

Prejudice in Joseph Conrad's Post-Colonial Novel *Heart of Darkness*

Nushrat Azam*

School of Communication, Language and Literature, Fiji National University, King's Road, Nasinu, Suva, Fiji

Corresponding Author: Nushrat Azam, E-mail: nushratazam@gmail.com

ARTICLE INFO

Article history

Received: July 07, 2019

Accepted: September 08, 2019

Published: September 30, 2019

Volume: 8 Issue: 5

Advance access: September 2019

Conflicts of interest: None

Funding: None

ABSTRACT

The paper analyses the underlying racism present in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. Although *Heart of Darkness* has been considered one of the greatest works of art ever since it was first published, one aspect of the novel has been a constant source of criticism and debate among scholars and readers: racism. Whether this novel is racist is a question of utmost importance because this question puts the greatness of the novel in doubt. The purpose of this study is to answer this very question of racism through the analysis of the author's point of view, characterization, visual description, use of symbols and language used in the novel with regards to racism. Through the analysis it has been concluded that through Conrad's method of narration, style and literary skill, Conrad expertly masks racist viewpoints and hides the fact that at its core, *Heart of Darkness* is in fact a racist novel.

Key words: Racism, Marlow, Colonialism, Achebe, Conrad

INTRODUCTION

The point of my observations should be quite clear by now, namely that Joseph Conrad was a thoroughgoing racist. That this simple truth is glossed over in criticisms of his work is due to the fact that white racism against Africa is such a normal way of thinking that its manifestations go completely unremarked (Achebe 176)

Joseph Conrad delves deeply into significant issues of the post-colonial era in his celebrated novel, *Heart of Darkness*. The novel explores in depth topics ranging from imperialism, oppression and power/class dichotomies to social problems such as ignorance, slavery and racism. Most of the aspects of the novel have been analyzed repeatedly by scholars without much debate about what Conrad's true intentions were behind their portrayal in the novel. However, the topic of racism has been a bone of contention among scholars and readers alike to this day. If *Heart of Darkness* is a racist novel, then according to most scholars this apparent classic can never be classified as a true work of art.

Heart of Darkness belongs to the Post-Colonial Literature genre which primarily focused on the colonialism and imperialism of European nations. The colonizers believed that they were civilizing the people of the African Continent, but their primary interest was in gaining wealth and they would go to any brutal extent necessary to achieve that wealth. Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* depicted a real image of the cruelty, brutality and racism that took place in the African continent during the 19th century.

To analyze the tone of racism in this novel, we need to first have an idea about the real meaning of racism. Racism

is an act of treating people differently according to their race. According to Oxford's definition "racism is unfair treatment of other races or belief that some races of people are better than others". It is the belief that race accounts for differences in human character or ability and that one race is superior to others. Racism occurs when a racist group finds it necessary to put down other ethnic groups to strengthen their own. The novel *Heart of Darkness* provides such instances which are racist and biased against the people living in Africa.

Research Structure and Hypothesis

This paper will analyze Conrad's portrayal and description of the African Continent. At first, the paper will analyze the choice of racist words used by the author to depict the characteristics and lifestyle of the African people. Moreover, it will look at Achebe's allegations against Conrad's racism in the novel. It will further analyze the loopholes in the arguments presented against Achebe's claims by Conrad's supporters.

Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899) has been acclaimed as one of the most complex and powerful works of literature ever. It has been considered a strong indictment of the evils of imperialism ever since it was first published. However, its greatness has been shrouded in doubt since Achebe made his controversial allegations against the novel. Racism is a force that is destructive and ever present. In the 21st century scholars, readers and people in general are much more aware about all kinds of racism and its ill effects.

Although *Heart of Darkness* is an anti-imperialistic novel, it is also a story in which racism has a constant presence.

Heart of Darkness depicts the tale of sadness, pain, illness, and tragedy of human existence in the wilderness of Africa. The story revolves around the character of Marlow who takes up a job as a sea captain for British Imperialistic forces in Africa and is stunned upon seeing what the European traders have done to the natives. When the novel was first published, the general people had a negative perception of Africans and were ignorant with regards to racism and so this discussion only started long after the novel's publication, when racist viewpoints became much less common and much more criticized. Achebe's interpretation of the novel as a racist book started a landslide of debate and arguments between supporters of the novel and those who oppose it.

Methods and Methodology

This paper will use Post-Colonial theory to frame a textual analysis of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. Specifically, it will analyze the elements of racism in the depiction of the natives belonging to Africa. This paper will be analyzing different stages of Marlow's journey through the river Congo and his encounter with the natives through which the author's own personal racist views get highlighted through the novel.

The reason for choosing Conrad's novel, *Heart of Darkness*, is mainly because the post-colonial text highlights the relationship between the colonizers and the colonized, with a mindset of portraying the African continent as an uncivilized nation.

ANALYSIS

Allegations of Chinua Achebe

Creating an African identity is important to Chinua Achebe and he believes that it is one of his most important responsibilities as an African writer. More than ever it seemed important to create an African identity. Achebe was also part of the Pan-Africanism movement which aim was to unify native Africans and eliminate colonialism (Appiah 73).

In his essay, Achebe labeled several accusations against Conrad and provided quite a few examples from Conrad's novel *Heart of Darkness* to prove that he is a racist. He even used Conrad's own life experiences to make his point, since if Conrad can be proved to be a racist, then it would be much easier to brand a novel of his as a representation of these views. According to Achebe, racism is glowing all through the novel and its undertone cannot be missed or ignored.

One of Achebe's principal complaints is Conrad's portrayal of Africa as "the other world." *Heart of Darkness projects the image of Africa as "the other world," the antithesis of Europe and therefore of civilization, a place where man's vaunted intelligence and refinement are finally mocked by triumphant bestiality.*" (Achebe 172) He cites Conrad's opposing portrayals of the River Thames and the River Congo as an example. While Thames, according to him, is shown as a tranquil river resting after rendering ages of service to man, River Congo is portrayed as a portal to a prehistoric world which is yet to provide any service to us. In Achebe's

opinion, Conrad uses Africa as an antithesis of civilized Europe – an uncivilized madhouse consisting of prehistoric surroundings and people too old and unrecognizable for the modern civilized European man to comprehend.

Achebe also quotes one of the famous sections of the novel, used by most Conrad critics before him, as a clear and undeniable evidence of Conrad's racism:

"It was unearthly and the men were...no they were not being human. Well, you know that was the worst of it – this suspicion of their not being inhuman. It would come slowly to one. They bowled and leaped and spun and made horrid faces, but what thrilled you, remote kingship with this wild and passionate uproar. Ugly." (Conrad 36)

Just the thought of being the same species as the Africans was ugly and shameful to Conrad. The comprehension that these Africans might be a small part of his own history and somehow related to him was to Conrad in one simple racism filled word – ugly.

According to Achebe, Conrad's description of the fireman is one of the rare instances of an African who is not just limbs or rolling eyes. Even then it is implied that an African should be expected to be 'clapping his hands and stamping his feet.' In his essay, Achebe talks about Conrad's love of things being in their places. He quotes one of Conrad's many descriptions of an African – "Fine fellows -- cannibals --in their place. They shouted, sang; their bodies streamed with perspiration; they had faces like grotesque masks" (Conrad 78). Achebe also says that the Amazon, even though African, is given a bit of detail because she is in her place and acts as the savage opposite of the sophisticated European woman.

Achebe is particularly peeved with Conrad's bestowal of human expression to the European and withholding of it from the African. Achebe observes that not just on this occasion, but throughout the novel Conrad refuses to confer language to the African describing their speech as "a violent babble of uncouth sounds" and "short grunting phrases". (Achebe 172) But Conrad does grant speech to the Africans on two occasions. Achebe quotes from those two scenarios;

"Catch 'im," he snapped with a bloodshot widening of his eyes and a flash of sharp teeth -- "catch 'im. Give 'im to us." "To you, eh?" I asked; "what would you do with them?" Eat 'im!" he said curtly.and: "Mistah Kurtz -- he dead" (Conrad 148).

Even then Achebe finds fault. In the first instance, Achebe thinks that the only thing more tempting than withholding speech from the Africans is to give them speech only to show their savage cannibalistic hearts. Achebe thinks that Conrad couldn't have found a more appropriate way than the proclamation of the death of a child of civilization who joined the forces of darkness through the mouth of a member of that very same darkness.

Achebe also considers the counterpoint that Conrad might not be Marlow and might be criticizing Marlow's views using irony. According to Achebe, Conrad does not do enough to distance himself from Marlow. To Achebe, Conrad's failure to provide an alternative reference frame from which to judge the actions and opinions of his characters is a clear giveaway that to Conrad, the alternative point of view

is incorrect and unnecessary. Achebe sees this as Conrad putting all his confidence into Marlow's character.

"It might be contended, of course, that the attitude to the African in Heart of Darkness is not Conrad's but that of his fictional narrator, Marlow, and that far from endorsing it Conrad might indeed be holding it up to irony and criticism. Certainly, Conrad appears to go to considerable pains to set up layers of insulation between himself and the moral universe of his history. He has, for example, a narrator behind a narrator." (Achebe 8)

He further emphasizes his point by mentioning the similarities between the careers of Conrad and Marlow. To Achebe, Marlow does not seem like only a witness of truth. Marlow comes off as the one who is advanced and humane held by sophisticated English liberals which required them to be shocked at various savage, inhumane atrocities.

Achebe latches onto the fact that Conrad never describes the Africans as brothers. The furthest Conrad would go was Kinship. Achebe then explicitly states his major point by saying, *"The point of my observations should be quite clear by now, namely that Joseph Conrad was a thoroughgoing racist"* (Achebe 9). According to Chinua Achebe, the reason that this racism is completely ignored is that white racism against blacks is so common. Achebe goes on to deal with the fact that many students and critics would point out that Conrad's focus is the deterioration of a European mind caused by the desolation of a place rather than Africa itself. Some would also interpret the book to ridicule Europe's role in civilizing Africa. Many would also say that Africa is just a backdrop. It is only a setting for the story. Achebe thinks that this is exactly where the problem lies. The humanity of the Africans is eliminated in using Africa only as a metaphysical battlefield for the wandering European. According to Achebe, this dehumanization of Africa and its people is the real problem which places the greatness of this novel in doubt. Achebe believes that a novel, which promotes and celebrates this kind of depersonalization and dehumanization of a major part of humanity, can in no way be considered great.

Chinua Achebe's allegations don't stop with just trying to prove that racism is ingrained in the novel, *Heart of Darkness*. To prove that the novel is racist he goes on to state his reasons to believe that Conrad is a racist in his personal life. This is an important point. If Conrad can be proven to be a racist, then it becomes much more likely that he would write a racist novel. Achebe draws on the fact that Conrad grew up in a time when prejudice and racism was common among Europeans. Achebe thinks that Conrad's account of his encounter with a black man for the first time is revealing of his antipathy towards black people. Conrad recalled the encounter saying:

"A certain enormous buck nigger encountered in Haiti fixed my conception of blind, furious, unreasoning rage, as manifested in the human animal to the end of my days. Of the nigger I used to dream for years afterwards" (Achebe 10).

Achebe also sees evidence of racism in Conrad's constant and mostly unnecessary use of the word 'nigger' which most black people find offensive. Even more damning is Conrad's description of his first encounter with an Englishman which

he called 'My Unforgettable Englishman'. This description, completely opposite that of his description of the furious African, depicts the Englishman as curious and friendly, having an illuminated face and triumphant eyes. According to Achebe, the blatant racism in his descriptions is not condemned only because this kind of racist thinking is so common among white people.

Achebe thinks that Conrad uses Marlow as an indirect route to describe and encourage racism. Conrad uses a narrator behind a narrator to hide his own true intentions. But to Achebe, there is no doubt that Marlow is really a reflection of Conrad and Marlow's opinions reflect those of Conrad. Pointing to the well documented similarities between both of their lives and careers, Achebe believes that there is not a shadow of a doubt that Marlow is Conrad. Achebe also considers the possibility that Marlow is not Conrad and that Conrad did not really intend *Heart of Darkness* to be a racist novel. According to Achebe, even then it would not have been very difficult for Conrad to show situations and descriptions in the novel from a different frame. A non-racist point of view in the novel through a narrator or through the eyes of another character would have balanced out the racism evident in the novel. It would have also given readers a different perspective to judge Africa and its people. Consecutively, the question about *Heart of Darkness* being a racist novel would have never been raised. Apart from all the criticism Achebe does praise Conrad's caliber as a writer and his stylistic approach. So, Achebe thinks that it would have been well within Conrad's abilities as a writer to draw an alternative non-racist, non-ignorant perspective. According to Achebe, these many different examples prove beyond argument that Joseph Conrad is a 'thoroughgoing racist' and his novel *Heart of Darkness* is just a complete reflection of racist thinking and just serves to encourage the racist agenda even today.

Arguments against Achebe's Views

There are many supporters of the book who disagree with Achebe. Some think that instead of degrading Africans, *Heart of Darkness* protests the dehumanization of Africans. They present some examples from the novel to back their view.

A point frequently made is that the views expressed by Marlow are typical of his time. Being a civilized British traveler in the 'uncivilized' areas of Africa, it is no surprise that Marlow was caught off guard seeing what he described as people howling, leaping, spinning and making horrible faces. They think that before judging Marlow's opinion that the actions of the Africans depicted ancient mindlessness, one must consider the time that is depicted. Some supporters of the novel also deny Achebe's claim that Africa is 'a place of negations...in comparison with which Europe's own state of spiritual grace will be manifest'. Instead of being opposites they point out a few instances Africa, Europe and their people are similar. They find similarity in the fact that Africans are referred to as 'hollow men' while Marlow once describes Europeans as *'ignorant, sheep like people in the streets'* (Watts 203). According to supporters, even the description

of the two places mirror each other with central Africa being described as the 'Heart of Darkness' while London is described as the center of 'a mournful (or brooding) gloom'.

Some scholars and readers who disagree with Achebe also do not see any true distinction between the portrayal of the white intended woman and the black mistress. They point out that each woman is portrayed as loyal to Kurtz and suffering loss. They also refer to the similarity that both are described as 'tragic' and making the same gesture (outstretched arms). Some supporters, attempting to balance out the negativities towards Africans and Europeans in the novel, even think that there are hints that Kurtz ate human flesh during a rite of passage. Many people also refuse to accept Achebe's claim that Conrad refuses dialogue to the Africans expect when the dialogue can be used to degrade them. Their rebuttal of the line - 'Catch 'im...Eat it', (Conrad 148) is usually that the crew was originally from a cannibalistic area in Africa and even then, it was later revealed that the cannibals never actually ate any flesh on the voyage. Some supporters of Conrad also think that the fact that the African mistress does not talk is because Marlow only sees her from far away and would have anyway found it much easier to communicate with someone from his native land.

There were diverse critics who wrote words of praise for the language used in the novel; as one of the critics wrote;

"I began to sense a certain incomprehension in Achebe's analysis of the pressures of form that engaged Conrad's imagination to transform biases grounded in homogeneous premises. By form I mean the novel form as a medium of consciousness that has its deepest roots in an intuitive and much, much older self than the historical ego or the historical conditions of ego dignity that bind us to a particular decade or generation or century" (Harris 86).

According to Harris Wilson, it is illogical to expect an individual to follow post-colonial approach when in reality he belongs to the colonial world. Achebe's allegations received numerous feedback and responses.

Edward Said also defends and contextualizes Conrad as a creature of his time in his critique, *"Two Visions in Heart of Darkness"*. Conrad's narrative is bound to a certain time and place. Conrad does not see an alternative to imperialism and the natives he wrote about seemed to be incapable of independence. He could not foresee what would happen when imperialism came to an end. *Conrad allows readers today to see an Africa that is not made up of dozens of European colonies, even if he himself might have had a very limited idea of what Africa was like* (Said 25). Conrad might be considered a racist in today's time but during the time that this novel was written, Conrad was just like thousand others who had the same stance towards Africa and African people.

For many, the main issues with the argument that Conrad's novel is racist, is the fact that Conrad was not writing a story about Africa or its people. They believe Achebe fails to see the voice that Conrad is creating. Some also think that there is a hint of sarcasm hidden behind Marlow's words. Some critics believe that Marlow and Kurtz see a connection between themselves and the dehumanized Africans, in that both share the ugliness of humanity. It is pointed out by

Conrad supporters that Africa and Europe are connected in every way in the novel.

Conrad seems to be attempting to ridicule his own society, not mock African society. Achebe is reading too much into the novella. He is forgetting it was written at a time when the word nigger was commonly used, and not considered racist. Achebe is reading Conrad from a modern point-of-view. We must view literature within the context of the time it was written. However, Achebe still judges Conrad from a modern point-of-view and deems him a racist. While, by our current standards, Conrad is a racist, by the standards of the 1890's he was no such thing. Compared to the view of many other people, Conrad was a liberal who did his best to shed light on the plight of the African people.

Achebe disagrees. Conrad dehumanizes all the characters in the novel. However, by dehumanizing the Africans and Africa he points out the hypocrisy of European attitudes towards Africa. The novel, hence, does not celebrate the dehumanizing of a portion of humans, but mocks the dehumanization as evil. Achebe's focus lies heavily on the recollection of African traditions, effects of Christian influences and the clash of values during and after the colonial era. Therefore, upon studying Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, he immediately underlined the significance of its themes and meanings referring to the apparent pejorative descriptions of Africa and its people as uncivilized and "savage" beings. However, Achebe also notified Conrad's ability acknowledging his talent for writing stating *"Conrad...is undoubtedly one of the great stylists of modern fiction and a good storyteller into the bargain"* (Achebe 3). Nevertheless, it is here that in opposition to Conrad's derogatory descriptions that he neglects to comprehend the implicit intent of the text. And while the story does not focus on the Africans that could be simply be because it was written by a white author during a time when cultures did not mix, not even in literature.

When Conrad discusses the natives as chained together, many find that the emotion he revokes is sympathy and sadness towards them. Also he blatantly makes the Eldorado company look like the "bad guys" since they are the ones who are pulling the treasures from the land.

In opposition to Achebe's idea of Conrad's racism, the Africans of *Heart of Darkness* are presented with a natural quality but from a quasi-colonial aspect through the narrator Marlow. This distorted narrative technique allows Conrad to project his own opinion upon the reader as moments of realization. By this technique he reveals the brutality of Imperialism upon the natives of the Congo. Though, to keep a psychological realism to Marlow's character the foreign appearance of the Africans is displayed from a western perspective. This does not directly reflect Conrad's negative view of their culture. This is understandable when one considers the darkness and 'incomprehensible frenzy' depicted throughout the journey as an insight into Marlow's spiritual solitary confinement. The darkness appears to be a recurring motif present in London, Brussels and the jungle. Therefore, the darkness appears explicitly as a foreboding veil constantly shrouding his human psyche.

Supporters of the novel think that rather than being racist, the novel points out the cultural equivalence between Europe

and Africa. They cite these examples to prove that *Heart of Darkness* is a stand against not only imperialism but also racism.

Loopholes in Counterarguments Against Achebe

The most common defense of *Heart of Darkness* is that Marlow's views are typical considering the time depicted in the novel. But this just seems like a desperately weak point. Just because most people were racist at the time does not justify the fact that the only character in the novel whose views are continually expressed is Marlow. No alternative point of view is shown. If Conrad really was trying to criticize racism, it would not have been hard to show a different perspective through a narrator or another character given Conrad's caliber as a writer. Thus, the readers have no choice but to rely on Marlow's racist views to base their judgments on.

The claim that *Heart of Darkness* is just an attack on colonialism is a rather shallow analysis. It is hard to see how this criticism of colonialism stands beside Marlow's love and fascination for Kurtz. Kurtz even placed African skulls on spikes. Yet, examples of Marlow's worship of Kurtz is not hard to find. Not only did Marlow listen in acknowledgement as The Intended describes Kurtz's death as 'a loss...[to] the world', but also called Kurtz 'a remarkable man' (Conrad, 178-179). Thus, Marlow was a follower of Kurtz and everything Kurtz stood for, including the display of skulls. This directly contradicts the point that *Heart of Darkness* is a criticism of colonialism.

The similarities between Africa and Europe that many points to in the novel are not conclusive. London is never described as an anachronistic place like Africa. Unlike Africa, London is not described as a backward place representative of the earliest times. Even the similarities between the European woman and the African mistress are not enough to deny a charge of racism, as it would not have been a detriment to Conrad or the novel to grant the African woman speech like the European character. After all, verbal communication is a key part of humanity and its lack dehumanizes a person.

Contrary to the claims of Conrad's supporters, the fact that there is just a hint of cannibalism in part of Kurtz in a rite does not balance out the cannibalism shown by many Africans. Even if Kurtz consumed human flesh, it was during a rite of passage in Africa which again paints Africa as a savage place. This extends to the point made by most supporters of Conrad that eventually the negativity towards Africa is balanced out by the negativity towards Europe. This is not true. Europe is never shown as a place full of savage uncivilized people. Europeans, unlike Africans, are not described as having horrible faces. And some of the descriptions of the Africans are downright dehumanizing. Comparing an African man to a dog is an example of this. There is no equivalent comparison to a European. So, it is quite obviously an uneducated defense to say that negativity towards the two cultures and places is balanced in the novel.

A bone of contention has been whether Conrad and Marlow are the same. If Marlow is just a depiction of Conrad, then Marlow's racist views reflect Conrad's own views. Then it is obvious that a racist person would write a racist

novel and the arguments for *Heart of Darkness* being a racist novel would be extremely difficult to contradict. The basis for the novel came from a journey in 1890 when Joseph Conrad sailed to Africa up the Congo River. Both Joseph Conrad and Marlow began sailing at a young age. Marlow began sailing at the age of 13 according to the narrator on the Nellie. Joseph Conrad experienced the life of a sailor when he was 17 and joined French merchant marine for four years as stated in his biography. Both Conrad and Marlow seemed to love exploring. Conrad was appalled by many things that he saw during his trip along the Congo just like Marlow. Conrad also held a job which involved piloting a boat forty miles up the Congo River to an outpost of the ivory trade for the Belgian company. Exactly like Marlow, Conrad was left morally shaken and physically ill after the trip to Congo. Even Virginia Woolf described Marlow as Conrad's alter-ego and since it is generally accepted among scholars that *Heart of Darkness* is based on personal experiences it can be inferred that Marlow is just a reflection of Conrad himself. If the facts are looked at, it can clearly be seen that Joseph Conrad used the character of Marlow in his novel as a mirror image of himself.

Conrad's ignorance led to his conformity to racism. His ignorance of not completely "granting the natives human status" leads him to social categorization. Clearly the counterarguments laid out by supporters of the novel are not enough to cancel out Achebe's allegations. The effectiveness of the points which Achebe presented far outweighs the counterpoints. As a result, it can be concluded that Achebe was right in labeling *Heart of Darkness* as a racist novel.

CONCLUSION

Taking a closer look at the novel through the 21st century lens reveals it to be a text brimming with racism despite its anti-imperialist themes. Previously racism was not considered a big deal. It was considered to be just one common part of the Victorian mindset. As Achebe says, it is quite habitual for many Westerners to dismiss racism or try to justify or completely ignore it. Therefore, readers must become conscious of this tendency and learn to read beyond the layers of darkness. When one is able to ignore the obvious greatness in the story, Conrad's writing style and the stylish presentation of situations and is able to just concentrate on the countless examples of racism which make up the novel, it is not too hard to admit that Chinua Achebe was most probably right in this assessment.

Looking through the 21st century lens, readers will still see *Heart of Darkness* as a powerful stand against imperialism, but they will realize that it is mainly from an anti-imperialistic European perspective. It is also evident that, in the process of representing the negativities of imperialism, Conrad forgets about the morally ill sources of racist views and its effects. He ends up marginalizing Africa and its inhabitants. When one looks through this 21st century lens, she still sees *Heart of Darkness* as an indictment of imperialism, but she also sees that Conrad could realize only an anti-imperialist European perspective, and therefore continued to marginalize Africa and its inhabitants.

Conrad's continued use of derogatory terminology to describe Africans is a disturbing part of the novel to any contemporary non-racist reader who can look beyond the deep layers in the novel which work to hide Conrad's racism. The flagrant devaluation of a race of people as savages, niggers and cannibals is unacceptable even when one considers the Victorian age. The dehumanization of Africans feels like an insult not only to Achebe and other Africans like him, but also to anyone opposed to racism.

One of the limitations of studying this topic is that the perception of racism is subjective. Some people perceive even a slight innocent comment as racist while other people have a higher tolerance for such things. So, it is difficult to come to a conclusion which satisfies every reader and scholar.

Even then for most people in the 21st century the novel is blatantly racist. Although supporters of Conrad will continue to argue their points, the evidence pointing to *Heart of Darkness* being a racist novel far outweighs the counterpoints used by supporters of Conrad. It is impossible to deny that the novel still stands as a great example of adventure literature. It will also forever be considered a legendary stand

against imperialism. But the one fact that will always keep this novel's greatness in doubt is that racism is the true darkness in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*.

REFERENCES

- Achebe, C. "An Image of Africa" in *Things Fall Apart: A Norton Critical Edition*. Ed Francis.
- Appiah, Kwame, A. 1992. *In my Father's House*. New York: Oxford University Press, Inc. Print.
- Conrad, J. 2006. *Heart of Darkness: A Norton Critical Edition*. 4th ed. Editor Armstrong. New York: W. W. Norton, Print.
- Dictionaries, Oxford. 1984. *The Concise Oxford English Dictionary*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Harris, W. 1981. "The Frontier on Which *Heart of Darkness* Stands." *Research in African Literature* 12 (1), 86-93.
- Said, Edward W. 1994. *Culture and Imperialism*. New York: Vintage Books, Print.
- Cedric, W. 2002. Joseph Conrad: *Heart of Darkness and Other Tales*. New York: Oxford University Press, 203.