit by a spear that wounds him deeply. In fact none of his fellow white men, pilgrims, bother, but the native helmsman tries to protect Marlow from the attack. The way he looks at Marlow, for Marlow, while he is dying is "in an extraordinary, profound, familiar manner". (Conrad, 1999, p. 73) Throughout this voyage, Marlow's perception of reality improves, highly, by his deeper penetration of the truth under surface. Marlow only can keep sane by dedicating himself to work discipline, as opposed to the rest of the Europeans, who plot, intrigue, oppress and murder once they are freed from the context of their civilized society. Experiencing this controversial representation of Europeans in his fellow Europeans distorts Marlow's perception of civilization completely. Moreover, he gets more and more confused when he realizes the capacity of restraint that Europeans lack but natives, especially the cannibals on the ship, are able to show. These crews, who are "fine fellows", Marlow is convinced, ". . . were men one could work with, and I am grateful to them. And, after all, they did not eat each other before my face" (Conrad, 1999, p. 62). Marlow realizes that the cannibals are very hungry and he wonders why they do not eat each other or whites. With them, in fact, Conrad presents their remarkable restraint as a reality of human existence by acquiring them with this quality of restraint even under the pressure of hunger. It looks unbelievable and improbable. The full recognition of their inborn restraint disgusts Marlow, when

he recalls the station where “the word ivory would ring in the air. . .” (Conrad, 1999, p. 62) He remembers the greedy wishes of the manager and the other Europeans. For John G. Peters “. . . the Europeans appear more savage than the Africans, whom the Europeans consider savages. . . Marlow shows the cannibals first to be more rational than their European colonisers and second to be more moral.” (p. 58) The strength of their uncorrupted nature and primitive honour remains an enigma to Marlow. Frommian considerations of *Heart of Darkness*, however, explain this enigma by man’s undisturbed harmony with nature. Living in conformity with nature does not destroy man’s inborn strength and restraint, even in the absence of any kind of external control. The loss of existential unity with nature, and the controlling social norms in the process of civilisation shape the unconscious and behaviours of all Europeans in *Heart of Darkness*.

CONCLUSION

As a novel that reflects the greed and moral corruption of Western culture in colonial context, *Heart of Darkness* deconstructs the "civilised" Europeans' conception of superiority over the "savage" natives of Africa. Due to the portrayal of one of its basic characters', Kurtz's, portrayal as an intellectual European who goes wild and transforms into a tyrant within the primitive circumstances of Africa, this novel is evaluated, mostly, as a symbolic novel reflecting a metaphorical voyage to the dark realms of human psyche in psychoanalytical terms. Based on Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis that defines human psyche in three layers, the basic drive of which is sexual energy, Erich Fromm develops the idea further by associating it not only with sexual drives but social drives as well. In the process of evolution, for Fromm, the civilized man lost his total harmony with nature as reflected in his aggression and material aspirations. Fromm believes that it is not only human instincts but the civilised society's restrictions and expectations that determine man's drives. Man's social drives too, like his instinctual ones, can become pathological at times. In the process of his assertion of his identity in society, in fact, such drives as social and material superiority can lead man to narcissism that is reflected through greed, ambition and tyranny.

This thesis reads, in this context, *Heart of Darkness* from the perspective of Frommian psychoanalysis, which is a revision of Freudian psychoanalysis. The Freudian psychoanalytic reading of *Heart of Darkness* considers Kurtz's savagery

and tyranny as the materialization of the id, the suppressed instinctual drives in human unconscious. Fromm's psychoanalysis, however, considers this savagery and tyranny as symptoms of narcissism, a pathology that is caused by man's social drives, a concept that responds to Marlow's confusion about the sense of restraint that he observes in the primitive natives, whereas all the Europeans lose control in the absence of social and legal restrictions.

This study proceeds with the first chapter that gives a detailed account of Joseph Conrad's life and writing career. It is asserted that Conrad's traumatic life as the descendent of exiled parents influenced his perception of reality, which is reflected in both his fictional and critical writing. The modernist touch in his writing, thus, is achieved through the means of not only technical innovations but also his perception of reality as well. The second chapter highlights such basic assumptions of Frommian psychoanalysis as the civilised man's loss of harmony with nature, his social drive to assert himself in society and the consequent narcissism. The last chapter is dedicated to a detailed Frommian reading of *Heart of Darkness*, especially, with reference to the aggression, greed and materialism that is attributed to all Europeans, those in Africa as well as at home, and natives whose natural sense of restraint confuses Marlow's perception of them. As opposed to Kurtz's narcissistic perception of himself as the centre of all around him in Africa, through his god-like behaviour within the Congolese jungle, the primitive man is not aggressive and ambitious. Kurtz's aggression and greed for material gain, ivory, are impositions of the civilized society at home rather than the primitivity of Africa. The native people have an inborn restraint which is not spoiled by the rules and barriers of society.

It is concluded that Frommian reading of *Heart of Darkness* enhances the psychoanalytical analysis of the novel by re-considering Kurtz's aggression and violence not only as an instinctual reflection but also the reflection of man's distorted nature consequent to his break with nature, whereas the natives retain their natural harmony and peace with nature.

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APPENDIX

CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL INFORMATION

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WORK EXPERIENCE

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FOREIGN LANGUAGE

English, fluent