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Cross-Cultural and Ideological Representations of The "Other" in Selected Works By Herman Melville and Joseph Conrad

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Abstract

This thesis discusses the representation of the "Other" in selected works of Herman Melville and Joseph Conrad. The purpose of this work is to demonstrate by an accurate scrutiny of the text based on Mikhael Bakhtin's view of the novel as a 'polyphonical genre' and postcolonial concept of "Otherness" that the representation of the Other is not strictly 'monological', but it is the result of a mix of different discourses which clash with each other and are unable to create a unitary, coherent picture. The working hypothesis at the basis of the research is that the quest for social recognition of the two authors and the 'authorial ideology' in terms of the dialectic of Self during their times have provoked a dialogue over the notion of the "Other" in their literary texts. For Bakhtin, "Even meanings born in dialogues of the remotest past will never be finally grasped once and for all, for they will always be renewed in later dialogue" (Bakhtin, 2002:39). We argue that Melville's and Conrad's literary texts are not only social practices and political productions but inspire endless dialogues that can be renewed because of the profound and ambivalent meanings of their texts. Different as they are stylistically, both texts offer a valuable lens that allows us to examine the dynamics of race, and gender; and to critique authorial responses to race, gender, social and political issues. To reach this aim, the work is divided into two parts. Each part is composed of three chapters.

The first part underscores the ideology of Otherness as it was worked out in the nineteenth century and contrasts it with modern theories, with stress on the differences in the theorizing about the "Other" in the two periods. It also attempts to highlight the context and the facets of life that might have shaped Melville's and Conrad's perception of the "Other". One of the arguments is that both writers are restless subjects who are always on the move both in terms of concrete experience as voyagers across the seas and in terms of imagination in quest of the truth about self-other dialectic. Their works are dramatized perceptions of the self as an "Other" under various shapes.

The second part will explore the crucial/unstable place that the Other holds in their selected works with an emphasis on the African, the Oriental and the Woman presence, and demonstrate that the human knowledge on the 'ideology of the Other' is not as controllable or as rational as Western thought would have it since language, in Melville's and Conrad's narratives, operates in subtle and often contradictory ways.

Résumé :

Cette thèse de doctorat a pour objectif d'analyser la représentation de « l'Autre » dans certaines œuvres sélectionnées de l'auteur américain Herman Melville et de l'auteur anglais, - d'origine polonaise - Joseph Conrad. Notre analyse se base sur l'hypothèse visant à démontrer l'existence d'un dialogue idéologique de l' « Autre » dans les textes littéraires de ces deux auteurs. Partant du concept établi par Mikhael Bakhtine sur le roman comme « un genre polyphonique » appuyé par la théorie postcoloniale d' «Altérité » initiée par Edward Said, cette étude vise donc à mettre en relief l'idée que la représentation de l'« Autre » à travers des romans, entre autres, *Moby-Dick, Les Encantadas, Pierre, Cœur des ténèbres* et *Lord Jim,* n'est pas strictement 'monologique' mais qu'elle est aussi le résultat d'un mélange de différents discours qui se heurtent les uns aux autres. Par conséquent, ces derniers sont incapables de créer une image cohérente et unifiée de l' « Autre ». Nous considérons que ces œuvres littéraires ne sont pas seulement des pratiques sociales et des productions politiques mais qu'elles inspirent et provoquent des dialogues 'interminables' pouvant être repris grâce au sens ambigu - des textes de Melville et ambivalent pour ceux de Conrad. Pour sa part, Bakhtine considère que "Even meanings born in dialogues of the remotest past will always be renewed in later dialogue" (Bakhtin, M. 2002:39). Ce qui pourrait être traduit ainsi : Même les sens nés de dialogues du passé le plus lointain seront toujours repris dans des dialogues ultérieurs. Les textes littéraires imaginaires et non- imaginaires de ces auteurs offrent de précieuses informations lors de leurs critiques concernant des questions sociales, politiques et surtout d'ordre racial et de genre. Bien que leur style soit différent, leurs textes traitent néanmoins, de façon similaire, du dynamisme des races et des genres et invitent le lecteur à réfléchir davantage sur la nature et les conséquences d'un tel dynamisme.

La première partie de cette étude tente de mettre en évidence le contexte et les réalités qui auraient pu façonner la perception de Melville et de Conrad relative à « l'Autre ». Les deux auteurs sont des sujets actifs toujours en mouvement, les deux, en termes d'expérience concrète, sont des voyageurs à travers les mers et, en termes d'imagination, sont en quête de la « vérité » sur la dialectique du 'Moi – Autre' (Self-Other) ; leurs travaux donnent des perceptions dramatisées du Moi comme étant un « Autre » sous différentes formes.

La deuxième partie de notre étude explorera, à partir des œuvres sélectionnés de Melville et Conrad, la place à la fois cruciale et instable que l'Autre occupe dans leurs écrits. Un intérêt particulier sera accordé à la présence : de l'Africain, l'Oriental et la Femme. Elle démontrera que le savoir humain sur « l'idéologie de l'Autre » n'est pas aussi contrôlable ni même aussi rationnel que les pensées philosophiques occidentales le prônent, puisqu'il s'avère que le langage opère de façon subtile et souvent contradictoire chez les auteurs abordés dans le cadre de cette recherche.

ملخص:

تدرس أطروحة الدكتورة تمثيل (الآخر) ضمن الأشغال المختارة لهيرمان ميلفيل و جوزيف كونراد، حيث تكشف عن حوار ممكن قد تعرضه نصوصهما الأدبية.و هدف هذا العمل هو توضيح بصفة دقيقةو النص المؤسس على وجهة نظر باختين في ما يخص الرواية كنوع متعدد الأصوات

وتصور للغيرية جاء ما بعد الكلونيالية و يكون تمثيل (الآخر) غير فرديوهذا ما ركز ّ عليه إدوارد سعيد و يعتبر نتيجة مزج العديد من الأحاديث التي تتصادم بينها،و التي لا يمكن لها أن تنشأ صورة متسقة وموحدة. حيث قال باختين: " Even meanings born in dialogues of the remotest past will always be renewed in later dialogue". أي « حتى المعنى الناشئ عن حوارات الماضي الأبعد يمكن إعادة استعماله في الحوارات المستقبلة » (باختين 2002:39). ونستنتج من الإبداعات الفنية لميلفيل وكونراد عبار ات إجرائية اجتماعية عن منتجات سياسية، بل إنها توحي إلى حوارات لا تنتهي و يمكن إعادة استعمالها بفضل المعنى المزدوج لنصوصها.

و تقدم لنا النصوص الوهمية وغير الوهمية لهذين المؤلفين رؤى مهمة تنقد عبرها أقوال مؤلفين آخرين في ما يخص المسائل الاجتماعية والسياسية والعرقية والجنسية. ويدرس النصان نشاط الأجناس، رغم اختلاف أسلوبهما، كما يدعوان القارئ إلى التفكير أكثر في ما يخص طبيعة ونتائج مثل هذه الأنشطة.

ويحاول الجزء الأول لهذا المبحث إظهار السياق والحقائق التي قد شكلت رؤية ميلفيل وكونراد للآخر. فالمؤلفان شخصان نشيطان، و يتحكمان في حركية مستمرة من حيث الخبرة الواقعية كمسافرين عبر البحار، ومن حيث الخيال في البحث عن حقيقة جدلية الذات الأخرى، كما أن أعمالهما تعتبر نظرة درامية للذات الآخر تحت أشكال مختلفة، أما الجزء الثاني فسوف يكشف المكان الحاسم/غير المستقر الذي يشغله الآخر بالأشغال المختارة لميلفيل وكونراد مع التأشير بوجود الإفريقي والشرقي، وكذا وجود المرأة، كما سيوضح هذا الجزء المعرفة البشرية في ما يخص (إيديولوجية الآخر) ليست قابلة للتحكم وليست منطقية كالأفكار الغربية بما أن اللغة تعمل بطريقة معارضة.

List of Abbreviations

A. The following abbreviations refer the Works of **Herman Melville**:

M-D: Moby-Dick; or, *The Whale*

BB: Billy Budd, Sailor (An Inside Narrative)

BC*:* "Benito Cereno"

E: "The Encantadas"

M: Mardi

O: Omoo

P: Pierre; or, The Ambiguities

R: Redburn

T: Typee

W-J: White-Jacket

B. The following abbreviations refer to the Works of **Joseph Conrad**:

CL JC VIII: *The Collected Letters Of Joseph Conrad, V III*

HD: Heart of Darkness

L: "The Lagoon"

LJ: Lord Jim

NLL*: Notes on Life and Letters*

NN: The Nigger of The "Narcissus"

P R: *A Personal Record*

R: The Rescue

SA: The Secret Agent

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General Introduction

Harold Bloom, in his *The Western Canon*, states that: "The anxiety of influence cripples weaker talents but stimulates canonical genius" (1994:10). In his article "Conrad and Modernism" (1996), Kenneth Graham quotes Conrad's avowal that his earliest readings included James Fennimore Cooper. When Conrad visited America in 1923, he told a group of reporters that he had come with a clear sense of United States geography, learned long ago from his reading of Cooper, who taught him what to expect from the East River. Cooper was the only American writer of the early nineteenth century whose significant impact Conrad readily admitted, the sea novels of the American romancer having fed his boyhood desire to go to sea (Graham, 1996: 205). Conrad knew and admired several of his American contemporaries except Herman Melville, who had started his literary career long before him. His well known comments on Melville's *Moby-Dick* may alert us to the literary influence of the American writer on Conrad. The letter from January 15, 1907, in which Conrad declines to write The Preface to an edition of Melville's writings, contains an interesting commentary on Melville's works:

> I am greatly flattered by your proposal; but the writing of my own stuff is a matter of so much toil and difficulty that I am too glad to leave other people's books alone. Years ago I looked into *Typee* and *Omoo*, but as I didn't find there what I am looking for when I open a book I did go no further. Lately I had in my hand *Moby-Dick*. It struck me as a rather stained rhapsody with whaling for a subject and not a single sincere line in the 3vols of it.
>
> (CLJC VIII: 408)

The above quote may justify a comparative study; however, this present work is not only a literary study of influence; it is also an attempt to draw an intertextual relation and a possible dialogue on the representation of the "Other" in selected fictional texts of two representative Western canon: Herman Melville and Joseph Conrad. These writers reflect shared fictional preoccupations and ideas that invite further study. They are representatives because their literary cosmopolitanism speaks both regionally and universally. Both authors' fictions

continue to be sources for critical studies, interrogating and expanding 19th, 20th, and 21st century world views, to establish fertile textual crossings. In fact, no single approach can plumb the depths of their writings, but a multifaceted approach may help to decipher their complexities.

In their stories, the sea is a sort of out of place, a geographical place where it is possible to be free. Yet, as we shall see in the analysis, the ships are fragments of land and host the same social, cultural, and political problems. John Peck observes that:

> [W]hile the majority of tellers of sea stories are content just to relate maritime adventures, more ambitious writers are alert to the potential within a maritime story to consider fundamental questions about imposing a shape, and, as such, an interpretation upon life. It is Melville and Conrad who exploit this potential to the full.
>
> (Peck, 2001: 108)

Through sea narratives, Melville and Conrad certainly intended to illuminate quite an interesting range of subjects by placing sailors at the center of their stories. The sea was a dynamic space outside American borders; it brought together wealthy captains and oppressed sailors; it grouped Gay Head Indians, Nantucket Quakers, and Alabama slaves; it linked Cuban revolutionaries with South Carolina slave traders; it joined Harvard-educated Brahmins with California natives. Conrad's 'Pantai band' consists of Malay, Chinese, Arabs, and even Europeans. Furthermore, unlike the heroes of popular antebellum novels, like Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans* or *The Lamplighter*, the characters in Melville's or Conrad's narratives interact with men and women of other nations and races, and often imagine those men and women as something more than the "Other." The maritime world provided these authors not only with scenes of juxtaposition, but also with possibilities for identification. With whom would the authors league themselves? Is it with the forecastle sailor, the steely captain, the rebellious slave, and the exploited foreigners? How would the authors regard those characters with whom they were not affiliated by fellow-feeling or

economic interest? In sum, the sea narrative offered these authors different choices to express themselves, and the reader is allowed to read these choices to learn more about the social, political, and cultural landscape in Antebellum America and late Victorian England. Moreover, the artistic diversity of their literary works allows us to investigate recent issues debated in postcolonial studies.

The sea narrative, as an American genre, emerged in the 1820s when James Fennimore Cooper published *The Pilot*, a tale of John Paul Jones's exploits during the Revolutionary War. Like Cooper, Melville and Conrad are authors of wilderness stories. Cooper's heroes are quarterdeck- captains and officers who embody American virtues and keep watch over an unruly crew who are more than an extension of the officer's will. Though Cooper's use of a nautical setting is significant historically, he does not use that setting to examine a changing American society. His works suggest the glorification of the American Nation. Thomas Philbrick's *James Fennimore Cooper and the Development of American Sea Fiction* (1961) shows the importance of sea literature and shows Cooper's influence on other writers. Philbrick (1961:14) suggests that, "before 1850 the American frontier was primarily a maritime one, so that the sea rather than the continental wilderness was the principal focus of the yearning and imaginings of the American dream." We consider that Melville's sea novels did not follow the nationalist trend expressed by Richard Henry Dana and James Fennimore Cooper; instead his work explores the sea narrative genre as a 'back door' through which he could criticize the myth of mobility and equality at the heart of the American society. That is why, perhaps, Melville complained in a letter to Hawthorne in 1851, "write the other way I cannot" (Melville, 1986: viii).

Some critics suggest that Conrad's desire to go to the sea came from his readings of travel books, such as James Bruce's and Livingstone's travels of exploration on the African continent. Of McClintock's book Conrad wrote in an essay "'Geography and Some Explorers" (1924): "The great spirit of the realities of the story sent me off on the romantic explorations of my inner self; to the discovery of the taste of poring over maps; and revealed to me the existence of a latent devotion to geography which interfered with my devotion (such as it was) to my other schoolwork" (Conrad, 1926:10). Conrad has given his explanation of how the desire to go to sea was formed in him and how it doggedly persisted in him until he had had his way. Looking back to this time more than thirty years later, he concluded that his imagination had been captured by his reading about the sea in fiction such as Hugo's *Travailleurs de la Mer* and the tales of Fenimore Copper and Captain Marryat. (Jocelyn Baines, 1960:29)

James Fenimore Copper has influenced both Melville and Conrad. Cooper's *The Red Rover*, whose pirate protagonist appealed to the rebellious young Melville, would be used as material in his fiction. Conrad's first trip, in July of 1876 aboard the Saint Antoine, to the Caribbean and the Americas would prove to be the basis for his novel, *Nostromo*. Two years later, he entered the British Merchant Navy, and during the next sixteen years he made many voyages that took him to Bombay, Singapore, the East Indies, Australia and the Congo Free State. For Cedric Watts, "Crossing the oceans, he [Conrad] accumulated an abundance of experience to supply his novels […] a diversity of characters of different nations, known or merely glimpsed" (Watts, 1994:3).

Conrad, as Melville, could not avail himself to write the realistic novels that the British novelists at that time were writing. Thomas Hardy's and George Eliot's novels are representative of the realist strain of the nineteenth-century British novel. Conrad points in one of his letters, to his French translator, Henry-David Davray: "A

national writer like Kipling, for example, translates easily. The interest in his work lies in the **subject**; the interest in mine lies in the **effect** it produces" (Quoted in Paul Kirshner, 1968:265).The device used by Conrad to reach this impressionistic effect is well explained in his preface to *The Nigger of The Narcissus* (1897) where he stresses the visual element in writing, "My task which I am trying to achieve is, by the power of the written word, to make you hear, to make you feel- it is, before all, to make you *see*" (*NN*: vii). By italicising the word 'see' Conrad wanted to emphasize not only the physical sight but also the sense of comprehending and understanding. His challenge is to make us have different perceptions of the world and to question 'everything' in relation to man. In this context, what is the nature of 'representations' of the "Other"? And how do they relate to other ways of knowing Europe's "Other"?

In 1906, Henry James wrote to Conrad, "No-one has *known* - for intellectual use - the thing you know […] you have, as the artist of the whole matter; an authority that no-one has approached" (1987:368). This echoes what Kevin J. Haye says, "Herman Melville created a rich and diverse body of work unparalleled in American literature" (2007: 25). What kind of knowledge do Melville's and Conrad's works enclose since both authors' *oeuvres* are used to explore issues debated nowadays? In the present work, our interest is to explore the way these authors perceive and shape the "Other" in their fictional works. More precisely, we intend to investigate the racial and gender "Other" in Melville's and Conrad's literary texts.

Our readings of some selected novels reveal the fascination of Melville and Conrad with "race". This interest can be explained, partly, by the authors' sea experience, which was indeed exceptional. The first phase of Melville's writing career, from 1846 to 1852, saw the production of seven books: *Typee* (1846), *Omoo* (1847), *Mardi* (1849), *Redburn* (1849), *White-Jacket* (1850), *Moby- Dick* (1851), and *Pierre* (1852). In writing these books, Melville

was inspired by his experiences as a sailor on trading ships, whalers, and frigates and as a sojourner in Liverpool, the Marquesas, Tahiti, and Hawaii. For Samuel Otter, Melville's fascination with the seas "animates his literary practice fueling his rhetorical excess and provoking questions about identity and intersubjectivity that he pursues across his texts" (1998: 12). The quest for the self to know the other is among the important themes in his fictional works.

The importance of race can also be explained by the fact that both Herman Melville and Joseph Conrad had emerged from an aristocratic background and abandoned an unsatisfactory society. The financial problems and the death of Melville's father changed his life completely. The distress he suffered was profound. He wrote in 1849, "never again such blights be made; they strike in too deep, and leave such a scar that the air of Paradise might not erase it" (Wyn Kelley, 2006: 9). Like Melville, the dark past of Conrad's Polish childhood is another perspective from which "race" helped to shape his literary career. In a letter to Cunningham Graham, Conrad writes, "I look at the future from the depths of a very dark past, and I find I am allowed nothing but fidelity to an absolutely lost cause, to an idea without future" (CLJC VII: 161). The dark past may probably refer to his disposal of his culture and land. Thus, we consider that his traumatic personal history is displaced in his literary texts where people can be victims of cultures different from theirs, like in *Heart of Darkness* and in *Lord Jim.*

Race, in the case of Conrad, owes a lot to his belonging to that category of foreigner called the *metic* (the word is borrowed from Julia Kristiva)**.** Conrad, who wasn't British but had chosen to be a naturalized British citizen, had himself been treated as a foreigner. In a memorial note for *La Nouvelle Revue Française* (1924) on the occasion of Conrad's death, André Gide, Conrad's close friend, called him the "perfect example of a man uprooted" (ce parfait déraciné qu'il etait). In her memorial

tribute on this same occasion, Virginia Woolf wrote: “he had the most perfect manners, the brightest eyes, and spoke with a strong foreign accent” (Quoted in Collits, 2005:56). Conrad’s ‘strong foreign accent’ remained a sign of his irreducible foreignness. Zdzislaw Najder points out that for every non-native speaker, there is a moment when the new language is “resistant like every object that is strange and newly discovered, and at the same time softly pliable because not hardened in schematic patterns of words and ideas inculcated since childhood” (1983: 116). This above comment accurately characterizes Conrad’s relationship to English, but equally important, it confines that relationship to a moment - the very moment, we would suggest, when Conrad achieved a mastery of the language, when identification was his primary theme.

Coming to English as an adult, Conrad passed through a period of awkward apprenticeship, and his foreign accent remained a lifelong marker of foreignness. Yet, in *A Personal Record* (1911), he expressed his conviction that he was somehow destined to be an English writer, if not an English speaker, and even felt himself “adopted by the genius language, which directly I came out of the stammering stage made me its own so completely that its very idioms I truly believe had a direct action on my temperament and fashioned my still plastic character” (*PR*: v). Most native speakers do not think of themselves as “adopted” by the language they speak, nor do they think of language in this external, quasi-human sense, as a superior being. For Geoffrey Galt Harpham,

> Conrad always regarded English as an alien medium; and besides, the concept of adoption was especially resonant for him because he had been effectively adopted on two other critical occasions. The first was by his uncle, who took responsibility for the young orphan after his parents' death, and the second was by a retired sea captain, who examined Conrad for his captain's license. This gentleman, Conrad wrote years later, was a sort of ‘grandfather in the craft’ who made him feel ‘adopted’ into the fellowship of the sea.
>
> (Harpham, 2005: 20)

Harpham suggests that adoption compensates for lack of a given or "natural" identity by conferring an external or contingent identity that can still be effective as a principle of psychic organization. He considers that, when Conrad says he was adopted by the English language, it seems exploring, and applying to himself, the fact that adoption gives one the opportunity to find one's identity in an external or non-natural field of possibilities, and forces one to produce oneself by volition and will rather than merely accepting the gifts of genetic determination. Thus, the adopted identity may be bestowed, or refused. Adoption entails, therefore, openness, an experimental freedom, that might represent, for a creative artist, a salutary condition. Perhaps, this is what has happened to Conrad.

Another perspective from which "race" helped to shape both authors' literary careers were the contemporareous 'ideas' in America and in Europe in relation to man and his origins. In the case of Melville, it was the "American School" of ethnology which achieved international prominence in the 1840s and 1850s. American ethnologists hailed the United States as the preeminent arena for the study of human racial differences. The archaeologist and ethnologist Ephraim George Squier announced in 1849 that "ethnology is not only the science of the age, but also […] it is, and must continue to be a prevailing extent, an *American science*" (1849: 386). The meaning of the word "American" in the "American school" at that time was the obsessive nationalistic insistence on finding physical evidence for the "fact" to separate human beings. The meticulous, encyclopedic effort of such ethnologists, like Samuel George Morton, Josiah Nott, and George Gliddon, by the 1850s, resulted in a growing belief that American racial groups were inherently unequal and that the physical characteristics of the body specifically, literally, and permanently revealed hierarchical differences in racial character, and this process was approaching the status of 'scientific facts'.

One of the most powerful instances of influence in the production of the racial representations, and one that underpins Conrad's work, was the developing science

of anthropology, specifically the influence of Darwin's theory of Natural Selection. This theory was subsequently constructed and adapted as a social and racial theory, particularly in the work of Herbert Spencer. This 'Social Darwinism' came to dominate late nineteenth-century scientific theories, specifically anthropological thinking, and had a wide and profound influence within the popular imagination. This evolutionary argument supported the ideology of othering via the colonial expansion. By occupying territories all over the world, the European nations aimed to demonstrate that they were the fittest to survive; and the exportation of their various economic, political and religious institutions was therefore a necessary step towards a higher form of human organization in the rest of the world. For Herbert Spencer, the dominance of the white race was the result of inherited superiority, and for Benjamin Kidd, in *The Control of the Tropics* (1898), the domination of inferior peoples by white civilization was necessary. The wide acceptance of such racial doctrines gave popular support for the imperialist enterprise and the construction of the "Other".

In the United States, the scientific approach to human race served to justify African American slavery and Native American 'removal', and in Europe, as Ian Watt well expresses it, in "the last half of the nineteenth century it was not the physical but the biological sciences which had the deepest and the most pervasive effect upon the way man viewed his personal and historical destiny" (Watt, 1973: 15). Race, then, as the Scottish anatomist Robert Knox declared in *The Races of Men* (1850), was everything: literature, science, art - in a word: civilization.

The above historical background shows that nineteenth-century ethnology and anthropology, in America and Europe, magnified the body. On this note, Samuel Otter states that: "midcentury United States saw the racialized human figure as embodying the answers to

crucial questions about divine intention, social structure, human origins and history, and national destiny" (1998: 14). The 'authorial ideology' of race during Melville's and Conrad's respective times was centered on the purity of the white race justified by the racist schools of anthropology and ethnology. At the end of the nineteenth-century, most racist school of anthropology developed as a means to study other races and cultures and sought to discriminate between high culture and sub culture and describe the 'savage' and 'barbarian' in opposition to the 'civilized' to emphasize absolute forms of racial and cultural difference and justify the othering of the 'uncivilized'. The 'barbarism' of colonized people was 'scientifically' stated through these pseudo racial theories to justify their subjugation in the name of civilization and 'progress'. This, of course, played an important part in the propaganda of imperial expansion.

The ideology of Otherness is principally a matter of perception influenced by religious, cultural, economic and social interests. This racial ideology became widespread in Britain and America and, obviously, it was expressed in literature. If such literature can demonstrate that the 'barbarism' of the native is irrevocable and deeply engrained, then the European's attempt to civilize the 'savage' native confers him moral superiority. We consider that the two authors sometimes adhere to the contemporary racial discourse; but most of the time, they resist and reverse the negative portrayal of the "Other". Melville's ambiguities or Conrad's ambivalence towards the "Other" in terms of the dialectic of Self and Other in their fictional works can, partly, be explained by the fact that both were outsiders. Conrad as a Polish émigré in England can be considered as a racial outsider and Melville's personal problems makes him feel as a social other. Melville's physical appearance, too, set him apart from others. He let his hair and beard grow until his 'savage' appearance became "a great source of anxiety" to his brother Gansevoort, who urged Herman to get "his hair sheared & whiskers shaved" before going home again (Quoted in Kelly,2006: 6).

Both Melville and Conrad felt as "Other(s)" doomed to ram the seas in quest of their 'selves'. Probably they sought in the sea the fulfilment of their frustrated expectations and that "pursuit of happiness" that is outlined in the American Declaration of Independence. Melville's desire to sail away rapidly expired and he was swallowed up in his society system again, while Conrad's escape was more radical. He chose to settle in another country, Britain. Thus, their restlessness may explain their compassion for marginal and oppressed groups, including women.

Melville and Conrad travelled the world extensively before beginning to write. As travel writers, they render in words the strange, the exotic, the dangerous, and the inexplicable; they convey information about geography as well as human nature; they try, as Ishmael or Marlow tried, to tell a kind of truth that paradoxically may be untellable. Critics and biographers argue that these experiences had provided both of them with source materials, and even more. So, it may justify why race and identity play such a crucial role in their works; and thus, it is an apt topic for literary criticism. However, too often that criticism ignores the possible dialogue that these texts may suggest. Different as they are stylistically, both authors' literary texts examine the dynamics of race, and gender. They reveal a set of issues in relation to the "Other", and invite the reader to reflect further on the nature and consequences of such dynamics. In their works, Melville and Conrad, question the various Western conceptions on race. In this sense, their texts raise issues discussed in current postcolonial studies. A brief review of literature may show the importance of the two writers and the influence they have exercised on Western and world literature.

The importance accorded to Melville is well shown in E.M Foster's *Aspect of the Novel* (1927) where he acclaims Melville's "prophetic" capacity to break through the tiresome little receptacle of social morality and to encompass larger metaphysical forces of evil. In *American Renaissance* (1941) Francis Otto Matthiessen (1902 – 1950)

has canonized Melville. He describes him "as a romancer dedicated to exploring the possibilities of liberty, a writer prepared heroically to confront estrangement from the material circumstances of his corrupt world in order to aspire toward an imaginative and putatively spiritual freedom"(Matthiessen, 1941: 15). This literary attention was due to the changes in the international political climate: the Great Depression, the rise of Fascism in Europe and Asia, and the Second World War. These events could have created a new receptivity to Melville's art.

Scholars like Perry Miller, Henry Nash Smith, Leslie Fielder, Daniel Hoffman, and others reinforce the importance of Melville as a creative American and world writer. Their criticisms of Melville's works extend the revival of the 1980s and 1990s, and it is quite interesting to observe that Melville's writing can, even now, be seen as implicated in the issues of the moment as race, gender, sexuality and nationalism. In other words, his work continues to help us articulate problems of identity and race. More recent work suggests that Melville's fiction negotiates intertextually with the circumscribed genius of English literature, and has focused its attention on the extent to which the author's chosen field of inquiry involves not simply the narrower terrain of the United States, but the more expansive circuits of North Atlantic culture in general. So, considering Melville as a postcolonial writer can also reveal his writing's anxiety towards the "Other".

Unlike Melville, several book-length studies of Conrad's life and works were written during his life time. Of those, it is worth to cite, first, Edward Garnett's review, "The Novel of the Week", in *The Nation*, 28 September 1907:

> It is good for us to have Mr. Conrad in our midst visualizing for us aspects of life we are constitutionally unable to perceive. Mr. Conrad, however, is to us as a willing hostage we have taken from the Slav lands, in exchange for whom no ransom could outweigh the value of his insight

> and his artistic revelation of the world at our gates, by us so imperfectly apprehended.
>
> (Quoted in Ian Watt, 1973: 40)

The above quote states Conrad's importance in the English literary Tradition; however, his 'foreignness' is also referred to as an irremediable distinctiveness.

After Conrad's death, a variety of commentaries appeared; the crucial work that helped to fix Conrad's reputation as one of the finest British novelists of the twentieth century is Frank Raymond Leavis's *The Great Tradition: George Eliot, Henry James, Joseph Conrad* (1948), whose author was to become by mid-century the most influential literary critic in the English-speaking world. This work places Conrad among the great writers of British literature. Since then, he has become one of the most prominent novelists both in Britain and abroad. George Orwell explains more clearly than anyone else why English novelists are attracted to Conrad:

> I regard Conrad as one of the best writers of this century, and… one of the very few true novelists that England possesses… [He had] a sort of grown-upness and political understanding which would have been almost impossible to a native English writer at that time…. Conrad was one of those writers who in the present century civilized English literature and brought it back into contact with Europe.
>
> (1968:489)

Conrad's work was valued in the 'Sixties', the moment was characterized by wars of National Liberation, revolutionary hope (sexual in the West, political/cultural in the East), and a French epistemology known as critical theory. From then re-reading Conrad from postcolonial perspectives has raised questions both about the writer and his texts: was Conrad for or against European imperialism? And in his representation of non-European peoples was he even-handed or deeply racist? Chinua Achebe's essay *An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's Heart of Darkness* has opened a debate over Conrad's racist attitude in his fictional work, *Heart of Darkness.* Achebe points out the horrific depiction of the African natives, an

africanist discourse that reduced the black Africans to savages and Others. Achebe's condemnation of a western canon has opened an unlimited amount of criticism that either defends or condemns Conrad. Our aim in the present study is to decipher the africanist discourse and its connotations in *Heart of Darkness*.

Harold Bloom is among the critics who note down the literary contribution and importance of Herman Melville and Joseph Conrad. For Harold Bloom, what intimately allies the three most vibrant American novelists of the "Chaotic Age" - Hemingway, Fitzgerald, and Faulkner - is that all of them emerge from Joseph Conrad's influence but temper it cunningly by mingling Conrad with an American precursor-Mark Twain, Henry James, and Herman Melville (1994:10). It will be quite interesting to investigate Melville's and Conrad's relation via their literary texts to highlight this link that we qualify as a dialogue. For instance, Melville's influence, via Conrad, on William Faulkner is well established by critics. The question that comes to mind is: is there any specific feature/element that shapes both Melville's and Conrad's works?

Critics have often pointed out the similarities lying between Melville and Conrad, but they have looked at these similarities only in the context of intertextuality. Secor Robert and Debra Moddelnag, for instance, have mapped out these influences in their *Joseph Conrad and American writers: A Biographical Study of Affinities, Influences, and Relation* (1985). This work contains a valuable amount of criticism on the influence of Melville on Conrad. Some of these critics state that the cause of the Melville revival lies in the popularity of Conrad; in other words, Conrad's critical success played a large role in the resurrection of Melville's reputation. Conrad's works had been read in comparison to Melville's works in 1898 in *The Criterion* when the "realism" of *The Nigger of the "Narcissus"* was compared to that of *Typee*, which then entered a plea for the reprinting of Melville's work. In the 1920s, when Melville's work

finally began to see reprinting, reviews frequently judged their success and significance by referring to Conrad. In 1929, the *Christian Science Monitor* announced that the cause of the Melville revival was partly due to the popularity of Conrad. That same year, in a book surveying *American literature*, Ernest Leisy asserted that only with the recent revival of interest in sea literature via Conrad's tales had Melville been given proper consideration (1985:18).

Other critics have examined their respective bodies of work in terms of comparative studies. James L. Guetti's *The Limits of Metaphor*: *A Study of Melville, Conrad, and Faulkner* (1967), studies three writers "most explicitly concerned with the inadequacy of language" (Guetti 1967:2), as demonstrated by an examination of *Moby Dick*, *Heart of Darkness*, and *Absalom, Absalom!* The narrators of all three novels "approach a problematic experience by surrounding it with disparate allusions and suggestions, never emphasizing a single perspective as definitive, and constantly relying, at crucial moments, upon the nearly simultaneous use of separate kinds of language—separate vocabularies--and upon similes of the greatest but vaguest dimensions" (Ibid). The paradox is that while these writers must make the reader aware of some "ineffable reality," they can convey the extent of the ineffability of this reality only by showing the insufficiency of language to capture it. Thus, Guetti concludes, "the basic emphasis in Melville, Conrad, and Faulkner is not upon some ultimate idea of truth or reality, or even upon some standard ideological dichotomy or paradox, but upon the unreality of imaginative structure of any sort and upon the radical linguistic nature - as opposed to the ideological nature - of the problem of order" (Ibid.11).

David Simpson's *Fetishism and Imagination*: *Dickens, Melville and Conrad* (1982) is the other study that can allow us to sustain further the dialogue that one can grasp from Melville's and Conrad's texts. Simpson explores the three authors' use of fetishism to describe the alienation of the imagination in the uncreative social environment of the

nineteenth century. Melville and Conrad explore its forms on the high seas and in distant lands. Although both Melville and Conrad view the sea as "outside the control of the fetishized imagination," (Simpson, 1982:125) they offer contrasting opinions about the resources of the sea. For Melville, the sea is a source of mystery, a place where man might reassume totality and banish differences in a moment of consciousness. For Conrad, the sea stimulates privileged perceptions, "It is a mere surface, to be forgotten for as long as possible, to be confronted only at those moments of lapse or crisis when the utilitarian mind cannot keep its threats at bay" (Ibid).

The Victorian Fol Sage: Comparative Readings on Carlyle, Emerson, Melville, and Conrad (1989) by Camille R. La Bossiere is another interesting work, which deals with a comparative reading of four rhetorical responses to "the history of wisdom's decline as the principle of knowledge and certainty in the nineteenth century" (La Bossiere, 1982:9). She suggests that Melville and Conrad can be considered as 'Victorian sages' because "their contradiction of each other and themselves demonstrates the folly of would-be sages" (Ibid. 10). In this sense, La Bossiere shows Melville's scepticism in his work, and suggests that "the Conradian artist renders the truth of himself and humanity as the intimate alliance of contradictions" (Ibid. 10).

Cesare Casarino in his book, *Modernity at Sea: Melville, Marx, Conrad in Crisis* (2002) serves our present thesis, for it suggests a transnational link between Melville and Conrad and implies that the generic qualities of the sea narrative transcend boundaries. In this sense, Casarino reads the maritime fiction within an international context, and his study focuses on the ship and sea as the writers' means of examining world's issues. The central premise of the work is that the "nineteenth century sea narrative constituted a crucial laboratory for the crisis that goes by the name of modernity" (2002:7), modernity being

defined primarily as the social structures concomitant with a shift from mercantile toward industrial capitalism.

Bryan C. Sinche considers the sea narrative and the sailors within as a valuable means that allows the American authors to consider the foundational American myths of upward mobility and class fluidity that were central to American fiction and political rhetoric throughout the antebellum period (Sinche, 2006:7). Literary reflections of the remarkable diversity of the antebellum maritime world, effectively, allude to the revolutionary ideas that circulated freely and dangerously in the waters and ports of the Atlantic rim. Sinche chooses sea narratives by Herman Melville, Frederick Douglass, and Martin Delany to show the sailor's social and economic marginality. These authors have provided him with materials to investigate the racial dimensions of class, labor, and freedom. For him, then, these authors confront the limits of opportunity for many Americans by positioning the sailor as a 'liminal' figure who—despite showing qualities of both—is neither slave nor citizen. According to him, these authors used this discontent as well as the extra-national settings and generic conventions unique to the sea narrative, both to illuminate foundational American ideals and expose the failure of those ideals. We consider that the racial dimension in relation to the sea narrative can also be investigated in Melville's and Conrad's sea fictions.

At first sight, the above review of the literature on Conrad and Melville may indicate that they are overworked writers, since comparative articles and statements on Conrad and Melville continue to be written right up to the present day. But they can be viewed as such only if one considers the number of these works without reference to the depth of the novels that have inspired them. As Toni Morrison well expressed it, "The imagination that produces work which bears and invites rereading, which motions to future readings as well as contemporary ones, implies a shareable world and an endlessly flexible language" (1992: xii). As readers, we struggle to interpret

these texts and state some justifiable claims. One of these claims is that most critics have overlooked in their analysis of these literary texts the dialogue, as defined by Mikhael Bakhtin, of the two authors' dialogue - the representation of Europe's and America's "Other". While sharing their contemporaries' curiosity of that age-old desire of the Other, Melville and Conrad maintained an ironical relationship.

For Conrad, Europe, or more recently the North, is the space of a shared cultural inheritance, like symbols, myths and ideas. Writing to Charles Chassé, in 1924, of Poland and Russian political power, Conrad insisted:

> Polish temperament, at any rate, is far removed from Byzantine and Asiatic associations. Poland has absorbed Western ideas, adopted Western culture, sympathized with Western ideals and tendencies as much as it was possible, across the great distances and the special conditions of its national and political life, whose main task was the struggle for life against Asiatic despotism at its door**.**
>
> (CLJC V 8, 291)

His literary heritage consists of three cultures: Polish, French and English. This European culture is reflected in his prolific literary production. Some of his novels and stories are placed outside Europe, but only in the strictly geographical sense. All the time Europe is eyed from afar and remains the locus of reference- by no means idealized. In assessing Europe's role overseas, Conrad could be seen as a harsh 'Euro critic' (borrowing Nadjer's word), putting off the veil of the colonialists' hypocrisy and rapacity to make us 'see' the failure of the white 'civilization'. We dare suggest that this is, perhaps, Conrad's way of responding to Melville's idealization of America as the prototype land of ideals and beliefs. Conrad's constant pessimism about political institutions was severely voiced in his essay on Anatole France (1904). He writes: "political institutions, whether contrived by the wisdom of the few or the ignorance of the many, are incapable of securing the happiness of mankind" (NLL: 38). For him, then, civilization and virtue are relative, fragile, and constantly under threat.

Both writers showed their belonging to the West, since their angle of vision remained 'Western' in the sense that they evaluated Americans and Europeans by their own standards, in terms of their own ideals, beliefs and myths. The contradictions expressed in Melville's fictional works refer mainly to the contradictions of America as a nation. America for Melville was the representative nation in the world since its ideals represented universal ethos. The whaling voyage Melville undertook would be the most important journey of his life; his inland excursion gave him the opportunity to explore the heart of America before seeing the South Pacific. This trip offered Melville the opportunity to discover and recognize what his national geography represented. In Melville's work, the Great Lakes stand for the greatness of America; the prairie represents the nation's natural fecundity; and the Mississippi symbolizes the political, social, and moral complexities facing the nation .Yet in both writers' works, as in Henry Nash Smith's *Virgin Land: The American West as Symbol and Myth* (1992), there was no celebration of the winning West, but their critique in their narratives stands as a voice exposing a new examination of myths and symbols of America and Europe.

In the light of what has been said so far, one assumption that can be advanced behind the possible dialogue between the two authors is Conrad's attraction to the "Americanness" of the American imagination that, for Richard Chase in his book, *The American Novel and Its Tradition* (1980), "has been stirred by the aesthetic possibilities of radical forms of alienation, contradiction, and disorder. And the intense desire to drive everything to the last turn of the screw or twist of the knife distinguishes American writers from English, often results in romantic nihilism, a poetry of force and darkness" (Chase, 1980:xi). According to Richard Chase the "Americanness" of the American novel is due; first, to the solitary position man has been placed in in this country, a position very early enforced by the doctrines of Puritanism and later by frontier conditions. Second, the Manichaean quality of New England Puritanism with its grand metaphors of election and

damnation, its opposition of the kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness, and its eternal and autonomous contraries of good and evil. Third, the racial composition of the American people and the Civil War that was fought, if more in legend than in fact, over the Negro (Ibid.11). So, young America as a literary topic had interesting ingredients: nature as subject matter, a system of symbolism, a thematic of the search for self-revalorization and validation- above all, the opportunity to conquer fear imaginatively and to quiet deep insecurities and anxieties of self-other complex relationships.

Toni Morrison explains these anxieties, "through significant and underscored omissions, startling contradictions, heavily nuanced conflicts, through the way writers peopled their work with the signs and bodies of this presence- one can see that a real or fabricated Africanist presence was crucial to their sense of Americanness" (Morrison, 1992:6). Morrison introduces the term Africanism as " A term for the denotative and connotative blackness that African peoples have come to signify, as well as the entire range of views, assumptions, readings, and misreading that accompany Eurocentric learning about these people" (Ibid.7). What Melville calls "the power of blackness" could refer to the black slavery upon which, as Morrison suggests, the imagination could play; through which historical, moral, metaphysical, and social fears, problems, and dichotomies could be articulated. This black population was available for meditation on terror- the terror of European outcast, their dread of failure, powerlessness, Nature without limits, natal loneliness, internal aggression, evil, sin, greed (Ibid. 38). Hence, it will be quite interesting to see the construction of Africanism as an official knowledge in both America and Europe, then explore this racial discourse in Melville's and Conrad's literary texts. As Morrison notes, the Africanist presence in American literature is explicit or implicit, and it is a dark and abiding presence, therefore the literary imagination as both a visible and an invisible mediating force. (Ibid.46)

The present research work is an attempt among other studies to explore the notion of the "Other" by re-reading Conrad's literary texts and bringing them into dialogue with Melville's works to enhance enriching debate on race and gender. Our chief object is to consider Melville's and Conrad's comprehension and representation of the "Other" as a black African, Oriental, and Woman in selected novels. The principal concern of this study is to answer the question of what - given the complexity of the issues it examines – are the different representations of the Other in Melville's and Conrad's novels? Is there any possible dialogue between the two authors on this notion? The striking analogies between Ahab and Kurtz, Ishmael and Marlow, and Billy and Jim will probably reveal more than similarities between the two authors. This study is, then, an attempt to go beyond a literary influence study to open new channels for the interpretation of the writers' works.

Julia Kristeva in *Strangers to Ourselves* (1991) has suggested that there are three main ways in which we might respond to our fundamental experience of estrangement: *art, religion* and *psychoanalysis*. We do not have the pretention to look at each of these concepts during the course of this study, but we shall concentrate on the artistic side of the literary texts of Melville and Conrad and suggest a possible dialogue within their texts since literature is a form of communication. In reading them, we participate in the discovery of the hidden meanings and hidden selves, and we rejoice in the uncovering as if we create the meanings and selves on our own.

This thesis is divided into two parts. Each part is composed of three chapters. The first part, entitled *Theoretical Background, Life, Time, and Influences,* opens with the ideology of Otherness as it was worked out in the nineteenth century and contrasts it with modern theories, with stress on the differences in theorizing about the "Other" in the two periods. One of our assumptions is that 'Otherness' is principally a matter of perception influenced by religious, cultural, economic and social interests, and the 'authorial ideology' of the two

authors in terms of the dialectic of Self and Other under analysis could be fully grasped only if the general ideology about Otherness during their times is fully exposed.

Following up the theoretical background chapter, the *Otherness in the Lives and Times of Melville and Conrad* chapter throws light on Otherness as it is illustrated through the writers' lives and times, their personal experiences in their respective home worlds as well as the outside world at large. This chapter is justified on the grounds that the two authors' works are dramatized perceptions of the self as an "Other" under various shapes. Melville and Conrad are restless subjects who are always on the move both in terms of concrete experience as voyagers across the seas and in terms of imagination in quest of the truth about the self-other dialectic. The analysis in this section will show that Melville and Conrad did not have easy lives. For different and sometimes similar reasons, they experienced a life of restlessness which might explain the perpetual search for identity and selfhood in their respective works. One of the arguments is that their times were no less turbulent because of the rapid changes in various domains: social, political, cultural and economic. The latter domains have changed man's vision of man and have determined his image and behavior towards other men and cultures. Therefore, what can be regarded as revolutions in society, culture, and economy developed in the authors concerned the impulse towards a cultural fantasy in whose heart is the "Other". It was no easy matter during their times to identify with particular ideas without being alienated. Being themselves "Otherized" by their societies through their non-conformism, they looked at the "external Others" differently.

The first part will close with the chapter entitled *Cultural and Literary Influences.* These influences might have been exerted on our two writers with specific reference to their talent within the British and American literary traditions. In this chapter, we are particularly interested in Melville and Conrad as artistic "Other"(s) estranged from the main literary

streams of their times. It is this artistic Otherness that marks them off from the authors of their times in their treatment of the theme of the "Other" in its broadest meanings.

The second part, entitled the *The Representations of the African, the Oriental and the Woman in Melville's and Conrad's Selected Works*, will explore the extent to which the two authors' perceptions of the "Other" resemble and/or differ from those the general ideologies of their times circulated. One of our major assumptions is that Melville's and Conrad's works struggle to understand what it means to forge a sense of Self and Other in rapidly changing contexts, such as the Industrial Revolution that brought about the worship of material objects at the very time that the West tried to weed out the practice of fetishism and paganism abroad. The complexity of the two authors' lives/ careers as post-colonials, and that of their contexts marked by colonialism and imperialism, both internal and external, and the movement for the emancipation of slaves and women have had a crucial impact on the way the two writers understood the "Other". Through its three chapters, this part explores the crucial place that the "Other" holds in selected works of these authors with an emphasis on the African, Oriental and Woman presence.

The Representation of the African Other in Melville's Moby-Dick and Conrad's Heart of Darkness chapter will investigate the construction and deconstruction of the African "Other" in Melville's *Moby-Dick* and Conrad's *Heart of Darkness.* Toni Morrison's definition of 'Africanism' will help us explore the two authors' racial discourse in their narratives. This chapter aims to demonstrate that Africanism as a racial discourse is used by Melville and Conrad as a metaphor for questioning the validity of 'scientific' theories and, sometimes, refuting the contemporary racial discourse.

As the two authors' works are re-evaluated over the debate of postcolonial studies, we shall refer to some postcolonial theories to explore the notion of otherness and the dichotomous frame of "us' and "them" in Melville's *Billy Budd* and Conrad's *Lord Jim.* In the

fifth chapter, *The Oriental "Other" in Billy Budd and Lord Jim,* we shall explore an oriental discourse in *Billy Budd* where Billy is considered as the "Other" and English as a cultural power that dominates the West. In this sense, Melville, as an American writer of the American Renaissance, reacts passionately towards this domination by satirising the British Justice. Melville, in this story, presents British justice as a kind of Masquerade that demystifies the American justice, since the latter inspired its maritime laws from the British laws. In this context, *Billy Budd* shows Melville expressing the spirit of the American Renaissance. What we shall argue in our discussion is that both Melville and Conrad use their texts as a space for probing the major social, cultural, and political issues of their times. It also traces how far Melville in *Billy Budd* and Conrad in *Lord Jim* set Orientalist and Western discourses in a productive dialectical relationship, using irony and derision to unsettle important assumptions of identity and culture.

To this end, we have borrowed some of Edward Said's analytic categories in his distinction between 'latent' and 'manifest' Orientalism. These different connotations of 'latent' and 'manifest' Orientalism are suitable to our analysis in which the notion of Orientalism is not explicit but rather an implicit 'negative ideology' that Melville and Conrad symbolically suggest through Oriental images and attitude. Our assumption is that Orientalism in these narratives is not simply a monologic discourse but a double-voiced discourse in which questions of nation, empire and race are intimately connected. In other words, the construction/deconstruction of the Orient has followed a complex and internally contradictory trajectory. We consider that the authors' Orientalist constructions express racial and national anxieties for both America as the 'New Nation' and Europe. *Billy Budd* shows oppositions that are deployed to repress or allay fears about the wholeness and stability of America in the face of Native American, African - American and diverse ethnic immigration

presence; *Lord Jim* shows Britain in the face of natives' overseas colonies at the period of high imperialism.

The "Other" has become an important concept for studies of the gender system where the notion of the 'Other' can also be applied to women because of the patriarchal order of society where men constitute the center and the standard. In this respect, the sixth chapter, *The Representation of the Gender 'Other'*, explores the representation of the woman "Other" in selected literary texts by the two authors. The analysis of the gender "Other" reveals that the two authors reshape the gender discourse. This chapter raises important postcolonial and feminist issues in relation to the Western culture. Does the unstable homo-social world in *Moby-Dick* and *Heart of Darkness* stand as a perverse mirror of "normal" homo-social world? Does the ambiguous relationship of male-male homoerotic attachments that are exposed in both narratives question the masculine and the hetero-normative gender constructions? At one level, we shall explore, in the selected fictions, how the ideals of masculinity and feminity are translated into social roles, and how they establish norms for that translation. At another level, we shall demonstrate the authors' resistance to the normative gender relations. Through their ambiguous gender relations, Melville and Conrad reveal their 'politics'- to borrow Simone de Beauvoir's parlance - in relation to the Western culture and imperial expansion.

In an age crippled by crisis of identity, Melville and Conrad would seem particularly suitable for our analysis because, first, they are representatives of Western literature; second, their fictional and non-fictional texts challenge the polarization of 'Us' and 'Them'. The emblematic figures of otherness take different kinds in their literary texts; sometimes, we have difficulties to differentiate between the Self and the Other. To appreciate the 'dialogical conversation' of these writers' texts, we considerate it appropriate to outline the two

authors' lives and experiences, and the contexts in which they wrote to show the pertinence of our study.

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INTRODUCTION

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PART ONE

Theoretical Background, Lives, Times, and Influences

> An identity is established in relation to a series of differences that have become socially recognized. These differences are essential to its being. If they did not coexist as differences, it would not exist in its distinctness and solidity [...] Identity requires difference in order to be, and it converts difference into otherness in order to secure its own self-certainty.
>
> (E. Connolly, 1991: xiv)

Introduction

The notion of the Other is complex, but in Herman Melville's and Joseph Conrad's deployment of it in their works is even more because of the distance that separates the twenty-first century reader from the two authors. Whether the reader in question is against the Other taken in its broadest meaning as class, gender, nationality, race, etc., or the acceptance of the same Other in the name of cultural diversity, tolerance, mutual recognition s/he remains deeply influenced by all the theories about the Other even if s/he belongs to a minority that fights a rearguard ideological fight for diverse human exclusions. The ideology of difference celebrated in the nineteenth century that paradoxically contributed to the construction of the Western man into the "Other" of otherness is still with us today, but it has not the same strong hold that it had at the time on people's mind. This first part of our thesis seeks, first, to highlight the ideology of Otherness as it was worked out in the nineteenth century and to contrast it with modern theories, with stress on the differences in the theorizing about the Other in the two periods. One of our assumptions is that 'Otherness' is principally a matter of perception influenced by religious, cultural, economic and social interests. We also believe that the 'authorial ideology' of the two authors in terms of the dialectic of Self and Other under analysis can be fully grasped only if the general ideology about Otherness during their times is fully exposed. We have not the intention to project the modern ideas about otherness on the works under analysis, because we consider that the works themselves theorize or rather philosophize about the notion of the other, even if their theories are not as formalized as the ones that are produced across the modern academia today.

Following the theoretical background chapter, the second chapter throws light on Otherness as it was illustrated through the writers' lives and times, their personal experiences in their respective home worlds as well as the outside world at large. This chapter is justified on the grounds that our two authors' works are dramatized perceptions of the self as an Other under various shapes. Melville and Conrad are restless subjects who are always on the move both in terms of concrete experience as voyagers across the seas and in terms of imagination in quest of the truth about self-other dialectic. This second chapter also fleshes out the economic, social, political context that might have contributed to the shaping of the authors' perceptions of the "Other" putting emphasis on issues like empire and nation building, the slavery and abolition issue, industrialization, etc., all of them involving questions about selfhood in its relation to the "Other". This first part closes with the literary influences that might have been exerted on our two authors with specific reference to their talent within the British and American literary traditions. In this chapter, we are particularly interested in Melville and Conrad as artistic "Others" estranged from the main literary streams of their times. It is this artistic otherness that marks them off from the authors of their times in their treatment of the theme of the "Other" in its broadest meanings.

Chapter One: Theoretical Background on the "Other".

Today in the theoretical thinking, in the social and political practice, the notion of difference has assumed importance in several fields: philosophy, sociology, anthropology, linguistics, economic studies, and literary analysis. In the latter, the concept of the "Other" has become a mainstay of cultural studies where the "Other" refers not only to a person other than one's self, but it is also identified as "different" from the self. The rise of postcolonial studies has inspired new interest in the notion of the "Other". In this field, otherness is marked by outward signs like race and gender; and "Othering", a term introduced by Edward Said, refers to the act of emphasizing the supposed inferiority of marginalized groups as a way of stressing the 'alleged strength' of those in positions of power. "Othering", then, refers to any racial, ethnic, religious, or geographically marginalized or subordinate group of people, those who have been defined as different by a dominant group.

A. The Self-Other Dialectic in Colonial Encounters

The concept that the self requires the other to define itself is an old one and has been dealt with by many thinkers as Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, the German philosopher, who conceived philosophically the idea of the "Other". Hegel introduced the idea of the other as a major constituent in self-consciousness in his *Phenomenalogy of the Spirit* (1807). He writes that each consciousness pursues the death of the other, which means that in seeing separateness between you and another person, a feeling of alienation is created, and you try to resolve it by synthesis. The resolution is depicted in Hegel's famous parable of the master-slave dialectic. Hegel argues that the self only expresses itself as a sovereign subject in so far as it struggles with, and is eventually recognized by, its Other. By seeing the other, a person recognizes that this other is different from him**.** His identity, thus, is established through this other. The first encounter with the other sets off a dialectic where both consciousnesses are

engaged. This engagement results in finding their place in the world. These two are locked in a form of conflict, where their position in the world will be decided by how this conflict is resolved. While both may be determined to be superior, the way that this antipathy can be resolved is for one of them to "give in". The fact of the matter is that some people value liberty over life and others value life over liberty. The newly self-conscious being who values liberty over life becomes the master, and the newly self-conscious individual who values life over liberty becomes the slave who submits to the master to survive.

In this dynamic, one begins as a conscious being (not yet self-conscious), where no conflict exists. Yet, when the two individuals encounter each other, there is a sense of conflict where a contradiction emerges where both cannot be the masters or be the slaves. Out of this conflict comes the resolution where one emerges as the master and the other emerges as the slave. This sequence is part of the dialectical process. Simply put, the dialectic moves through thesis (prior to the encounter), antithesis (the encounter) and synthesis (the resolution where one is the master and the other the slave). Yet, the process does not end here. Now that their positions have become apparent in the world (as each individual being either the master or the slave), the dynamic has changed. The master produces nothing and lives off the slave (thesis). The master has no contact with nature. The slave, on the other hand, works with nature and produces something of value, even though it is only used by the master, and this handiwork from nature gives the slave true knowledge about nature (antithesis) which the master cannot hope to duplicate.

Accordingly, for Hegel the "master" is a "consciousness" that defines itself only in mutual relation to the slave's consciousness - a process of mediation and mutual interdependence. "The consciousness for-the-Master is not an independent but a dependent, consciousness," Hegel explains in *Phenomenalogy of the Spirit* (1967:61). He adds: "Thus, he is not certain of existence-for-self as the truth; rather, his truth is the unessential

consciousness and the unessential action of the latter [the slave]" (Ibid). In other words, according to Hegel, both master and slave "recognize" their own existence only in relation or "reconciliation" with the other. Among the many implications of the master-slave dialectic, then, is the idea of the existence of a reciprocity or mutual dependence between master and slave rather than an opposition of dominance to subordination. The slave ironically *shares* in the master's power because the master defines himself only in opposition to the slave; that is, the master *needs* the slave in order to legitimate his comparative privilege.

Hegel's "dialectic" has been a source of influence for many thinkers. Jean- Paul Sartre, for example, makes use of the dialectic of the master and slave in *Being and Nothingness* (1943), when describing how the world is altered at the appearance of another person, and how the world appears to orient itself around this other person. Sartre dealt implicitly with issue of race in many of his works, beginning with *Being and Nothingness.* Race relations, especially segregation in the South, figured centrally in his reports from the United States during two visits after the War (1945 and 1946) and were a major topic of his many writings on colonialism and neocolonialism thereafter. He claimed that even as a boy, whenever he heard of the French "colonies," he thought of racial exploitation. He wrote in *Black Orpheus* about the African poets using the colonizers' language against them in their poems of liberation: "Black poetry in French is the only great revolutionary poetry of our time" (Quoted in Thomas Flynn, 2012). He fulminated against the violence of colonialism and its implicit "justification" by appeal to the sub-humanity of the native population. On several occasions in diverse works Sartre referred to the cry of the oppressed and the exploited: "We too are humans!" as the guiding ideal of their fight for liberty. His existential humanism grounded his critique of the capitalist and colonialist "systems." His appeal for violence to counter the inherent violence of the colonial system in Algeria reached hyperbolic proportions in his prefatory essay to Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961).

Sartre's contribution in writing an introduction to Albert Memmi's *The Colonizer and the Colonized* (1965) can be seen as a rallying point for an anti-colonial movement. The latter is well informed by political theory and committed to direct action. In this introduction, Sartre begins by quoting a remark typical of North American racist discourse: "Only the Southerner is competent to discuss slavery, because he alone knows the Negro" (Memmi, 1965: xxi). Thus, Sartre's supporting Albert Memmi, Frantz Fanon and others- together with his personal commitment to anti-colonial struggles in Algeria and elsewhere- is an underestimated component of the academic discourse we now call postcolonialism. Terry Collits considers that, "The politicizing of literary criticism had hardly begun in the Anglophone academy of the 1950s, when Sartre was the most famous French philosopher alive" (Collits, 2005: 83). During the Algerian Revolution, Sartre urged France to be true to its highest (revolutionary) ideals by allowing the colonized Algerians to enjoy the same benefits as mainland French citizens. Sartre's sympathy to the Algerian question, however, was expressed in less radical tones than those of Memmi or Frantz Fanon for example.

Frantz Fanon, another thinker, takes issue with Hegel's master-slave dialectic encounters in its translation into a postcolonial context. In the following passage taken from *Black Skin, White Masks* (1967), Fanon revises the dialectic to suggest that it underestimates the white master's dominance over black slaves in Africa and Europe. He states:

> I hope I have shown that here the master differs basically from the master described by Hegel. For Hegel there is reciprocity; here the master laughs at the consciousness of the slave. What he wants from the slave is not recognition but work.
>
> (Fanon, 1967:220)

For Fanon, there is no reciprocity in the master-slave dialectic. He considers that the master (the colonizer) mocks the consciousness of the slave (the colonized). The resolution for Fanon and Memmi would be a violent revolution that would bring down the colonial system.

For Benita Parry, the construction of a text disrupting the authorized version of imperialism began long ago within the political and intellectual cultures of colonial liberation movements, and the counter-discourse developed in this milieu which is known to western academics, read by black activists in the USA and transcribed as armed struggle in the other hemisphere, was written way back in the 1950s by Frantz Fanon. Parry argues, "by disclosing the social and cultural positioning of the pre-constituted and metaphysical poles of white and black, Fanon's writing is directed at liberating the consciousness of the oppressed from its confinement in 'the white man's artifact'" (Parry, 2004:13). To this end, the dichotomy construed by colonialist thought, white as the sovereign law and black as its transgression, with its attendant chain of naturalized antitheses, is shown to be axiologically fixed in discourse, Good-Evil, Beauty-Ugliness, White-Black: such are the characteristic pairings we called "manecheism delirium" that operates to deform the dialogical interaction of self with other selves, constitutive of and indispensable to being, and coterminous with consciousness, into the conflictual self- other colonial relationship. (Ibid)

In Fanon's writings, the colonized, as constructed by colonist ideology, is the very figure of the divided subject posited by psychoanalytic theory to refute the myth of humanism of a unified self. Denied the right to subjectivity, and alienated from a wrecked native culture, the colonized is condemned to exist in an unauthentic condition. Fanon points out, that for the black people, "to speak is to exist absolutely for the other"; meaning that the language one chooses to communicate requires that he or she "assumes a culture, support a weight of a civilization" (1967:17). The key element in this theory is that, in the oppressed black mind, there is the tendency to equate European culture and whiteness with humanity. Thus, "the negro will become whiter - become more human - as he masters the white man's language" (Ibid. 18).

Fanon uses the native Caribbean and French colonization to explain the process of black inferiority. The problem Fanon addresses is the constitution of a self identity where the native as "different" is validated by Western thought and culture. For Fanon:

> Every colonized people- in other words, every people in whose soul an inferiority complex has been created by the death and burial of its local culture originality - find itself face to face with the language of the civilizing nation; that is, with the culture of the mother country. The colonized is elevated above his jungle status in proportion to his adoption of the mother country's cultural standards. He becomes whiter as he renounces his blackness, his jungle.
>
> (Fanon, 1967:17-18)

Colonialism and oppression work as a distorting operation in the colonized self to the degree that the latter forgets his/ her own self in an attempt to become another self, as a white person, to be considered as human not as the "Other".

In his essay "Remembering Fanon" (1994), Homi Bhabha notes that Fanon "is too quick to name the Other, to personalize its presence in the language of colonial racism" (1994: xix), while valorizing those inscriptions when that "familiar alignment of colonial subjects - Black/White, Self/Other - is disturbed […] and the traditional grounds of racial identity are dispersed" (Ibid. ix). In a deconstruction of Fanon's texts, Bhabha states that:

> It is through image and fantasy - those orders that figure transgressively on the borders of history and the unconscious - that Fanon most profoundly evokes the colonial condition. In articulating the problem of colonial cultural alienation in psychoanalytic language of demand and desire, Fanon radically questions the formation of both individual and social authority as they come to be developed in the discourse of Social Sovereignity […] In shifting the focus of cultural racism from the politics of nationalism to the politics of narcissism, Fanon opens up a margin of interrogation that causes a subversive slippage of identity and authority.
>
> (Ibid. xiii, xxiv)

Fanon significant body of work including *The Wretched of the Earth* (1965) serves our present thesis, for it allow us to investigate the racial discourse in Melville's and Conrad's

texts, and observe that racial categories are meaningless in isolation, because their markers always serve the function of identification.

B. Culture /Civilization and the History of Difference

The figure of the "stranger" - ranging from the ancient notion of "foreigner" (*xenos*) to the contemporary category of alien - frequently operates as a limit-experience for humans trying to identify themselves over and against others. The Greeks had their barbarians, the Romans their Etruscans, and the Europeans their exotic overseas "savages"'. The word "barbarian" comes to us from Ancient Greece where it was part of a common usage, especially after the Persian War. It was contrasted with another word the Greek, and together they made it possible for the population of the whole world to be divided into unequal parts: the Greek (or 'us'), and the barbarians (the 'others', the foreigners). The Greek language was considered as the marker to distinguish one group from another group: the barbarians were all those who did not speak or did not understand the Greek language. The Greeks had merged together two oppositions, one formed from terms with an absolute moral value (barbarian/civilized), the other from neutral, relative and reversible terms (being able/unable to speak the language of the country). So, the contrast Barbarians/ Greek refers to the contrast between "savage" and "civilized".

In this sense, the characteristics of what we call savage life, like to transgress the most fundamental laws of common life, resort to violence and war, settle the differences between the people, and postulate a complete break between ourselves and other men constitute the state of being barbarian; the opposite of these cited behaviors, constitute civilization. For John Stuart Mill, the word civilization sometimes stands for human improvement in general, and sometimes for certain kinds of improvement in particular (Mill, 1975:160). Mill's double meaning of the term 'civilization' can refer to the dialectic of 'civilization' and 'culture'.

‘Culture’ comes from the Latin *cultura* and *colere*, which had a range of meanings: inhabit, cultivate, attend, protect, honor with worship. The word *cultura* became the Latin *cultus*, from which derives the word ‘cult’. The word ‘inhabit’ became the Latin *colonus*, from which derives the word ‘colony’. So we can say that colonization rests at the heart of culture, or culture always involves a form of colonization, even in relation to its conventional meaning as the farming of the soil. For Robert J.C. Young, the culture of land has always been the primary form of colonization since the focus on soil emphasis the physicality of the territory that is coveted, occupied, cultivated, turned into plantations and made unsuitable for indigenous nomadic tribes. (Young, 1995:31)

By the sixteenth century the word culture as ‘agri-culture’ extended its meaning to the human cultivation of the mind; so that, in the eighteenth century it came to represent the intellectual side of civilization. It was in the nineteenth century that the human history was defined according to the cultural-racial categories of savagery, barbarism and civilization. The word culture stands as a distinction between the civilized and the savage; in other words, to be civilized is to be a Westerner, and to be a savage means wild man living in distant and barbarian lands. It was J.S. Mill’s essay ‘Civilization’ (1836) that, first, referred to the three words- savagery, barbarism and civilization as a hierarchy of the historical stages of man, bringing geography and history together in a generalized scheme of European superiority that identified civilization with race. In this sense, culture has marked cultural difference by producing the Other where racism has always been an integral part of it. As Young notes, “race has always been culturally constructed and culture has always been racially constructed” (1995:54). The Westerners deployed such classifications, first, to justify slavery and later, colonialism.

As a way of imposing order and understanding on complex realities in which one group asserted dominance over others, racial division was the option that some Europeans

chose. Those Europeans, who came to dominate the colonial world of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century America, created a world in which the status of "whiteness" achieved supremacy, while inferior or lower-status were imposed on those populations encountered and exploited in the New World (also in Asia and later in Africa). "Race" conveyed a model of the world as being divided into exclusive groups that were naturally ranked vis-à-vis one another. The maintenance of this unequal relationship wholly depends on the subordination of an "other" group or peoples on the basis of cultural and physical differences. The creation of the "Other" is made by highlighting these differences, justifying the domination of individuals or groups over other individuals or groups to facilitate the subordination. Thus, creating the moral responsibility of the stronger self to educate, convert, or civilize the "Other". In Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* Marlow criticizes colonization and slavery on the basis of physical appearance of the black in Africa. Marlow states that the colonization of Africa is partly justified by the fact that the natives have "a different complexion" and "flatter noses" that he considers, at least, as not a "pretty thing when you look into it too much" (Conrad, 1994:10).

In this sense, the people most instrumental in the development of the idea of the "Other" as a racial experience in North America were the English colonists during their first settlements in the seventeenth century. They brought with them, to the colonies, English beliefs, values, and social practices that set the stage for a racial worldview in America. At that time, America was declared as being vacant. The Indians were reduced to invisibility by the settlers' gaze. They were confounded with the natural environment. Just like the plants, animals, they were regarded as part of the décor or spectacle. This perception of the Indian as the "Other" by the American settlers in Colonial America stayed with later American thinkers like Perry Miller, who in the *Errant into the Wilderness* (1956) gazed back to the American past and saw the land as vacant.

The vacant gaze of the White American settlers and some modern American historians was sometimes replaced by the gaze that saw the Indians as nomadic tribes with no legitimacy to the land they had occupied for centuries. This Othering perception of the Indians as nomads just like the vacant land legitimated the occupation of the land by the White settlers. The religious, cultural, and linguistic perceptions of the Indians are no less deforming in their apprehension of the original inhabitants associated with the devil forces and culturally retarded by Puritans and other theologians of the day.

However, some intellectuals had a different position towards the Indians, among them Bartolomé de las Casas, (1484 – 1566), a 16th-century Spanish historian, social reformer and Dominican friar who proclaimed himself the defender of the Indians. He became the first officially appointed 'Protector of the Indians'. His extensive writings, the most famous "*A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies*" and "Historia de Las Indias", record the first decades of colonization of the West Indies and focus particularly on the atrocities committed by the colonizers against the indigenous peoples. Bartolomé de las Casas spent 50 years of his life actively fighting slavery and the violent colonial abuse of indigenous peoples, especially by trying to convince the Spanish court to adopt a more humane policy of colonization. Las Casas is often seen as one of the first advocators for the Universal Human Rights. He rejected the firm equation between 'barbarians' and 'Indians'. He claimed: "We will call a man barbarian, in comparison with another, because he is strange in his ways of speaking and pronounces the other's language badly. […] But from this point of view, there is no man or race which is not barbaric with relation to another man or another race. Thus, just as we consider the people of the Indians to be barbarians, they judge us the same way, since they do not understand us" (Quoted in Todorov, 2010: 20). The book in which Las Casas wrote these words was to remain unpublished for centuries, but his idea spread right across Europe.

Melville used the notion of the "Other" as a means to achieve a cultural distance to construct an ideological critique of the contemporary America. In Melville's *Moby-Dick* the Indian did not follow this legacy of the misperception of the Indian. Tashtago, a Gay Head Indian from Marthas's Vineyard, is introduced as one of the last members of a tribe which is about to disappear. He mediates Melville's critique towards Indians' extermination. His portrait as a skilled person aboard the ship is also meant to defy racial stereotypes used generally to describe the natives.

C. Racial Theories and Otherness

The relationship between science and social thought, beliefs, and values has always existed since scientists cannot operate outside of the knowledge systems of their cultures. In the late eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century the state of that knowledge, both social and cultural, determined the directions along which science would develop. Thus, scientific advances, experimentation, and theories have generally reflected not only the prevailing state of technological knowledge, but also the economic, social, ideological, ethical, and/or political trend.

It was under the banner of progress that the concept of the "Other" came into existence. As Bernard MCGrane states it:

> The concept of progress was what made possible the experience of the Other- as- primitive, of the Other – as – fossil [...] We would have never, in encountering and confronting difference, experienced 'primitiveness,' experienced our advance over backwardness... The resource of 'progress' authorises the transformation of the 'different' into the 'primitive.
>
> (MCGrane, 1989:14)

Scientific interest in 'primitive' societies had been urged by the archeological and anthropological discoveries. It was at the end of the nineteenth-century, when civilization was

identified with colonialism and the project of imperialism that most racist school of anthropology sought to discriminate between high culture and sub-culture, and described the 'savage' and 'barbarian' in opposition to the 'civilized' to emphasize absolute forms of racial and cultural difference. It must be argued that polygenism refuted the Enlightenment ethos of the universal sameness and equality of humanity by claiming that while primitive races had remained static since their creation, civilized ones had progressed. The century witnessed a cultural debate between the 'monogenists', those who believed in the Biblical account of the origin of man - a single creation for all races, and 'polygenists' those who considered that the different races were just as different species that had been different all along, and would continue to be so. In the 1860s, polygenism was becoming the dominant scientific view next to phrenology, a scientific theory based on the belief that a person's character and personality could be determined by looking at the shape of his head.

The debate over racial discourse could not be done without reference to the notorious Joseph Arthur Comte de Gobineau (1816-1882), who developed the theory of the Aryan master race in his book *An Essay on the Inequality of Races* (1853-1855). Gobineau has divided the races of the world on physiological grounds, the white, the yellow and the black. Each ethnical element brings with it its own characteristics or instincts. The white for instance is vigorous, strong and highly educated. The yellow race is mediocre, moderate and comparatively developed. The black race is feeble, very strong and partially latent. Gobineau's theory also advocates the supreme role of the Aryan race. He states: "All civilizations derive from the white race […] none can exist without its help" (Quoted in Robert J.C. Young, 1995: 106). But already in 1850, the Edinburgh anatomist Robert Knox (1791- 1862) published the first racialist scientific work in Britain, *The Races of Men*. In this work, Knox brought together many racial ideas that had been developed at that time, those based on antagonistic relations between the Saxons, Celts, Jews and the "dark races of men"

(Ibid.119). So, by the 1850s, hostile attitude to other races became widespread in Britain and was expressed in literature as in the works of Thomas Arnold's "Occasional Discourse on the Nigger Question" (1853) and Charles Dickens' story, "The Perils of Certain English Prisoners" (1857). In the latter, Dickens fictionalized his violent reaction to the Indian Mutiny of 1857. He wrote:

> I wish I were commander in Chief in India. The first thing I would do to strike that Oriental race with amazement… should be to proclaim to them in their language, that I considered my holding that appointment by the leave of God, to mean that I should do my utmost to exterminate the Race upon whom the stain of the late cruelties rested; and that I was […] now proceeding […] to blot it out of mankind and raze it off the face of the earth.
>
> (Dickens, 1910:16)

The above quote is quite explicit of the racial discourse in the cultural sphere. The expression below: to "raze" the "Oriental race" from the face of the world reminds us of another phrase in another fictional work, 'Exterminate the brute', in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness.*

Othering via the ideas of ethnocentricity - the belief that one's own ethnic group is superior to all others and the tendency to evaluate and assign meaning to other ethnicities using yours as a standard - is additionally achieved through processes of cartography. The drawing of maps has historically emphasized specific lands and their associated national identities. Cartographers in early centuries commonly distorted actual locations and distances when depicting them on maps; British cartographers for example centered Britain on their maps, and drew it proportionally larger than it should be. Thus we see that agendas of domination and subordination are not only supported by the soft sciences like language, popular culture, and literature, but also through the hard and exact sciences like mathematics and geography. Maps in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* are more than transcriptions of physical space for Marlow, as for the young Conrad. They are the spur to dreams of adventure and exploration. Marlow's fascination with maps reveals several issues:

colonialism and imperialism. The “blank space” was filled by colors which established the territorial claims of European colonialist powers in the ‘scramble for Africa’ in the early 1880s. The French (blue), the Portuguese and Italians (orange and green), the German (purple), and the Belgians (yellow). The “vast amount of red” refers to the British that is “good to see at any time because one knows that some real work is done in there” (Conrad, 1994:14).

Thus, in *Heart of Darkness* maps could stand as the intersection of spheres: imagination, and political and economic colonization. Maps do transcribe physical space. They also in a sense inscribe it, with names, boundary lines, and even (if we think of cartographic projections) a perspective from which to view it. Maps and map making are the result and also tools of territorial possession. In fact, by mapping and naming ‘the blank’ spaces the Europeans are just expropriating these spaces because the ‘discovered’ area existed and was peopled before their arrival. As explorers discover a new land, they map it both to claim it and to move in it and control it better. So, by giving names and borders to this ‘unknown’ land, it becomes easier to impose their will over it. By the late 1880s Africa, specifically the Congo area, was much fully colonized, settlements were more numerous and extended – the maps, on both worlds, were more intricately elaborated.

Racial distinction is a reality created in the human mind. It is fabricated as an existential reality out of a combination of recognizable physical differences - the ‘dominant white’ has constructed and has maintained social barriers and economic inequalities; also of some incontestable cultural and social facts; and some scientific theories which based their reflection not on objective truths but on ethnic parameters. The aim is to justify the conquest of indigenous peoples, their domination and exploitation, and the importation of a vulnerable

and controllable population from Africa for slavery. Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin define post-colonial theory as a debate on:

> [...] migration, slavery, suppression, resistance, representation, difference, race, gender, place, and responses to influential master discourses of imperial Europe...and the fundamental experiences of speaking and writing by which all these come into being.
>
> (Ashcroft, 1989: 2)

The culture that a supposed superior ethnic group is important for its valuable knowledge relies on the judgment of the ethnic group in power. Distortions in the writing of history have carried over till today in the writing of news and also fictional works. As mentioned before under examples of international othering, political parties in European countries use racial stereotypes about ethnic groups in their campaigns reformulating late nineteenth-century racial doctrines, as the French Minister Claude Guèant who considers that France has a 'high civilization', excluding the immigrants from this 'high cultural community'. In this context, disrespect for the others can be considered as "othering". The knowledge of this sheds much light on historiographies of other cultures created by the dominant culture, and by the discourses, whether academic or otherwise, that surround these written and oral histories. In this sense, race is a cultural creation, a product of human invention. Be it racial, or ethnic Other , the term Other is used to name the way a hegemonic culture group views different ones as inferior or just plain aliens, and therefore, as something that has to be erased or assimilated by any way. By extension, the negative otherness is attributed to these cultures.

Our present world is marked by a paradoxical combination of violently proclaimed cultural difference and complex interconnected networks of globalization. Homi K. Bhabha' notion of cultural 'hybridity' is among the concepts that work to undermine the polarization of the world into self and other. Like Edward Said, Bhabha suggests that traditional ways of thinking about the world have often been complicit with long-standing inequalities between nations and people. His work operates on the assumption that a traditional philosophical sense

of the relationship between one's self and others can result in racism and stigmatization - something we see too often in the encounter between different cultures. Bhabha in *The Location of Culture* (1994) refers to hybridity of cultures as the mixed-ness, or 'impurity' of cultures thus, a mixed-ness within every form of identity. In the case of cultural identities, hybridity refers to the fact that cultures are not discrete phenomena; instead, they are always in contact with one another. He directs our intention to what happens in- between cultures. He thinks about this through what he calls the *liminal,* meaning that which is on the border or the threshold. The term stresses the idea that what is an inbetween settled cultural forms or identities - like self and other - is central to the creation of new cultural meaning.

The debate over the 'Other' and otherness initiated by Edward Said in his influential work *Orientalism* (1979) is still substantial today. Said's work introduces a global perspective of political and economic realities to which literary studies have remained closed, and more importantly, he brings politics into literary studies by insisting that scholarly Orientalism needs to be seen in the context of Western perceptions of the Orient dating back to Classical times. In this sense, Orientalism embodies a "textual attitude" (1979: 92) suggesting that the discourse of Orientalism relies on images of the East and its inhabitants that are not derived from empirical evidence but from books as far as medieval texts. The Western academic institutions are compromised by their relation to power, as for example in theory and criticism in literary studies- in the 1970s New Criticism, as F.R. Leavis, was the dominant pedagogical mode of criticism in literary studies both in the USA and in Britain. In the late 1970s, the world of literary studies was beginning to be opened up to the influences of the outside world, as the feminist and the Civil Rights movements, in the form of political, economic, and sexual realities. Said's insistence on the inextricable connections between literature, history and politics makes *Orientalism* an important theoretical work.

The starting point of Said's Orientalism is that "the Orient is not an inert fact of nature", but that it is, like the Occident, "man-made" (1979:4-5). This statement opens up questions about the construction of the Orient and Oriental people by Westerners. It also raises issues connected with representation, knowledge and power, which are both productive and problematic. For Said, the Orientalist discourse is based on a dichotomy between the West and the Orient, and this relation is influenced by theories of racial inequality and hierarchy. The West is seen as, "rational, peaceful, liberal, logical, capable of holding real values, [and] without natural suspicion", and the Orient as "none of these things."(Ibid 49) Said's evaluation and critique of these sets of beliefs forms an important background for postcolonial studies. His work highlights the inaccuracies of a wide variety of assumptions in relation to the natives or Orientals as it questions various paradigms of thought which are accepted on individual, academic, and political levels. He foregrounds the Western textual construction of the Orient and argues that this textual production is an example of the Western 'will to power' over others, and that it is therefore intimately related to the material realities of political and economic domination which constitute colonialism, imperialism and neo-colonialism.

The word 'Orientalism' may refer to different and complex connotations. For Said the term has three applications; first, it is an academic tradition of study, teaching and writing about the Orient. Second, it is "a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between 'the Orient' and (most of the time) 'the Occident'"; that is, the West in general. Third, it is "the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient" or "a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient" (Ibid. 200). The "Orient" signifies a system of representations framed by political forces that brought the Orient into Western learning, Western consciousness, and Western empire. We can then say that the Orient exists for the West, and is constructed by and in relation to the

West. So, Orientalism as a discourse is "a manner of regularized (or Orientalized) writing, vision, and study, dominated by imperatives, perspectives, and ideological biases ostensibly suited to the Orient" (Ibid). What is considered as the 'Orient' in our study is a vast space - 'an imaginative geography', one that spreads across a myriad of cultures and countries both in Melville's and Conrad's selected works.

According to Said, the West is endowed with a strong geographical eagerness. It is characterized mainly by the impulse 'to find out,' and 'to settle upon'; thus, the blanker the maps, the greater the imaginative space they offer. Marlow's description of Africa shows first his fascination for the unknown then for full cartographic precision. It recalls the 'glamour' Marlow/ Conrad projects into the blank spaces on the maps of his youth – Marlow's description of the snaking river seems to insist on an almost Edenic temptation. Hence, 'Africa' represented on a map, as blankness is not so much a physical, geographical space, as an imaginative one, available to whatever dreams – an exotic 'otherness' that promises adventure and exploration. The dark 'unknown' place is also fascinating for the possibilities of imaginative exploitation and appropriation it offers.

The Orient as "an imaginative geography" is a European invention, that it is both "a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences," and Europe's "deepest and most recurring images of the Other."(1979: 4) It is a mirror image of what is inferior and alien "Other" to the West. The Oriental is the person represented by such thinking. The man is depicted as feminine, weak, yet strangely dangerous because he poses a threat to white, and to Western women. The woman is both eager to be dominated and strikingly exotic. The Oriental is a single image, a sweeping generalization, a stereotype that crosses countless cultural and national boundaries. For Johar Malini Schueller, the major contribution of Said's Orientalism was to make it impossible to think about Western

construction of the Orient in purely spiritual, philosophical, or symbolic terms and, by analogy, to make it problematic to deal with any construction of an Other" (Schueller, 1998:6). Billy in Melville's *Billy Budd* is Orientalized to allow the author to refer to important national issues. Thus, Western representations of the Orient, no matter where and when this Orient might be located, include features that may be used in our work.

In criticizing the persistence of Western characterizations of the Orient as passive, supine, available woman/body, Said obviously draws attention to the power relations inherent in constructions of the Orient. For him there is not only one scholarly discourse or imperial institution, but rather many interlocking discourses and institutions, which is what Foucauldian perspective implies. Said's use of Michel Foucault's ideas on discourse and power will allow us to explore the relationship between power and knowledge and how the racial representations, in the selected fictional works, are always influenced by the system of power in which they are located. Michel Foucault and other postmodernists have suggested that the process of othering is related to knowledge and power to achieve a particular political agenda in its goal of domination. Said demonstrates how from the eighteenth century onward, Oriental representation has always been linked to Western colonialism and imperialism. Said's criticism at 'dismantling the science of imperialism' has increased colonial discourse analysis, which engendered literary theory that resulted in the interrogations of Western Canons, like Conrad who was treated by some critics as a racist.

Another important point introduced by Said in his critical work that is quite adequate to our analysis of the Oriental as the Other in both Melville's *Billy Budd* and Conrad's *Lord Jim* is his distinction between 'latent' and 'manifest' Orientalism. In the third chapter of his *Orientalism,* Said argues that latent Orientalism, the textual and contemplative (1979:210), unchanging, and single-minded view of the Orient in terms of its distinctiveness from the West (Ibid. 205-206), was distinct from manifest Orientalism. He hypothesized that manifest

Orientalism, caused by a spatial and geographical (Ibid. 210) change in the attitude of the West which grew to see the Orient as a geographical space to be cultivated, harvested, and guarded, (Ibid.219), was an acknowledgment of the modern Orient and its own power and force within the world which needed to be administer[ed] in economic or military (Ibid.) terms. And when the Orient became concretely real, when it became an actual geographical and spatial arena in the eyes of the Occident, manifest Orientalism occurred. **'**Latent Orientalism', for Valerie Kennedy, seems to mean something like a collective and unconscious shared set of images and attitude (Kennedy, 2000: 23). Peter Childs and Patrick Williams consider that latent Orientalism "has strong affinities with certain concepts of ideology, particularly the 'negative' version of ideology as false consciousness" (Childs, 1997:101). These different connotations of 'latent Orientalist' are suitable for our analysis of the Oriental in *Billy Budd* where the notion of Orientalism is not explicit but more 'a negative ideology' that Melville symbolically suggests through Oriental images and attitudes.

D. The Gender Other

Simone De Beauvoir (1908-1986), a French feminist, made use of otherness in *The Second Sex* (1949). De Beauvoir refers to Hegel's master-slave dialectic as analogous, in many respects, to the relationship of man and woman. She adjusts the Hegelian notion of the 'Other' in her description of the male-dominated culture. According to her, this notion treats woman as the 'Other' in relation to man. De Beauvoir calls the Other the *minority*, the least favored one and often a woman, when compared to a man, for a man represents both the positive and the neutral, as indicated by the common use of man to designate human beings in general; whereas a woman represents only the negative characteristics as being weak and irresponsible.

De Beauvoir's work in relation to politics demonstrates her argument that we are ethically compelled to do all we can to change oppressive institutions, not only in our closest relations, but more globally as well. Her 'feminine' and 'feminist' solidarity with women, especially with the oppressed women, is well stated in her work which refers to Djamila Boupacha, a young Algerian woman wrongly imprisoned, tortured, and raped during the Algerian Revolution War (1954-1962). De Beauvoir attracted the world's attention by publicizing the crimes against Djamila. She aimed to raise consciousness and inspire political action specifically on Djamila's behalf. And more broadly, She used this particular case to elicit support within France for Algerian independence. Significantly, it is Djamila's body itself that is a primary site of oppression and resistance. She considered that: "The rape of this woman and the violation of her body is the concern of every person in France" (1962:197). Her sustained appeal to the world of the atrocities of the French colonial system both for the woman's body and her people's fight for independence marks a visible point of De Beauvoir's defense of Djamila, and her politics as action. A parallel can be drawn with Melville's politics in "*The Encantadas*" where Hunilla's rape mediates Melville's politics as action to refer to the Mexican war and to the U.S. Empire.

Sarojini Sahoo**,** an Indian feminist writer, agrees with De Beauvoir that women can only free themselves by thinking, taking action, working, creating, on the same terms as men. She disagrees with her, however, that though women have the same status as men as human beings, they have their own identity and they are different from men. They are "others" in real definition, but this is not in context with the Hegelian definition of "others". It is not always due to man's "active" and "subjective" demands. They are the others, unknowingly accepting the subjugation as a part of "subjectivity". Redefining femininity with Eastern perspective, Sahoo considers that at the same time as the woman's identity is certainly constitutionally different from that of man, men and women still share a basic human equality. Thus the

harmful asymmetric sex/gender "Othering" arises 'passively' from natural, unavoidable intersubjectivity.

The Postcolonialism debate is first initiated by Said; however, gender inequalities seem to be neglected in *Orientalism*. In a conversation with Raymond Williams Said argued that "in the relationships between the ruler and the ruled in the imperial or colonial or racial sense, race takes precedence over both class and gender." He added, "I have always felt that the problem of emphasis and relative importance took precedence over the need to establish one's feminist credentials." (Quoted in Valerie Kennedy, 2000:37) Even if Said didn't refer to gender inequalities in *Orientalism* we consider that the issue of gender has explanatory value at the level of figuration, in its 'emblematization' of power relations. Near the beginning of *Orientalism*, said takes the famous example of Flaubert and the Egyptian dancer, Kuchuk Hanem, as the prototype of the relationship between the Western colonizing power and Eastern colonized people. He says, "He [Flaubert] was foreign, comparatively wealthy, male, and these were historical facts of domination that allowed him not only to possess Kuchuk Hanem physically but to speak for her and tell his readers in what way she was 'typically Oriental'" (Said, 1979:6). These statements suggest that Said refers to gender as a factor in 'the historical facts of domination'. The gender implication is also implied in Said's 'latent Orientalism' where he states that Orientalism was "an exclusively male province", he says that this is particularly clear in travel writing and fiction, where "women are usually the creatures of a male power-fantasy. They express unlimited sensuality, they are more or less stupid, and above all they are willing. Flaubert's Kuchuk Hanem is the prototype of such caricatures" (Ibid. 207). There is a double othering of the woman: she mediates the colonial male- power and the 'stupid' female that stands as inferior to man.

The postcolonial women critics and feminist postcolonialists who have deployed Said's paradigms to read empire and its nationalist aftermath are too numerous to discuss in

any detail here. Jenny Sharpe in *Allegories of Empire* (1993) makes direct reference to Said's *Orientalism* in her account of the colonial discourse of post-Mutiny India. She focuses on the construction of the Englishwoman in the British colonial text. For her, the subject gendered female - in particular the subject threatened with rape - is the construct that at once stabilizes and threatens to expose the multiple contradictions of the colonial project. Her study submits that the master–slave, or colonizer–colonized, relationship is always a gendered one. Her predominant concern is to steer the over determined contradictions of colonialism of its patriarchal structures. The native woman in Melville's *The Encantandas* and the African woman in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* are 'creatures of a male power-fantasy'. However, the portrayal of these women in the two fictional works differs: Conrad's native woman, partly, adheres to the above stereotype. Melville's native woman was a victim of a rape in the island but her importance as a woman and as a native is emphasized through her courage and her daring.

Identifying the connection between the Orient and sex as a significant ingredient of the relationship between the Western (male) writer and the Orient, Said singles out Flaubert as a particularly interesting example of the kinds of "complex responses" which the association between sex and the Orient produced (1979:188). He also adds to the question of the Orient and sexuality "the association […] between the Orient and the freedom of licentious sex arguing that:

> For nineteenth-century Europe, with its increasing *embourgeoisement*, sex had been institutionalized to a very considerable degree. On the one hand, there was no such thing as 'free' sex, and on the other, sex in society entailed a web of legal, moral, even political and economic obligations of a detailed and certainly encumbering sort […] the Orient was a place where one could look for sexual experience unobtainable in Europe.
>
> (Ibid. 90)

In describing the nineteenth century's 'institutionalization of sex', Said states that there was no such thing as free sex, that is what he calls 'sex outside society' while sex in society was encumbered by 'a web of legal, moral, even political and economic obligations'. More importantly, Said shows the relation between the West/ Westerner and the Orient/Oriental to be sexual and gendered. So, the gender implications in *Orientalism* are Western men's textual and real exploitation of Oriental women. The West's feminization of the Orient invites penetration and insemination.

The 'Other' has become an important concept for studies of the gender system where the notion of the 'Other' can also be applied to women because of the patriarchal order of society where men constitute the center and the standard. Judith Butler (1956-), for example, attempts to resituate feminity out of the paradigm of dominated/othered initiated by Homi K. Bhabha's theorizations on the stereotype as an "ambivalent, contradictory mode of representation," based as much on anxiety as on assertion, the enunciation of a split subject. The crux of Butler's argument in *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (1990) is that the coherence of the categories of sex, gender, and sexuality - the natural-seeming coherence, for example, of masculine gender and heterosexual desire in male bodies - is culturally constructed through the repetition of stylized acts in time. These stylized bodily acts, in their repetition, establish the appearance of an essential, ontological "core" gender. In other words, gender ontology deals with questions concerning what entities exist or can be said to exist, and how such entities can be grouped, related within a hierarchy, and subdivided according to similarities and differences. This is the sense in which Butler famously theorizes gender, along with sex and sexuality, as performative. The performance of gender, sex, and sexuality, however, is not a voluntary choice for Butler, who locates the construction of the gendered, sexed, desiring subject within what she calls "regulative discourses", borrowing the phrase from Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*. The expression is also called "frameworks of

intelligibility", or "disciplinary regimes" and decided in advance what possibilities of sex, gender, and sexuality are socially permitted to appear as coherent or 'natural'.

Butler explicitly challenges biological accounts of binary sex, reconceiving the sexed body as itself culturally constructed by regulative discourse. The supposed obviousness of sex as a natural biological fact attests to how deeply its production in discourse is concealed. The sexed body, once established as a "natural" and unquestioned "fact," is the alibi for constructions of gender and sexuality, unavoidably more cultural in their appearance, which can purport to be the just-as-natural expressions or consequences of a more fundamental sex. (Butler, 1990:135-45) On Butler's account, it is on the basis of the construction of natural binary sex that binary gender and heterosexuality are likewise constructed as natural (Ibid. 163). In this way, Butler claims that without a critique of sex as produced by discourse, the sex/gender distinction as a feminist strategy for contesting constructions of binary asymmetric gender and compulsory heterosexuality will be ineffective (Ibid. 9-11).

E. The Contemporary Concept of the Other

The contemporary concept usage of "the Other" as radically other was developed by the French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan and the Lithuanian-French philosopher Emmanuel Lévinas. Lacan articulated the 'Other' with *the symbolic order* and language. Levinas connected it with the scriptural and traditional God, in *The Infinite Other*. He claimed that everyone is essentially and before anything else interpellated by the face of the 'Other'. Lacan uses the term "other" in a number of ways. First, in the sense of self/other, where "other" is the "not-me"; but we know that the "other" becomes me in the mirror stage. Lacan also uses the idea of "Other", with a capital "o", to distinguish between the concept of the other and actual others. The image the child sees in the mirror is another, and it gives the child the idea of "Other" as a structural possibility, one which makes possible the structural possibility of

"I" or self. In other words, the child encounters actual others - its own image, other people- and understand the idea of "Otherness", things that are not itself. According to Lacan, the notion of Otherness, encountered in the Imaginary phase (and associated with demand), comes before the sense of "self" which is built on the idea of Otherness.

The relation between the self and its image, which Lacan terms "the imaginary", is one in which mirroring foretells inter subjectivity or the interaction between two separate selves, each with its own distinct perspective. In *Lord Jim*, there is no fixed opposition between the self and the native, and no clear statement between the binary opposition "superior" "inferior", and "civilized" "uncivilized". Such, we would argue, is the larger narrative perspective of *Lord Jim*, which exposes the limitations and self-contradiction of Marlow's views to open up a complex dialogue on issues of history, culture, race, and gender. Thus the entirely of *Lord Jim* attempts to deal with the other in symbolic terms, although Marlow is able to deal with the other only in the realm of the imaginary.

Richard Kearney considers that we often project onto others those unconscious fears from which we recoil in ourselves. Rather than acknowledge that we are deep down answerable to an alterity which unsettles us, we devise all kinds of evasion strategies. Primary amongst these is the attempt to simplify our existence by scapegoating others as "aliens". In doing so, we contrive to transmute the sacrificial alien into a monster, or into a fetish-god. But either way, we refuse to recognize the stranger before us as a singular other who responds, in turn, to the singular otherness in each of us. We refuse to acknowledge ourselves-as-others. (Kearney, 2002: 4)

The concept of 'alterity' has also been taken up in colonial studies. Alterity from the German 'alter,' or 'other', does not simply describe individual differences but the systematized construction of classes of people. *The Oxford Dictionary* defines alterity or otherness as "a thing other than the thing mentioned or the thinking subject," indicating that

alterity comprises not only radical external difference, but everything that is in some way distinct from the subject. Alterity can therefore be understood as the represented Other, or projected identity. The final step in the construction of alterity is to institutionalize these prejudices in laws and this construction of alterity inevitably leads to racism and sexism. Thus originally being a philosophical concept, othering has political, economic, social and psychological connotations and implications. The concept of the "Other", as the analysis has shown, includes 'race', and 'gender'; thus, the different concepts will provide a theoretical background for our work in the representations of the 'Negro', of the 'Oriental' and of the 'woman' using postcolonial theorists' insights.

F. Intertextuality, Dialogism and Otherness

In our discussion, we shall use these multiple resonances of the complex concept of the 'Other' using the authors' fictional texts and investigate in what ways Melville and Conrad negotiate and resist the Othering process. We shall use the term *Orient* and *Oriental* to foreground the issues of power inherent in Said's usage of the terms emphasizing the various and intertwining discourses of otherness in both Melville's and Conrad's literary texts. The relevance of the concept follows from the fact that the dominated official political discourse both in the United States and in Europe was based on racial theories which legitimised the white supremacy. Our construction of the following discussion has been influenced by Bakhtin's methodology. The notion of dialogue that we intend to apply in this work will be carried out from the dialogic perspective defined by Mikhail Bakhtin in his *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* (1992). The choice of the perspective is due to the fact that the writers' "dialogizing" over the notion of the Other can be grasped through the type of sociological stylistics elaborated by Bakhtin:

> Thus, the expressiveness of individual words is not inherent in the words themselves as units of language, nor does it issue directly from the meaning of these words: it is neither typical generic expression nor it is

> an echo of another's individual expression, which makes the word as it were, representative of another's whole utterance from a particular evaluative position.
>
> (Bakhtin, 1992:89)

For Bakhtin, literary texts are utterances, words that cannot be divorced from particular subjects in specific situations. In other words, literature is another form of communication, and, as such, another form of knowledge.

Bakhtin's theory of the novel stipulates that the novel is "a genre that is ever questing, ever examining itself and subjecting its established forms to review; such indeed, is the only possibility open to a genre that structures itself in a zone of direct contact with developing reality" (1992:39). What marks the novel off as distinctive within the range of all possible genres (both literary and non-literary) is the novel's peculiar ability to open a window in discourse from which the extraordinary variety of social languages can be perceived. The novel is able to create a work space in which that variety is not only displayed, but in which it can become an active force in shaping cultural history (Ibid.72). Hence for Bakhtin the novel "has become the leading hero in the drama of literary development in our time, because it best of all reflects the tendencies of a new world still in the making" (Ibid.7) Bakhtin's concept of the novel as "a genre in the making and the most fluid of all genres" puts emphasis upon the novel's dynamism, flexibility, and formal and thematic range. This characteristic elasticity and generic versatility, which contribute to and yet complicate definitions of the novel, derive in part from its tendency to exploit and incorporate elements of other genres into its own.

In *Problems of Dostoevky's Poetics* Bakhtin developed the concept of dialogism, or, double voicing. Applying to language in general and specific instance of literary expression, dialogism means the co-presence of two voices in one: awareness of subtle shifts of the representation of voices drawn from particular discourse in a literary text. In the latter case, Bakhtin suggests that dialogic language functions as if in quotation marks; in other words,

each dialogic expression foregrounds that it is in a self-aware relationship, or tension, with another voice. A good example is that of irony, where not only does a statement have two competing meanings, but this double-voiced structure is deliberately aimed at a listener or receiver. Melville's and Conrad's text presents multiple voices, including the authors'/narrators' that allow us to 'experience' polyphony.

Bakhtin uses the concept of polyphony to account for the author's process of assimilating other peoples' "words". The simultaneity of these dialogues is merely a particular instance of the larger polyphony of social and discursive forces which Bakhtin calls "heteroglossia". Heteroglossia is a situation, the situation of a subject surrounded by the myriad responses. It is a way of conceiving the world as made up of a roiling mass of languages, each of which has its own distinct formal markers. As Bakhtin notes:

> Languages of heteroglossia, like mirrors that face each other, each of which in its own way reflects a little piece, a tiny corner of the world, force us to guess at and grasp behind their inter-reflecting aspects for a world that is broader, more multi-levelled and multi-horizoned than would be available to one language, one mirror.
>
> (Quoted in Holquist, 2002: 69)

Hence, the novelist becomes the heir of an anti-authoritarian popular cultural strategy to deflate the pretensions of the official language and ideology and institute a popular-collective learning process. His character's social perception of the world is fused with their intensest intimate life. In this way ideological thinking is perceived by the author as passionate and fundamentally personal. At the macro level of social history, Bakhtin claims that the author (Bakhtin is speaking about Dostoevsky) hears his epoch as a passionate clash of ideological voices, a 'great dialogue' of

> Not only individual voices, but precisely and predominantly the dialogic relationship among voices, their *dialogic interaction.* He heard both the loud, recognized reigning voices of the epoch, that is, the reigning dominant ideas (official and unofficial), as well as voices still weak, ideas not yet fully

> emerged, latent ideas heard as yet by no one but himself, and ideas which were just beginning to ripen, embryos of future world views.
>
> (Bakhtin, 1984:100)

It is the interaction of contradictory and differing voices which is creative; and the 'Discourse' in the novel focuses most strongly upon this oppositional struggle at the macro level of social order. Bakhtin introduces two terms to describe this 'dialogic battle'. The first is called "a centripetal force"; the latter aims at centralizing and unifying meaning. This centripetal force in discourse is put to use by any dominant social group to impose its own 'monologic', unitary perceptions of truth. However, always working against that centralizing process is "a centrifugal force – the force of heteroglossia – which stratifies and fragments ideological thought into multiple views of the world. The novel is thus a literary expression of a whole socio-cultural process which describes both the character of a genre, multi-accented artistic discourse, and an anti-authoritarian relationship between discourses.

For Bakhtin there is neither a first word nor a last word. The contexts of dialogue are without limit. The rich and diverse body of Melville's work can only be deciphered through intensive and multiple approaches. The literary texts in Conrad's fiction are ambivalent and ambiguous; they can only be deciphered through intensive readings. Bakhtin adds that: "Even meanings born in dialogues of the remotest past will never be finally grasped once and for all, for they will always be renewed in later dialogue" (Ibid: 39). Bakhtin's concept of dialogue, and on the notion that language- any form of speech or writing- is always a dialogue is adequate for the analysis of our corpus. That is why we consider that when one thinks "Melville and Conrad", the problem is not what to say, because of the richness of their literary texts, but where to begin.

It follows from the above definition that the "Other" is a matter of perception, or rather misperception, that it is here, to stay with us as a sociological, psychological, philosophical,

religious, economic, linguistic and cultural reality. In every age, men in the generic sense of the word as human beings had their perceptions of other human beings deformed by these realities that functioned according to their own interests and for their imposition of power, or the “Other” declared as inferior to the self. What differentiates one age from another age in matter of discrimination against the other is the means deployed for establishing the otherness of the “Other”. In other words, the ideology of difference is sometimes built on religious grounds, at other times built on culture and civilization, and at other times on physical features and so on.

The analysis has shown that the notion of the “Other” was a product of popular beliefs, and a folk classification about human differences that could be dated back to the sixteenth century, and took great importance in the nineteenth century. By a folk classification, we refer to the ideologies, and selective perceptions that constitute a society’s popular beliefs and interpretations of the world. The racial “Other”, then, originated as a cultural product reflecting a particular way of looking at and interpreting human differences, both physical and cultural. These folk ideas were embraced by naturalists and other learned people and were given legitimacy as a supposed product of scientific investigations. In the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, scientists reflected the beliefs and biases of their time; that is, fears, prejudices, and evaluations of peoples whom they saw as alien. So, human populations were classified into unequal groups on the bases of physical features that resulted in behavioral, intellectual and moral qualities. Each group of peoples was created unique by God so that the imputed differences were said to be fixed and unalterable. Accordingly, racial otherness was and is just one of several ways of perceiving, interpreting, and dealing with human differences. It is a worldview perpetuated as much by the stereotypes to which so many of us have been, often unconsciously, conditioned.

However, the awareness about this process of othering has become today more than at other times more widespread. Indeed, more than at any time, the ideology of difference as the "Other" has become more affirmative than negative in its connotations, except of course, for fundamentalists of all sorts. This ideology of difference as the "Other" has led to the rise of what is today referred to as multiculturalism, syncretism, cultural hybridity, and so on. The next chapter will show how this ideology of difference worked in the lives and times of Herman Melville and Joseph Conrad.

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Chapter II: Otherness in the Lives and Times of Herman Melville and Joseph Conrad

This chapter seeks to illustrate that Melville and Conrad did not have an easy life. For different and sometimes similar reasons, they experienced a life of restlessness which might explain the perpetual quest for identity and selfhood in their respective works. The confluence of personal factors of instability like the loss of parents at an early age, social and economic demotion of their families make them seek refuge in the sea and later in the world of words. Their tendency to see themselves as "poètes maudits" did not prevent them from having a prolific literary career. Their works comprise different kinds of narrative, as well as poetry for Melville and drama for Conrad. Melville's early books describe voyages to the South Seas involving clashes between different cultures. Similarly, Conrad travelled in different nations and races and this allowed him to "mold words as lenses and veils to express his ideas" (Cedric Watts, 1994:4).

Their times were no less turbulent because of the rapid changes in various domains: social, political, cultural and economic. Besides, important cultural issues, such as woman's rights, changed man's vision of man and determined his vision and behavior towards other men and cultures. So, what can be regarded as revolutions in industry, economy, society, and culture developed in them the impulse towards a cultural fantasy at whose heart is the "Other". It was no easy matter during their times to identify with particular ideas without being alienated. Being themselves "Otherized" by their societies through their non-conformism, they looked at the "external Others" differently.

A. Life of Herman Melville and the Quest for the Other

Herman Melville was born in New York City in 1819 to a family with English and Dutch ancestry. He was twelve when his father died bankrupt. Since then, the family was financially and socially insecure. One consequence of Melville's reversal of fortune was his complicated and ambivalent class allegiance: on the one hand, he identified with the sufferings of the dispossessed; on the other hand, he felt that he belonged to the class of possessors since he descended, on both sides of his parents, from distinguished Revolutionary War grandfathers. The family, Maria the mother, and her seven children, left New-York to Albany. Herman's education did not go much beyond fifteen birthdays and he had a number of odd jobs. His situation was quite difficult because of the hard times following the Panic of 1837. The latter was a financial crisis that had had damaging effects on national economies. The banks accepted payment only in species (gold and silver coinage), forcing a dramatic, deflationary backlash. The Panic was followed by a five-year depression, with the failure of banks and unemployment. For Robert Milder, the social alienation of Melville's early narrators who rail against the callousness of nominal Christians, have their root in the frustrations of this period. (Milder, 2005:20)

After fruitless attempts at finding work, Melville went to sea. He joined a ship bound for Liverpool as a cabin boy at the age of 19, in 1839. The voyage proved to be both romantic and disturbing. In fact, Melville experienced the usual hardships, and tyrannies of shipboard life which was later described in his novel *Redburn*. The trip also ingrained in him a love for the sea. In 1841, Melville signed aboard the *Acushnet,* a whaling vessel, which sailed from Massachusetts to the South Pacific. A year and a half later, the *Acushnet* touched at Nukuheva in the Marquesas and Melville jumped ship with Richard Tobias Greene, whom he immortalized as Toby in

Typee. This fictional work is based on his time spent among the supposedly cannibalistic but hospitable tribe of Typee, in the Marquesas Islands in the South Pacific. The book praises the islanders and their natural, harmonious life, and criticizes the Christian missionaries that Melville finds less genuinely civilized than the people they come to convert. For him, the "Other" stands as a moral measure for the self, and of course, he was criticized by some contemporary reviewers, as Horace Greely in his article in the *New-York Weekly Tribute* (1847), who considered Melville's "freedom of view" as irreverence. "Not that you can put your finger on a passage positively offensive; but the *tone* is bad" (Quoted in Leyda Jay, 1951: 248).

After four weeks with the Typees, he was taken on by the Australian whaler *Lucy Ann*. There, he joined a non-violent mutiny that landed him in prison in Tahiti, an experience that inspired his second book, *Omoo,* whose title "is borrowed from the dialect of the Marquesas Islands [...] signifies a rover, a person wandering from one island to another" (Melville, 1982:326). In this fictional work, Melville redoubled his criticism of missionary civilization which instead of enlightening the "savage" people revealed their self-alienation in the worship of the Bible just as a "fetish" and in the name of which they established their tyranny on the islanders. John Bryant notes that Melville began *Typee* "with no set political agenda but gradually developed one as he wrote the novel; in *Omoo* the agenda becomes overt when Melville expresses his criticism and the tragic destruction of Polynesian culture under both the colonialist's rapacity and missionary's repression" (John Bryant, 1996: xxii). His eighteen-month trip in 1841 on a whaling ship bound for the South Seas provided much for the factual detail found in *Moby-Dick*. In this novel, as we shall argue later, the "Other" and the Self are not in a dialectic of struggle but that of love. The dialectic of love between self and other finds full expression in the image

of Quequeg and Ishmael, finding themselves together in bed just as two strange bed fellows.

Melville's immediate problem during his writing career was how to make an adequate living as a writer without selling out himself and his ideals. Indeed, he had to worry about money for the support of his family, and Melville knew that his dark vision prevented him from selling his books. He complained in a letter to Nathaniel Hawthorn in 1851:

> Dollars damn me; and the malicious Devil is forever grinning in upon me, holding the door ajar […] What I feel most moved to write, that is banned-it will not pay. Yet, altogether, write the other way I cannot. So the product is a final hash, and all my books are botches.
>
> (Melville, 1886: viii)

The above quote shows Melville complaining about what Carlyle calls the cash-nexus. This cash-nexus is the cause of alienation of self-othering. Money, the Dollar, is the fetish that people worship and in the process of which transforms the self, the human dimension, into the "Other". The Dollar, as the fetish, inhibits the satisfaction of human desires for higher ideals reducing them into membership of a commercial society with no individuals, that is, selves of their own.

The transformation of adventure narratives, as *Typee* (1846) or *Mardi* (1849), to philosophical quest marks the beginning of Melville's struggle with his audience. Artistically, *Mardi* is an important work in the author's intellectual maturity, as he states: "Had I not written & printed 'Mardi', in all likelihood, I would not be as wise as I am now, or may be" (Quoted in Robert Milder, 2005: 26). Unfortunately, Melville didn't succeed in making his contemporary audience and the nineteenth-century critic understand his speculative thinking on important issues as the notion of

race, the one kind of thinking that the twentieth and twenty first- centuries reader quite share with Melville.

What stands out from this summarized account of the life of Herman Melville is that the author considered himself as an outcast, a social other, doomed to ram the seas through real experiences as a seaman and author of tales of adventure on the sea. We have tried to illustrate that he was deeply marked by the loss of his father at an early age which resulted in social and economic demotion. He was also alienated from the commercial transformation of human relations by the new economic vision of man. In his quest for a self that he tried to find out by losing himself in his different voyages, paradoxically Melville encounters the "Other" that looked like the familiar "Other" at home. In the neutral ground of the Pacific Ocean, hysterical discussion of the self-other dialectic peculiar to America, in the first half of the nineteenth century, is carried out in a cool-headed manner. In short, we can say that Herman Melville's life is marked by different transformations that provide the impression of the instability of the self-other dialectic in his works.

B. Life of Joseph Conrad: the Self as the Other

Joseph Conrad biographies mostly, Frederick R. Karl's *Joseph Conrad: The Three* Lives (1979) and Ian Watt's *Conrad in the Nineteenth Century* (1980), and Zdzislaw Najder's *Joseph Conrad: A Chronicl*e (1983) are works that add immeasurably to the factual knowledge of Conrad's life. The three lives referred to in Karl's work presents Conrad as a Pole, entangled in Polish politics and history, Conrad as a sailor, and Conrad as a writer. Najder's biography emphasizes Conrad's displacement, his geographical, cultural, and linguistic otherness in removing himself from Poland and writing in another language. Cedric Watts describes him as a: "Polish nobleman and British citizen; master mariner and

dedicated author; moralist and sceptic; traditionalist and modernist; reserved and fervent; pessimistic and humane" (1994:1).

'The Polish nobleman', Joseph Conrad, was born on December 3, 1857 in Berdichev, a Ukrainian province of Poland that had long been under Tsarist rule. His parents were members of the land owning gentry of Szlachta class, a legally privileged noble class with origins in the Kingdom of Poland. Their members were owners of landed property, often in the form of "manor farms". The nobility negotiated substantial and increasing political and legal privileges for itself throughout its entire history until the decline of the Polish Commonwealth in the late 18th century. They were also devout Catholics who conspired against the Russian overlords. His parents were arrested, found guilty of subversive activities, and exiled to the remote province of Vologda, in Northern Russia. During the moment, the mother's health was undermined by the harsh conditions of exile and she died in 1865.Four years after their return to Poland, his father died. In fact, after the death of his wife Eva, Apollo became depressed and silent, dreamy and gloomy (biographers, like Najder, often find analogies between Apollo and some characters in Conrad's fiction as Almayer or Dr. Monygam).

After the death of his parents Conrad was taken under the protection of his Uncle Thaddeus Bobrowski, who was to be a continuing influence all along his life. It has to be observed here that Conrad's early class demotion, his being uprooted from his land, his placement in an exilic condition resembles a kind of metamorphosis, or othering process that later made him feel a certain sympathy for the "Other" in other geographic spaces placed under colonial regimes. Conrad, more than Melville, felt the need to go to sea.

At the age of sixteen, he astonished his guardian by expressing a desire to go to sea to embark on a sea career. He left Poland for Marseilles to become a seaman.

In 1878, Conrad made his first contact with the British Merchant service and would soon come to seek a complex identity and vocation in its tradition. As a young boy, he had shared the life of a nation, Poland, subjected to imperialism. Then, as a young man, he became a British citizen and shared the life of a nation at the height of her imperial power. This paradox led him to develop the kind of ambivalence towards the questioning of imperialism, which later would be enlarged with a traumatic visit to the Belgian Congo in 1890. His career as a sailor was to supply so much material about the othering process in his writing. He ended his sea career and took up a permanent residence on dry land in 1894. In the following two years, he married Jessie George and devoted himself to writing that expresses the complexity of his vision as regards the dialectic of the Self and the Other.

The fact that Conrad grew up within a cosmopolitan literary and linguistic atmosphere - his father was a translator of English and French texts (by Shakespeare and Victor Hugo), his native language was Polish, he had lived in a region where the peasants spoke Ukrainian and the overlords Russian - encouraged him to become 'a great reader'. His English was acquired partly from his reading of Shakespeare, Carlyle and others, and partly from sailors of the British Merchant Navy. Conrad claimed, "My teachers had been the sailors of the Norfolk shore; coast men, with steady eyes, mighty limbs, and gentle voice; men of very few words, which at least were never bare of meaning" (Watts, 1994:4).

English critics treated Conrad as an important established author but could never forget that Conrad was a Slav, and tended to treat him primarily as a curiosity. Conrad wrote in his letter to Garnett: "I've been cried up of late as a sort of freak, an amazing bloody foreigner writing in English" (Quoted in Ian Watt, 1973:40). So, Conrad was well aware that he was a foreigner, at least artistically and intellectually,

and that he had to interest the English in his unfamiliar temperament and preoccupations. Edward Garnett wrote in *The Nation* (1907) that, during the nineties, Conrad's books "not only threw a bridge between the Eurasian and native flotsam and jetsam in Eastern seas, but a bridge between the British and the continental spirit" (Ibid). In this sense, the study of the "Other" will reveal this lens between two authors from each side of the Atlantic 'bridge'.

Just like Melville's, Conrad's life is marked by restlessness caused by the feeling of exilic otherness. Indeed, what stands out from our discussion about Conrad's life is that the absence of a secure home and the familial and national tragedy make him feel as an outcast, a social "Other" doomed to go first to sea and later to settle in a foreign country that he chose to be his homeland. These elements, the personal bleak and the political 'données' that shaped the writer's life, may partly explain his quest of identity and the " choice of nightmare" expressed in his fiction.

C. Times in Herman Melville and Joseph Conrad

The times when Melville and Conrad produced their respective works was marked by the notion of the "Other". The literature of the nineteenth and early twentieth century was deeply influenced by political uprisings which changed the political climate of Britain: scientific advancement, economic progress, imperialism and wars. Besides, important cultural issues, such as woman's rights, increased industrialism and mechanization were equally influential and changed man's vision, man's behavior towards other man and other cultures. This section will outline these contexts and show how Melville's and Conrad's works are influenced by the same process of othering, and analyze the writers' response to these circumstances. The age, indeed, was marked by an accumulation that triggered a process of othering at both the level of culture and the psyche.

1. America in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century: Time of Otherness

The years of Melville's writing career were politically unstable, charged with debate about racial identity, economic and political rights. Nineteenth century America was a land of contradictions. The large and prosperous territory was both a 'Freedom-Loving' and 'Slave- Holding' society, a nation of expansive and primitive frontiers as well as cities of growing commerce and industrialization. It was a period of growing United States and military activity in the South Pacific. In *Moby-Dick*, for example, the Pacific is paralleled with the American West. As Charles Olson observed, Melville was "long-eyed enough to understand the Pacific as part of our geography, another West, prefigured in the Plains, antithetical" (Charles Olson, 1947:18). Many Americans were bound to cross the Continent, they were bound and determined to span the globe. So, a myth had to be created for the importance and glory of the New Nation; but, this myth has its own corrupting elements. Like the legend of the South, which was based on slavery, the one of the West was based on the displacement of the American Indians. The Westward flow of settlers led to the division of old territories and the drawing of new boundaries. Moreover, this Westward expansion brought settlers into conflict with the Indians. It was during Andrew Jackson's two terms presidency that the frontier expanded without limits by removing dozens of Indian tribes from their ancestral homelands. In other words, it brought out another type of encounter involving the self and "Other" dialectic. Just like black slavery, the Indian issue captivated public opinion. Melville did not deal with this dialectic of Self and Other through pamphlets as was the case with Henry David Thoreau, but through the imaginative transposition of the issue to the Pacific Islands expressed in the writing of such novels, as *Mardi*, *Omoo* and *Moby-Dick*.

What we can say is that the times in which Melville wrote were momentous. The above events that shaped the era were reflected in his fictional works, and reading them now, they may reveal more. Melville's career as a writer extended nearly a half century. It began well before the American Civil War (1861), with the publication of his fictional work *Typee* in 1846, based on his adventures in the Marquesan islands, and concluding with his unfinished manuscript *Billy Budd, Sailor* in 1891, which was published posthumously in 1924. Melville's writing overlaps the different historical changes of America. During this period, the United States endured the terrible Civil War which brought a radical change; in other words, it transformed the country from a society that was predominantly rural and agrarian into one that was industrial and increasingly urban.

a. Slavery as a Self-Other Dialectic

The issue of slavery and its abolition was carried out in some sort of a dialectic of self and "Other" at several levels, economic, social, political, cultural and religious. While some American thinkers, like Lord Garrison, Frederick Douglass, Henry David Thoreau, and to some extent Ralph Waldo Emerson supported the inseparability of the black slaves from the American self, others refused them out of the fold of humanity and othered them as brutes and animals. Slavery was a system structured out of political, economic, and social experiences of people who had emerged as expansionists and conquerors, dominating nations on a worldwide quest for wealth and power.

Probably, for most Americans of the period, the best-known literary statement on slavery and the Northerner's obligation to the fugitive slave was *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852) by Harriet Beecher Stowe. Melville, too, had not hesitated to speak out against slavery in *Mardi* and in favor of free Negroes' rights in *Redburn* and to delineate many Negroes

sympathetically in *Moby Dick*. Though not an abolitionist and consistently skeptical of reform movements, Melville's ambiguities, in his fiction, well express America's anxieties and contradictions.

b. Economic, Cultural, and Religious Approaches to Slavery

Slavery as an economic institution was first established as a slave trade. The slave trade was one of the most obvious ways linking the United States to the rest of the world in the era of the New American Republic. Africans were first introduced into the English colony at Jamestown in 1619. They were part of a "cargo" of people sold from a Dutch ship that had been trading along the Virginia coast. Later, the slaves, as unpaid labor, were a source of wealth since they could be put to productive works, augmenting the resources and wealth of their masters. Economically, slavery was considered as absolutely necessary to the South. For pro-slavery advocators, the Negro represented a huge investment in property, whose loss would mean financial ruin for one-third of a nation and probably for the nation itself.

Slavery supplied the labor force driving the cotton production that fuelled the British textile industry, the world's leading manufacturing industry. Such imports of slaves, then, were intended to aid expansion of the cotton industry, which had begun to prosper in the 1790s, just after the time when the abolition of slavery was first seriously canvassed. In the eighteenth-century, slavery was part of a much larger European trade captured and shipped across the Atlantic. These Atlantic cargoes represented an important segment of Arab traders as well as Europeans (Ian Tyrrell, 2007:65- 66).

Slavery, as an institution, developed gradually. In Virginia, over the critical years between 1660 and 1705, dozens of statutes and regulations were passed restricting some of the rights of blacks, establishing servitude for life, limiting their rights to bear arms and to hold certain property, and providing penalties for interracial marriage or fornication. By the

1650s, the New England colonies enacted laws prohibiting Indians and Negroes from serving in the militias. This was the earliest of a number of legal restrictions affecting blacks. These laws defined the Negro as a subordinate to differentiate him from the white Europeans and, of course, excluded him from the privileges and responsibilities enjoyed by Europeans. Henry Nash well expresses this process of transforming Africans into chattel slaves:

> In rapid succession Afro-American lost their rights to testify before a court; to engage in any kind of commercial activity, either as buyer or seller; to hold property; to participate in the political process; to congregate in public places with more than two or three of their fellows; to travel without permission; and to engage in legal marriage or parenthood. In some colonies legislatures even prohibited the right to education and religion, for they thought these might encourage the germ of freedom in slaves […] Gradually they reduced the slave, in the eyes of society and the law, from a human being to a piece of chattel property.
>
> (Nash, 1992: 159)

The major restrictions on negroes in all the colonies had been fully implemented by the first decades of the eighteenth century, and even though, there were far fewer slaves in New England than in the South, every colony passed laws defining the Negro as a subordinate and differentiating blacks from other residents.

The date frequently noted by historians to mark the first official recognition of permanent slave status in law is 1661. It was the period when the Virginia assembly passed an act making a servant who ran away with a Negro responsible for serving the time of the Negro slave. However, as Audrey Smedley states, “North American slavery was not the result of a single law or a single court decision, but of numerous individual acts, decisions, and practices that over time became codified into the legal framework of colonial society” (1999: 93). So, the imposition of permanent slavery on Negroes was the result of decisions which became laws. In 1723, the General Assembly of Virginia passed an act ostensibly designed to promote better government and social control. One of its most significant articles states that “no free negro, mulatto, or Indian whatsoever, shall have any vote at the election of burgesses, or any

other election whatsoever" (Ibid.242). These numerous acts led to the creation of the ideology of race.

Opposition to slavery was common in colonial days, but it was not until after the formation of the Republic and the enunciation of eighteenth-century doctrines of liberty and equality that a serious examination of the institution began. The anti-slavery movement began as a part of the whole great stirring of nineteenth-century humanitarianism. It was a reform motivated by the same drives that produced Jacksonian democracy, utopian communities, and other humanitarian and social experiments. Until the mid-forties, anti-slavery was simply one of many reform enthusiasms, one done by the reformers. William Lloyd Garrison and some friends founded the New England Anti-slavery Society in Boston in 1832. Within the next year, similar groups appeared in New York City, Philadelphia, and Ohio. In 1833 representatives of these societies met in Philadelphia to organize the national group called: The American Anti-Slavery Society.

In the opinion of many Americans, chattel slavery was a clear violation of and a direct threat to the traditional concept of American democracy. The slavery question became eventually a question of whether the nation would continue to exist, and if so, of whether it would exist as a democratic nation. Anti-slavery sympathizers, whatever their reasons, agreed generally that slavery was wrong and was considered as unchristian, a clear violation of Scriptures; thus, it must be abolished. However, they found great difficulties in agreeing on how and when to abolish it. This movement intended to appeal to the nation by fact and argument to change public opinion, and thus to build a great body of Northern and Southern anti-slavery sentiment that would eventually (by legal and political means) abolish slavery.

However, the slavery system was politically accessible, subject to state and federal law, and the complexity of the question made compromise or agreement among anti-slavery, abolitionist, and pro-slavery adherents difficult. The arguments, on both sides, concerning the

slavery question, were extremely complex. Neither pro-slavery nor anti-slavery groups were always able to agree with each other. The pro-slavery argument was both defensive and offensive in nature. First, they discredited both the tradition and the document of the Declaration of Independence. The Declaration of Independence, said John C. Calhoun, represented an admirable theory but no guide for practical life. Of Jefferson's phrase, "all men are created equal", he remarked, "Taking the proposition literally, there is not a word of truth in it", a view to which many other Southern leaders agreed. "The universal law of nature is force", Thomas Cooper wrote. "By this law the lower animals are subdued to man, and the same law governs the relations between men" (Quoted in R.B. Nye and J.E. Morpurgo, 1955:414). Slavery, from a Southern point of view, had deep roots in natural law. Moreover, the exponents of slavery declared that men were actually born neither free nor equal. Liberty is not an inheritance granted to every man, but only to those who are equipped to deserve it. In other words, natural rights and liberty do not exist naturally. Men possess only such rights as society grants them; that which society gives it can also take away. As Calhoun summarized the argument, men are born into a political and social state, subject to its laws and institutions. He considers that a Negro, being socially, mentally, and anthropologically inferior to the white man, has no natural rights, deserves none, and could not make responsible use of them if he had them.

A Cultural Approach to Slavery

Black slavery in America was not only an important economic institution that was profitable for the traders, for those whose wealth was acquired from the labor of slaves, and the land owners, but also a social institution, a mechanism integral to the structuring of the colonies' social system. It evolved simultaneously as a relationship of dominance and power. Europeans (in the colonies) of all social and economic classes and ethnic identities learned that they had the right to acquire slaves for their plantation. Thus, even if the economic

efficiency of slavery declined or was subjected to question at times, the structural relationships and functions persisted and strengthened in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In other words, the social-cultural factor is as important as the economic factor. It was the former that generated the greatest resistance to ending slavery since the social dimension became a way of life, or something natural. So, as Smedley well explains:

> The process of advancing slowly along the road to a full scale slave society, English colonists gradually transferred an institution (indentured servitude) into a form of permanent slavery for people of African origin. While doing so they initiated the development of a unique and subtle ideology about human differences, not the least of which was the homogenization of all Europeans into a "white" identity, and of all those with African ancestry into an identity as "Negroes" and slaves.
>
> (Smedley, 1999: 110)

So, the origin of separateness and difference was a product of popular beliefs about human differences that evolved from the sixteenth through the nineteenth centuries. By popular beliefs, we refer to the ideologies, and selective perceptions that constitute a society's popular imagery and interpretations of the world. People comprehend the world through concepts that their culture proffer to them, and this formed the substratum out of which were formed the social categories that came to be designated as "race" in North America. For the next two centuries, Americans continued to imbue these categories with social meanings and acts as if these meanings were factual in order to maintain the inequalities and power differentials that colonists had established.

American history has proved that there is a connection between race and racism with slavery, which started with the first encounter of the two people, Africans and Europeans. In almost all of the English colonies, discrimination against the Negro preceded the evolution of a slave status, and by that fact helped to shape the form that the institution of slavery would assume the discrimination, which had occurred from the first contact with African on American soil. And in so doing, the discrimination was perpetuated, and then was legally

recognized. Likewise, that discrimination against the Negro occurred before the slave status was fully defined and before slave labor became pivotal to the whole economic system.

The racial attitude and behavior of English towards Africans was justified by some scholars by suggesting that the very blackness of the Negroes was, on first contact, sufficiently traumatic to ensure the bias toward them. Their skin color apparently shocked the lightest-skinned peoples of Europe, the English. In view of that, Winthrop Jordan saw as the basis hostility that the concept of blackness in the English language conveyed predominantly negative images. In this respect, he considers that the English language and culture helped to predispose its carriers towards prejudice against Africans. On the one hand, black meant filthy, evil, vile, sinister, ugly, fearful, and deadly. It was the color of mourning, "an emotionally partisan, the handmaid and symbol of baseness and evil, a sign of danger and repulsion" (Smedley, 1999: 95). White, on the other hand, was the color of beauty, virtue, purity, goodness, and perfection. These contrasting elements in the meaning of these color terms insinuated their way into the English thought, which may have become the budding molders of the English attitude towards the Africans to result in othering them through negative evaluation.

To sum up, the race system that evolved at that time in the United States was based on the dichotomous race categories of black and white with no legal and social recognition of a racial category in between black and white, which was an absolute social necessity to keep the white race pure. The distinction of racial identity was reflected in tangible and easily recognized biophysical characteristics. Indeed, the existence of physical differences among the black and white people was accepted as concrete evidence of race distinction. In this racial system, there should be no doubt that the Africans' physical differences facilitate their reduction to servitude. The physical distinctiveness of dark-skinned Africans was one of the bases to the structure to the demarcation point to justify their bondage. Dark skin color would

soon become a symbol of savagery and heathenism, and all the negative characteristics that these terms connoted in the English worldview. The image that evolved from the English collective consciousness was that the Africans were different in a way that transcends all other modes of ethnic differentiation. These ideas and concepts that emanate from cultural conditioning are imposed on sciences to enclose them as realities.

It is quite evident that the colonists felt the need to concretize their practices and the customs developing around them in the law by passing dozens of statutes and regulations that hemmed the Africans with restrictions. Englishmen, in different colonies, actively passed numerous laws separating out Africans for special treatment and institutionalizing permanent hereditary slavery for them, and their descendants. Although these acts contradicted prevailing English laws relative to servants and their treatment, it is obvious that the Virginia planters expected no reaction from the English government. For them, the Africans were different; they were heathens and they were already slaves, it was argued; and to some they were a "brutish people" whom English laws needed to protect. Thus, it became easier to think of these people solely as slaves and property that could be purchased as goods.

After the Civil War, the South was not ready for the abolition of slavery. The South was even permitted to work out its brutal accommodation with the former victims of slavery by the institution of Jim Crow laws. These laws were enacted between 1876 and 1965 in the United States. Some examples of these laws are the segregation of public schools, public places and public transportation, and the segregation of restrooms, restaurants and drinking fountains for whites and blacks. The United States is still struggling to overcome this racial inequality.

A Religious Approach to Slavery

The American settlers' arguments for embarking on the enslavement of Africans rested on the same issues of religion and 'savagery' that they had already applied to the Indians. So, the colonists persuaded themselves, and others, that the Africans deserved the status of slavery because they lived in sin and savagery in Africa. Many colonists of the seventeenth century believed, or vindicated their actions with the belief that enslavement was a major step towards saving the souls of the Africans. The justification for the reduction to slavery of the black people was not only a fact of physical differences. It is important to emphasize that complexion alone was not put forth as a primary justification for slavery.

The pro-slavery preachers scrutinized the Bible for arguments to justify slavery. As Jesus and the apostles exhorted slaves to obedience and fidelity to their masters; the sons of Ham were cursed to eternal servitude by divine decree. Having once established slavery on religious and political grounds, its supporters proceeded to prove that its continued existence was both necessary and desirable. Slavery was best for the Negro, since he needed the care and guidance that only some system of servitude could provide. "Providence has placed him in our hands for his good", wrote Governor Hammond of North Carolina, "and has paid us from his labor for our guardianship" (Quoted in Nye, 1955:415).

Early nineteenth century reflection on how to incorporate the black "Other" into the American self or to reject it as an indissoluble other was too important to escape the attention of a Melville who, it has to be mentioned, lived close to Frederick Douglass (1818- 1895). As we shall argue later, Melville was not militantly outspokenly involved in the slavery issue as a self-other dialectic. On the contrary, he transposed that dialectic to the level of imaginative writing endowed deeply by analogical thinking drawing parallels between what was happening in America to the pacific Islands. By adopting this analogical procedure to the self-

other encounter as dialectic, it can be argued that it turned out to be more pedagogically effective.

c. The Empire of the Common man

From the earliest settlement, the Americans have never ceased conquering and opening new lands until Jackson Turner announced the closing of the frontier in 1892. The late nineteenth-century America is characterized by a vigorous expansionism. The latter is fuelled by the "frontier" movement and the "Manifest Destiny". The notion of Frontier is the process of the settlement and the conquest of the American Continent by the first Pioneers, who brought with them the notion of optimism and individualism. Manifest Destiny is the belief in the superiority of the Anglo-Saxon race and their mission to civilize the world. Reverend Josiah Strong, a protestant clergyman, and the author *Our Country* (1885) believes that the Anglo-Saxon race, especially as it has developed in America, is the bearer of liberty and Christianity to the rest of the world. He argues, in his book, that the Anglo-Saxon race is chosen by God to civilize the world, and the United States has the essential responsibility in this mission advocating many of the theories justifying U.S. imperialism in the 19th century America. He states that the Anglo-American race would spread itself over the earth, would move down upon Mexico, down and upon Central and South America, out upon Islands of the sea, over upon Africa and beyond. Strong asserts that American imperial expansion is not only inevitable, but is a positive duty as well.

From the beginning, then, the idea of America as an empire was well established. Thomas Jefferson praised America as an "empire for liberty" while Andrew Jackson used the phrase "extending the area of freedom" to justify the annexation of Texas. During the opening decades of the nineteenth century, Central

and South America turned to revolution. By 1822 Central and Latin America had won the independence from the mother country. The same year, President James Monroe, under powerful public pressure, received authority to recognize the new countries of Latin America, and soon exchanged ministers with them. When the Holly Alliance, an association of some European countries, which were against revolution to protect monarchies, announced its intention of restoring its former colonies to Spain; President Monroe refused the extension of European domination in the Americas. This message would become known as the Monroe Doctrine. From upward, the continent opens its frontiers to new settlers. The line of settlement – 'the frontier' – moved westward. This could be well expressed in Horace Creely's celebrated advice "Go west, young man, and grow up with the country" (Quoted in Nye, 1955:349).

The Napoleonic wars had also conditioned, in a way, the American territorial expansion. France had gained Louisiana in 1800-01, after losing it in the settlement of the Seven Years War in 1763.The French Emperor found himself master of the western Mississippi Valley, yet needed money for his military campaigns in Europe and the Middle East "Napoleon was determined not to have the territory fall into the control of his mortal (British) enemy and viewed the expansion of the American Republic as a move in a larger game" (Tyrell, 2007:15). Napoleon felt "he would so strengthen America that she would become in time a worthy rival of Great Britain" (Ibid). Thus, the European rivalries enabled the United States to acquire a vast territory.

The American dream of annexing Cuba and other Caribbean lands was part of a larger strategy to expand U.S slavery and make it dominate the nation's economic and political structure. Texas, which had been torn away from Mexico by American colonists and enriched by the slave plantation economy they imported from the Southern states, was annexed as a

slave state in 1845. Supporters of slavery had instigated war with Mexico, allowing the United States to annex the northern half of Mexico in 1848. The possibility of turning this vast area into slave states, thus ending the balance between slave and free states arranged by the Missouri Compromise of 1820, was confirmed by the so-called Compromise of 1850. This fateful series of acts established the principle that the Congress had no authority to prohibit slavery in any part of the territory seized from Mexico or in any state formed from that territory, gave full U.S. government legitimacy to slavery within the District of Columbia. A new land of opportunity now lay open for slavery.

With the end of the Mexican war in 1846, the United States gained a vast territory, and by 1850 the national territory stretched over forest, plain and mountain. New territories were admitted to the Union. We consider that Melville's *Moby-Dick* expresses these big spaces and the space used for the pursuit of the white whale is unlimited, from the Atlantic into the South Pacific Ocean.

Early 19th century American projects in the Marquesas Islands were heralded by their proponents as models for the eventual rise of the New Nation to imperial dominance: they put forward conflicting theories about how this should happen, and Melville judged these theories against what he found taking place on the ground. America, like Europe, entered into an aggressive phase of imperialism, justifying territorial conquest by an assumed Euro-American cultural primacy, America's/Europe's divine mission, and the need to "civilize" the savages. In this context, references to Eastern and African cultures, narratives of journeys to "exotic" lands, and philosophical meditations on racial Otherness in American literature become much more than simply symbolic.

The rise of the common man and the empire in the sense of domination of American politics was arguably the most important aspect of what was called the American Renaissance. The period between 1830's and 1840's was also called the age of 'Jacksonian'

democracy- a democracy of independent property owners. In Jackson's words, government existed for the benefit of 'the planter, the farmer, the mechanic, and the laborer' who form the great body of the people in the United States. His party's concern is the 'common-man', the small independent merchant, farmer, or artisan. As more and more farmers, workers gained the right to vote, widening the base of popular political activity, the Jacksonian idea of 'mass politics' took root. The belief in the adequacy of the common man to perform all political duties had its corollary in a belief in every man's right to equality of economic opportunity. The party slogan "Equal rights for all, special privileges for none" (Nye, 1955: 370), had economic as well as political connotations. The Jacksonian's view of economic life exactly fitted the need of an expanding nation.

The policy was based on an agrarian economy, a dynamic agrarianism, an era of expanding land values, and rich speculative opportunities. An important aspect of Jacksonian political philosophy was the belief in *laisser-faire* doctrine and the desire to give economic opportunity for all. Jackson believed in the common man's ability to cope with almost any problem, a belief shared alike by Western frontiersman. The period of the 1830's gloried proudly the civilization strength, freedom, and aliveness.

The democratic drive of the Jacksonian era generated tremendous activity in American intellectual life. Particularly in New England, the new spirit flowered in literature, which for the first time felt itself free of bondage to Europe. Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote in 1837: "Our day of independence, our long apprenticeship to the learning of other lands, draws to a close" (Ibid. 392). Emerson was the guiding spirit of the transcendental movement. Transcendentalism, a philosophic-religious system current in New England from 1830 to 1860, staked out the route of the new trend. The Jacksonian Democrat believed as Emerson in the worth of the individual, in self-reliance, in the integrity of one's own mind. Emersonian thought, in fact, transcendentalism in general, rested on the single belief that every man had

within him a spark of divinity. “In all my lectures”, Emerson wrote, “I have taught one doctrine, namely, the infinitude of the private man” (Ibid. 394). In effect, Emersonian transcendentalism was a mystical affirmation of the prevailing American belief in freedom and equality, a re-emphasis of frontier individualism, a nineteenth-century modification of the old Puritan doctrine of election and an assertion of the divine election of every man. Transcendentalism really meant, as one of its followers phrased it, “that men are free, and claim the right to think for themselves in religious as well as in political matters” (Ibid.396). It emphasized the worth of the individual and the principle of self-reliance; it admired the man of action and original thought, not the man bound by tradition or formal creed; it believed in the values of instinctive and individual judgment, rather than in those of authority and convention. To say it in Emersonian terms, “God is in every man” (Ibid), which in the final test was not far removed from that Jackson meant.

Henry David Thoreau, another American author, practiced the doctrines of self-reliance and self-sufficiency that Emerson preached. Thoreau’s emphasis on individualism brought him into open conflict with organized society, which he found sadly lacking in moral and spiritual values. Hence, his doctrine of the absolute freedom of the individual, as explained in *Civil Disobedience* (1849), led him to reject the authority of government. Thus, he refused to pay a tax to support a State engaged in what he regarded as immoral actions - in particular, the Mexican War and the continuance of slavery. If Emerson stresses the nobility of the individual, the innate authority of the average man, Thoreau emphasizes the duties and capabilities of that man in society.

On the popular level, the comprehension of the notion was accomplished by different kinds of movements, as ‘come-outism’. The latter was the name applied to those dissident unorthodox sects that dotted America during the pre-Civil War period. It meant, roughly, establishing one’s religious independence by ‘coming out’ of the orthodox churches, and

stressing individualism, self-expression and egalitarianism in religion. During 1820 and 1850, the religious communities established in the United States were bent on making religion a personal, individual matter, bringing it into the daily social and economic life of the average man. The most important influence on the religious thought of the period was the 'perfectionist' movement of the thirties and forties. Perfectionism stressed individual ability, egalitarianism, and self-reliance. In 1825, these ideas reached the Eastern churches and New York, under the leadership of a young Presbyterian named Charles Grandison Finney. Finney's ideas reinforced the numerous humanitarian-reform movements of the time. Many of Finney's followers were attracted to the abolitionist movement, which was gaining ground in the thirties. The abolitionist movement in its early phases had a strong religious cast that was a direct result of perfectionist influences.

The notion as a whole once again is looked through the position of the self-other dialectic. The American self is defined in the opposition between the American common man and the aristocratic nature of man in Europe. Whereas the former achieves greatness and heroism through his own agency the latter has greatness bestowed on him. Politics was no longer the reserve of the aristocrats. The common man needed a literature to celebrate his assertion as having an important role in the new nation. Melville, as an author, is able to translate these beliefs into fictional works where the literary 'imaginary' expresses *his* philosophical comprehension of transcendentalism in relation to self and the other.

d. Women's Rights Agitation

As we have seen above the decade witnessed contradictory trends. As far as the women question is concerned, it was apparent to any onlooker that women in America as in Europe had few legal, political, and social rights as the Negro slave - as the abolitionists continually pointed out. The rise of Jacksonian Democracy resulted in the extension of voting; so, it was quite evident that it was in the United States that the demand for women's suffrage had started

its agitation, and an alliance was developed between women reformers and the state. The famous Seneca Falls Woman's Rights Convention of 1848 was the site of the first women's rights convention in history held in New York. It drew its foundation on the Declaration of Independence. The Convention discussed the social, civil and religious condition and rights of woman. Thus, attention was focused on the extension of women's educational, property and legal rights.

Besides, the first half of the nineteenth century witnessed a flow of American travel overseas that would be accelerated by the end of the Civil War. The travelers comprised women, not only as family members but also on their own. Margaret Fuller or Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) had shown that American women could travel alone around the world. In their travels the WCTU missionaries acted as travelers, exhibiting an American thirst for knowledge of the wider world and conveyed that knowledge to Americans.

One important component of these travels was the role of women in exporting and importing knowledge. In fact, missionaries and women's reports that had been sent home were published in magazines. These, of course, roused the appetite for the exotic. Tyrrell notes that, "these women detected underlying patterns of gender subordination and they qualified racial oppression with awareness of a common humanity" (Tyrrell, 2007:101). One of these works, *Our Journey around the World* (1895), written by the Clarks shows this female/male distinction in the way the things and events are reported. Harriet Clark's impressions for example, differed markedly from her husband's, Francis. Harriet stated, "the man may, perhaps, have a clear vision and a wider outlook; but the woman, with more leisure, and with more opportunities in some directions because she *is* a woman, will notice little things which has escaped the larger vision' and yet were 'none the less interesting'". She even avowed that, a "woman who for the sake of taking a journey around the world has given up

her own home could not help but feel sympathy with home life in other lands" (Ibid. 101-2). This perspective made women more empathetic towards the oppressed of their own gender, even though it did require hints of superiority as well. The Clarks' divergent outlooks were seen most clearly in the depiction of Hindu child brides. For Harriet, "my heart cries aloud for help to rescue the benighted women and innocent children of India." Her husband, on the other hand, seemed less troubled- and described the weddings as "most gorgeous affairs" and he considered that it was "pleasant to believe" that in India "as everywhere else in this old world", there was "much conjugal felicity". He failed to comment on the gendered effects of child marriages. Rather, "matchmaking" to achieve the old custom of arranged marriages was "an open, honorable, and avowed occupation" (Ibid). The Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) and the women's reports, both as travel writings or as world missionaries' reports, revealed that the view of the West as superior was somehow flawed.

The contribution of women writers such as Susanna Rowson, Maria Susanna Cummins, and Harriet Prescott Spofford contradicts the idea of Orientalism as a male domain. These women continually critique the patriarchal impulses of imperialism and explore the consequences of racial blurring, even though the general position of the West was proclaimed by the dominant imperial force of the discourses of Orientalism. Many U.S. Orientalist works also break down the traditional gendered dichotomies of mind and body that Edward Said invokes. In these Orientalists writings, for instance, the muscular, athletic, imperial body of the nation depends on an evocation of India as a dematerialized and disembodied spirit or soul; the investment in materiality and body is US American, while the association with spirit is Oriental. Johar Malini Schueller, in *U.S. Orientalisms* (1998), notes that the autonomy and wholeness of the imperial body is highly fragile, dependent on the raced/gendered Other that it presumes to control. Many U.S. Orientalist texts challenge heterosexist presumptions because the Oriental encounter opens up possibilities of homoerotic gendering that cannot be

freely articulated at home. (Schueller, 1998: 6) Many women writers used the Orient as site for questioning and undermining the socially acceptable ideologies of womanhood in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. For example, in *El Fureidis*, Maria Susanna Cummins's hero, Meredith, loses his sense of masculinity and wholeness when confronted with an image of two amorous women.

The question of female participation in contemporary religious revivals brought the issue up in another connection; could not women testify and be saved too, thus finding equal status with men in salvation? Strong minded women like Catherine Beecher, Emma Willard, Lydia Maria Child, and Margaret Fuller, began to agitate in earnest for the recognition of women's legal and personal rights. Amelia Bloomer campaigned for dress reform and immortalized her name in an unlovely article of feminine apparel; Abby Kelley, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and the Grimkè sisters went into the abolitionist movement. Their first victory came in 1848 with the passage of New York's Married Women's Property Law. Their real accomplishments, and after the Civil War, resulted in the nineteenth Amendment, which became part of the Constitution in 1920. Nevertheless, Mary Wollstonecraft was criticized and rejected by the American evangelical religion. New England clergyman, Timothy Dwight preached the conservative strategy rather than equal rights as a favorable approach to the woman's question. Dwight denounced Wollstonecraft as 'a strumpet' for her impertinent, immoral and political dangerous doctrines of female equality. Evangelicals across North America established colleges called ladies seminaries to ensure that, if women should receive education, it should be geared towards piety, purity and cultivation of genteel arts and literature, not political participation as full citizens. (Quoted in Tyrrell, 2007: 13)

Both the frontier necessity and the eighteenth-century emphasis on the rights of individuals were contributing factors for equal treatment of women and for women's rights in America. Woman's rights agitation, originally associated with Mary Wollstonecraft, spread

back to Britain. This gave birth to some international organizations such as The International Council of Women (founded by May Wright Sewell in 1888), and the International Woman's Suffrage Association (1902).These institutions gave American women platforms to promote international solidarity on suffrage, opposition to war, and equal rights. Some women formed the 'Woman's Peace Party' in 1915 and travelled to Europe to aid the peace negotiations.

In conclusion, we can say that the American Renaissance, the period in which Melville published his major novels, was marked by a self-Other dialectic at several levels. At the dialectic level, we have the White self/ Indian and the Negro Other. This dialectic itself steeped in arguments borrowed from religious, economic and political ideology of othering. At the political level, we have the rise of the common man to empire in American politics giving birth to another social stratification different from the old aristocratic class. The American identity is described in opposition to other countries of Europe and to those who lost power in America. The rise of the common man to power necessitated a literature celebrating the heroism of this peculiarly American class. It is all these processing of othering that are debated by Melville in his books.

Not surprisingly then, Melville's novels are steeped in the issue of the self-other dialectic. *Typee* (1846) and *Omoo* (1847) show the notion of othering where the West attempts to discipline native ways of life by bringing them under the tutelage of "civilization". *Moby-Dick,* a quest narrative exposing many of the myths that fuelled America's imperial ambition, questions the validity of the Christian beliefs and ethical values that are often used to justify imperialism. The broader context of slavery of this novel will help us to explore Africanism and explain why English colonizers, long imbued with notions of liberty, created a system of black slavery where the Negro is treated as the Other. *White Jacket* (1850), too, turns mainly on the betrayal of the democratic ideal, and this issue is treated again in more pertinent

way. In Melville's last novella, *Billy Budd* (1924), the writer is asking if there is any place left for the Rights-of-Man (the name of the ship from which Billy was impressed). How pertinent and global is Melville's question.

His investigation and depiction of the human condition in all its different facets is again revealed in the story *"Bartleby, the Scrivener"*, *"Benito Cerano"*, and the tales collected in *"The Encantadas"*. Melville's disillusionment is well expressed in his long narrative *The Confidence-Man: His Masquerade* (1857). It expresses the cynicism about all human motives and reveals an exquisitely shrewd social, political, and moral grasp of the myriad that nineteenth-century American idealism could be employed for purpose of deceit, manipulation, and corruption. Melville had struggled with his times through his poetry that Robert Milder describes as "second act" where his engagements with his age remained in their way as insistent, complex, and passionate (Milder, 2005:7).

2. Class and Race in the Late Nineteenth-Century Britain

When Conrad came to England at the end of the nineteenth century, England had already known a process of democratization that changed completely the social fabric. The aristocratic class had virtually lost power to the Bourgeois class. It is true that England had not known the ascension of the common man to power as was the case in the America of Melville, but there are political attempts to enroll in the conquest of other territories. Benjamin Disraeli is the Prime Minister in Britain who attempted to make a small case of the traditional division between the aristocratic class and the class of the common people by celebrating the heroic spirit in both for the common good. This was achieved through the establishment of racial hierarchies where the English common people were ranked higher than the other people belonging to different races. It is these common people or the demoted

aristocratic class that portrayed the novels of colonialism, addressed to the young people at that time.

Disraeli was a supporter of the expansion and preservation of the British Empire in the Middle East and Central Asia. Disraeli's imperialism orientated the Conservative party for many years to come in a tradition to gain a bigger electoral asset in winning working-class support to gain wider support for the Conservative party during the last quarter of the century. Disraeli's policy is regarded as a major statement of British nationalistic and imperialistic sentiment. This party, Disraeli asserts, has three great objects: to maintain the nation's institutions—its monarchy, House of Lords, and Church; to elevate the condition of the people; and to uphold the Empire. Assuming the superiority of the nation and its institutions, he advocates "a great policy of Imperial consolidation," in order to insure England's international power and reputation (Disraeli, 1999:118). Later, during Disraeli's second administration, the government both enacted important social reforms related to public health, housing, factory conditions, and trade unions and pursued an aggressive foreign policy, marked by the purchase of the Suez Canal. He introduced the Royal Titles Act (1876) which proclaimed Queen Victoria as "Empress of India", putting her at the same level as the Russian Tsar. He launched an invasion of Afghanistan and signed the Cyprus Convention with Turkey in order to contain Russia's influence.

In one of his speeches he states that his government practices policies in both domestic and foreign affairs that deserve public approval. He states:

> Whatever the struggle of parties, whatever the strife of factions, whatever the excitement and exaltation of the public mind, there has always been something in this country round which all classes and parties could rally, representing the majesty of the law, the administration of justice, and involving, at the same time, the security for every man's rights and the fountain of honour.
>
> (Disraeli, 1950: 223)

This speech shows the importance of the common man's rights in Britain. Disraeli considers that the working classes are in possession of personal privileges - of personal rights and liberties - which are not enjoyed by the aristocracies of other countries. They have obtained a great extension of political rights. "They possess every personal right of freedom, and, according to the conviction of the whole country, also an adequate concession of political rights […] they should wish to elevate and improve their condition" (Ibid). At the Crystal Palace, June 24, 1872 Disraeli asserted his imperialistic sentiment:

> If the first [object] is to maintain the institutions of the country, the second is, in my opinion, to uphold the Empire of England […] in my opinion no Minister in this country will do his duty who neglects any opportunity of reconstructing as much as possible our Colonial Empire, and of responding to those distant sympathies which may become the source of incalculable strength and happiness to this land […] the maintenance of the Empire, or the upholding of our institutions, is the elevation of the condition of the people.
>
> (Disraeli, 1999: 117)

For him then the elevation of the condition of the people rests on the material benefit provided by the British colonies. For him the question is whether the British "will be content to be a comfortable England, modelled and moulded upon Continental principles and meeting in due course an inevitable fate", or whether they "will be a great country,—an Imperial country—a country where your sons, when they rise, rise to paramount positions, and obtain not merely the esteem of their countrymen, but command the respect of the world" (Ibid). If the common man in Britain has gained more political rights it was not the case of the natives in the colonies who could not improve their personal, social, and political rights.

a. Ideological Othering for Economic Interests

The history of European involvement in the Malay Archipelago or in Africa is largely a history of trade. In the early sixteenth century, the Portuguese had established strategic bases in the Archipelago in their pursuit of the lucrative trade of

spices; in 1600 Queen Elisabeth I founded the East India Company; and in 1602 the Dutch formed the United East India Company. “Such companies enjoyed extraordinary powers: not only they were trading monopolies, but their charters also gave them the right to wage war or make contracts in the name of the Crown or States-General, respectively, to build forts and establish trading posts to keep soldiers and hire managers”(Allan H. Simmons, 2006:34).

Imperialism means the practice, the theory, and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan center ruling distant territories. In other words, it is the policy of extending a country’s empire and influence, and a belief in the value of colonies. So, colonialism is the implanting of settlements on distant territory. For Edward Said Imperialism means, “[…] setting on, controlling a land that you do not possess, that is distant, that is lived on, and owned by others […] and often involves untold misery for others” (1993:50). Said cited Michael Doyle’s definition:

> Empire is a relationship, formal or informal, in which one state controls the effective political sovereignty of another political society. It can be achieved by force, by political collaboration, by economic, social, or cultural dependence. Imperialism is simply the process or policy of establishing or maintaining an empire.
>
> (Ibid. 8)

This process is supported, in the nineteenth century, by impressive ideological formation that includes notions that certain territories and people require and beseech domination. This can be called an ideological othering for economic interests. The problem with ideological othering is that it is sustained by the idea of civilization. In writings about civilization issues, commerce appears as a peaceful means of establishing contact between areas of culture and civilization. It is based on the idea of equality between the partners who are involved in the exchange. Beyond the

commercial aspect, the exchange establishes cultural contacts, and thus helps to enrich people culturally.

Commerce used as an imperializing means is deeply ambiguous. On the one hand, it means the exchange of goods. On the other hand, commerce also implies the idea of corruption. It implies rape and violence on the “Other” through the goods you exchange. To have commerce means also to have illicit sexual relationship with women. Both views are developed by theorists of gulf exchange like Jean Baudrillard. This violence/commerce relationship is captured by both Melville and Conrad in their works.

The idea of civilizing Africa through commerce, Christianity and culture shamed all the obverse side of the enterprise. The commerce in the sense of exchange of goods for connecting cultures and peoples turned out to be an enterprise of prostitution, of sexual penetration negotiated among European countries. In other words, the imperial powers prostituted the initial idea of civilization, and turning themselves in the very “Other” that they wanted to spiritualize and civilize.

Commerce, instead of putting an end to the dialectic of self-other through the establishment of cultural connections, generates a need for the process of othering to better exploit the natives. The spiritual aspect of commerce was overturned by the material one engendering the worship of cash. This is the reversal aspect that Conrad deals with in his novels of colonialism. The quest for spiritual and cultural commerce, animated by the impulse to establish the self, turned into extreme that is the “Other”. Conrad and Melville show the same view about the tribulations of ideals and ideas for the sake of materialism.

The quest for money can, partly, be explained by the fact that in the mid – nineteenth century Europe witnessed growth and vitality. One important element worth citing was the notion of imperialism in Europe between 1880 and 1914. Conrad's period of employment in the British Merchant Service corresponded with the heyday of Empire. In fact, much of his time was spent in Southeast Asia, witnessing the role of the conquering European nations in the non-European world. This "new imperialism" a complex response to the industrialized countries growing needs, raw materials, markets, and investment opportunities, was praised and worldwide . It was pursued by new comers as Germany, Belgium, Italy, the United States, and Japan, while Britain and France redoubled their efforts to acquire colonial territories. Indeed, Britain had committed herself to stopping further French and German expansion in Africa, even at the risk of war. "At this state, European governments were ready to spend regiments, and tens thousands of re-enforcements to maintain their colonies for the sake of national greed" (Said, 1993:160). During this period (1897), then, access to and control of the colonies became a European rivalry. The British government adopted an intensive imperialist program when the leadership of the Liberal Party passed from Gladstone to Roseberry in 1894 and when the conservative ministry of Lord Salisbury took office in 1895 with Joseph Chamberlain, as a colonial secretary. At that time, a number of collisions among the great powers over the division of Africa occurred. The Berlin Conference of 1885 had recognized the existence of the 'Congo Free State' as the personal possession of king Leopold II of Belgium.

It was in this atmosphere of intensifying international conflict over Africa that Conrad wrote *Heart of Darkness*. His Polish background made him particularly responsive to contemporary historical events and trends such, for example, the new

imperialism which emerged and gained strength during the 1850s'. Some writers expressed the new enthusiasm for empire; the most famous was Rudyard Kipling who was considered as the established poet laureate of empire, and the chief propagandist for the values which the imperial mission required – group duty, military discipline, and technological efficiencies. One important feature that sets Conrad's colonial fictions apart from his contemporaries is that they repeatedly slide the imperial adventure of its claims to anything more than crude commercialism.

In the modern European sense, 'imperialism' describes both a historical process and an abstract concept or category of understanding. It synthesizes various histories and practices that developed over several hundred years, and resulted in Europe's domination by "the penetration and spread of the capitalist system into non-capitalist or primitive capitalist areas of the world" (Collits, 2005:73). If the 'new imperialism' of the late nineteenth century coincides with intellectual developments that consolidate the human sciences, it is important to determine the impact on Conrad of both the politics of imperialism and the formation of new kinds of knowledge. The seeds of Conrad's concern with imperialistic material interests as a fictional subject are introduced in *Almayer's Folly*, where trade becomes a means to pass ironic comment on Dutch colonialism. The same ironical discourse is seen both in *Heart of Darkness* and *Lord Jim*. Conrad's fiction also demonstrates how the relationship between trade and power extends to the modification of persons, like for example Kurtz's obsession with ivory.

When we place the belief of Kurtz in his racial superiority within the context of evolutionary theory, Conrad's ironic comment upon colonialism in *Heart of Darkness* becomes clear. Conrad began writing his first novel in 1889, less than twenty years after the publication of Charles Darwin's *Theory of Natural Selection* (1870) and *The Descent of Man*

(1871). In other words, the century was influenced by biological sciences. Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*, by means of natural selection, or *The Presentation of Favored Races in the Struggle for Life* (1859) means that the species of plants and animals were the accidental products of natural selection and not of a special creation by God as the book of Genesis had it. Herbert Spencer, English philosopher, who had already introduced the word 'evolution' into the general currency in 1854, warmly welcomed *The Origin of Species* because it helped to fill out his own grand system of the progressive development of every part of the universe. For him the 'survival is for the fittest'.

The same mode of evolutionary argument also supported the ideology of colonial expansion. By occupying territories all over the world, the European nations had demonstrated that they were the fittest to survive; and the exportation of their various economic, political and religious institutions was therefore a necessary step towards a higher form of human organization in the rest of the world. This upward line development was extended by another social Darwinist Benjamin Kidd in his *The Control of the Tropics* (1898) where he included the necessary domination or destruction of inferior peoples by white civilization. The wide acceptance of such racial doctrines gave popular support to the imperialist adventures in the late nineteenth century.

The representation of race in *Heart of Darkness* or in *Lord Jim* is characterized by familiar colonial tropes. For instance, the racial other is typically reduced to a "savage" that can be "exploited": Kurtz or Jim are lords in foreign lands whom the natives must obey. However, the contradiction between the liberal ideal and the oppressive reality, often narrated against a colonial background in Conrad's novels, may refer to the British-naturalized author's ambivalent attitude towards "Western" imperialism. Moreover, the ambivalence illuminates

the uniqueness of Conrad as a Pole, who suffers from “Eastern” imperialism. The Polish revolutionary Szlachta, who fought in various revolutions in Europe, were abandoned in their hour of need - like Conrad’s heroes, forgotten and betrayed by those for whom they work - and yet, they pursued their "Western" ideals in extreme isolation from the West, and also from their own reality. This denial of reality became an essential part of Polish national consciousness, referred to as “Idealism” or “Insurrection” in colonial Poland.

Conrad wrote in a letter, “we are a nation who considers ourselves greatly misunderstood, the possessors of a greatness which others do not recognize and will never recognize” (Jean-Aubry, 1927:148). In this quote, we can see that Conrad establishes a difference between British imperialism and the imperialism of other countries. In *Nostromo* (1904) a parallel expression is found in Decoud's characterization of Costaguana: “We are a wonderful people, but it has always been our fate to be [...] exploited!” (Conrad, 1994: 147) Thus Conrad’s conflicting attitudes toward European imperialism should be understood in the context of the colonial history of Poland, in which the relation between the East as the dominator and the West as the dominated is the opposite of their relation in other “Eastern” colonies in the Western empire. His reservation in addressing the oppressed East in the colonies of the European empire is the very symptom of his resistance to imperialism - to the Eastern (Russian) empire - which is accompanied by his covert admiration of the Western ideal-of Polish Romanticism-of which he cherished “the idea of Fidelity” (*PR*: 9). Conrad’s “ambivalence”, then, is rooted in his identity as the colonized Pole rather than as the British libertarian colonialist.

We consider that Joseph Conrad, particularly more than other British novelists, was affected by important historical events both in Europe and in the world. The events affecting France, Poland, and Russia during the nineteenth and early twentieth century would form the context for Conrad’s life and much of his fiction. Napoleonic France had deeply influenced

the time of Conrad's youth because of the effect it had on Poland's political situation. For John G. Peters: "Napoleonic France served primarily as a setting and political backdrop for Conrad's writing" (2006:20). However, Russia's rule of Poland had a more immediate impact on Conrad's life and work. Hence, several of his works consider the idea of revolutionary politics and the government they opposed. Thus, revolutionaries and Anarchists appear significantly in *The Secret Agent*, and in *Under Western Eye*.

b. Women's Issues

Conrad's representation of gender needs to be understood in its historical context. Among the many factors shaping representation of gender in late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century British culture were the development of the British Empire and the debate over the economic situation and political rights of women. Each of these factors not only formed part of the general cultural context of literature, but also found expression in a specific literary genre. Indeed, narratives of travel and exploration, and adventure stories, especially those intended for boys, expressed and developed the ideology of Empire. The novels and drama of the 1890s and 1900s also contributed to the debate concerning women's rights in the period, leading up to the changes in gender roles associated with the First World War and the eventual achievement of votes for women in the United kingdom in 1918 and 1928.

Conrad makes direct allusion to feminism in *Under Western Eyes*, in a satirical portrait of an exploitive male 'feminist', but comes closer to dealing with the idea of the 'New Woman' in *Chance*, which is a sympathetic account of the oppressed hero in Flora de Barral, and a grotesque and hostile caricature of 'feminist', Mrs. Fyne. However, it would be a mistake to take this caricature of the woman as demonstrating that Conrad was opposed to the women's movements of his time, since we acknowledged that he had given his support for women's voting rights.

The late nineteenth century, as numerous critics and historians have observed, brought a crisis in the discourses of masculinity, gender and sexuality in Britain. British political life mirrored the changing configurations and realignment of national identity. Its leaning to socialism was evident in the founding of the Fabian Society in 1884, whose members included Sidney and Beatrice Webb, George Bernard Shaw, and H.G. Wells. The need for an increasing unionized working class to be represented in the House of Commons led to the formation in Bradford in 1893 of the Independent Labor Party, founded by Keir Hardy, an Ayrshire coal miner. The membership of the trade union movement increased steadily: it doubled in the Edwardian years, from two million in 1901 to over four million in 1913. This movement was Coordinated through organizations such as Mrs. Fawcett's National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies in 1897 and the Pankhurst's' Women's social and Political Union in 1903. We can say that the campaign for women's votes politicized gender and raised issues, like the pursuit of a revised concept of British "citizenship".

Along with England's increased industrialism and mechanization, women's inequality was a prominent issue of the time. Concerns such as women's property rights, women in the work place, and women suffrage were fervently debated. During the nineteenth century, women gained various victories in their struggle for equality, but change was slow. The issue of women in the workplace was a crucial aspect of the woman question. Ideally, a woman was supposed to marry and become a devoted caregiver to her children and husband. She should work only if she could not marry and had no other alternative. Unmarried women whose families were not wealthy, however, found themselves in a precarious condition. For working-class women, employment options were limited to becoming servants or factory workers. For middle- class women, they could become governess, schoolteachers, or companions. Later in the late nineteenth century, middle-class women could sometimes do secretarial work or

perform certain factory jobs. At no point could they compete with men for clerk positions or other more prestigious and better-paid occupations.

Conrad brings into his fiction the question of a woman's place in society in different ways. In *Heart of Darkness* the woman is 'out of it', where he makes her inhabit a place in society away from the harsh realities of the man's world. However, she has also an important role in this patriarchal society since it was through his aunt that Marlow got his job. Similarly, in *The Secret Agent*, Winnie marries Verloc only for the security he represents for her and her brother, Stevie. However, Winnie serves a crucial role in Conrad's fictional work: the moral isolation of the modern man. Jewel in *Lord Jim* mediates Conrad's criticism in relation to the betrayal of the colonial enterprise toward the natives.

The outlining of the contexts in which Melville and Conrad write their novels may, at a certain extent, explain the analysis we have drawn between the two authors' literary works. In terms of history, both authors came to the literary scene at transitional periods of their "lands of adoption", America for Melville and Britain for Conrad. It follows that mid nineteenth century America and late nineteenth century Britain show remarkable similarities. Though America was a post-independent country, we see her involved in a kind of internal colonialism and imperializing thought over what to do with the Other at home. This debate over the ethnic other, the Indian and the black American, was an imperial debate involving the conquest of spaces and bodies. It is the same debate of slavery in the West Indies in the early nineteenth century, but the debate popped up again in the late nineteenth century with the scramble for Africa. The ideal of putting an end to slavery was prostituted for material reasons, just as the ideal of the freedom and happiness was prostituted in America. Both lands were involved in the "Scramble" for annexation of territories. America's expansionism can quite be paralleled with Europe's expansionism. This expansionist politicy was fuelled by racial doctrines.

The America of Melville celebrated the rise of the common man to power and empire over American politics accompanied by a thrust into the American West. Similarly, Britain knew the same ascension of the common man with the politics of the Prime Minister Disraeli. Both countries had experienced a shaking of the traditional certitudes. In America, Puritanism was in the wave and on the point of being displaced by transcendentalism. In Britain, it was Utilitarianism that was shaped by new scientific discoveries. In terms of philosophy, there occurred a split between the enlighten tenets of progress, economic definition of man, the perfection of mankind contested by theories that emphasized the "evil side" of man. These contexts of philosophical attitude explain, in part, the atmosphere and the pessimistic tone of Melville's and Conrad's works in their treatment of the big "ideas" of their times. The other part, as we have seen above, is their biographies. As regards their proper lives, we have noticed that Melville and Conrad have many things in common. For one thing, they both came from higher social ranks. However, the class demotion led them to have a double allegiance, the class to which their parents belonged and the class in which they found themselves because of circumstances.

The notion of the "Other" expresses the respective authors' contemporary backgrounds. Conrad alludes and shows in his fiction that the Europeans of that period, on the basis of progress and civilization, were proclaiming that they were called upon to rule not for their glory, but for the natives' happiness. Conrad's specific background allowed him to look at colonialism in quite a different way from his contemporaries. He grew up in an occupied country; he even suffered from Russian imperialism. This allowed him to see colonialism through the eyes of both the colonizer and the colonized.

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Chapter III: Cross-Cultural Influences in Melville and Conrad

Melville's and Conrad's veins of their art derived from different sources. The cultural diversity in their works reveals the universal feature in their novels. For Sterling Stuckey, the classic feature of Melville's art is its astonishing layered nature. One or more cultures may be concealed, contributing to the formation of symbols, characterization, and scenes on the printed pages. A certain fluidity of cultural thought and practice occurs when Melville relates one culture to another, enabling the reader to imagine the flow of influences, to layer one beneath, or above, the other (Stuckey, 2009: 3). For Gene Moor, Conrad is a figure of the crossroads, determined to portray and explore the conflicting loyalties and multiple identities of those who, like him, have been denied their cultural birthright (Moor, 2009: 97). *Heart of Darkness* is frequently invoked as a cultural token signifying the 'horror' at the heart of modern Western civilization, but more importantly about the dark side of Man.

Crossing conventional boundaries of literary scholarship which has already dealt with the possible influences that shaped Melville's and Conrad's work, a new approach can be explored, enabling us to consider cultural influences – such as the African music and dance in *Moby-Dick*. The latter is used by Melville as a metaphor to reveal both the African and African American cultural heritage.

A. Melville at the Crossroads of Cultures

1. Melville's Pacific experience

Arthur Stedman, Melville's contemporary, saw Melville's Pacific experience as the source of his writing. Recent critics like Robert Milder in *The Historical Guide to Herman Melville* notes that: "Polynesia gave Melville his initial subject and milieu, but his life at sea and in the Marquesas and the Society and Sandwich (Hawaiian) islands also imprinted itself on his mind and imagination in ways that would take him years to sift and an emotive power

that would mellow into myth as he aged" (2005:21). For Milder, what Melville witnessed and intuitively grasped in the newly colonized Pacific was the replacement of the pleasure principle (spontaneity, freedom, sensuality, immediate gratification) by the reality principle (discipline, toil, austerity, delayed gratification). Reviewing *Typee* for the *Salem Adviser* in 1846, Nathaniel Hawthorne praised Melville for "that freedom of view- it would be too harsh to call it laxity of principle- which renders him tolerant of codes of morals that may be little in accordance with our own" (Quoted in David B. Kesterson, 2000). According to D.H. Lawrence, Polynesia made Melville realize that while "we can't go back to the savages: not a stride, we can take a great curve in their direction, onward" (Lawrence, 1977: 26). As for example Ishmael's marriage to Queequeg which can be seen as an assimilation of Polynesian culture to the sophisticated Western consciousness. We consider that The Pacific has provided Melville a revisionary perspective on fundamental matters of race, class, sexuality, and culture.

Melville is not an arm-chair writer content to deliver speeches about the backwardness of other cultures in travel narrative. One can say that he is a defender of what today is called cultural relativism or cultural diversity. His experience with other cultures at first hand had shaped his his view about cultural difference. So, in *Typee* he states that just like anthropologists and travelers of his time, "he saw everything, but could comprehend nothing" (Melville, 1982:177) in the culture of the Pacific Islands.

Yet, he tells us that unlike the other travelers he wanted to show that he succeeded to understand how the culture of others works. In this attempt, he has become a cultural cross-over because in the same narrative, he lets us know that the people in the Pacific Islands are not just idolaters and fetish bowing themselves in front of "gravures and images". In Chinua Achebe's *Arrow of God*, the narrator tells us that African idols are in the command of their creators, and worshipers are not slaves of their representations they have made. He informs us

that when they fail to respond to their needs, they are carried to the forest, and left there to be eaten by termites. Melville informs us of the same human agency in the Islander's theology because they break the idols when they cease to respond.

2. Melville and English Literature

We consider that Melville's reading of Montaigne, Rabelais, Coleridge, and Seneca may, partially, explain the philosophical trend of his works. For Milder, Melville's readings shaped his "free yielding to that rush of interior development which served him for education" (2005:26). According to biographers, the transformation of *Mardi* to philosophical quest is due to these readings. The influence of William Shakespeare on the composition of *Moby Dick* is, also, well known. For Paul Giles, "Six months after beginning to write the novel [Moby Dick], Melville started to conceive its shape in the light of recent readings of Shakespeare and Thomas Carlyle" (Giles, 1998: 232). Melville undertook three expeditions to Britain during the first half of his life, each of which offered a different perspective on English culture. On one of his trips (in 1849) he acquired a huge number of English books and of course Shakespeare's works. In fact, Melville greatly admired Shakespeare and came to deepen his knowledge of the writer's artistic power through his intensive readings of his works.

Melville has been discussed within the context of his English heritage by many critics such as: Henry Pommer in his *Milton and Melville* (1950) and Camille R. La Bossière in his *The Victorians Fol Sage: Comparative Reading on Carlyle, Emerson, Melville and Conrad* (1989). The latter has analyzed his novels in relation to the English writer Thomas Carlyle. Paul Gilles considers that, "Melville's professional career was heavily involved with English literary models and professional paradigms"; and he adds that, "he [Melville] interacts with it in a perverse and parodic manner". He notes that:

> […] the multilayered dramatic interludes and Shakespearian Soliloquies, as well as the metaphysical speculations, with which the text is larded, testify to Melville's desire to overcome a cultural 'anxiety of influence' by projecting his novel beyond American provincialism into the 'unshored, harborless immensities' of world literature.
>
> (Gilles, 1998: 244)

For Gilles the influence of Shakespeare gives a universal dimension to Melville's works. Melville, like other American writers of that period, had a complex relationship with Shakespeare's works. They wanted to cut the link with English literature "to give something to our literature which will be our own, with neither foreign spirit, nor imagery, nor form, but adapted to our case, grown out of our associations, boldly portraying the west, strengthening and intensifying the nation's soul**,** and finding the entire foundations of its birth and growth in our country" (Whitman, 1990: 6).

Melville's critical essay, *"Hawthorne and his Mosses"*, published by Duyckinck's *Literary World* in August 1850, shows the patriotic spirit of that period. Melville critiques Washington Irving, among others, for his "self-acknowledge imitation of a foreign model" and urges American writers to abandon their "leaven of literary flunkeyism towards England" (1998: 227). For Lawrence Buell, it is a form of postcolonial anxiety where Melville's art should be seen as embroiled within a "much more complicated transnational historical matrix" (Buell, 1992: 233) than the master narratives of nationalism.

Melville, as a writer of the Renaissance Period, used English literary texts to reflect upon the growth and development of American culture. Hence, his 'appropriation' of Shakespeare's work, for example, can be considered both as an aesthetic and political act. Hans Robert Jauss writes that a literary text can continue to have an effect only if those who came after it still or once again respond to it – if there are readers who again appropriate the past work or authors who want to imitate, outdo, or refute it (Hans Robert Jauss, 1982:22). In the case of Melville, it is more an imaginative appropriation to make 'things one's own'. In

other words, the American 'horizon' of the period made possible the reception of English works as a conscious awareness. Once Melville had found a source of inspiration in English literature (there are biographical indications of Melville's interest in Shakespeare and other English writers) he had realized that it could be used to create his own imaginative language in order to both 'illuminate' the American language and criticize his own age.

Mardi has been made about the controversy on the issue of the language of the ex-colonial powers –in post-colonial criticism. As an ex-colonial country, America is no exception. In fact, thought was given to replace English by the German language as the official language. But Americans came to accept that the English language is cultural and linguistic dimension belonged as much to England than to America. The literature articulated by that language is also at issue. Melville seems to come to the conclusion that authors like Shakespeare or Milton are not cultural others, but constitute one of the legacies of America. As a postcolonial writer, Melville does not renounce or abrogate this literate culture as other, but he seeks to appropriate it by giving it another tone. If we look at the way nineteenth century Britain is portrayed, as in *Redburn*, we can see Melville trying to show that nineteenth century American culture was a more congenial space for the growth of these classics through refinement than decadent England.

Melville's works and his contemporaries' are like literary museums preserving classics from the decadent cultural environment of England by an excessive proverbial quoting of English authors like Shakespeare, Milton, John Donne, Alexander Pope, etc. However, these quoted authors are often made to talk in an American voice in that American literature of the Renaissance period. In a way, the English classic authors are posthumous exilic writers who have found a home in the ex-colony.

3. Melville and African Culture

Biographical elements show the encounter of the African culture with Melville from his childhood. Early nineteenth century slave music and dance were public entertainment in both the North and South of the United states of America. "In New York City and across the state, slaves were observed dancing and making music on street corners and in market places, as if preparing for the Pinkster Festival that, once a year in May for several days and at times in multiple locations, engaged the attention of white spectators" (Stuckey Sterling, 1998:37). The residence of Melville's family was well exposed to all these celebrations. In fact, his house faced the "tip of Manhattan Island, on one side, and on the other side the wharves and shipping offices of the South Street waterfront" (Ibid. 38) and slaves were known to entertain whites along the wharves of New York. Therefore, Melville could not have missed these celebrations.

Obviously, Melville's exposure to black music was quite full in his youth: he was a young boy in 1825 when the "great procession of negroes, some of them well-dressed" paraded, "two by two, preceded by music and a flag […] down Broadway" (Shane White, 1994: 20). It would be doubtful that Melville would have not been attracted by these activities since they were in his neighborhood. According to Stuckey one of these great festivals in New York was 'Pinkster' (in reference to Pinkster Hill in New York), known to be famous in Albany - Melville's mother's hometown. Let's just see one of the descriptions of Pinkster's parade:

> The principle instrument selected to furnish this important portion of the ceremony was a symmetrically *eel-pot*, with a cleanly dressed sheep skin drawn tightly over its wide and pen extremity…repeating the ever wild, though euphonic cry of *Hi-a bomba, bomba bomba*, in full harmony with the thumping sounds. The female portion of the spectators … was accompanied by the beating of time with their ungloved hands, in strict accordance with the eel-pot melody.
>
> (Ibid. 41)

Stuckey notes that what was sacred for the African was regulated by such rhythms, which contributed to a form of spiritual recreation for the hundreds of slave participants in the festival. (Ibid)

The influence of the African culture came first in his child hood and later through his readings. Of the American writers that used Pinkster festival historically was Fenimore Cooper. In *Satanstoe* (1845), Cooper gives us a vivid account of this festival:

> Nine-tenth of the blacks of the city, and the whole country within thirty or forty miles, were collected in thousands in the field, beating banjoes, singing African songs, drinking, and worst of all, laughing in a way that seemed to set their very hearts tattling within their ribs [...] Hundreds of whites were walking through the field, amused spectators. Among these last a great many children of the better class, who had come to look at the enjoyment of those who attended them, in their ordinary amusements [...]
>
> (Quoted in Robert S. Levine, 1998:45)

The above quote stresses the entertainment side of the parade where Melville could have been one of the children enjoying the festival. The African music and dance were later expressed in Melville's *Moby-Dick*. Melville is not intolerant towards the African culture. He shows this 'Other' culture as an African aesthetics that has enriched the American culture. In chapter "Midnight, Forecastle", Melville emphasies the influence of African culture in America - the rhythms that influenced the development of jazz and jazz dance.

4. Minstrelsy in American Culture

In the antebellum years, it was through popular entertainment such as the Circus and Minstrelsy theatre that the American popular culture travelled inside and outside America. Minstrel plays were performed by white men, in black face, imitating the Blacks' manners, songs and dances to entertain the white audience. The Minstrels adopted the Blacks' dialects which were ungrammatical and without syntactic rules. The Minstrel shows were performed in black face with black dialects. These shows

portrayed the Negroes as totally inferior. They offered different stereotypes of the Negroes.

The Minstrel show was composed of three main parts. First, as soon as the curtain rose, eight Minstrels would start moving, dancing, singing, banging their tambourines, and waving their arms in funny ways to make the audience laugh. Then, there comes a brief break in which the Minstrels would change their clothing; they prepare themselves for another variety, which is called the Olio. In this show the Minstrels perform with dogs or monkeys. Finally, the show would end by displaying a plantation scene with Darkies next to bales of cotton. The whole troupe would burst into singing and making any grotesquerie so long as it is not indecent.

Tyrrell states that the image of the black and white minstrels, with their caricatures of happy, down-home African-Americans singing and dancing illustrated the conflicting images that cultural exporters could convey abroad. He adds that these "touring minstrel shows in 1848 competed with and to some extent subverted African-American abolitionist Frederick Douglass's attempt to create a serious debate over the evils of slavery" (Tyrrell, 2007:111). In *Moby-Dick* the reference to minstrelsy is seen in the use of the 'black'/'white' relationship to mount a criticism towards racial representations of the Negro as the "Other".

5. The influence of the Orient

In the fall of 1856, Melville travelled to Turkey, Egypt, Italy, and Palestine, all of which he documented in his journal of the period. His journey in the Near East had deeply influenced him. The experience is intellectually expressed in poetry. *Clarel: A Poem and Pilgrimage*, one of the longest poems in the English language, published nineteen years later in 1876. Malini Johar Schueller considers that "In *Clarel*, the racial and cultural issues raised in the journal find clearer poetic expression." She adds that "While the journal records the

narrator's confusion and his sense of being overwhelmed by the cultures of the Near East, *Clarel* crystallizes this loss of an active, imperial, male agency of the New World into racialized dynamics of desire" (Schueller 1998: 128). Through Clarel, a young theological student journeying the Near East, Melville "eroticizes" the relationship between the New World and the Near Eastern Orient and demonstrates how the racial-cultural difference of the Near East cannot be contained by a creation of race hierarchies adopting male/ female and mind/body dichotomies; instead, Melville's poem question the raced and gendered oppositions between the New World and the Near East through the circulation of homoerotic desire.

Melville's early skepticism about the superiority of Western " 'civilization' was accentuated by his own journey through Muslim lands in 1856-7 as it had been during his earlier travels across the Atlantic and in the Polynesian Pacific" (Marr, 2006: 246). Melville is persuaded that traveling teaches us humility. One of the lessons of humility that he learned during his journey to Palestine was the insufficiency of the American pretence of superiority. In the Levant where all nations congregate, unpretending people speak half a dozen languages, Melville acknowledges, "and a person who thought himself well educated at home is often abashed at his ignorance there" (Ibid. 247).

We consider that Melville's *Billy Budd*, as *Clarel*, fictionalized the doubts and hesitancies of the New World where Billy, embodying the nation's contradictions is sent on a warship that involves a questioning not only of his nationality but, more importantly, of his race identity, both of which define him as an imperial subject. Orientalism in *Billy Budd* provokes questions about racial alterity and national ideology.

B. Cultural and Literary Influences on Conrad

1. Homo Duplex: Polish Ancestry

Conrad called himself *'homo duplex'*, the double man. This may partially explain Conrad's characteristics in his fictional works. A significant part of the answer may possibly lie in his past. His belonging to Poland is quite important both for him and for his father, who wrote to his son on the occasion of his christening as Josef Teodor Konrad Nalecz Korzeniowski in December 1857:

> Bless you my little so:
> Be a *Pole*! Though foes
> May spread before you
> A web of happiness,
> Renounce it-love your poverty….
> Baby, son, tell yourself
> You are without land, without love,
> Without country, without people,
> While *Poland*-your *Mothe*r is in her grave.
> For only your *Mother* is dead-and yet
> She is your faith, your palm of martyrdom….
> This thought will make your courage grow,
> Give her and yourself immortality.

(Quoted in Meyers, 1991:10)

His father, a Polish patriot, had written that his "*Mother-Poland*" was entombed; but the harsh reality for the young boy was that his real mother died, lost to the cause of national identity which, he may have felt, had both betrayed her and led to betray him. Conrad's father was involved in clandestine political activity to the liberate Poland from the Russian Empire. Both he and his wife were forced into exile, and the young boy moved with them. The harsh conditions of exile caused the death of the mother. Conrad's fictional writings, perhaps, allude to this 'lost' land and home. This pain and deception is consciously and unconsciously expressed. For Zdzislaw Nadjer when Conrad was ill, he would speak Polish. Edward Said

(1975:131), too, has noted how Conrad possesses two voices: the urban, wry, confident voice of his public commentaries (not least in the Prefaces to his books) and the "rich, confusing" voice of his private writing.

Conrad complex relationship with his father can, partially, be understood through Apollo's letters to his friend Kaszewski. In fact, it shows the melancholy and sad atmosphere in which father and son were engulfed after the death of the mother. After the death of his wife, his desire was to ensure Conrad's future. He taught his son at home, partly because he did not want his child to be educated in Russian schools. In the same year, he wrote to Kaszewski:

> How can I thank you for all your kindness to my poor little orphan. What you have promised him was our dream in the days of our deepest distress and an encouragement for the ominous future [. . .] Your promise to send me school books and syllabuses fills me with joy. I await its fulfillment with impatience. Sell my writing table to buy these books. It was a favourite of hers but she will never see me working at it again.
>
> (Meyers, 1991: 23)

The above letters highlight the sorrow the father and son lived after the death of the mother. They show also the importance of studies and readings in this family. More important for Conrad than the presumably meager conventional instruction that Apollo was able to provide must have been the influence of his father's intellectual occupations. Living in somber isolation from everyday life, Apollo had become increasingly absorbed in literature; concentrated on doing translations, particularly of Shakespeare and Hugo, in the hope that these would bring in some money. Conrad remembered being asked to read the proofs of his father's translations.

One of these translations was Victor Hugo's *Les Travailleurs de la Mer*. It is easy to understand how this book would have struck a responsive chord in both father and son. The portrait of Gilliat's position and isolation in a hostile society might have them reflect on their fate. The text is worth citing:

> Les volcans lancent des pierres et les révolutions des hommes. Des familles sont ainsi envoyées à de grandes distances, des destinées sont ainsi dépaysées, des groupes sont dispersés et s'émiettent; des gens tombent des nues. . . . Ils étonnent les naturels du pays. D'ou viennent ces inconnus? C'est ce Vésuve qui fume là-bas qui les a expectorés. On donne des noms à ces aérolithes, à ces individus expulsés et perdus, à ces éliminés du sort; on les appelle émigrés, réfugiés, aventuriers. S'ils restent, on les tolère; s'ils s'en vont, on est content. . . J'ai vu une pauvre touffe d'herbe lancée éperdument en l'air par une explosion de mine. . . .
>
> La femme qu'à Guernsey on appelait la Gilliat était peut-être cette touffe d'herbe-là.
>
> La femme vieillit, l'enfant grandit. Ils vivaient seuls et évités
>
> (Quoted in Jocelyn Baines, 1960: 18)

What stands out in the quote is the theme of exile developed in an analogical manner. The spectacle of a volcano throwing stones in the skies is compared to that of revolution sending human beings across the globe. Human beings and stones find themselves in unfamiliar, other grounds, uprooted from the depths of the earth. Whether as geological fragments or human ones, the refugee, the exiles, immigrants, adventurers are not congenial to the grounds on which they land. They are regarded as others. Though their presence is sometimes tolerated, people are happy to see them go. In Hugo's *Les Travailleurs de la Mer* the woman of Guernsey and her son stand as a symbol of uprootedness by a volcanic explosion, taking root in a socially uncongenial space with her son. This quote from Hugo's book seems to have had reverberation later in Conrad's "*A Personal Record*" (1912) where he compares human life and existence to a "spectacular Universe" devoid of ethical concerns. In other words, human existence is marked by otherness in a strangely spectacular world.

The works of Conrad reveal the cultural and political heritage of his homeland, which was part of imperial Russia. The author's Polish roots may be disavowed by the fact that not a single passing reference to Poland appears in his fictional works, except in the short story "Prince Roman." His claim, "I am a Pole" (Jean-Aubry, 1927); however, is justified by the presence of a symbolic, rather than a geographical Poland in his works: Poland as a romantic,

idealistic, and radically liberal Western Europe that struggles against an oppressive “Eastern” (East European or Asian) reality that is subjected to Russian autocracy. In fact, Poland existed only in the Poles’ hearts in nineteenth-century Europe, as she had been completely partitioned between Russia, Prussia, and Austria a century earlier. Rightfully, Geoffrey Galt Harpham argues, “the force with which Poland determines Conrad’s work is directly proportional to its literal nonappearance within it” (Harpham, 1996: 12), suggesting that Conrad’s Poland, as the most repressed subject, is the most powerful narrative at work.

The idealistic tradition of Poland had devastated the reality of the people’s lives by Conrad’s time. Although the Republic of Poland was established as early as the sixteenth century, the radically democratic tradition of the Republic led to the “Partitions”, which put the Lithuanian part of Poland - from which the Conrad family came - into Russian hands. As Conrad proudly remarked, the foundation of the United Republic of Poland-Lithuania in 1569 was “a spontaneous and complete union of sovereign States” that offers “a singular instance of an extremely liberal administrative federalism” (Norman Davies, 1982:120). The Polish Republic was modeled upon an extreme form of democracy characterized by the practice of liberal veto, which ensured legal equality for every member of the Polish nobility, as the Szlachta to which Conrad’s familly belonged. This radically democratic procedure of the nobility, which formed eight to twelve per cent of society - far larger than the one to two per cent in other European states - was not only too idealistic, often resulting in chaos, but distant from the reality of the common people, whose complete subjugation, the social system was based on. (Ibid 261) The contradiction between the libertarian ideas and the authoritarian reality of the Polish Republic, which intensifies under Russian autocracy, is the imaginative force behind Conrad the author, who depicts the clash between idealistic heroes and their conflicting realities in his work.

It must be pointed out that Conrad's background as a Polish exile in England, whose second language was English, reinforces the notion of multiple perspectives in reading his works. As Edward Said observes in *Culture and Imperialism*:

> Because Conrad also had an extraordinarily residual sense of his own exilic marginality, he quite carefully (some would say maddeningly) qualified Marlow's narrative with the provisionality that came from standing at the very juncture of this world with another, unspecified but different.
>
> (Said, 1994:24)

Michael North goes further, describing how to Conrad's friends, his Polish nationality was seen as a racial difference. North points out that Conrad's Polish accent was associated by them with the Orient, and further that his appearance and mannerisms were considered by H.G. Wells and Ford Maddox Ford to be Oriental (North, 1994: 38). This view of Conrad as racially different from his English colleagues and, therefore, inferior provides us with another explanation of Conrad's ambivalent attitudes in *Heart of Darkness* toward Africa and imperialism. In a sense, Conrad wanted both to belong to and escape from a culture that never quite accepted him. It is Conrad the exotic other that attracted the most attention. Conrad's exoticism is not solely due to his Polish origins, but also to the strange foreign accent of his language and the strange tales of the Orient that he circulated after long years spent as a seaman in far regions.

2. Conrad's Encounter with Contemporary Authors

On 4 October 1894, Conrad put an end to a restless life on the seas after the acceptance of the *Almayer's Folly* by Fisher Unwin. The transmutation of a seaman's life to a writing life no less marked by restlessness mainly because of the ambivalent reaction towards his works captured in the following response by the audience as the Polish gentleman cased in British far sea-stories. This general attitude, as one of his biographers tells us, is reflected in his reaction towards the two readers of his publishers, W. H. Chesson and Edward Garnett,

whose exaggerated compliments towards *Almayer's Folly* sounded as patronizing to the budding author. *Almayer's Folly* was followed by *An Outcast of the Islands* in 1896, a book reviewed by the famous author H.G. Wells. He reviewed the latter novel anonymously, so he arguably evaluated Conrad at his right value.

Conrad's various homes across England became during his life time the sojourn of famous British and American authors. So during his stay in Ivy Walls, an Elizabethan farmhouse in Essex, we learn from his biographers that he received friends and personalities of the day like G.F.W. Hope who invited him to sea excursions in his yacht the *Nellie*, the movable setting that Conrad uses in *Heart of Darkness.* It is during these excursions with acquaintances of friends from the good old life of sailing that Conrad indulged in recounting his yarns. Conrad has failed as a playwright or dramatist, but as his episode of life shows, he succeeded to dramatize his life to his listeners. He dramatized the self as the other by the invocation of his past as a seaman among Orientals.

Conrad did not live in the Elizabethan period. He was not Marlow and not Shakespeare, but his residence in an Elizabethan farmhouse in Essex was certainly an indication to do as well as these Elizabethan gaits of literature through novel wriggler. Arguably, his story in Essex and his speakerly recollections of his sea life experience was at the heart of that idiosyncratic style of his. His voice stands as a mark of otherness in the English novel.

Among other writers that Conrad has acquainted himself with during his writing life we can mention Stephen Crane whose book *The Red Badge of Courage* really pleased Conrad for the negative image it gave of the war; Robert Bondine Cunninghame Graham, a time-Member of Parliament who became an anarchist, with whom Conrad stayed a friend in spite of their particularly different views; Ford Madox Ford with whom Conrad co-authored *Romance* (1903), *The Inheritors* (1901) and the *The Nature of a Crime* (1924).

At Pen Farm, an old farm house, in southwest Kent, where Conrad's family settled from 1898 to 1907, the writer did not cease to draw the attention of other fellow writers. Pen farm, as autobiographers, tell us, was a remote place from London, but it was the centre of a literary circle. For example, Henry James was living close by, and was regular visitor that Conrad addressed as "mon chér Maitre" an address that arguably indicates the extent to which Conrad's irony, and the estranging quality of his novels is due to his encounter with his American fellow.

Conrad also met with other authors like George Bernard Shaw. The latter, as his fellow British author H.G. Wells, tells us is highly critical of Conrad's works:

> When Conrad first met Shaw in my house, Shaw talked with his customary freedom. "You know, my dear fellow, your books won't do" […] and so forth.
>
> I went out of the room and suddenly found Conrad on my knees, swift and white-faced. 'Does that man want to insult me? He demanded.
>
> The provocation to say "yes" and to assist at the subsequent duel was very great, but I overcame it'.
>
> (Quoted in Najder, 2007: 326)

What the quote above shows, as we have already tried to argue is that the response to Conrad is deeply ambivalent. Even Wells who supposedly reviewed positively Conrad's first works wanted to create a duel between Shaw and Conrad with the hope that the former would be killed. Conrad is the rival "Other" that the British authors loved and hated.

The second remark that we can make about the encounter with other authors is that he leaned more favorably to American authors like Crane whom he considered as a "son" and Henry James as a master. However, Conrad's struggle for carving a place for himself in English fiction was not waged solely against what now are the classical authors of his age. The struggle against these classic authors can be said to be successful since Conrad had

managed to survive his status as a ‘speakerly’ exotic item, an exotic idol that speaks English with a foreign accent and that his contemporaries loved and hated all at once.

On the contrary, his struggle against popular and sensational authors of the time, authors of detective stories like Arthur Conan Doyle was a complete loss. Conrad went so far as to write like them with the publication of *The Secret Agent* (1907), based on the fictionalization of how the anarchist Marchal Bourdin had attempted to blow up the Greenwich Observatory in 1894 and had succeeded in exploding himself. By giving in to the popular taste for sensation and detective stories of investigation, his novel came close to its source in journalism that Conrad tapped for its writing. This short betrayal of the craft of novel writing was due to the quest for popularity. It was also experienced by Melville in the first half of the nineteenth century with the rise of a commercial press that circulated a popular fiction that Emerson qualified as “giggle” literature with reference to Poe’s fiction and novels. In the late nineteenth century England, it caused a similar anxiety among classic authors who took fiction seriously.

Seemingly, Conrad failed in his comprehension with the popular authors of his time who knew better than Conrad how to sell themselves. As reported by Norman Sherry, after the disappointing financial return from *The Secret Agent*, Conrad wrote to John Galsworthy in 1908 to inform him about what an inspiration killing it is to think: “is it saleable? There is nothing more cruel than to be caught between one’s impulse, one’s act, and that question, which for me is a question of life and death” (Quoted in Norman Sherry, 1966:94). This anxiety about authors obliged them to sell out the integrity of their minds. Such writers, as Grant Allen (1848 –1899), Marie Corelli (1855 –1924), and Hall Caine (1853 –1931) have spoken about the alienation of creative artists in the modern times. These artists were obliged to bend down to material considerations, and the pampering of the reading public by serving what it wanted, and in common places.

In his fulmination against cheapening artistic productions, Conrad distances himself as a distinguished artistic "Other" from common people unable to set differences between realist and mere propagandist. In itself, it is the sticking to the principles of art that makes Conrad feel as an exile, the "Other" in the artistic sense. Conrad can be said to be the inheritor of the "artist maudit" so famous for the Romantics.

3. Leopold II's Congo Versus Conrad's Congo

Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* is inspired from his voyage to the Congo. In fact, Conrad's engagement in 1890 with The Société Anonyme Belge pour le Commerce du Haut Congo, took him to the Congo. After months looking for employment his position was secured through the good offices of Marguerite Poradouska, not his 'aunt' but the widow of a second cousin. Conrad's assignment with the Société Anonyme was to replace on the Steamboat Florida a Danish Captain Freiesleben, who had been murdered after a quarrel with tribesmen. Conrad's journey in Africa is recorded in his *Congo Diary* (1890), which bears witness to his direct exposure to the brutalities of the colonial scramble: "saw at a camp-place the dead body of a Backongo. Shot? Horrid smell…" (J. Conrad, *Congo Diary* 1978:8).

According to Zdzislaw Najder, Conrad's biographer, the idea of working in Africa came about almost for want of something better to do. Evidence seems to indicate that Conrad's initial interest was in finding steady employment, and this Africa posting offered itself. He found his way to Albert Thys, director of the Société Belge pour le Commerce du Haut Congo, a business concession in Brussels, with significant funding from British and American financiers, who appointed him to his new post, by a chain of accidental connections. He stepped on board ship from Brussels for the Congo on 10 May 1890. Conrad expected to stay in Africa for three years but as we know, he spent only six

months, from June to December 1890. He returned to Europe because he was deeply ill and he suffered both physically and mentally. “I see everything with such despondency-all in black. My nerves are completely frayed,” he wrote to Marguerite Poradowska in April1891, and the following month he wrote again: “I am still plunged in densest night and my dreams are only nightmares” (CLJC VI: 79). He was hospitalized in London, and travelled to Champel-les-Bains in Switzerland to convalescence, but just after he was ill again “an attack of malaria in the form of dyspepsia” (Ibid. 88).

What Conrad expected to find in Africa was the official pronouncement of the time as pronounced by Belgium monarch Leopold II: “To bring civilization to the only part of this globe where it has not yet penetrated, to pierce the darkness which envelops entire populations - is […] a crusade worthy of this age of progress” (Quoted in Najder, 1983:30). His fascination was short lived. His letters and his Diary testify to the increasing sense of disillusionment and frustration, and the severe physical and mental deterioration he suffered. So, what he saw in the Congo – the murders and beatings of natives, atrocities and exploitation, the chain-gangs of Africans, left to die when they were too sick to work - opened Conrad’s eyes to the real colonial world. Conrad discovered the other side of the narratives of conquest and geographic discoveries wide spread during his time.

The truth was otherwise, and metaphors of civilization and the light of progress penetrating the darkness of Africa concealed a most rapacious and terrible campaign to maximize profit. Conrad came to understand this and expressed it in his letters, in his *Congo River Diary*, and in his fictional work *Heart of Darkness*. His letter to Roger Casement in 1903 stated:

> It is an extraordinary thing that the conscience of Europe which seventy years ago has put down the slave trade on humanitarian grounds tolerates the Congo State to day. It is as if the moral clock had been put back many

> hours… [I]n 1903…there exists in Africa a Congo State, created by the act of European powers where ruthless systematic cruelty to the blacks is the basis of administration…
>
> (Quoted in Knowles & Moore, 2000:67)

From this quote, we learn that the "Other" is created by the crusade against the slave trade and slavery. Paradoxically, philanthropy turns to its contrary by inviting imperialism.

The Congo he visited was a region annexed by Leopold II, king of Belgium. Leopold spoke about Christianization and the bringing of civilization to the Congo. However, he fully exploited the natives by introducing labor tax and forced labor. Besides this harsh exploitation of the natives, there was a taking of the Congo's resources. Later in *Last Essays* (1926) Conrad openly termed imperialism in Africa as "the vilest scramble for loot that ever disfigured the history of human conscience". He states in the Author's Note of *Youth*:

> *Youth* is a fair of memory. It is a record of experience; but that experience, in its facts, in its inwardness and in its coloring, begins and ends in myself. "Heart of Darkness" is experience, too; but it is experience pushed a little (and only very little) beyond the actual facts of the case for the perfectly legitimate, I believe, purpose of bringing it home to the minds and bosoms of the readers**.**
>
> (Y: xi)

For Jocelyn Baines the Congo episode is expressed in *An Outpost of Progress* through irony and macabre humor, and in *Heart of Darkness* through a tone of outraged humanism and its consciousness of evil. She considers that these narratives show how deeply Conrad was affected emotionally by the sight of such human baseness and degradation. She adds that his Congo experience devastatingly exposed the cleavage between human pretensions and practice, a consciousness of which underlies a philosophy of life. (Baines, 1960:119) In *Heart of Darkness* Conrad ascribes to Marlow a somewhat naive version of the appeal which the Congo may have had for him. At first, Marlow is naïve about the reasons for geographic exploration celebrated during his time; however, the ideal is compared to the real and shows

the contradiction, that is, “light” becomes “blackness” whereas philanthropy gives place to robbery.

In *Heart of Darkness* the Congo shows Conrad’s experience of the specific form of colonial imperialism Leopold II practiced in the Congo Free State for two decades from 1885 to 1905. It reveals the specific territorial conquests made by the industrialized European nations in their ‘scramble for Africa’ in the second half of the nineteenth century. The Congo became Leopold II’s personal territorial possession. Leopold II pursued his Congo interest in the name of philanthropy and anti-slavery. He stated:

> The mission which the agents of the State have to accomplish on the Congo is a noble one. They have to continue the development of civilization in the center of Equatorial Africa, receiving their inspiration directly from Berlin and Brussels. Placed face to face with primitive barbarism, grappling with sanguinary customs that date back thousands of years, they are obliged to reduce these gradually. They must accustom the population to general laws, of which the most salutary is assuredly that of work.
>
> (Slade, 1962:70)

The above quote shows the paradoxes of the civilizing mission under which the imperial powers undertook the colonization of Africa.

To exploit fully the wealth of the Congo State, Leopold instituted a ‘Labor Tax’ on natives in the form of forty hours per month of forced labor. In practice this was brutally and arbitrarily exacted by the chiefs of the concession companies with the ruthless encouragement of Leopold’s local army. Increased production of ivory and rubber was their only priority; physical mutilation sustained their method. In 1906 Leopold asserted:

> The Congo has been, and could have been, nothing but a personal undertaking. There is no more legitimate or respectable right than that of an author over his own work, the fruit of his labor […] My rights over

> the Congo are to be shared with none; they are the fruit of my own struggles and expenditure.
>
> (Ibid.175)

Leopold treated the Congo as his personal fiefdom, created by his own efforts. This was the self-declared absolute ownership of the Congo and its riches.

The above historical information may partly explain the historical context of *Heart of Darkness*. Leopold's absolute personal rule over the Congo might have helped to create Kurtz with his extreme monomania, brutality, and the strong obsession to possess: "My intended, my ivory, my station, my river" (*HD*: 70). The following sentence cited in Slade's referring to Leopold, may be used to refer to Kurtz: "The king was the founder of the State; he was its organizer, its owner, its absolute sovereign" (1962:175).

4. The Malay in Conrad's Sense

Just as Conrad's journey to the Congo led him to discover the other side of the discourse of power, his earlier voyages to the far distant places of the Malay Archipelago resulted in the debunking of the myth of the Orient. First, it is useful to identify the terms Malay and Malayan. The former is more closely aligned with the political experiences of the region while the latter term refers to all of the numerous ethnic inhabitants of the Malay Archipelago as South Asians, Arabs, Chinese, and Jew. Conrad's fictional 'Malay' refers to the colonial racial categories but, as we are going to see in our analysis, it is a discourse inflected with irony. Agnes S.K. Yeow argues that in "his Eastern tales, Conrad does succeed in evoking a mobile, heterogeneous and nebulous world in which exiles, expatriate, and migrants moved and had their being" (Yeow, 2009:19). Conrad's expatriates are not only European exiles (English, Dutch, German, and Belgian), but Malay exiles (wajo, Ilanun, Bugis

etc…) and others of mixed descent. The rise of the British Empire in the East created a racial line between the British and the Malayan. Yeow notes, one could adopt British or European lifestyles and acquire tastes and opinions but one could never enter or be absorbed into the folds as it were. (Ibid) In *Lord Jim* we gain an insight into the British administration of the Malay where Jim is the 'virtual ruler' of *Patusan*. There is an ironical discourse in Conrad's reconstruction of the Malay political and religious identity.

The history of the Malay Archipelagos records the rivalries of the Portuguese, Dutch, English, and Spanish who for centuries have claimed shares in the wealth of the Indies and access to trade with China. The progress of this competition has been measured with lines on maps, delimiting the various spheres of influence emanating from administrative centers, like Batavia or Singapore or Manila, based on contracts or agreements made with sultans or rulers of "semi-independent states" who would accept promises of protection in return for promises to develop trade. In a letter dated 6 September 1897 to his publisher William Blackwood, Conrad indicated that he was familiar with gun running plots. He wrote:

> In 1848 an English called Wyndham had been living for many years with the Sultan of Sulu and was the general purveyor of arms and gunpowder. In 1850 or 51 he financed a very lively row in Celebes. He is mentioned in Dutch official documents as a great nuisance-which he, no doubt, was. I've heard several versions of his end (occurred in the sixties) all very lamentable. In the 70ies Lingard had a great if occult influence with the Raja of Bali. He was a meddler but very disinterested and was greatly respected by the natives. As late as 1888 arms have been landed on the coast of that island - that to my personal knowledge.
>
> (CLJC VI: 382)

As Conrad's above letter shows, the rivalries among the Western powers play an important global role in the politics of the Malay fictions. These 'gun running plots' witnessed in the Malay, are expressed in his fictional works, like those described in

The Rescue and *Almayer's Folly*. In *Conrad's Eastern World* (1966), Norman Sherry cites an anonymous report published in the Singapore weekly *Strait Times Overland Journal* of 26 March 1883 (more than four years before Conrad visited the coast) describing conditions in what its nameless author calls "the state of Berouw", or in other words Conrad's Sambir:

> Labour is for women and slaves only. Slaves are met with in a almost every house on the lower river, there is even a large village wholly inhabited by slaves. The authorities allow this, in spite of Art.115 of the Government reg. whereby slavery in Netherlands India has been abolished. Most of the slaves are fairly well off excepting those who have to work in the [coal] mines. The number of these unfortunates yearly sold at Gunong Thabor is estimated at 300. These people are bought in or kidnapped from the islands of Sooloo and the other Philippines, and then bartered for gunpowder, muskets, revolvers, lillas [pins?], cloth, calico, opium, Dutch candles etc.
>
> (Quoted in Sherry, 1966:130)

Slavery as a social and economic system had already existed before the establishment of the colonial system. These European reports were probably written to justify their colonial system based on slavery and exploitation. In 1894, seven years after Conrad had left the coast, the slave trade continued, as a Dutch report confirmed:

> That slavery continues to exist despite all the attempts to stifle it is due to the fact that the whole East Coast is thinly populated, while the exploitation of gettah (*sic*), rattan and birds'nests, the assets of this territory, is dangerous work, for which slaves have been used since time immemorial. The dangerous and above all unhealthy nature of that work is responsible for the high mortality among the slaves and necessitates a steady supply to prevent a shortage of hands.
>
> (Ibid)

In Conrad's Malay fictions slavery and racism are complex and ambivalent issues. They reveal ethnic traditions and rivalries to which his white characters are blinded by their own racial and cultural prerogatives. Moreover, rivalries among the Western powers play an important role in the politics of these fictions, but the drama of these stories involves the local efforts of village leaders to preserve a sense of dignity and

cultural identity under conditions of duress. Beneath the romantic melodrama of their plots and exoticism of their settings, these fictions display a serious interest in *moeurs malaisiennes*, an ethnographic awareness of many different kinds of "natives" engaged in a struggle for survival. So, colonialism in Conrad's Malay world is not only a conflict among Western powers for Eastern resources, but also a complex political struggle involving stateless ethnic groups competing against one another. In *Lord Jim* the chiefs and village headmen who hold power in Patusan are themselves refugee or colonists from elsewhere.

Conclusion

The analysis contained in the first part has shown that the notion of the "Other" is a product of popular beliefs, and a folk classification about human differences. The racial "Other", then originated as a cultural product reflecting a particular way of looking at and interpreting human differences, both physical and cultural, was embraced by naturalists and other learned people. It was also given legitimacy as a supposed product of scientific investigations. In the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, scientists reflected the beliefs and biases of their time through their works. Therefore, human populations were classified into unequal groups on the bases of these features. Accordingly, racial Otherness is just one of several ways of perceiving, interpreting and dealing with human differences. It is a worldview perpetuated as much by the stereotypes to which so many of us have been, often unconsciously, conditioned. The 'authorial ideology' under analysis of the two authors in terms of the dialectic of Self and Other is fully grasped through the exposition of the general ideology of otherness during their times. The ideology of difference celebrated in the nineteenth century that paradoxically contributed to the construction of the Western man into the "Other" of otherness is still with us today, but it does not have the same strong hold on people's minds that it had at that time. The first part has hopefully shown that Melville and Conrad could not have ignored the presence of this "Other" in their basically imperializing societies.

This part of the research has shown that Melville and Conrad lived lives of otherness at both personal and social levels. Melville, as we have said, lived as an orphan at an early age, dropping school in quest for the re-establishment of the family fortune. In other words, he lived a life of poverty with the awareness that he belonged to another class than the one that destiny landed him in. The restlessness that characterized his life as a seaman and later as a writer of sea stories can be explained by this family history that 'otherized' him when he

was still young. At the same time, he tried hard to make up for his misfortune by confirming the ideal heroism that he lived through involvement as a sea man on different ships. What he lost in terms of materialism was compensated through spiritual adventure in other lands. The context in which he wrote his books was also marked by a sense of otherness that resulted from the discussion of the place of the Indian, the black man, and women during his time; and the process of democratization and industrialization.

Conrad's dramatic life as an orphan is more traumatic than that of Melville. The death of his mother, the second great turning point after the exile he had witnessed in his childhood with his parents, weakened his health and threw him into a solitary relation with his father. We also suggest that Poland as Africa had been under a colonial power. On 12 January 1796, a tripartite convention between Russia, Austria, and Prussia in St Petersburg decreed "the need to abolish everything which can recall the memory of the existence of the kingdom of Poland" (Quoted in Jerzy Lukowski and Hubert Zawadzki, 2001: 105). This historical event resembles The Berlin Conference where Africa was divided between the European powers. In 'The Crime of Partition', written in December 1918 and first published in the *Fortnightly Review* in May 1919, Conrad insisted that the disappearance of the Polish state in 1795 had not constituted the death of the nation:

> But the spirit of the nation refused to rest therein. It haunted the territories of the Old Republic in the manner of a ghost haunting its ancestral mansion […] Poland deprived of its independence, of its historical continuity, and its religion and language persecuted and repressed, became a mere geographical expression. […] The nation stabbed to the heart refused to grow insensible and cold.
>
> (NLL: 96)

Such discourse reveals Conrad's criticism toward imperial exploitation; first, in relation to Poland and then, to Africa.

Conrad's skepticism about the "imperial mission" can also be related to his own journey into the Congo. He has tried to recapitulate the experience he has sought out and undergone in 1890, an experience that led not to philosophical conclusions but to a physical and nervous breakdown. In a sense, Conrad's anger at these experiences is translated in his fictionalized novel *Heart of Darkness* through an ironic discourse.

The above analysis has shown that there is a certain convergence between the personal otherness of the writers and the social otherness that was discussed. An instructive way of understanding Conrad's interest in 'race' is the analysis of his youth in Poland, his experience as a seaman and as a Polish immigrant in England. In *The Secret Agent* Conrad contends to present London as a city in which distinction of national difference is rendered obsolete by the materiality of the city, where the characters, like Conrad, are becoming "denationalized" (*SA*: 115). As we shall see in the next part of this research, the otherness that Melville and Conrad lived at the personal and social levels reverberated in their respective works.

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PART TWO

The Representations of the African, the Oriental and the Woman as Other (s) in Melville's and Conrad's Selected Works

Introduction

The first part of this thesis has attempted to highlight the context and the facets of life that might have shaped Melville's and Conrad's perception of the "Other". If we have to draw one major conclusion from the historical background against which the two authors produced their works, we shall say that it was characterized by a rapid transformation in all walks of life. Very often today, we hear people complaining about the difficulty of forging a sense of self because of what is commonly called globalization. We believe that globalization is not a contemporary phenomenon, but a process that had witnessed its greatest impetus in the nineteenth century through the Industrial Revolution, the establishment of free trade, and other forces of change. It is arguably not a simple coincidence that Hegel elaborated his master-slave dialectic or the self-other dialectic at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Today, the replacement of imperialism by globalization is accompanied by the decline of the value of sameness and homogeneity, and the celebration of diversity and plurality instead. This discursive transformation in the self-other dialectic is paradoxically the result of imperialism, which in its quest for the construction of self by othering, excluding, and stigmatizing for principally material self-interest has finished bringing the other from the (ex)colonial periphery; that is, the alien, the stranger, or foreigner into the center.

In this second part, we shall explore the crucial place that the other holds in selected works by Melville and Conrad with an emphasis on the African, Oriental and Woman presence. The historical background chapter has hopefully shown that Melville and Conrad could not have ignored the presence of this African, Oriental and woman "Other(s)" in their basically imperializing societies. We shall seek to show to what extent the two authors' perceptions of the "Other" resemble and/or differ from those the general ideologies of their times circulated. One of our major assumptions is that Melville's and Conrad's works struggle to understand what it means to forge a sense of Self and Other in rapidly changing contexts such as the Industrial Revolution that brought the worship of material objects at the very time when the West tried to weed out the practice of fetishism and

paganism abroad. The complexity of the two authors' life careers as post-colonials, and that of their contexts marked by colonialism and imperialism, both internal and external, the movement for the emancipation of slaves and women have had a crucial impact on the way the two writers understand the "Other" as African, Oriental and woman. The next chapter will be concerned with the construction and deconstruction of the "Other" as African in Melville's *Moby-Dick* and Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*.

Chapter IV: The Representation of the African "Other" in Melville's *Moby-Dick* and Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*

> These men were absolutely naked and bedaubed with paint, their long hair was tangled, their mouths frothed with excitement, and their expression were wild, startled, and distrustful. They possessed hardly any arts, and like wild animals lived on what they could catch; they had no government, and were merciless to everyone not of their own small tribes.
>
> (C. Darwin, 1874)

There may be no paragraph, no sentence, and no word of Melville's *Moby-Dick* that has escaped attention or not be mined for critical meaning over the course of the hundred years and more since it was first published. Practically, the same thing can be said for Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. Thus, is it possible to say anything new or relevant about these works of such remarkable density and resonance that has not been already intimated before? For Bakhtin literature is another form of communication, and, as such, another form of knowledge. "Even meanings born in dialogues of the remotest past will never be finally grasped once and for all", he writes, "they will always be renewed in later dialogue" **(2002:39).** Yet, that 'renewed' meaning 'in later dialogue' should also be questioned; perhaps, the novel's forms of reach and connection make it a transitive text – a work dealing overtly with connections through space and time which becomes the kind of territory it describes, extending itself as we read it. Conrad himself notes, "There are two more installments in [*Heart of Darkness*] which the idea is so wrapped up in secondary notions that you [Cunningham Graham]-even you! - may miss it. […] - mais après? There is an après" (CLJC II: 157). The fact that a text can allow such different interpretations of a single aspect of the narration can be seen as evidence that both *Moby-Dick* and *Heart of Darkness, as* literary texts, are irreducible to a thoroughgoing and single-minded approach.

Thus, we intend to propose a re-reading of *Moby-Dick* (1850) and *Heart of Darkness* (1898) by exploring the authors' responses to the African "Other" in relation to the Western understanding of Africanism using some concepts developed by the American writer and critic, Toni Morrison. The analysis of the Africanist discourse in the selected novels will be explored through the study of characterization. Ishmael shows Melville's ambiguous attitude towards the Negroes aboard the Pequod. Melville in portraying Pip, first, introduces him as a Negro 'tribal' stereotype. Then, he is soon given another, more serious and more individualized dimension with a crucial part to play in the novel. Conrad, too, shows ambivalence towards Africa and the Africans, oscillating between two poles, revealing Marlow sometimes being affected by a distorted perception of reality. Marlow displays at times a critical self-consciousness, marked by irony. At other times, he assumes an (un)conscious attitude of class or racial superiority, as, for example when he is offended by the 'provoking insolence' of the manager's Negro 'boy'.

Throughout the text, Marlow also oscillates in his position towards colonialism. He insists upon the distinction between truth and lies; between civilization and savagery; and, most of all, between "Self" and "Other". Of these, the most important distinction is between the self and the other, for it is this opposition that sustains the colonial enterprise. The lure and the fear of the "Other" have initiated "discovery" and then colonialism; the conviction of the inferiority of the "Other" has justified the colonial enterprise. Yet, despite Marlow's insistence, all binary oppositions collapse in the course of his narrative: colonists prove to be conquerors, the gang of virtue is indistinguishable from the gang of greed, and there is no clear distinction between lies and truth. Most importantly, the fundamental difference between Self and Other is questioned and, with it, the binary opposition between savage and civilized that sustains the power structure of Western civilization. But, this awareness offered by the

text cannot avoid Marlow's Western culture that makes this awareness too dark - too dark altogether.

The other aspect that will be explored in these two fictional works is the authors' discourse in relation to Africanism where the black African is portrayed as the "Other". Toni Morrison introduces the term Africanism as: "The denotative and connotative blackness that African peoples have come to signify, as well as the entire range of views, assumptions, readings, and misreading that accompany Eurocentric learning about these people" (1992:6). Africanism is, then, the way the West constructs Africa. The latter is seen as a place of passivity, full of monolithic blackness, populated with black savage peoples who are in need of salvation because of their savagery and depravity. We shall seek to show to what extent the two authors' perceptions of the African 'Other' resemble and/or differ from those that the general ideologies of their times circulated.

Africanism as a racial discourse is not explicit in these fictional works because of the complexity of their literary texts. Conrad's literary works are ambivalent and ambiguous; they can only be deciphered through intensive readings. Conrad's sustained attention to self-reflectivity of fiction can be seen at work in all his major fiction, like in *Heart of Darkness.* In this novella, Conrad shows his capacity to mould his narrative to achieve a level of communication bordering on the visionary, a task set in his preface to *The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'* (1897). In 'A Familiar Preface' to *A Personal Record* (1912) he talks of "the force of a word" to affect "a whole mass of lives" (Conrad, 1912:3). His point is that meanings are suggested rather than stated. Conrad, here, reinforces Melville's argument expressed decades before when *Moby-Dick* appeared. Melville wrote to Sophia Hawthorne:

> It really amazed me that you should find any satisfaction in that book [*Moby-Dick*] But, then, since you, with your spiritualizing nature, see more things than other people, and […] refine all you see so that they are not the same things that other people see, but things which while you think you humbly discover them, you do in fact create them for yourself.

> Therefore…I do not so much marvel at your expressions concerning *Moby-Dick*.
>
> (Quoted in David Bradley, 1997:144)

In both fictional works, *Moby-Dick* and *Heart of Darkness*, what is seen is likely to be not as pretty as some readers would prefer.

From the beginning, Conrad negotiates the different implications of the racial "Other" in his writings. In an Author's note for his novel *Almayer's Folly* (1895), he states the question of the exotic "Other":

> I am informed that criticizing that literature which preys on strange people and prowls in far-off countries, under the shade of palms, in the unsheltered glare of sunbeaten beaches, amongst honest cannibals and the more sophisticated pioneers of our glorious virtues, a lady- distinguished in the world of letters- summed up her disapproval of it by saying that the tales it produced were "decivilized". And in that sentence not only the tales but, I apprehend, the strange people and the far-off countries also, are finally condemned in a verdict of contemptuous dislike […] a judgment that has nothing to do with justice.
>
> (Conrad, 1990: ii)

In the above quote, Conrad states that a lady showed her disapproval of "literature", such as his own works, that focuses on "strange people and prowls in far-off countries" because these types of tales were "decivilized". However, Conrad believes that there is a "bond" among people, regardless of their race. He depicts common racist European sentiments about people of color, like the feelings of the female critic, who readily dismisses the literature that features the "decivilized" as she refers to those who are foreign to her, in order to undermine them. Nineteenth-century Europeans would like to believe that people in far-off countries, who live in huts in forests, instead of in houses on paved streets, were different and inferior to them, as expressed by the contemptuous female critic. But, Conrad shows his disapproval of this racial discrimination.

The "honest cannibals" in the above quote makes us think about Melville's 'cannibals'. As James Baird in his *Ishmael: The Art of Melville in the Contexts of International Primitivism* well suggests: "*Heart of Darkness* will speak more authoritatively upon the meaning of primitivism in the novels of Herman Melville than the most adroit critical interpretation of these novels" (Baird, 1956: xi). He adds that Conrad and Melville belong to the group of Western writers depicting the South Seas who move beyond the superficial into the realm of the symbolical and the mythological. Melville in *Moby-Dick* sees the world of primitives and cannibals as a source of redemption and creative energy; Conrad, too, shows in *Heart of Darkness* that savagery may be applied to the Europeans and the natives' over-seas. Conrad as Melville realizes that:

> The critic and the judje seems to think that in those distant lands all joy is a yell and a war dance, all pathos is a howl and a ghastly grin of filed teeth, and that the solution of all problems is found in the barrel of a revolver or on the point of an assegai. And yet it is not so. But the erring magistrate may plead in excuse the misleading nature of the evidence.
>
> (Conrad, 1990: vii)

The above quote expresses British prejudices about the non-European world. The racism that Conrad identifies in his Author's Note reminds us of Melville's letter to Sophia Hawthorne, where Melville has suspected her of understanding that *Moby-Dick* could be read as an attack on slavery. Both of them address the question of racial prejudice in their fictional works, and this explains why their texts may suggest an interesting dialogue, and be test cases in postcolonial studies of the American\ European racial Other.

Conrad's narrative aim is well expressed in his preface to *The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'* (1897). He states, "you shall find there according to your deserts: encouragement, consolation, fear, charm – all you demand- and, perhaps, also that glimpse of truth for which you have forgotten to ask" (1963: xiii). So, a literary text may produce meanings, **"**What art makes us *see*, and therefore gives to us in the form

of '*seeing*', '*perceiving*' and '*feeling*' (which is not the form of knowing), is the *ideology* from which it is born, in which it bathes, from which it detaches itself as art, and to which it *alludes*" (Louis Althusser, 1971:222). Althusser says that ideology is not the way people use their imaginations to represent the world, but rather is the representation of the way people use their imaginations. It means that ideology is not some false picture of the world but our false picture of the world. In other words, ideologies are fantasies that support our relationships with each other and these false pictures give us our very identities. The 'ideology', to which it alludes, in both fictional works, is 'Africanism'.

A. Africanism: An Ideological Discourse of Otherness

Toni Morrison in her book, *Playing in the Dark*, states that the literature of the United States, like its history, represents a commentary on the transformations of biological, ideological, and metaphysical concepts of racial difference, and American writers were able to employ an imagined africanist persona to articulate and imaginatively act out the forbidden in American culture (1992:66). We consider that both Melville's and Conrad's narratives refer, sometimes in figurative language, to the Negro as the African "Other", a topic that could have been considered as daring during their times. The africanist characterization of the Negroes aboard the Pequod reveals the self-other dialectic, peculiar to America in the nineteenth century,and in *Moby-Dick* it is carried out in an ironic and metaphorical manner. Melville employs "an imagined africanist persona to articulate and imaginatively act out the forbidden in American culture" (Morrison, 1992: 66), like for example, the issue of slavery, or the ideology of racial difference in America.

The portrayal of the black cabin boy, Pip, is quite significant in relation to the racial discourse. Dough-Boy Pip is "like a black pony", he is "over tender-hearted […] very bright,

with that pleasant, genial, jolly brightness peculiar to his tribe'' (*M-D*: 393). Once introducing this 'tribal' stereotype, Melville reminds his reader, "Nor smile so, while I write that this little black was brilliant, for even blackness has its brilliancy […] But Pip loved life, and all life's peaceable securities; so that the panic-striking business in which he had somehow unaccountably become entrapped, had most sadly blurred his brightness" (Ibid.394). Melville through using such phrases, "Nor smile so", "brilliant" and "entrapment" is referring to Africanism where he is trying to dissolve racist assumptions about African Americans and slavery as a social, economic, and political institution which "entrapped" and "blurred" the African Americans' "brightness".

Introduced as the happy-go-lucky, tambourine playing black boy of the stereotype, he is soon given another, more serious and more individualized dimension. It is Pip who perceives the full significance for himself and the rest of the crew of Ahab's determination to hunt down the white whale: "Oh, thou big white God aloft there somewhere in yon darkness, have mercy on this small black boy down here; preserve him from all men that have no bowels to feel fear!" (Ibid. 149) His prayer, with its race-conscious overtones and following as it does immediately upon Daggoo's fight with the white sailor, refer to the racial discourse, a theme which reappears in Pip's later scenes. The incident of Pip's first leap overboard and Stubb's subsequent lecture on the relative value of whales and black men, absolutely, meant to function as a vehicle for comment on slavery. The representation of the black as the "Other" refers to complex issues of the author's time, as Morrison well expresses it, "What became transparent were the self-evident ways that Americans choose to talk about themselves through and within a sometimes metaphorical, but always choked representation of an Africanist presence" (Ibid. 17).

When the bowline wraps around Pip's chest and neck, he is drawn through the water beside the boat so Stubb, the mate, must decide whether to cut or not the line, thus saving Pip

but losing the whale. The rope is cut and Pip is saved, but only to take a tongue-lashing from the boat's crew for costing them their catch. The terms of profit and loss in which Stubb and the narrator comment on Pip's action gives this episode another dimension: commerce reinforces the dialectic of self-other in the exploitation of the Africans by the white man. Stubb cried, "Stick to the boat, Pip, or, by the Lord, I won't pick you up if you jump; mind that. We can't afford to lose whales by the likes of you; a whale would sell for thirty times what you would, Pip, in Alabama." And the narrator adds, " […] perhaps Stubb indirectly hinted, that though man loved his fellow, yet man is a money-making animal, which propensity too often interferes with his benevolence" (*M-D*: 395). In this passage, we can see Melville complaining about what Carlyle calls the Cash-nexus. This cash-nexus is the cause of alienation of self-othering. Money, the Dollar, is the fetish that people worship, and is the transform process of which the self, the human dimension into the "Other". This fetish- the Dollar- inhibits the satisfaction of human desires for higher ideals reducing them into membership of a commercial society with no individuals that is selves on their own.

Contemporarily, it is certainly pertinent to the problem which fugitive slaves posed for Northern commercial interests. From an ideological and humanitarian standpoint, the North would be expected at least to admit - if not actually encourage - fugitives. But, as Melville's narrator observes, "man is a money-making animal", and Northern businessmen were overwhelmingly opposed to the abolitionists' efforts to encourage runaway slaves. Abolitionist agitation, in the eyes of such men, posed a dangerous threat to profits, and they were loath to exchange a whale - or anything else - for a black man, like Pip.

We can, then, say that Pip has an important role. He is delineated as a complex individual with a crucial part to play in the novel, rather than as a stereotyped Negro. Melville has probably created Pip to humanize the mad Ahab and to make us see the black boy's

humanity. He makes Pip a Negro and calls attention to this fact both in the prayer and in the opening lines of "*The Castaway*." In the latter scene, Melville sets up the theme of human isolation and its relation to slavery and race. Pip's despair, his belief that he has been abandoned by the ship, is the product of his life as a slave, a sense that he cannot count as a human; and this reveals Melville's concern with slavery, especially the plight of the fugitive slave.

Daggoo, one of the Pequod's harpooners, is described as "a gigantic, coal-black negro-savage" from Africa. Melville takes the opportunity to introduce explicit Negro-white comparisons, in which the latter comes off second best: "a white man standing before him [Daggoo] seemed a white flag come to beg truce of a fortress" (*M-D*: 127). Again, there is ambivalence in Melville's description of the black African. On the one hand, the character's portrait fits the complacent American stereotype of the Negro as "a gigantic" and "savage"; on the other hand, there is something of the noble savage convention, "Daggoo retained all his barbaric virtues", where the Negro is not docile and self-effacing. Instead, Daggoo, "the imperial negro", is proud of his race. In chapter *Midnight, Forecastle* he states: "What of that? Who's afraid of black's afraid of me! I'm quarried out of it" (Ibid.178).

The black character allows Melville to introduce an important theme: racial relationship between the white man and the black man. When Daggoo is challenged by another sailor who taunts him, "Thy race is the undeniable dark side of mankind--develish dark at that", he cries, leaping on his opponent "White skin, white liver!" (Ibid) The African calls the other's bluff, and in the ensuing fight Melville makes clear that this is not just another skirmish between sailors. It is a contest between black man and white man. We feel Melville, here, clearly on the Negro's side.

The last Negro to appear in the novel is the old Cook Fleece. He is introduced as a comic character when Stubb has some fun ordering the old black to deliver a message to

the sharks: "tell 'em they are welcome to help themselves civilly […] but they must keep quiet." It is true that the sermon to the sharks mixes humor with a serious bit of philosophizing pertinent to the novel's theme; however, Fleece's thick dialect: "Fellow-critters: I'se ordered here to say dat you must stop dat dam noise dare" (Ibid. 288) reveals Melville stereotyping this one Negro when he has taken care to avoid such treatment of the others in *Moby-Dick.* He tells us:

> The old black, […] came shambling along from his galley, for, like many old blacks, there was something the matter with his knee-pans, which he did not keep well scoured like his other pans; this old Fleece, as they called him, came shuffling and limping along, assisting his step with his tongs, which after a clumsy fashion, were made of straightened iron hoops; this old Ebony floundered along, and in obedience to the word of command, came to a dead stop on the opposite side of Stubb's sideboard; when, with both hands folded before him, and resting on his two-legged cane, he bowed his arched back still further over, at the same time sideways inclining his head, so as to bring his best ear into play.
>
> (Ibid.287)

The above passage reveals an Africanist discourse where the Negro is stereotyped through his dialect and his comic behavior. The scene between Fleece and Stubb continues for two pages, and according to critics, in those pages Fleece plays his comic role on cue. Frantz Fanon considers that the relationship between the black and white is analogous to that of the relationship between an adult and a child. In his observations, he recalls seeing whites speak condescendingly to blacks, like using dialects. He notes: "A white man addressing a Negro behaves exactly like an adult with a child and start smirking, whispering, patronizing, [and] cozening" (Fanon, 1967:31). To talk in this way is to say to the Negro, "You'd better keep your place" (Ibid. 34). Is Melville using the Negro dialect to show the inferiority of the black and the superiority of the white?

It might be interesting to speculate why Melville has stereotyped this one Negro when he has taken care to avoid such treatment of the others in *Moby-Dick.* For Eleanor E. Simpson the simplest explanation is that Melville needed comic relief at this point and furnished it

through these characters, Fleece and Stubb. If we can also speculate, we suggest an Africanist discourse where the comic scene and the Negro dialect may refer to Minstrelsy where the black entertains the white (Fleece and Stubb), and the old black obeying the white man's orders may refer to the master-slave relationship; in other words, to an important contemporary issue.

The basic issue in the United States of 1850s was slavery, particularly, the expansion of slavery into the territories. Those who favored expansion argued that it was legal under the so-called Calhoun Doctrine. The latter was written in December 1828 by John C. Calhoun, then Vice president under John Quincy Adams. The document was a protest against the Tariff of 1828, also known as the Tariff of Abominations. The document stated that a state has the right to reject a federal law. They had planned a convention for June in Nashville, Tennessee, where a vote for secession would have been taken. But in January the "Grand Master of Compromise", Henry Clay, proposed a series of resolutions that, by May, developed into a compilation of legislation designed to preserve the Union- at the price of principle. Part of that compilation was the Second Fugitive Slave Act, which took effect on September 18. In other words, the act not only made illegal to assist a fugitive slave but required any person, if called upon, to assist with the recapture and detention of any fugitive. The effect of the act was to exasperate many who were indifferent to slavery itself. As Bruce Levine expresses it in his book, *Half Slave and Half Free: The Roots of the Civil War*:

> So long as slavery seemed geographically contained and remote, free-state residents could despise it without feeling much direct personal involvement in it workings; slavery could thus remain the peculiar institution of the South, not a problem or responsibility of the North. By sending slave hunters into the free states and requiring even anti-slavery citizens to aid them, however, the new law made such rationalization impossible.
>
> (B. Levine, 1992:189)

These political events had certainly influenced Melville's writing. At that time, Melville purchased a farm and took up residence in Massachusetts, which was an abolitionist stronghold. Melville himself wrote in *Moby-Dick* "Though I wrote the Gospels in this century, I should die in the gutter" (*M-D*: 559).

The chapter on *Fast-Fish* and *Loose- Fish* may be read as an elaborate and satirical reference to the Fugitive Slave Act itself, especially when Melville states:

> It is not a saying in every one's mouth, Possession is half the law: that is, regardless of how the thing came into possession? But often possession is the whole of the law. What are the sinews and souls of Russian surfs and Republican slaves but Fast-Fish, whereof possession is the whole of the law?
>
> (Ibid. 381)

The above passage reveals Melville's figurative language to speak about his racial position as an American man in the mid-nineteenth-century United States. The passage follows, "What was Poland to the Czar?" (Ibid) The question could have been asked to Conrad. We suggest that Conrad was at one time a victim of a 'Fast-Fish'- law which dispossessed him of both his land and family. It can also refer to Americans demonstrations which occurred in 1831, to express their solidarity with the Polish people oppressed by the Russian Tsar and denied independence. "The eminent clergy Lyman Beecher fervently invoked the Divine Blessing on the cause of the Poles, and the civil and religious freedom-praying that the rod of the oppressor might be broken, and the oppressed of all nations be emancipated" (Ian Tyrrell, 2007:42).

There is further evidence that Melville's alertness to the problem and dissatisfaction with the Fugitive Slave Act had found expression in *Moby-Dick*. Two men close to Melville were involved in the case of Thomas Simms, a fugitive slave from Georgia who was arrested in Boston. He was judged in the Massachusetts Supreme Court in April 1851, and he was

ordered by Shaw to return to Savannah, where he received a public whipping. During his trial, an iron chain had encircled the court building, together with an armed guard of police. The Simms case served to revive the abolitionists' animosity. Melville's father-in-law, Lemuel Shaw, was Chief Justice of that court, and his friend Richard Henry Dana was one of the attorneys retained to defend Simms (Charles H. Foster, 1961:30-5). Shaw had been a close friend of the Melville family even before Herman's marriage to his daughter, after which the bond of affection between the two men had grown stronger. Melville, probably, discussed the Simms case with his father-in-law.

Foster states, "*Moby-Dick* produced a democratic and antislavery fable [. . .], a revolt against Judge Shaw" (Foster, 1961: 55). Foster suggests that Father Mapple's sermon (Chapter 9) and the role of the Negro Pip are among Melville's later insertions, and that the sermon covertly expresses Melville's dissatisfaction with Judge Shaw's handling of the Simms case. Other critics note that major revisions of *Moby-Dick* were made in the spring of 1851, possibly at the time of the Simms trial. Thus, two events pertinent to the fugitive slave issue took place during the course of the composition of *Moby-Dick* and may have figured in its repeated revision. It would appear that, as the critics suggest, particular passages do allude to slavery and perhaps specifically to the Simms case. This would seem plausible in view of the preacher's exhortation that we must destroy all sin, though "[we] pluck it out from under the robes of Senators and Judges" (Ibid. 16-20). For Melville, "Judge" might well mean Lemuel Shaw. We consider that Melville's characterization of the Negroes aboard the Pequod was not only consciously intended as a reaction to Shaw's conservatism, but also a racial discourse of the Negro as the Other and show the assumption that the slave is a property rather than a person, that legalism rather than conscience humanitarianism is adequate to decide the Negro's status.

The allusion to slavery can also be perceived in the tale of the harpooner who left off whaling to go on a trading ship on a voyage to Africa, which might have seemed to connect the enterprise of whaling to that of slaving- as might the fact that Melville steers the *Pequod* to the Pacific not by the "Cape Horn"(*M-D*:26) route that Ishmael anticipates, and that Melville followed on in his own voyages; but "by way of the Cape of Good Hope, thus causing the fictional vessel to follow the course that would have been steered by a Salem slaver bound for the Guinea Coast" (Bradley, 1997: 144). For Melville, this 'Africanist Other' in Morrison's word becomes a means of thinking about slavery as an exploration of ethics and morality. This issue is also revealed in another fictional work, *White-Jacket.* In this novel, Melville presents flogging in explicitly theatrical terms, with actors, victims, audience, and intricate spatial arrangement. On the deck of the frigate *Neversink*, Melville shows how the national drama of freedom and slavery is enacted around the 'skin' of black and white to deal with slavery. Many authors employed the analogy between sailors and slaves, like for example William McNally (1839), and Richard Henry Dana, Jr. (1840).

Melville's *White-Jacket* shows also the sailor/slave exploitation. Samuel Otter argues that this analogy is often used by naval reformers and labor activists to appropriate the figure of the black slave and the experience of the chattel slavery in order to advance the politics of white oppression and to establish a hierarchy of suffering (Otter, 1998:27); whereas Toni Morrison considers that the construction of blackness and enslavement could be found not only with the not-free but also, with the dramatic polarity created by skin color, the projection of not-me.

> What rose up out of collective needs to allay internal fears and to rationalize external exploitation was an American Africanism- a fabricated brew of darkness, otherness, alarm, and desire that is uniquely American.
>
> (Morrison, 1992:38)

The result, as in Melville's *White-Jacket*, the jacket can be considered as a complexion or skin that expresses meaning of black/white coding color:

> "Jacket", cried I? "You must change your complexion! You must hie to the dyers and be dyed, that I may live. I have but one poor life, White Jacket, and that life I cannot spare. I cannot consent to die for *you*, but I cannot die without irreparable loss, and running the eternal risk".
>
> (*WJ*: 78)

Despite the joking tone of the narrative this passage invites the seriousness of the topic: the danger in which the jacket's white color places the narrator. The white Jacket may display biographical exigencies; there was an ample supply of blue naval jackets in the frigate on which Melville served. One of which Melville himself certainly wore. Melville's emphasis on the jacket- its confinement, its capillary attraction, and its color- evokes the treatments of skin color and texture in narratives of slavery and in antebellum African American fiction (Otter, 1998:30). Like black skin, the narrator's white jacket renders him vulnerable. Like black skin, the color of the jacket shows him ominous, the sign of his difference and his degradation. The same degradation and danger expressed through the black skin in *Heart of Darkness* where the black slaves in the chain gang episode died because of the black color of their complexions. White-Jacket's cry resonates in the natives' lament in *Heart of Darkness*. Melville, in this novel, represents whiteness as subject to the kind of anxious regard usually associated with blackness, as the blackness in Conrad's fiction.

This struggle over 'skin' will be dramatized in *Moby-Dick*, especially in the chapter titled "The Blanket" where Melville's question: "what and where is the skin of the whale?" (*M-D*: 297) The chapter "The Whiteness of the Whale" also reinforces the racial discourse in this novel, when Ishmael remarks that there is a "vague, nameless horror […], which at times by its intensity completely overpowered all the

rest; and yet so mystical and well-nigh ineffable was it, that I almost despair of putting it in a comprehensible form". He adds: "It was the whiteness of the whale that above all things appalled me" (Ibid. 189). The despair mentioned here is more apparent later when Ishmael exclaims, "But how can I hope to explain myself" (Ibid). Then, the narrator continues with an extended account of the qualities of whiteness in the world, where it is associated with beauty, nobility, and, even, divinity. And yet, he declares, there "lurks an elusive something in the innermost idea of this hue, which strikes more of panic to the soul than that redness which affrights in blood" (Ibid. 190). We may note here that Ishmael's representation of whiteness depends upon its elusiveness, that his account of it is founded not upon what it is, but upon what it is not or what it is more than what he has tried to express. The narrator continues, not with a closer consideration of possible definitions of whiteness, but with examples of various responses to the color: the terror inspired by the polar bear, the magical significance of the albatross, and the intrinsically repellent nature of the "albino man". In this chapter, the narrator is providing examples to express the power of whiteness and also many possible causes for this power, and with each example the essence of whiteness in relation to race becomes more complex and vague.

Near the end of the chapter Ishmael admits his failure to solve the 'incantation of this whiteness', which is both the symbol of spiritual things and "the intensifying agent in things most appalling to mankind". He concludes the chapter by questions and speculations about "whiteness":

> Is it, that as an essence whiteness is not so much a color as the visible absence of color, and at the same time the concrete of all colors; it is for these reasons that there is such a dumb blankness, full of meaning, in a wide landscape of snows – a colorless, all – color of atheism from which

> we shrink?" "[…] And of all these things the Albino whale was the symbol. Wonder ye then at the fiery hunt?"
>
> (*M-D*: 196-7)

So, "whiteness" means a multitude variety of thoughts and associations. This impossibility to define "whiteness" is, perhaps, Melville's way to show that the real world is a world of different colors and the white color can refer to the blackness of life that most men try deliberately to ignore.

The question of whiteness leads to a second, equally important point: a homogenous "West" that stays within the terms of a racial framework. What is the "West" and why would we want to evoke this highly ideological and Eurocentric concept? We consider that not only is the referent of the "West" highly elusive, but the use of the concept ends up confirming the racialized framework it seeks to mark and displace in the two writers' works. As Naoki Sakai puts it, "the West is [n]either a geographic territory with an affiliated population, [n]or a unified cultural and social formation. It remains always a putative unity; its unity is preordained regardless of its inherent fragmentation and dispersal. It is in fact a mythic unity" (Sakai, 2005:180). The argument here is that the West may seem to serve as practical shorthand for unequal power relations, for, as Sakai continues, "The West-and-the-Rest distinction can never be free of the aura of racism" (Ibid.191). In seeking to explore that 'aura', we shall attempt to demonstrate the internal heterogeneity of Europe and North America, which serve as part of a more thoroughgoing indictment of imperial politics and legacies that draw attention to the parallels as well as differences between forms of violence inside and outside the West.

Eric J. Sundquist in *Empire and Slavery in American Literature 1820-1865,* suggests that Melville "was in quest not of a white whale alone but of white ideology- that is, the assumptions governing the imperial venture that, in its contradictory combination of virtue and vice, asserted and sought to extend European

and American empire" (2006:9). For him, *Moby Dick* showed the Euro- American world in contention with others- the world of enslaved Africans (Ibid). However, we consider that in *Moby- Dick* the presence of Africa is also positively represented through its culture.

In the chapter "Midnight, Forecastle", sailors from different nationalities are attracted by the African music of the tambourine. "They were nearly all Islanders in the *Pequod*, Isolatoes too, I call such," Melville writes, "not acknowledging the common continent of men, but each Isolato living on a separate continent of his own." (*M-D*175) The crew of the *Pequod* is attracted by the music and dance, "federated along one keel". The French sailor introduces the Ring Shout, the most influential slave dance, to the reader: " Form, now, Indian-file, and gallop into the double-shuffle? Throw yourselves! Legs! legs!" (Ibid) This passage shows the influence of African culture in America- the rhythms that influenced the development of jazz and jazz dance. The sustained presentation of slave music and dance in *Moby-Dick* denotes that Melville was exposed to African culture practice in Albany and New York City as a teenager, and during his voyages. His trip on the *Acushnet* can be seen as an example of cultural interaction between black and white sailors. The *Acushnet* with its mixture of free Negroes, Portuguese, and others who came from the north of Europe together with Americans constituted a cultural laboratory, in which Melville might thrive as a student of that difference he increasingly came to value. Sterling Stuckey in his remarkable essay, "*The Tambourine in Glory: African Culture and Melville's Art*" states: "Melville gives primary attention, in *Moby Dick*, to an African aesthetics that captures the tempo of an increasingly complex American civilization" (1998:59).

The presentation of slave music and dance as a positive cultural American heritage, in *Moby-Dick*, reveals the African American identity and denotes Melville's shame towards slavery. Melville might have read David Walker's fiery pamphlet, an *Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World*, which had appeared in 1828 and which some had held responsible for Turner's rebellion, a successful slave uprising in American history which occurred in Southampton, Virginia. The central paradox of American democracy that lay at the core of arguments over slavery is well expressed in the following quote that we consider worth to write:

> Man, in all ages and all nations of earth, is the same. Man is a peculiar creature- he is the image of God, though he may be subjected to the most wretched conditions upon earth, yet the spirit and feeling which constitute the creature, man, can never be entirely erased from his breast, because God […] planted it in his heart… The whites knowing this, they are afraid that we, being men, and not brutes, will retaliate, and woe will be to them; therefore, that dreadful fear, together with an avaricious spirit, and the natural love in them, to be called masters […] bring them to the resolve that they will keep us in ignorance and wretchedness, as long as they possibly can, and make the best of their time, while it lasts.
>
> (J. Sundquist, 2006: 20)

Conrad, probably, shares this shame towards slavery, the colonial system that he himself observed in the Congo. In fact, he was probably influenced by his hard experience in the Congo and also by the account of Commander R.H. Bacon, who traveled in Benin and described horrors: "[…] everywhere death, barbarity and blood, and smells that is hardly seem right for human beings to smell and yet live!" (Quoted in Fothergill, 1989:10) The first Negroes seen by Marlow are full of vitality; but as he goes in, he meets first men reduced to slavery, then mere shadows left to die like animals.

What is important in the New World was its claim to freedom but what was disturbing was "the presence of the unfree within the heart of the democratic experiment" (Morrison, 1992:48). "Born in genocide" in its wars against American

Indians and further disfigured" by slavery, wrote Martin Luther King, Jr., in *Why We Can't Wait* (1964), the United States had betrayed, rather than fulfilled, the blessings of liberty. This can also be applied to Europe. When Conrad came to England at the end of the nineteenth century, England had already known a process of democratization that changed completely the social fabric at home, yet a colonial system based on racism in the colonies. This reversal aspect that shapes the British society is an important theme in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*.

The debate over 'Africanism' in relation to Conrad's fictional work, *Heart of Darkness*, has started with Chinua Achebe's terms "Bloody racist" (1977:787) in his essay, "*An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's Heart of Darkness*". By pointing out Marlow's horrific depiction of the Africans he encounters as mute "savages", Achebe highlights what he considers a clear-cut racism inherent in Conrad's work towards the black Africans. Achebe's critique has elicited responses that either defend or condemn Conrad. On the one hand, some of these researches completely oppose Achebe's view by highlighting Conrad's criticism of European colonialism by showing the prejudice towards the natives considering them as victims of such colonialism. The most notable proponents of this idea are formulated by Hunt Hawkins and Brian Shaffer. Hawkins points out in his essay "Conrad's Critique of Imperialism in *Heart of Darkness*" (1979) that Marlow, in many instances, attacks the "folly" of the Europeans, and more specifically the barbarity of Kurtz. By exposing the flaws of the white colonists, Hawkins argues that Conrad parodies European imperialism, which in turn makes Marlow's criticism of the natives less pointedly racist. In essence, Hawkins argues that since Marlow criticizes both whites and blacks, he cannot be considered racist. In the same way, Brian Shaffer argues that *Heart of Darkness* "invokes, only to destroy, [the] norms, values, and myths [of] imperialist civilization" (1992: 230). By highlighting the way in which Conrad picks apart Herbert Spencer's idea of inevitable social progress - one can see this in

Conrad's intentional muddling of the lines between trade and war and between militancy and industriousness - Conrad "disarms the rhetoric of imperialist civilization" (Ibid. 52). According to Schaffer, this picking apart of imperialism overrides any racist sentiments that Marlow expresses during his voyage. On the other hand, other researches completely support Achebe's argument that Conrad is a racist.

So, Achebe's attack on Conrad opened up a range of interrelated problems. It is clear that most of the research done on racism in *Heart of Darkness* has missed the ironic discourse that shows more the idea of Africanism in the representation of the black. The narrative of *Heart of Darkness* embodies ambivalent meanings where it is hard to state Conrad's discourse over racism. Edward Said in *Culture and Imperialism* states:

> Conrad's realization is that if, like narrative, imperialism has monopolized the entire system of representation […] your self-consciousness as an outsider can allow you actively to comprehend how the machine works, given that you and it are fundamentally not in perfect synchrony or correspondence. Never the wholly incorporated and fully acculturated Englishman, Conrad therefore preserved an ironic distance in each of his works.
>
> (Said, 1993:20)

For Said, the fact that Conrad was 'an outsider' might explain the irony in his fictional works in relation to Colonialism and the native "Other". A significant example worth citing here is when Marlow remarks that the native African, who was his fireman, "was as edifying as seeing a dog in a parody of breeches and a feather hat walking on his hind- legs. A few months of training had done for that really fine chap" (HD: 52). Is Marlow expressing European prejudice of racial superiority? Marlow adds: "He ought to have been clapping his hands and stamping his feet on the bank, instead of which he was hard at work […] He was useful because he had been instructed" (Ibid).

For Achebe Marlow's statement shows Conrad dehumanizing Africans in *Heart of Darkness* by denying them the presence and individuality accorded to European characters in the novel. Let's see his view on the above passage:

> Having shown us Africa in the mass, Conrad then zeros in on a specific example, giving us one of his rare descriptions of an African who is not just limbs or rolling eyes…He might not exactly admire savages clapping their hands and stamping their feet but they have at least the merit of being in their place, unlike this dog in a parody of breeches. For Conrad things (and persons) being in their place is of the utmost importance.
>
> (1977:788)

So, is Marlow expressing European prejudice of racial superiority? Achebe implies that Conrad evokes ethnocentric racial stereotypes of savages stamping and staying in their place; i.e., the blacks in the 'jungle', while Europeans have advanced beyond that state. Terry Collits is among recent critics who consider that Conrad "was not a racist because he never engaged with racist discourse" (Collits, 2005: 96). He considers that Achebe's basic 'error' consists in misreading *Heart of Darkness* as "a stable embodiment of Conrad's political beliefs and attitude towards blacks" (Ibid. 98). We consider that the narrative of *Heart of Darkness* embodies ambivalent meanings where it is hard to state Conrad's racial discourse over an 'Africanist presence'. The narrator's use of modality, "ought to", expresses the expectation of a readership for racial prejudice, and shows Conrad engaged in an ambivalent racial discourse.

If we take Conrad's ideas of 'right place' and 'displacement' the meaning will change. We think that the irony turns against the Europeans, those who have chosen to put themselves in the wrong place, bringing their 'improving knowledge', and their 'instruction' to hide their financial motives. What Marlow, for example, perceives as the "incrustability" of his surrounding is the degree to which it threatens him. Despite its 'strangeness' or 'otherness', Marlow feels a 'kinship' with the jungle; it is monstrous and yet it is attractive to him even if he cannot comprehend

and therefore cannot control or contain it, he is aware that it is a source of power and force. This shows an inversion of power between the white man and the colonized land. The relationship of colonizer to the colonized is one of dominant possession. The colonizer assumes that he owns and controls the colonized space and can use its indigenous inhabitants, as he wishes. But for Conrad, the land is a space not controlled by but controlling Marlow and later shown to control Kurtz. The equation, then, that the white man's act of possession towards the 'strange land' is just inverted.

The state of confusion that Marlow experiences after the death of the black helmsman gives another dimension to this event. The horror of the death of the helmsman makes Marlow confused, which is expressed in his panicked concern to change his shoes, now uncomfortably clogged with blood. The disruptive intensity shows Marlow close to the black, seeing in him a lost person, despite their difference. For with their work "neither that fireman nor I [Marlow] had any time to peer into our creepy thoughts" (*HD:* 53). Here, there is identification between the self and the "Other". Freud tells us that communication with the other is often a communication with the self. When people lament the death of others, they are in fact weeping over their own through identification and kinship with the dead.

Reading this passage from a postcolonial perspective reveals the complexity of the relation between 'colonizer and colonized'. The "black death-mask", in the passage, reminds us of the binary terms in Frantz Fanon', *Black Skin, White Masks* (1967). Skin and masks both identify and hide. In performances of Greek tragedy, audiences identified with the hero represented by the mask rather than the nondescript Athenian actor whose face is not masked. In the Eurocentric world, skin-color is always culturally loaded, and may be a strong element in the formation of

subjectivities whose identity it masks. The skin-color signifies identity and the white color or "whiteness" refers to superiority and justifies colonialism and racism. The political and ideological function of racism was to sustain the domination of the white man, the colonizer. Marlow's reference to "black mask" reveals anxieties comparable to those engendered by the dislocation in Fanon's title: black\white, skin\masks. We think, the irony lies in the color 'black' which is associated with death and mask. The first refers to the atrocities that the native has abided, and the second - the mask, is not natural as the skin, but is something artificial that can be removed. What skin and masks have in common is that both mark the interface between the self and the world. Moreover, they share with language this spatial positioning between differences and contrasts. All three, skin- masks - language, are used artistically, as in a Minstrel performance, by Conrad, to display the paradoxes of representation.

It is true that the natives are in no way individuated. They are "prehistoric"; their frenzied howling and dancing are, like the wilderness, monstrous and attractive, whose incomprehensibility and exotic 'otherness' are equally attributed to them. The landscape is, thus, virtually erased of 'the human' – in any social-cultural manifestation. The Africans in the narrative are described through negative words. The word 'savage', for example, is used several times, and its different meanings refer to: brutality, violence and primitiveness. The reality for Marlow in Africa "was paddled by black fellows. You could see from afar the white of their eyeballs glistening" (HD: 20). The blank space is full of "people, mostly black and naked, mov[ing] about like ants" (Ibid. 21-22). Rejected back into a distant past, the natives are reduced to separate anatomical parts, "black hands, a mass of hands"; " naked breasts, arms, legs, glaring eyes – the bush was swarming with human limbs in movement, glistening, of bronze color" (Ibid.64).

These phrases assimilate the human bodies into the trees and bushes, underscoring the stereotype of primitive savagery – the black as a contemporary ancestor, as a physical animal, and as a human body without intellect.

The whole novel draws heavily upon a body of cultural texts rich in images and assumptions about Africa and the African as primitive, which pervaded mid and late nineteenth-century European culture – and which still have their powerful representatives today. Achebe considers that Conrad's work is a part of a whole discourse about Africa that includes "whole libraries of books devoted to the same purpose" (Achebe, 1977:783). By 'Cultural texts' we mean not just adventure novels, but other literary forms – travel journals, missionary reports, newspapers, illustrated magazines – and mass cultural enterprises like the *Great Exhibition of 1851* or scientific exhibitions. Via such media, Africa and the Africans were being represented for Europeans understanding and 'consumption' as the 'savage' and the darkest wild. These representations produced and endorsed stereotypic images of the African as the "Other". Yet, Marlow makes up his value judgement by noting, "They [natives] wanted no excuse for being there" (Ibid. 20); meaning, perhaps, that the "Other" is Marlow not the native.

Contrary to the joyful African music in the *Pequod* the only music heard by Marlow is the chains' noise of the slaves. The 'clinking' sound in *Heart of Darkness* refers to slavery in Africa. Marlow gives us details of what he has witnessed in Africa just as Conrad had witnessed the same atrocities in the Congo. The chain-gang episode shows Africanism as "a dark and abiding presence", Conrad using it as a "mediating force" (Morrison, 1992:46) to speak about this colonial atrocity. Marlow gives us details of what he witnesses. He gives us images of appalling decay and futile suffering, waste and physical atrocity, and this is surely accentuated by these

following phrases: “A slight clinking behind me made me turn my head. Six black men advanced in a file, toiling up the path […] I could see every rib […] each had an iron collar on his neck, and all were […] rhythmically clinking” (*HD*: 22). The accumulation of particular concrete sense impressions (aural and visual) - clinking, advancing blacks, iron collars - slowly consolidate into meaning. Marlow hears a clinking and gradually he attributes signification to it: it is the chain of a chain gang. Later, the description is more violent with the description of the “shapes” in the grove of death. The following phrases- the face, the black bones, the eyelids, the orbs, the bundles of acute angles, and dying laborers- express Conrad’s demonic image of the barbarous reduction of a whole human being to dislocated parts.

We consider that the ‘chain gang’ episode dramatizes the self-other dialectic where the “Other” is reduced to a slave, a disposable object. The ‘clinking’ sound refers to slavery in Africa. In his descriptions of the African natives, Marlow attempts to deny the power of the “Other” he fears by resorting to stereotypes. His account of the natives, whom he acknowledges only in generic descriptions, is reductive. “Dark human shapes could be made out in the distance [...] two bronze figures, leaning on tall spears, stood in the sunlight under fantastic head-dresses of spotted skins, warlike and still in statuesque repose” (*HD*: 87). Even when described individually, they are stereotyped: “The man seemed young - almost a boy - but you know with them it’s hard to tell” (Ibid. 25). Marlow’s stereotypical descriptions of the natives serve a strategy of containment that enables him to deny both their importance for him and his affinity with them. As when He claims, “I missed my late helmsman awfully […] Perhaps you will think it passing strange this regret for a savage who was no more account than a grain of sand in black Sahara” (Ibid.73). Marlow’s kinship as “a subtle bond” (Ibid) shows his humanity. Thus, we dare to suggest that Conrad’s ‘strategy’ is to refer to Africanism without adhering completely to its racial discourse. His

‘message’ is to make us ‘see’ the atrocities caused by the ideology of difference celebrated in the nineteenth century in Europe, which causes the depersonalization of the natives regarding them as slaves and disposable matter, well-illustrated in the narrative like when Marlow evokes: “A nigger was being beaten nearby [...] he was screeching most horribly. I saw him later, for several days, sitting in a bit of shade looking very sick and trying to recover himself...” (Ibid.34) A little further, Marlow adds: “The hurt nigger moaned feebly somewhere nearby, and then fetched a deep sigh that made me mend my pace away from there” (Ibid.37). The scene is so unbearable that Marlow walks hastily to run away from it. It results from the above consideration that the African people are actually victims of the white men’s savagery.

B. Ishmael’s/Marlow’s Reflection on the African Other

In our view, Melville and Conrad render the racial discourse through their narrators. It is through Ishmael that Melville gets inside the head of antebellum ethnology: examining the meanings of skin, defining, ranking and separating bodies and cranes. He also refers to evolutionary thought through the classification and the description of the Leviathan. Ishmael explains that “pre-adamite traces” of Leviathan can be seen both in “the stereotype plates of nature, and in limestone and marl bequeathed his ancient bust”. In “The Fossil whale” chapter, we find geological references, which consider the leviathan as “one of the most extraordinary creatures which the mutations of the globe have blotted out of existence” (*M-D*: 433), and evolutionary references where the ‘leviathan Skeleton’ are characterized by “partial resemblances to the existing breeds of sea-monsters” (Ibid. 431-4). In chapter “Cetology”, the narrator tries to classify the Leviathan and warns the reader that it “is no easy task” to give “a minute anatomical description of the various species”. He

starts by giving “some systematized exhibition of the whale”; but states, “my object here is simply to project the draught of a systematization of Cetology” (Ibid.137-9).

In chapter *‘Does the whale’s Magnitude Diminish-will he Perish?’* the narrator states that the whales of the present day are superior in magnitude to those whose fossil remains are found in the tertiary System (embracing a distinct geological period prior to man). He concludes that the whale is immortal. To support this idea of immortality and magnitude of whales, Melville used a method of allusions; i.e., reporting what someone else has said or might say about whales. Melville was not a naturalist; his purpose was not to treat biology or zoology. His object was to convey the industry of whaling as practiced in his time, but also to enlarge upon some possible philosophical lessons that might be derived from such considerations. The combination that entered into the book of fact, fancy, symbolism, legend, observation, hyperbole, extrapolation and imagination has much to do with the symbolic context of this work .Thus, one of the possible objects was the contemporary racial discourse based on scientific racial doctrines which proned the superiority of the white race and the inferiority of the black race. Melville refers to ethnology that composes its project by separating human types using phrenology, physiognomy, and craniometry to refer to africanism.

It is through Marlow that Conrad manipulates several aspects of evolutionary thought in *Heart of Darkness*. First, the doctor of the Company measures Marlow’s head to complete his “theory”. This is Conrad’s allusion to the pseudo-scientific theories of his time. The second reference to this evolutionary thought is Marlow’s voyage up the river, at “The Central Station”. He imagines himself as an ich thyosaurus taking a bath. Later, he recalls that “going up that river was like traveling back to the earliest beginnings of the world, when vegetation rioted on the earth and

the big trees were kings" (*HD*: 48). The primeval world which Marlow encounters is wild and uncivilized. Marlow states:

> We were wanderers on prehistoric earth, on an earth that wore the aspect of an unknown planet. We could have fancied ourselves the first of men taking possession of an accursed inheritance, to be subdued at the cost of profound anguish and of excessive toil.
>
> (Ibid. 51)

This evolutionary argument supported the ideology of colonial expansion. By occupying territories all over the world, the European nations had demonstrated that they were the fittest to survive; and the exportation of their various economic, political and religious institutions was therefore a necessary step towards a higher form of human organization in the rest of the world. For Herbert Spencer, the dominance of the white races was itself the result of inherited superiority, and for Benjamin Kidd, in *The Control of the Tropics* (1898), the domination of inferior peoples by white civilization was necessary. The wide acceptance of such racial doctrines gave popular support to the imperialist adventures.

The narrators in both works make us share their assumptions. They stand as credible story-tellers reporting a series of tales, one embedded within the other. They are narrating as if they have a relationship with us that a raconteur has with a familiar audience gathered around him. According to the Bible, Ishmael is the son of Abraham who lived as an exile. The Buddha like pose makes Marlow resemble a 'foreigner'. Both of them, then, have something to communicate through their respective journey of discovery. So, the voyage for the two narrators allows them to encounter foreign lands and other people and both of them try to render their experience through their respective tales.

Marlow has Ishmael's fascination and mystery of a story-teller that much enhances the interest of the tale. Like Melville, Conrad makes Marlow stands as an important voice that allows him to tell things. Conrad claims: "Of all my people he's [Marlow] the one that has never been a vexation to my spirit. A most discreet, understanding man" (Conrad, 1990: xiii). Through Marlow Conrad records both the illusion and violence of imperialism, he even permits his reader to imagine another Africa, the one full of atrocities and violence quite different from the 'exotic' land. Conrad gives Marlow the role of a satirist like the American satirist well expressed by Ishmael.

Ishmael and Marlow are sailors who love sea adventure. Ishmael recalls: "When I go to sea, I go as a simple sailor"; however, Melville makes him *different* from other sailors since Ishmael is also a schoolmaster. Marlow is described by the frame narrator:

> He was the only man of us who still 'followed the sea.' The worst that can be said of him was that he did not represent his class. He was a sea man, but he was a wanderer too, while most seamen lead, if one may so express it, a sedentary life. Their minds are of stay-at-home order, and their home is always with them-the ship-and so is their country-the sea. One ship is very much like another and the sea is always the same.
>
> (*HD*: 7)

Both narrators are exceptional seamen; therefore, there is the idea that 'their country is the sea'. If their home is the ship and their country is the sea, then where is their 'country'? Stephen Clingman notes that the question raised by the word 'country' in relation to Marlow, "is that water - suggesting an oceanography rather than geography - represents an alternative country, a transnational rather than national space" (2009: 36). We consider that both narrators question the notion of identity in relation to the country and nationality. Marlow as Ishmael comes from everywhere and nowhere. "They come from lanes and alleys, streets and avenues- north, east,

south, and west. Yet they all unite" (*MD*: 22). "Their minds are of the stay-at home order, and their home is always with them – the ship, and so is their country – the sea" (*HD:* 8).We can say that Melville and Conrad are not interested in fixed identities. Their vision of men is the vision of a cosmopolitan.

Ishmael states: "I love to sail forbidden seas and land on barbarous coasts" (*M-D*: 26). As a child Marlow has been fascinated by maps, and especially by areas of the globe yet to be 'discovered'. Thus, the 'barbarous coasts' or the 'impenetrable jungle' suggest otherness in both fictional works. Obviously, the narrators' journeys reveal the notion of 'alterity' in both Ishmael's and Marlow's selves and their encounter with the 'Other'. Before reaching the center of the whaling, Nantucket, Ishmael stops in New Bedford. As 'the little packet for Nantucket had already sailed', Ishmael had to find a place to rest till he would embark on his voyage. The 'cheapest' inn where he has to stay is described as: "dreary streets! Blocks of blackness, not houses on either hand, and here and there a candle, like a candle moving in a tomb" (*MD:* 27). Ishmael states:

> It seemed the great Black Parliament sitting in Tophet. A hundred black faces turned around in their rows to peer; and beyond, a black Angel of Doom was beating a book in a pulpit. It was a negro church; and the preacher's text was about the blackness of darkness […]
>
> (Ibid. 28)

Historically, the 'Tophet' was a holy place in the valley of Hinnom south of ancient Jerusalem where human sacrifices, especially those of children, were performed to Moloch. So, Melville's reference to this place may suggest where the slaves are scarified for the benefit of the 'white'. Some critics describe this journey as a descent into hell, and others, as David Bradley, suggest that the place where Ishmael goes is a ghetto. Bradley adds, "[…] the hellishness comes from Ishmael's diction rather than from the nature of what he sees" (1997:134). In fact, Melville refers to otherness where

the black community is entrapped in this 'Tophet' as "Others" and "Ishmael [...] Wretched entertainment at the sign of "The Trap!"'(*M-D*: 28).

A similar journey and its different meanings emerge in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness,* where Marlow's journey may also be seen as a descent into the underworld. In the case of Marlow the descent occurred both in Europe where the city of the Company Headquarters is described as "a white sepulcher" and in the jungle the "enormous wilderness" strongly recalls Melville's 'Blocks of blackness' in *Moby Dick.* So, Marlow is just trying to put words to express what he is actually 'seeing' in his voyage; it is probably, ' the essentials of the matter' that Ishmael had seen in 'the preacher's text', in the above quote, which 'was about the blackness of darkness'. For Ishmael 'that quarter of the town proved all but deserted' and the city where Marlow arrived was 'a narrow and deserted street'. Marlow suggests throughout the story that at the center of things there is meaning and that he is pursuing this meaning. For Ishmael one possible 'truth' or meaning is his meeting with the 'Other'. The 'negro church' passage reveals another 'truth': Melville's treatment of slavery as darkness.

The journeys reveal the narrators expressing africanist discourse. They are constantly aligned to processes of textual interpretation. Both texts refer to the "Other" as a Negro expressing Africanism with different meanings, like the issue of slavery or the issue of colonialism. Through Ishmael, Melville criticizes slavery. The narrator's proclamation "Call me Ishmael" is Melville's symbolic strategy to announce the narrator's affiliation as the son of the slave. In the Book of Genesis, God had cast Ishmael out of the family of Abraham and denied his progeny the promise of God's covenant with Israel. So, Ishmael's question "Who ain't a slave?" is Melville's way of refuting racial discrimination that justifies africanism.

C. Ahab/ Kurtz: 'Interlocutors' of Western Racial Discourse

The racial discourse over Africanism can also be investigated through the main characters of the novels. Ahab and Kurtz, as "white" heroes, ironically, stand as Western interlocutors of Africanism. To reinforce the supremacy of the 'white' race both Melville and Conrad invest their characters – Ahab and Kurtz– with supernatural qualities. Ahab is described as having a mark on his face which is "lividly whitish", (*M-D*: 129) and a "barbaric white leg upon which he partly stood" (*M-D* 130). His "snow-white new ivory leg" echoes Kurtz, the ivory worshipper, who has a 'lofty frontal bone'. Kurtz is described with a head "impressively bald [...] like a ball – an ivory ball" (*HD*: 69). Kurtz can be considered as an Ahab in his desperate and obsessive search for ivory. Marlow, the narrator, presents Kurtz as the object of his pursuit – ivory. He reflects, or projects, what he pursues, and in his pursuit of the external, in the exploitation of the forest- "you would think there was not a single tusk left" (Ibid) – he has himself 'withered' with the wilderness. Just as Ahab, Kurtz exhibits a version of the wrinkled brow in his showing of the Lofty frontal bone.

In the figure of Ahab, Melville makes the reader accept the evolution of a plain old whale–hunter into a heroic quest–figure of Promethean proportions. Ahab is invested with the qualities of a great hero, he is a 'God-like man'. He remains a hero, but not one whose greatness rests merely on traditional or inherited qualities. Melville writes on Ahab:

> This August dignity I treat of is not the dignity of kings and robes, but that abounding dignity which has no robed investiture. Thou salt see it shining in the arm that wields a pick or drives a spike; that democratic dignity which, on all hands, radiates without end from God
>
> (*M-D*: 114).

This shows Melville's process of democratic mythmaking. Melville raises Ahab to a powerful rank and later, as we are going to see it, for both Ahab and Kurtz, he destroys both the myth and the hero.

Both Kurtz and Ahab stand as 'types' for Britain as 'grand empire' and America as 'The promised land'. In the same ironic vein, Kurtz represents the 'white' race. He represents Europe since his "mother was half-English, his father was half-French" (*HD*: 71). Conrad remarked: "I took great care to give Kurtz a cosmopolitan origin" (Conrad, 1990:273). He shows Kurtz's individualism and narcissism – "My intended, my ivory, my station, my river – *(HD*: 70) to show man's obsession with acquiring things. So, Kurtz embodies the European colonizer, the one who "by the awaking of forgotten and brutal instincts, by the memory of gratified and monstrous passions" had been driven "out to the edge of the forest, to the bush towards the gleam of fires" (Ibid.70). Kurtz is described as being "the best agent […] an exceptional man, of the greatest importance!" (Ibid. 27) Conrad goes further by making him stand as "a universal genius" (Ibid.40) perhaps because wilderness "had whispered to him things about himself which he did not know, things of which he had no conception till he took council with this great solitude" (Ibid. 83). Kurtz is respected and feared, "you don't talk with that man – you listen to him" (Ibid. 76). The charismatic Kurtz, brilliant yet depraved, corrupted yet fascinating, is the monstrous product of imperial Europe.

Kurtz, the "remarkable man" whose motives and fate are deeply representative, stands as a 'type'of the 'grandeur' of the British empire. Kurtz went to Africa, first of all, to make money; he is thus a representative of economic individualism in a free market place. He joined the British colonizing company in the Congo where he became a first class agent. He is a representative of the moralities and values of his age. He

embodies the Victorian ethics and values. He stands for the ideal of the self-made man. Kurtz was not rich enough for his fiancée's parents, and Marlow infers that "it was his impatience of comparative poverty," (Ibid. 108) which drove him out to the Congo. He is a hard worker and an energetic person who relies on himself to achieve his aims. In fact, he gathers a great wealth in Africa and he is the most important agent in the Inner station, the one that accumulates the great amount of ivory.

Kurtz presents another morality of his age. The English people, during the Victorian period, were convinced that they belonged to a superior civilization. So, they considered themselves in Africa as wanderers and travelers that expanded civilization elsewhere in 'dark places'. So, in the Congo, Kurtz is supposed to be the idealist European who comes to the 'dark' continent for the sake of a philanthropic mission. The irony is that he seems to export idolatry in the form of worship for material goals, as the self-fetish. The harlequin confirms Kurtz's supreme authority in the station: "He came to them with thunder and lightning, you know - and they had never seen anything like it" (Ibid.80). Marlow listens with interest as the manager cites Kurtz's lofty aim to make each station a beacon lighting the way of progress, a center for humanizing, improving, and instructing. But there, Kurtz degenerates and behaves like a 'barbarian'.

There are further parallels between the two main characters. Kurtz, like Ahab, is lately introduced in the book; both writers sustain a kind of suspense towards their main characters. For example in the following quotation Melville gives a portrait of Ahab in advance before he shows him to the reader:

> And when these things unite in a man of greatly superior natural force, with a globular brain and a ponderous heart; who has also by the stillness and seclusion of many loog night watches in the remotest waters…
>
> (*M-D*: 73)

It is only in chapter twenty-eight that Ahab finally appears "Reality outran apprehension; Captain Ahab stood upon his quarter-deck" (Ibid. 129). This reality is heightened into something heroic. "His whole high, broad form, seemed made of solid bronze, and shaped in an unalterable mould, like Cellini's cast Perseus" (Ibid. 129). This figurative technique of announcing a character before showing him reminds us of Shakespeare's drama. Nothing about Ahab is ordinary; in fact, Melville presents him as something 'grand'. The rumors too, are used to magnify the characters and make them appear as heroic figures. Conrad first alludes to Kurtz then gradually, builds a heroic stature round him and realizes a pattern for a hero.

Another common point that has its importance to be cited for both Ahab and Kurtz is the demon-intoxication or possession. Ahab is himself possessed or demon-intoxicated and this possession can be seen as an impressive achievement of Melville's mythic investiture. Melville rests the case of Ahab's demonism on psychological grounds. The same process is done by Conrad towards Kurtz: "The wilderness… 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" (*HD*: 69). These words may echo Melville's: "[…] Ahab had cherished a wild vindictiveness against the whale, all the more fell for that in his frantic morbidness he at last came to identify with him" (*M-D*: 185). Melville goes on to describe the rise of Ahab's monomania, when, after the fight, lying in his hammock and rocked by the storms of the Patagonian Cape, "this torn body and gashed soul blend into one another; and so interfusing, made him made". He adds, "[…] far from having lost his strength, Ahab, […] did now possess a thousand fold more potency than ever he had sanely brought to bear upon any one reasonable object" (Ibid. 186-88). Melville gives us a remarkable account of how a physical

wound unites with mental anguish in a craziness that comes to possess and redirect the mind upon a single insane object. Both Ahab's madness and that of Kurtz's make them see things as they are, but as we cannot bear to have them.

The idea of the 'white' man's greed and profit in *Heart of Darkness* is suggested Through Kurtz's greed. Kurtz as an imperialist is Europe that shows exploitation and hypocrisy. Conrad shows us that the company's real objective was wealth derived from a trade in bones. The fragile veneer of western civilization, the great white lie of the 'White Man's Burden' with its implicit, pseudo-altruism, must be accepted if the natives of the 'Dark Continent' are to be improved, enlightened, and transformed into white people with black skins.

In a large historical perspective the evolutionary optimism of the mid-century can be seen as having weakened the two main lines of demarcation, which had traditionally defined man's estate. There was the upper one, which separated man from God and the angels; and there was the lower one, which separated him from the animals. But evolutionary thought had introduced a new mobility into the chain of being, and this was widely supposed to make it possible for Man to transcend the upper barrier, as he had already transcended that which separated him from the apes.

Kurtz's authority in the station is supreme; he takes on semi-divine attributes. The natives adore and 'worship' him, and even human sacrifices "at certain midnight dances ending with unspeakable rites, which as far as I reluctantly gathered at various times – were offered up to him – do you understand? –To Mr Kurtz himself" (*HD*: 71). In the wilderness, Kurtz meets the ape and the tiger within himself and release all his "forgotten and brutal instincts" (Ibid.83). When the individual is liberated from the restraining power of what Huxley called the 'artificial conscience' provided by the opinion of his fellows (Europeans), it appears that reason's gift is

powerless against the appetite Kurtz shares with those below him on the evolutionary chain of being. Kurtz loses self-control; he degenerates in exploiting the African natives, by becoming savage and cannibalistic. This is shown through the dried human heads transformed into knobs on the fences surrounding his station. His lust to acquire more and more ivory makes him break down the values and the laws of the human society. Through the portrait of Kurtz Conrad wants to illustrate the complex social moralities of the Victorian period where Kurtz's megalomaniac drive to appropriate the 'dark continent' stands as representative of European colonizers. The process of demonism on psychological grounds done by Conrad towards Kurtz can be seen as an ironical strategy to demolish the "white supremacy".

Ahab's tragic vengeance strangely foreshadows Kurtz's cry The Horror! The Horror! This may refer to Kurtz's savage life, "showing the man who goes down into that hell which is the historical beginning of the human soul, a beginning not outgrown but established in humanity as we know it now, preferring the reality of this hell to the bland lies of the civilization that has overlaid it" (Lionel Trilling, 1967:32-3). Kurtz's concluding cry sounds as an end for both 'white' heroes. Throughout the course of the two novels both protagonists, Ahab and Kurtz, represent America and Europe. *Moby-Dick* can be read as a rejection of the American work ethic where Ahab's pursuit of Moby-Dick can be seen as an explicit rejection of the very foundation of American civilization- the country's doctrine advocating the constant pursuit of wealth. Ahab, as a hunter, is the capitalist whose rapacity modifies nature and destroys the communal values. The white man's insatiable vocation of conquest, according to Leslie Silko in *Storyteller* (1981), might best be imagined as a contest among witches that led to the destruction of the Indians' world and would issue one day in the uranium-fuelled annihilation of the whole planet,

"*They will take this world from ocean to ocean/ They will turn on each other/ They will destroy each other/ Up here"* (Quoted in J. Sundquist, 2006: 16).

The authors' criticism of Africanism as a racist discourse in western thought is done through both Ahab' and Kurtz' demon-intoxication, possession, and megalomania. Through the portrait of Ahab Melville mediates his critique towards the racial anxieties of nineteenth-century America. Similarly, Kurtz stands to illustrate the complex social moralities of the Victorian period where Kurtz's megalomaniac drives to appropriate the 'dark continent'. He stands as the representative of the European colonizer. The process of demonism on psychological grounds done by the two authors towards their main characters, Kurtz and Ahab, can be seen as an ironical strategy to demolish the "white supremacy".

D. Melville's and Conrad's Multivoiced World

The dialogue of the two authors can also be seen in the treatment of important themes in the two novels. The notion of 'civilization and savagery' is linked to the notion of 'Otherness'. If we look at the epigraph which opens this chapter, Darwin describes the 'Fuegians' as 'savages'. The natives' representation of Darwin cannot be applied to Melville's portrait of the savage in *Moby-Dick* where the native is positively represented. Queequeg is not a Negro - he is from one of the South Pacific islands - but he is described as if he were a Negro. He worships a black idol (a "black manikin," a "Congo doll"), and Ishmael's suggestion that a white man is really "a white-washed negro" implies that he was thinking of Queequeg in these terms. Queequeg's cultural roots are in Polynesia. His Congo idol, his ritualistic Ramadhan, his earthly purple-yellow skin color, and his mythical native land of Kokovoko show him as the "Other". Despite his otherness, he is Ishmael's "bosom friend", who expresses kindness, charity, and heroism. First, his appearance in the early chapters of the

novel enables Melville to synthesize many of his Polynesian observations into one important character. Thus, Queequeg, Polynesian Prince, is described as having "excellent blood in his veins" (*M-D*: 70) since his father "was a High Chief". His importance is stated mainly through his coffin, which becomes a transitional element from death to life. In fact, after the ship sinks, Ishmael is saved by the engraved coffin made by his close friend, Queequeg. From death life emerges, in the end. Melville subverts the evangelical Captain Bildad's construction of Queequeg as a "son of darkness" in need of salvation (Ibid: 87), since it is Queequeg who succeeds in converting Ishmael, and his symbolic body. This can be seen as an ironic agent of Ishmael's redemption and rebirth. Queequeg is not Darwin's 'native'.

Throughout his work, Melville emphasized the essential dignity and equality of all men. Phrenologizing Queequeg, Ishmael compares his head to George Washington's: "It had the same long regularly graded retreating slope from above the brows, which were likewise very projecting, like two long promontories thickly wooded on top. Queequeg was George Washington cannibalistically developed" (*M-D*: 50). The comparison between a cannibal and one of America's founding fathers may shock some readers, but it serves to underscore the fundamental humanity they share. Melville questions the racial scientific theory that justifies cultural distinction between the 'civilized' and the 'savage'.

Melville can be seen as a precursor of cultural relativism, which was first developed by the American anthropologist, Boas (1858-1952). The latter believed that the evolutionists were wrong in their conclusions about the progression of cultures. Boas introduced the concepts of historical particularism and cultural relativism. Historical particularism says that each society has its own unique historical development and must be understood as a product of its own history.

Cultural relativism means that a society should be viewed in terms of its practices and values. These ideas led Boas to disagree with genetic determination and other racist ideas.

At the beginning of Queequeg's fasting, Ishmael shows his comprehension and respect for his friend's religious obligation and he even exclaims: "Heaven have mercy on us all – Presbyterians and pagans alike – for we are all somehow dreadfully cracked about the head, and sadly need mending" (*M-D*: 94). Even if Melville shows Ishmael annoyed when he sees Queequeg sitting in the middle of the room, squatting on his hams, and holding Yojo on top of his head for all day long, and considers the primitive religions as "nonsense; bad for the health; useless for the soul; opposed, in short, to the obvious laws of Hygiene and Common Sense (Ibid.98), he reverses the notion of 'pagan' when Queequeg "thought a great pity that such evangelical pagan piety" (Ibid. 99). In this chapter, there is a description of the Ramadan and its ritual as practiced by a native, but at any time, we as readers, feel Melville's criticism or rejection of these beliefs and customs. Instead, we find sentences as "we cannibals must help these Christians," (Ibid.76) or "those people have their grace as well as we" (Ibid. 73). Melville shows primitive cannibalism in an almost positive side where the emphasis is placed on the primitive tribal rites as being customs and traditions without negative connotations. Thus Queequeg "knew a good deal more about the true religion than I [Ishmael] did" (Ibid. 99).

For Timothy Marr Queequeg's deeper role is to place such reciprocal relativism at the service of cultural criticism. By landing the hideous islander in New Bedford, Melville brings savage difference to bear as a witness of the spiritual mettle of sanctimonious New Englanders. By creating Queequeg, Melville realizes his flippant suggestion in *Typee* that "four of five Marquesans Islanders sent to the

United States as Missionaries might be quite as useful as an equal number of Americans dispatched to the Islands in a similar capacity" (Marr, 2005:150). So, in Melville's fiction the representation of the primitive seems to be a medium for commenting allegorically on the absurdities of the 'civilized' world as we know it, "these savages have an innate sense of delicacy, say what you will; it is marvelous how essentially polite they are [...] he treated me with so much civility and consideration, while I was guilty of great rudeness" (*M-D*: 45). Moreover, through his symbolic naturalization of Queequeg, a Polynesian whose cultural location remains a mystery, Melville challenges both the sincerity of American religious and republican inclusiveness. Queequeg plays a crucial role in one of the novel's major thematic developments – the redemption of Ishmael from his initial despair- and in the epilogue, we witness his symbolic redemption from the destruction, which has come about on the rest of the crew.

Ishmael's attitude toward Queequeg shows Melville as more than just a fervent abolitionist; in fact, Ishmael is frequently more radical in his equalitarian views than the abolitionists themselves who, though steady in their opposition to slavery, were considerably less certain about the desirability of social equality and integration. Though they realized that to be consistent they also had to work for equal rights for free Negroes, most abolitionists were nonetheless reluctant to contravene custom and mix socially with black men. The contention aroused over the question of admitting Negroes to the antislavery societies demonstrates how strong this inhibition was. Most abolitionists, it is quite sure, never experienced the close contact with Negroes that Melville had known as a seaman. Therefore, the picture of Ishmael, descended (like Melville himself) from a genteel Yankee family, sharing a bed and becoming "chums" (the seaman's word for friends) with Queequeg, was probably a bit extreme even for the most advanced antislavery man.

Ishmael, faced with the prospect of close contact with Queequeg, is; in fact, less concerned about the latter's race than about his "heathenish" appearance and his cannibalism. Ishmael's decision: "the man's a human being just as I am" discovers that "a simple honest heart; his countenance yet had something in it which was by no means disagreeable. You cannot hide the soul" (*M-D*: 40). Ishmael states: "No more my splintered heart and maddened hand were turned against the wolfish world. This soothing savage had redeemed it. There he sat, his very indifference speaking a nature in which there lurked no civilized hypocrisies and bland deceits [. . .] I'll try a pagan friend, thought I, since Christian kindness has proved but hollow courtesy" (Ibid. 59). The references to "soothing savage" and "civilized hypocrisies" may reveal Melville's sympathy towards other races. The scene where Ishmael and Queequeg were seen together: on the crossing to Nantucket, "jeering glances" from their fellow passengers, "who marvelled that two fellow beings should be so companionable; as though a white man were anything more dignified than a whitewashed Negro," (Ibid. 65) reveals Ishmael's reflection that a white man is really "a white-washed negro". This shows Melville far beyond the position of most abolitionists.

In this narrative the natives have their importance, and it shows Melville's conception of American democracy. Queequeg is a main contributor to this new secular religion, a figure of unfallen self-integration and fraternity "entirely at his ease, preserving the utmost serenity; content with own companionship; always equal to himself. Pre-intellectual, indeed largely pre-linguistic, Queequeg is no pattern for Ishmael; but as D.H. Lawrence long ago observed, he embodies a mode of being – instinctive, sensuous, and affectionate – that the self-estranged Westerner needs to recover to become whole. "We can't go back to savages: not a stride", Lawrence wrote, but "we can take a great curve in their direction, onward" (Quoted in Levine, 1998:257).

Describing the cast of characters who roam the streets of New Bedford and "make a stranger stare," Ishmael intimates that he may be just such a character:

> In thoroughfares nigh the docks, any considerable seaport will frequently offer to view the queerest looking non-descripts from foreign parts. Even in Broadway and Chestnut streets, Mediterranean mariners will sometimes jostle the affrighted ladies. Regent Street is not unknown to Lascars and Malays; and at Bombay, in the Apollo Green, live Yankees have often scared the natives. But New Bedford beats all Water Street and Wapping.
>
> (*M-D*: 49)

As mariners from the Mediterranean frighten New Yorkers, Americans frighten Indian natives. Ishmael, like the Lascars, Malays and Mediterranean, is a "non-descript from foreign parts" who has come to accept the relativism that Queequeg narrates in "Wheelbarrow" chapter. The above passage mediates the interesting cultural diversity of America and reveals the wide geographic experience of Ishmael. London, Liverpool, New York, Bombay, New Bedford, and other great sailor-towns of the world have all been home to Ishmael at one time or another. In passing, Ishmael also mentions his sojourns in Tranquo, Algiers, and Patagonia. Touching five continents and countless cities, Ishmael's career has transformed him into a man of the world and, significantly, into a "white sailor-savage" (Ibid. 270).

This characterization is particularly interesting because it indicates that Ishmael has become quite different from the man who lay in bed at the Spouter-Inn, quaking at the sight of the savage Queequeg. We may suggest that Ishmael's thinking changes (literally) overnight, as evidenced by Ishmael's description of "outlandish" characters inhabiting the streets of New Bedford. We would suggest, however, that the change in Ishmael's attitude develops over the time he has spent among the sailors and savages of all nations. After a decade wandering the fiddler's greens of the world, Ishmael finds these "green Vermonters" more "curious" and "comical" than the "white-cannibals" and "white-savages" among whom he now counts himself. Reborn in the coffin of a savage, Ishmael is now a composite of his former self and

his bosom friend- the "Other"; indeed, he suggests that all true whale-hunters arrive at such a state:

> Long exile from Christendom and civilization inevitably restores a man to that condition in which God placed him, *i.e.* what is called savagery. Your true whale-hunter is as much a savage as an Iroquois. I myself am a savage, owning no allegiance but to the King of the Cannibals; and ready at any moment to rebel against him.
>
> (*M-D*: 270)

Ishmael makes several attempts to align himself with Queequeg in this brief passage. He describes his "exile from Christendom," which certainly describes the harpooner's religious position, and he notes his allegiance to the King of the Cannibals, who, in this case would most likely be Queequeg himself. Ishmael has come to understand savagery as a relative term, defined by separation from Western religion and customs. He even believes that savagery is a *restoration* of man's original vitality and position under God. The savage is the man who can keep the "open independence of his sea" despite the pressures of the land - pressures of money, caste, and religion. Though Ishmael declares his allegiance to the King of the Cannibals, he is free to rebel against that king, just as Queequeg does when he leaves his home and the hierarchy into which he is born so that he may become a citizen of the world. Of course, self-exile has its costs, and Ishmael is willing to bear them. He becomes a "savage" to an America obsessed with civilization; he swears allegiance to the King of the Cannibals in a land of Christians; and, to make his exile permanent, he marks his body in a nation demanding racial purity.

Darwin's description of the natives can, partly, be applied to *Heart of Darkness*. The earth "was unearthly" and the natives are in no way individuated. They are "not inhuman " (*HD*: 51); their frenzied howling and dancing are, like the wilderness, monstrous and attractive, whose incomprehensibility and exotic 'otherness' are equally attributed to them. The landscape is thus virtually erased of

the humans – in any social or cultural manifestation. Rejected back into a distant past, the natives are represented only as separate anatomical parts, "a whirl of black limb, a mass of hands clapping, of feet stamping, of bodies swaying, of eyes rolling, under the droops of heavy and motionless foliage" (*HD*: 51).

The above passage reveals the cultural stereotype of primitive savagery – the black as a contemporary ancestor, as a physical animal, and as a human body without intellect. The whole novel draws heavily upon a body of cultural texts rich in images and assumptions about Africa and the African as primitive, which pervaded mid and late nineteenth-century European culture – and which still have their powerful representatives today. By 'Cultural texts' we mean not just adventure novels, but other literary forms – travel journals, missionary reports, newspapers, illustrated magazines – and mass cultural enterprises like the Great Exhibition of 1851 or scientific exhibitions. Via such media, Africa and the Africans were being represented for Europeans' understanding as– the 'savage' and the darkest wild – which produced and endorsed stereotypic images of this "Other".

In psychological terms, the "Other" is but the undiscovered territory in the self. In the colonial enterprise, this territory of the unconscious is displaced onto another people who both allure and terrify. The colonizer, fearing to succumb to the "Other", attempts to contain it - through subordination, suppression, or conversion. These strategies of containment are designed to preserve the opposition and inequality between Self and Other that justifies the imperialist enterprise.

Among his many limitations in dealing with cultural differences, Marlow displays his racism when he unwillingly accepts to live on the Continent, explaining, "It's cheap and not so nasty as it looks, they say" (Ibid. 13). Further, he exhibits contradictory ideas about entering another culture, revealing his determination to get to Africa "by hook or by crook"

but, once there, feeling like an “imposter” (Ibid. 19) when he observes that the natives (unlike him) wanted no excuse for being there. Throughout the text, Marlow works hard to avoid stereotypes that separate savage customs from civilized behavior; yet, the reader could not miss references to civilized/uncivilized as a binary opposition in relation to culture. Like for example, Marlow’s distinction between the comprehensible language of civilized discourse and the incomprehensible noise of savages – “the roll of drums” (Ibid. 47), “abrupt burst of yells” , “A complaining clamour, modulated in savage discords” (Ibid. 56), “tumultuous and mournful uproar” (Ibid. 57). Similarly, Marlow’s noisy jig with the boiler-maker (when he finally gets rivets to repair his boat) from the “whirl of black limbs” on shore that he condescends to regard as “not inhuman” show this cultural distinction between the Westerner and the native. Marlow’s attempts at separations prove to be unstable and distorted; they serve to reveal his intense need to sustain the Manichean allegory so necessary to his sense of his Self in contradiction to the “Other”. However, all voices, European and native, degenerate in Marlow’s memory into “one immense jabber, silly, atrocious, sordid, savage, or simply mean, without any kind of sense”(Ibid. 69) and shows Marlow’s ambivalence to the binary opposition of the Self and Other, that is, the civilized and the savage.

It is true that the novel relies on the European cultural stereotypes of the ‘savage’; however, it questions and criticizes some aspects of them. The best example that can illustrate this critique is Conrad’s use of the ‘civilized vs. the ‘savage’ opposition. For his strategy is to propose the contrast, but to redistribute the defining terms of it. Qualities which are attributed to the ‘savage’ are shared by the ‘civilized’. He, thus critically undermines the ‘progressive’ thrust of the Darwinian view of evolutionary social development by suggesting that the ‘civilized’ is nothing more than the ‘primitive dressed up in ‘pretty rags – rags that would fly off at the first good shake’ (Ibid. 52). The image of the savage reflects the inner truth of the

human kind and it is the ‘forgotten and brutal instincts’, which drive the ‘civilized’ Kurtz into the wilderness to behave as a ‘savage’.

Indeed, in *Heart of Darkness* light/dark, past/present**,** civilized/savage reveals a mode of thinking central to modern western culture. This dual mode of thinking is a part of an etymology that does violence to the Self and the Other. As an everyday mode of perceiving and organizing people, the space, and the objects around the people, this opposition carries with it the conviction of the ‘right’ behavior. Things are in or out, standing or sitting, left or right. Applied to the mode of writing, Conrad finds in these binary images a powerful tool which, when re-evaluated, can provide the means for a radical and disturbing critique of the assumed cultural norms of the West. Conrad shows the white color representing ‘blackness’ and the “civilized” Kurtz to be uncivilized and savage. He even queries whether darkness or the unknown are to be found in dark places, or in any place. Accordingly, Marlow’s comments on the barbarity and brutal instincts he discovers in Africa suggest a critique over Victorian ideas of progress.

The title of Conrad’s fictional work can be a good example to highlight the ambiguities that generate multiple meanings. The reader is invited to decipher the multiple meanings it suggests. One possible assertion of the title is that “darkness” has a “heart” and the reader penetrates the unknown and finally discovers the ‘truth’. Yet, Marlow’s ambiguity and ambivalence towards the truth about Kurtz’s darkness makes us accept another possible assertion of the title. The ‘darkness’ in ‘heart of darkness’ may refer to that darkness that lies in our self-discovery to the inner truth of the surface truth. For Marlow one possible ‘truth’ is his meeting with the “Other” in Africa, the other ‘truth’ is Conrad’s treatment of slavery as darkness.

At first sight, the reader would see the 'heart of darkness' as having primarily a geographical reference. The work is supposed to be an account of a journey up the Congo into 'darkest' Africa. But after the first few pages, the reader realizes that Marlow's story is an instrument for Conrad to conduct a critique of European colonialism and slavery with its imperialistic impulses towards profit, exploitation, and destruction. The idea of the 'savagery' of this place is reinforced by the nineteenth century anthropological debates on the savage and the civilized, and on evolution and the origins of civilization. Accordingly, Marlow's comments on the barbarity and brutal instincts he discovers in Africa suggest Conrad's discourse of africanism. The misrepresention of the natives by Marlow in this narrative can be 'seen' as Conrad's 'message'; that is, a formal protest at the depersonalizing forces of colonialism, which cause it, regarding its slave as disposable matter. Thus, the negative representation of the "Other" reveals the Europeans as savages, as "Others", like the pilgrims who are there to grab what they can get, in the way of ivory or promotion in the company. However, Conrad as a Westerner shows his belonging to Europe, even if he didn't accept the white man's deeds overseas. One reason that makes us say this is the fact that Marlow shares an ambiguous moral relationship with the main character, Kurtz. Marlow states: "I should be loyal to the nightmare of my choice" (*HD*: 101).

As *Heart of Darkness* generates a multiplicity of readings the notion of otherness can be applied to both Europe and Africa. The following passage that describes the Thames at sunset and conveys the silent meditation where Marlow offers a particular view of history can be a good example to illustrate this multiplicity of readings:

> The old river in its broad reach rested unruffled at the decline of day, after ages of good services done to the race that peopled its banks, spread out in the tranquil dignity of a waterway leading to the uttermost ends of the earth…. They had sailed from Deptford, from Greenwich, from Earth – the adventures and the settlers; kings' ships and the ships of men on change; captains, admirals, the dark 'interlopers' of eastern trade, and the commissioned 'generals' of East India. Hunters for gold or pursuers of fame, they all had gone out that stream, bearing the sword, and often the torch, messengers of the might within the land, bearers of a spark from the sacred fire. What greatness had not floated on the ebb of that river into the mystery of an unknown earth … The dreams of men, the seed of common wealth, the germs of empires.
>
> (*HD*: 136-7).

This passage shows how a language can be ambivalent and ironic in its interpretation of history. Look at the phrases, 'dark interlopers' and bearers of 'the sword and often the torch' (of knowledge, or the fires of destruction?). In 'germs of Empire' are germs seeds or disease?

The introduction of the Roman Conquest of Britain offers a radical shift of perspective on Britain as a conquering proud nation in the nineteenth century. It implies that history is not monolithic. Our view of it depends on where we are standing. Conrad wants to shock the English reader into this recognition by presenting conquest from the disturbing aspect of Britain as the dark and ignorant conquered land. This introduction of the Roman Conquest is dealt through Marlow's abrupt interruption. While the narrator sees the past as a constantly present tale of fortitude and glory, Marlow offers another alternative. Like Africa now, Britain, too, has been a dark place. In his account of the Roman conquest of Britain, Marlow adopts the oppositional imagery of the first narrator – lightness and darkness, illumination and ignorance, conqueror and conquered, civilized and savage – only to invert its reference. By changing the perspective, Marlow points to the issue of history. In positing a different view of history, he suggests that Britain is still, in a sense, one of the darkest places on the earth because of what happens in the British

colonies: 'It was just robbery with violence, aggravated murder on a grand scale and men going at it blind – as is very proper for those who tackle darkness.' (*HD*: 140) Not only is there a reversal of referent – Britain becomes the conquered of another's Empire – but also the judgments attached to certain activities are also reversed. Colonization, progress, and dreams of empire become mass murder, robbery with violence, and nightmare.

The challenging view over the idea of 'historic acts' of conquest is carried on by Marlow who says: "The conquest of the earth, which mostly means the taking it away from those who have a different complexion or slightly flatter noses than ourselves, is not a pretty thing when you look into it too much" (Ibid: 10). Marlow is critical of the biological legitimacy at the heart of the colonial enterprise. He says that the conquest cannot be justified on the grounds of physical features, say pigmentation or physical features, like a 'flatter nose'. However, he undermines his culture of imperialism when he moves his discourse to the grounds of culture and ideas. Marlow remains an idealist in spite of the skepticism that he shows about the application of the idea of civilization. Conrad's adoption of England as home country seems to be at the basis of the distinction that he establishes between British imperialism and the Belgian imperialism in the Congo. It is as a British citizen that he seeks to salvage the idea of civilization. Marlow modifies his attack over colonization and contradict it. He adds:

> What redeems it is the idea only. An idea at the back of it; not a sentimental pretence but an idea; and an unselfish belief in the idea – something you can set up, and bow down before, and offer a sacrifice to…
>
> (Ibid)

What the quote above suggests is that the British are the real guardians of the ideal civilization countries have adulterated. If they were able to do, he suggests, it is

because Britain had witnessed the same conquest at the hands of the Romans. The British history of conquest has made the British presence the refinement of civilization. The aim is to imply that there is after all some justification for this brutal 'conquest of the earth'.

This fictional work offers us materials for making judgments, but it does not make them for us. So, there are no easy exits offered by Conrad or by his protagonists in the way of solutions to a predicament of racism and decline, which seems psychological and political.

E. Paganism/ Fetishism as an Othering Process

Fetishism is the oldest and most universal form of worship. Fetishists worship things for themselves. The dominant feature of a fetish is that, by being a material embodiment of a human aspiration or motive, it tends by the very fact of its objective form to cause its creator or user to forget that he is himself responsible for its creation or continued existence. Melville and Conrad can be considered as analysts of Fetishism on the high seas and in far–off places. Both authors refer to the symbolic images of fetishism to allude how the spiritual aspect of human life is overturned by the material one engendering the worship of materialism. This is the reversal aspect that Melville and Conrad explore in their novels. The quest for spiritual and cultural commerce, animated by the impulse to establish the self, turned into othering the natives. Conrad and Melville show the same view about the tribulations of ideals and ideas for the sake of materialism.

Moby-Dick is about the male imagination and also about phalluses. The latter is an activity of representation, and it is central to the theory of fetishism. The phallus is a detached emblem that must always signal a lack, or a sense of incompletion. The concentration upon it sets a quest that is by definition impossible

to fulfill. As a representation, it is always alien, never properly open to conversion into the body-part it seeks to image forth. To attempt to accomplish this conversion, by chasing the whale, is to set a process that can only end in death. The quest of the Pequod is a quest for completion, for the capture of what is always lacking.

Moby-Dick can be considered as a world of idols, in which all characters move and have their being. Queeque's idol is an obvious idol, but whales are idols too. *Heart of Darkness* is clearly an investigation of fetishism. Kurtz, the ivory worshipper, is at least something of an Ahab in his desperate and obsessive search for ivory, and Similarly, he exhibits a version of the wrinkled brow in his showing forth the Mudstone phonology, the "lofty frontal bone," itself perhaps an image of or substitution for the lack that is intimated again in the "slim posts [...] roughly trimmed, and with their upper ends ornamented with round carved balls" (*HD*: 75), both the actual products of Kurtz's pagan rituals and the figured forms of his own dismembering .

The suggestive force of ivory, in the novel, works as an obsessive material for Kurtz. The ivory of *Heart of Darkness* is the raw material of wealth. This is the bone that was one part of the living animal that can be considered as a natural resource, and stands as a material of luxury, the ornament of civilization. Ivory is the fetish that expresses idolatry and possession. It works as the oil provided by the whale in *Moby-Dick*. The animal is a source of power and fascination in nineteenth- century America because it provides the fuel and therefore light. It is also a source of wealth. This obsession for possession corrupts the mind and appetite. Through Kurtz's obsession image, Conrad suggests the idea of greed and lust for power that caused the othering of the natives through the colonial enterprise.

Kurtz's quest is enlarged to agents of the station and even to the pilgrims. The latter are there to grab what they can get in the way of ivory or promotion in the company: "The word 'ivory' rang in the air, was whispered, was sighed. You would think they were praying to it. A taint of imbecile rapacity blew through it all, like a whiff from some corpse" (*HD*: 33). Kurtz raided the country for ivory. The wilderness, at least, holds a philosophical truth for him: profit. And it is through him that the wilderness has found its most terrible expression. Kurtz, in facing the truth about himself and acting in accordance to it, has become the image of insatiability: "I saw him open his mouth wide – it gave him a weirdly voracious aspect, as though he had wanted to swallow all the air, all the earth, all the men before him" (Ibid. 85).

The idea of fetishism is also extended to Marlow. The narrator, at least as he is seen, "resembled an idol" (Ibid.6) to those listening to his tale and his own propensity to mental idolatry is clearly detailed in his worship of ideas. The setting up, the bowing down, and the sacrificing, enact the complete cycle of creation, self-suppression, and aggression which is the dance of death and trade, exploitation and desire. The narrative discourse of Marlow encloses idolatry figures, like the native woman who is all "barbarous ornaments," "There was a low jingle, a glint of yellow metal, a sway of fringed draperies, and she stopped as if her heart had failed her" (Ibid. 87). Marlow, even, ends as he has begun, "in the pose of a meditating Buddha" (Ibid.111). People are constantly seeing each other as figures.

Both Melville and Conrad show the idols become much more destructive and pervasive than they had ever been in the natives' societies. The language used is 'fetished'. Fetishism works, in both works, as a metaphor for the discontents of Western Civilization that might value what had no necessary value in itself. So, European imperialists, embodied in Kurtz's obsession with ivory, gives value to

nothingness, quite as primitive fetishism valued that which might be considered nothing as: stones, lifeless images and objects.

Trade is also fetished in both narratives, "It is the head of the whale which contains the precious oil". The "whale men of America", we are told, produce annually "a well reaped harvest of $7,000,000" (*M-D*: 117), and the national industry is described:

> Herein it is the same with the American whales fishery as with the American army and military and merchant navies, and the engineering forces employed in the construction of the American Canals and Railroads. The same, I say because in all these cases the native American liberally provides the brains, the rest of the world as generously supplying the muscles
>
> (*M-D*: 127).

So, the Captain and the crew may be considered as the tools of a society that decrees that whales must die in order to "illuminate" America and the world. The whale must die, and someone must kill him. The ship becomes the vehicle of Ahab's quest. So, here they - the ship, the crew, and the owners - become Ahab's tools. Whaling was also inherently expansionist, since it required Americans to sail round the world in search for whales.

Conrad does the same in *Heart of Darkness*. The wheel of commerce is fuelled by the system of colonialism and later by imperialism. The structure of commerce is maintained by a structure of racism and exploitation of the European nations over the "primitive" people. Material interests have infected, and have fetished, and show unenlightened self-interest as theorized by Jeremy Bentham, who considers that human beings are the most powerful instruments of production, and therefore everyone becomes anxious to employ the services of his fellows in multiplying his own comfort. Hence, it is the intense and universal thirst for power; the equally

prevalent hatred of subjection. Each man therefore meets with an obstinate resistance to his own will, and is obliged to make equally constant opposition to that of others, and this naturally engenders antipathy towards the beings that thus baffle and contravene his wishes. When self-interest has itself been materialized there is no place for the development of a "moral principle" (Quoted in Stark W., 1954: 423).

Melville makes Ahab integrate Moby-Dick into the most familiar and apparently manageable form of social exchange and shared meanings, the money system, in offering the doubloon as the reward for the first sighting. But, the doubloon is in fact not at all a principle of exchange but yet another example of Ahab's redoubling himself. No other sailor manages to anticipate him in spotting the white whale, so that the reward he has offered in fact devolves to him: "No, the doubloon is mine, fate reserved the doubloon for me." (*M-D*: 510). The coin expresses Ahab's obsession to acquire material objects. Conrad, too, shows us that the company's real objective was wealth derived from a trade in bones. The fragile veneer of western civilization, the great white lie of the white Man's Burden with its implicit, pseudo-altruism, must be accepted if the natives of the 'Dark Continent' are to remain as Others.

It follows from the above analysis that Melville and Conrad share the notion of "Idola" and fetishism. Both authors show how the Western man is closer to the "primitive" man that the anthropological theories of their times othered. However, informed as he was by the romantic idea of the "noble savage", Melville did not seem to be particularly disturbed by the similarity of the American man's worship of the whale or rather its oil with primitive worship. On the whole it can be said that he was involved in the building of the "Idola" (the term is from Francis Bacon) for which the American nation was in need of. The "Idola" in Conrad is looked as a

perversion of a spiritual quest. It is alienating and its worship is considered as negative. It has to be observed that Conrad wrote his novel after the publication of Frederick Nietzsche's *The Twilight of the Idols*, with which *Heart of Darkness* shares the necessity of debunking alienating ideas.

Melville is not as intolerant towards other cultures, as was let us say, Robinson Crusoe and his author Defoe. He is not an iconoclast towards idols elected by other people belonging to distant cultural areas. He shows that these "Others" often dismissed as pagans, fetishists and idolators are not as alienated as it is often claimed in the West. Their 'iconoclasm' appears to be even more evident than that of the Puritans. Nothing can arguably be more appreciated by a Puritan writer like Melville than the breaking of false images in other cultures at the time when his countrymen electing other images to mammon. Paganism seems to have deserted the Pacific Islands to elect home in America and the West in general. This is an ironic reversal of the prototypical American Robinson Crusoe who has set himself the fable of importing civilization to distant countries and cultures.

The above analysis has demonstrated that the notion of the "Other" in both novels is complex and problematic. Both authors conjoin the discursive, the corporeal, and the ideological in their inquiries into the constitution and boundaries of human bodies, the science and politics of race, and the structure of racial and individual identity. This study has shown that Africanism as a racial discourse has no settled voice, in both fictional works, vacillating in dialectic or continuing dialogue between Melville's ambiguities and Conrad's ambivalence. In both fictions things are not *black* or *white*. Melville's sense of the "truth" is expressed in contraries. He has "no settled voice [...] forever trying on alternatives", vacillating in a "dialectic or continuing dialogue between the Yea - Sayers and the Nay – Sayers" (Melville, 1963: 270). In Conrad's, too, 'truth' is expressed through ambivalence oscillating between

two poles. For Morrison, "Encoded or explicit, indirect or overt, the linguistic responses to an Africanist presence complicate texts, sometimes contradicting them entirely" (1992: 66). On one hand, they both inhabit and manipulate contemporary racial discourse, giving a material sense of its structures and functions. Melville gives us his understanding of racial position as an American man in the mid-nineteenth-century where ethnology gives substantial sense to the ideology of race. *Moby Dick* is marked by the self-other dialectic where the African is othered by slavery. *Heart of Darkness* is also marked by an Africanist discourse where Africa is described as "impenetrable jungle" with "enormous wilderness" and black slaves. On the other hand, in both authors' narratives, the "linguistic responses to Africanism" provide paradox, ambiguity, and violence; and serve as a means to critique slavery. For them, this 'Africanist other' becomes a means of thinking about the "Other".

We dare, then, suggest that Melville and Conrad use artistic strategies to transfer internal conflicts of a "black darkness" to whiteness as "meaningless", "unfathomable" and "implacable" in *Moby-Dick* and to violently silenced black bodies in *Heart of Darkness*. For different and sometimes similar reasons, they experienced a life of restlessness, which might explain the perpetual quest for identity and selfhood in their respective works. The confluence of personal factors of instability like the loss of parents at an early age, social and economic demotion of their families, and the encounters with people of various races and classes on their trips helped to define the dialogue of sympathies, and anxieties of the two authors' imagination; and above all their rejection of the established Western notions both scientific and ideological. Hence, Africanism is used, by both writers, as a metaphor for questioning the validity of 'scientific' theories and, sometimes, refuting the contemporary racial discourse. While sharing their contemporaries' curiosity of that age-old desire of the Other, Melville and Conrad maintained an ironical relationship towards it.

In Melville's work the blending of cultures created a sharp juxtaposition of values, customs, and behaviors. It is not the same in Conrad's novella. When the Europeans took power in Africa, their goal was not to create a cultural fusion to convert the "savages." Instead, the native experienced the devastating cultural ideology of othering, and they were treated as inferior and sub-human. The idea of othering is rooted in colonial ideology, which simply describes the European superiority complex. This ideology disregards the native's religion, behavior practices, and language.

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Chapter V: Ethnic Other: The Oriental in *Billy Budd* and *Lord Jim*

> And, as elsewhere said, a barbarian Billy radically was: as much so, for all costume, as his countrymen the British captives, living trophies, made to march in the Roman triumph of Germanicus.
>
> (Melville, 1995: 77)

> But next morning, at the first bend of the river shutting off the houses of Patusan, all this dropped out of my sight bodily, with its colour, its design, and its meaning, like a picture created by fancy on a canvas, upon which, after long contemplation, you turn your back for the last time.
>
> (Conrad, 1994: 248)

In the fourth chapter of this second part of our thesis, we have identified the polyphonic/dialogic africanist discourse in both *Moby-Dick* and *Heart of Darkness.* In what follows, we intend to examine the deconstruction of the Orient in Melville's *Billy Budd* and Conrad's *Lord Jim.* To this end, we shall borrow some of Edward Said's analytic categories in his distinction between 'latent' and 'manifest' Orientalism. Said defines latent Orientalism as "an almost unconscious (and certainly untouchable) positivity (1979: 206) that embodied an inaccurate yet unchallengeable body of ideas, beliefs, clichés, or learning about the East (Ibid. 205). The Orient is seen as separate, eccentric, backward, silently different, sensual, and passive. It has a tendency towards despotism and away from progress. It displays feminine penetrability and supine malleability. Its progress and value are judged in terms of, and in comparison to, the West, so it is always the Other, the conquerable, and the inferior. Valerie Kennedy suggests that 'latent Orientalism' refers to "a collective and unconscious shared set of images and attitude", (2000: 23) and Peter Childs and Patrick Williams consider that the notion has strong affinities with certain concepts of ideology, particularly the 'negative' version of ideology as false consciousness (1997:101). Manifest Orientalism is what is spoken and acted upon. It includes information and changes in knowledge about the Orient as well as

policy decisions founded in Orientalist thinking. It is the expression in words and actions of Latent Orientalism.

The Orient was a word which later accrued to it a wide field of meanings, associations, and connotations; these did not necessarily refer to the real Orient but to the field surrounding the word (1979: 203). These different connotations of 'latent' and 'manifest' Orientalism are suitable to our analysis of the Oriental in *Billy Budd* and *Lord Jim*, where the notion of Orientalism is not explicit but more 'a negative ideology' that Melville and Conrad suggest through Oriental images and attitudes. We shall argue that Melville's and Conrad's Orientalism provided them with a cultural resource through which they meditated on the bewildering complexity of human difference, and tried to express it in their literary art. It is also a discourse in which questions of nation, empire and race are intimately connected. In other words, the construction/deconstruction of the Orient in these fictional works has followed a complex and internally contradictory trajectory.

Melville's 'latent Orientalism' aims at questioning and undermining the social and political ideologies of government in the late nineteenth century. The Orientalist discourse in *Billy Budd* reveals Melville criticizing and satirizing American blind imitation of the English laws in the US Navy, which causes the perversion of the American ethos. Thus, Orientalism is a political imaginary where *Billy Budd* fictionalizes the doubts and hesitancies of the New World. Besides, Billy as an 'alien' or "Other" stands as a reflection of the anxieties about racial origins of post-bellum 'US America'.

We consider that the greater mystery remains the thematic similarities and intellectual affinities between *Billy Budd* (published in 1924) and *Lord Jim* published many years earlier, in 1900. In both novels 'justice' and 'natural rights' of men are questioned. Both works dramatize the conflict of racial identity and express the writers' sceptical assertion towards

America and Europe, or even the world. In other terms, the two novels dramatize the conflict of racial identity.

The literary representations of the Orient in both fictional works will be examined through characterization, setting and themes, in an attempt to draw the possible dialogue that the literary works provoke. Melville 'orientalizes' Billy in an anxious attempt to suggest the idea that the New World ought to cut link with the mother country. At the same time, he shows the idea of America being a fragmented nation. Similarly, Conrad's tag 'one of us' vehicles an orientalist discourse; but, it also shows Conrad's critique of the idea of empire by reversing the gaze based on versions of the dichotomies: European righteousness, morality, energy, and vitality versus Oriental corruption, deviance, lassitude, and passivity. These dichotomies better explain the mystification of internal and external racial divisions in both the West and the East.

Recent critics have suggested a colonized status for early U.S. literature. Hence, Melville's *Billy Budd* can be read as a post-colonial response to English literature. Malcolm Bradbury, for instance, considers that American writing and the American mind have been haunted by images of Europe. These images are sometimes conciliatory and express nostalgia and sentimentalities, but other times, they are hostile and express terrors and fantasies. (Malcolm Bradbury, 1982:10) The American Renaissance, the context in which Melville wrote, generated considerable artistic and literary activity, most of it committed to "America". This literature was invested with Romantic thoughts about the need for nationalism and nativism in writing, using symbolism to show the political and intellectual transformation of the environment of the New World. For Bradbury this literature "was also deeply imprinted with European metrics, ideas and iconographies. Its primary moulds and its very language came from elsewhere. American writers were emerging, but only to face the problem of all artists in a post-colonial culture – the problem of cultural self-definition" (Ibid).

Lawrence E. Buell, in his turn, suggests in his essay entitled "Melville and the Question of Decolonization" that Melville's writings reflect a postcolonial anxiety and consciousness of two audiences, the colonial and the native. He refers to the "two audiences" phenomenon, namely the issue of how postcolonial authors negotiate the problem of writing both for their countrymen and for the Western world audience, on which commercial success in good part also depends. Therefore, Melville's aim, and even some other nineteenth-century American writers, was to reach a "bicontinental audience" for both economic and prestige reasons. Buell further writes,

> Melville […] has been justly seen as carrying the cause of American literary independence further; yet he too was baptized into authorship in such a way as to be made equally conscious of the two audiences phenomenon, and he was at least as shrewd in developing a rhetorical repertoire to accommodate himself to it and exploit it.
>
> (2004: 80)

Starting from the point that the rhetoric of American Renaissance literature reflects the two audiences where 'Americans are always "we," and the English "they", *Billy Budd* can be read as a "reminiscence" about what happens when an American autodidact - as the young ex-sailor Melville liked to picture himself - enters the arena of cosmopolitan culture. The young writer, like the young sailor Billy, quickly finds that free expression is regulated and constrained by the world of measured forms. This ultimately leads, in the mature writer, to a style of insinuation, rather than direct statement.

This dual-audience phenomenon can also be used as a key to decipher Melville's postcolonial anxiety in *Billy Budd*. Since the novel expresses an interesting characteristic postcolonial motif: disillusionment at the incompletion of the social changes that ought to have followed from the political revolution, one may consider that Melville, in *Billy Budd*, orientalizes Britain. He considers that the British supremacy overseas can endanger American ideals, those that open the preamble of the Declaration of Independence: "We hold these

truths to be *self-evident*, that *all men are created equal*, that they are endowed by their *Creator* with certain *unalienable Rights*, that among these are *Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness*." The document states that whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive, it is "the *Right of the People to alter or to abolish it*." The next section of the American Declaration is a list of charges against King George that aimed to demonstrate that he had violated the colonists' rights and was therefore unfit to be their ruler.

Melville's criticism of American allegiance to Britain began when he wrote *Redburn* (1849). In one long sentence Melville states:

> Being so young and inexperienced then, and unconsciously swayed by those local and social prejudices, that are the maring of most men, and from which, for the mass, there seems no possible escape; at first I was surprised that a colored man should be treated as he is in this town; but a little reflection showed that, after all, it was but recognizing his claims to humanity and *normal equality*; so that, in some things, we Americans leave to other countries the carrying out of the principle that stands at the head of our Declaration of Independence.
>
> (*R*: 202)

The above quote expresses Melville's disillusionment towards the American unfaithfulness to the ethos that stands in the American Declaration of Independence. This theme is better dramatized in *Billy Budd* whereby Melville's repeated commentary on the incongruity of monarchical codes of shipboard discipline insinuates how imperial forms persist in American enterprise where Billy will be sacrificed to these 'tyrannical Articles of War.' In other words, this novel expresses the disenchantment "with republican premises reflective on a vision of human corruptibility at once more broadly Euro American and more idiosyncratically personal and on the other of the entrapment of the individual within oppressive political and/or economic orders by no means peculiar to America" (Buell, 2004: 85).

Another point, quite worth investigating, is Melville's appropriation of Orientalism in *Billy Budd*. The text suggests parallels between imperialism and American-style democracy in its satire on American slavery and expansionist designs in Mexico and Cuba. The context of the novel refers to American-English rivalry over the acquisition of territories. The consequence of impressments in the story takes the form of an Anglo-American disagreement. In this respect, L. Buell points out that "*Billy Budd* opens by obliquely opening one of the greatest grievances that post-revolutionary America harboured against Britain [...] Billy's impressments story goes on to become an ambiguous parable of the rite of passage to cultural maturity, from a comparatively egalitarian 'state- of- nature' community aboard the *Rights of Man* to the *Bellipotent'*s more hierarchical and "advanced" society, dominated by a rule of law" (2004: 77). This suggests an important characteristic of Melville's use of literal and symbolic contrasts between "English" or "European" and "American" positions and their instability. Frederic Jameson, on his part, writing about the preoccupations of Third World Literature in his *Third-World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism*, claims that "all third-world texts are necessarily […] allegorical, and in a very specific way: they are to be read as what I will call national allegories" (Jameson, 1986:69). Considering Melville as a postcolonial writer, one may say that Jameson's quote can be applied to nineteenth-century American literature. It will therefore be quite interesting to identify *Billy Budd*'s subtexts as 'national allegories'.

Timothy Marr's *The Cultural Roots of American Islamicism* articulates how Americans interrogate orientalized images of Islam to articulate local knowledge and situations within a global context (2006: 5). Within his study he introduces three valences of islamicism: domestic, comparative, and romantic "to elaborate its vibrant dynamism as a dislocating global presence within the cultural politics of the early United States" (Ibid. 10). He considers that a diversity of Americans "appropriated these rhetorical resources within

domestic discursive situations to articulate a complex variety of cultural work and play in a broad range of different ideological registers" (Ibid).

Marr considers that Melville has the most revealing investment in the conventions of islamicism because he has put them to a broader variety of critical uses and has grounded his orientalism through his own experience of Near Eastern travel. Marr's study explores how Melville deployed its rhetorical patterns and symbolic geography as a powerful means of fashioning the worldly diversity of his literary characters, the transgressive privilege of his narrators, and the gendered shapes of his romantic aspirations (Ibid. 220). He considers that, "the multivalent islamicist strands from the vast fabric of Melville's literary imagination reveals the artistry with which he used these stereotypes to launch into dimensions of the critical, the subversive, the celebratory, the symbolic, and the sublime" (Ibid). Our study explores how Melville transmutes orientalist conventions through his vital artistic imagination into creative resources for both critical and contemplative symbolism. In his narrative worlds, Melville frequently portrayed his captains as possessed by an oriental despotism to illustrate the injustice of their arbitrary and absolute command. Melville fictional captain in *Billy Budd* is a despot who threatened the human liberties aboard the Bellipotent.

Conrad, as a Polish-born writer, can also be regarded as a postcolonial author. Reading Conrad's works necessarily involves recourse to post colonialism, since Conrad's Poland was occupied by the Russians. More precisely, Russian Poland was the Western colony of an Eastern Empire. The presence of the colonized Poland can be detected in Conrad's works in a symbolic and ironic way: the colonial environment of Poland is reversed to that of Eastern colonies of the Western empire. Agnes S.K. Yeow, in her insightful *Conrad's Eastern Vision: A Vain and Floating Appearance* (2009), argues that "although Conrad appeared to employ the official and Victorian discourse of 'race', he recognized the instability and fallibility of the term and riddled it with irony" (Yeow, 2009: 18).

In the note to his first short story, “The Lagoon”, Conrad describes a specific period of his literary career and declares that the story, “marks in a manner of speaking, the end of my first phase, the Malayan phase with its special subject and its verbal suggestions”. (L: 23) One of these suggestions is the solidarity that Conrad shares with the ‘Eastern crowd’: cultural ambiguity, conflicting allegiances, and liminal identity. As Robert Hampson points out: “Conrad’s relation to the discursive formation ‘Writing Malaysia”’ is [...] doubly problematic: his identity as a British naval officer is always destabilised by his identity as a Pole, and his main experience of the archipelago is mediated through Arab rather than European trading networks” (Hampson, 2000:28-29). It can be argued that Conrad himself derived his vision of the Malay world from the colonial paradigms of the ‘master’ discourse.

Conrad’s conflicting attitude towards European imperialism should be understood in the context of the colonial history of Poland, in which the relation between the East as the dominator and the West as the dominated is the opposite of their relation in other “Eastern” colonies in the Western empire. In other terms, Conrad’s ambivalence is rooted in his identity as the colonized Pole rather than as the British liberal colonialist. Therefore, Conrad has to be viewed as an exile living with a double vision in the margin of an empire, an exile from the Eastern (Russian) empire accompanied by an admiration for a Western ideal - English power.

The orientalist division of East and West can be seen in Conrad’s first writings where Marlow’s description in ‘*Youth*’ expresses this ‘exotic’ pleasure before the ‘break’ that will be expressed in *Lord Jim:*

> We drag at the oars with aching arms, and suddenly a puff of wind, a puff faint and tepid and laden with strange odours of blossoms, of aromatic wood, comes out of the still night- the first sight of the East on my face. That I can never forget. It was impalpable and enslaving, like a charm, like a whispered promise of mysterious delight...
>
> (*Y:* 37)

The expressions: ‘a charm, a whispered promise, a mysterious delight’ refer to the major component of the orientalist discourse, which was celebrated by Conrad’s contemporaries, such as Paul Gauguin and Robert Louis Stevenson. Subsequently, Conrad in this passage embodies the same discourse: the East as an exotic land for Westerners. This attitude is well expressed in Edward Said statement: “the Orient was almost a European invention, and had been since antiquity a place of romance, exotic being, hunting, memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences” (Said, 1979: 01). Stated otherwise, one may say that the Orient as a ‘Space’ allows the Europeans to release unconscious frustrations. It is a place for adventures, discoveries and entertainment and beside all, a place of commercial profit. This ‘space’ is generally presented as an unfamiliar and strange place. The question that rises here is: Is *Lord Jim* written in the same tone?

It is true that the novel is described variously by commentators as an imperial adventure story; however, as a complex wrought literary work, *Lord Jim* provides considerable textual interpretations. This thematic complexity, perhaps, justifies the fact that this work has been one of Conrad’s most widely studied in the last decades. Christopher GoGwilt, for example, has argued that, “With the failure to consolidate a coherent ideology of the British Empire, the idea of the ‘West’ emerged to replace and resituate a range of assumptions about race, nation, class, and gender” (GoGwilt, 1995:88). What *Lord Jim* illuminates about this shift is the problematic continuity between nineteenth-and twentieth-century representations of race, nation, and culture.

In *Lord Jim*, Conrad had his own recollections of the disgrace of the *Jeddah* affair of 1880 where nearly one thousand passengers were abandoned by the British crew. The story of the Patna was, partially, inspired from this real event, as well as from Conrad’s readings, such as Alfred Wallace’s *The Malay Archipelago* (1836), *Fred McNair’s Perak and the Malays* (1878). One can also mention Marguerite Poradowska’s Ukrainian romances: *Yaga* (1887),

Demoiselle Micia (1888-89), and *La Madone de Bursowiska* (1891), which were published in *Revue des Deux Mondes*. These works attracted Conrad because they reminded him of his Polish childhood through the Polish multi-ethnic world of the characters - the local Ukrainian (Ruthenian, Galician, or Hutsulian) population share quite a lot with the Malay. Besides, Conrad's boyhood experience of revolt, the Polish uprising against Russian overlords, and exile made him cynical of the politics of imperialism and left him with "a remarkably acute and sympathetic eye for the plight of the stateless, of fellow refugees and outcasts, such as the slaves and exiles and fugitives who people the backwaters of the Malay Archipelago" (M. Moor, 1992:22). The complexity of Jim's character, his conflicting motivations of self-abnegation and self-exaggeration, his heroic illusions and his disappointing reality, his desire for glory and fame and his desire for effacement, may be seen as a displacement of Conrad's personal grievances that causes Jim to act as an interpretive space for others.

A. Ideological Otherness: *Billy Budd* (Re) Interrogating Rights of Man

The authors' dialogue in the works under scrutiny in this chapter revolves around the natural rights of man in relation to the "Other". These 'rights' seem to be important for both writers because, perhaps as sailors, they adhere to John Locke's understanding of both the state and the natural law developed in his *Second Treatise on Government* (1689). According to Locke, man in nature is in "a state of perfect freedom to order (his) as (her) fit, though natural law demands that no one ought to harm another in his life, health, liberty, or possession" (Locke, 1962:4-5). Melville, in *Billy Budd*, sharply attacks the doctrine of civilization, with its assignment of moral superiority and political entitlement to the "laws" where Billy is othered by a British law. This fact is introduced early in chapter I. Billy's removal from the ship named *Right-of-Man* to the *Bellipotent* symbolises the power that society exercises over individuals. The scene demonstrates the idea that the demands of society overpower the rights of the individual. As the narrator points out, the *Rights-of-Man* is

named after a book by Thomas Paine that defends the principles of individual liberty and human rights, which inspired the French Revolution. Ironically, Billy is removed from that ship and is forced to join the *Bellipotent*, a hierarchical organized "strictly run vessel" that represents perverted authority.

In Melville's work, the ship, as an isolated space or world, functions as a microcosm of the larger world of America. The two ships, the *Bellipotent* and *The Right-of-Man* introduce not only social, political, and philosophical issues, but also the issue of American expression in the age of literary emergence. Billy is introduced in the novel as a peacekeeper. He finds himself transferred from a merchant ship to a warship. Billy, the "peacekeeper", is selected among other sailors to change rank. Symbolically, Billy finds himself transferred from America to Britain. The opposition of peace/war articulated by the ships allows Melville to express a contemporary issue: the use of the *Articles of War* in the American Navy. The American maritime legal system consists of a set of military laws derived from the British model. These American Navy's military laws are introduced in the novel as abusive and tyrannical. Melville considers that their use is a harsh contradiction of the American ethos. Sea captains, he claims, have a tendency to become abusive tyrants because of the power they receive through the maritime legal system.

Aboard this ship, Billy is accused by John Claggart, the Ship's master-at-arms, of taking part in a mutiny. The fact that Billy is judged under a military law can be interpreted as a perversion of America's own legal system. The ship is a representative example of nineteenth-century America. It functions as a microcosm of the larger world of America, in which the *Bellipotent* is a representative of a social and political institution. The fact that Captain Vere wants Billy to be executed quickly under the *Mutiny Act* shows Melville's criticism of both the British Navy and the American Navy since the latter uses British military law. The author presents an example of the perversion of the American principles since this

“English” law does not necessarily follow the principles advocated by the larger cultural institution that is America itself. To reinforce this blind American imitation of the British Law, the writer introduces, in chapter 22, a similar case of “the U.S. brig-of-war *Somers*”, where the American Captain Mackenzie puts down a prankish rebellion led by Philip Spenser. The latter is hanged in accordance with what is described here as “the so – called Articles of War, Articles modelled upon the English Mutiny Act” (*BB*: 113).

Melville denounces the American Articles of War in another of his fictional works, *White-Jacket*, where he refers to these articles as “[...] an importation from abroad, even from Britain, whose laws we Americans hurled off as tyrannical of all” (1984: 63). For the writer, the fact that Billy’s execution is justified by law does not mean that an act of justice is done, since Articles favouring punishment published during the late 1880s argued that the death penalty should be restricted to murder committed with malice pretence, by a sane person, in resisting arrest, or in the commission of another felony. Nobody on the ship believes Billy acted with premeditation or malicious intent, since we know that he accidentally killed Claggart; but Vere instructs the court that they must disregard all question of intent. So, justice in *Billy Budd* is acted out according to ideological directives. The criticism expressed in this narrative focuses essentially around what could be called the dichotomy of acceptance vs. resistance. On the one hand, we can read the story as accepting the slaughter of Billy as the necessary end of justice. Thus, Vere’s condemnation can be seen as a necessary military action performed in the name of preserving the political order on board the *Bellipotent*. On the other hand, we can read the story ironically as a Melvillian doctrine of resistance where, of course, Billy’s execution is the example of injustice. The execution itself is a testament of denunciation, deploring the political order of a military regime.

Captain Vere, for example, places his duty to martial law above his own sense of duty to Billy, sacrificing him to war. He strongly believes that his duty towards the British Navy is

more important than justice. He considers himself as a soldier whose duty is to kill his enemy in a war. The Mutiny Act, under which Billy is condemned, was implemented precisely in order to deter mutiny by punishing any act of violence against a superior officer with death, no matter what the circumstances. So, it is worth noting that judging Billy under a military law is Melville's way to show that war requires a nation to be as brutal to its own subjects as it is to its enemies. Melville's skill lies in enlarging the scope of the issue of British "authority" and prophesying American "Authority"' overseas, the war in Iraq or in Afghanistan.

The Articles of War has an impact even on the religious aspect of life on the ship. The Chaplain is also in direct opposition to the tenets of religion, since it obeys to the Navy's laws rather than to those of the church. There is a profound irony to all the parallels between the Bible and Bill's fate, since, as Vere has already pointed out to the reader, Billy is not being sacrificed to God, but in direct opposition to the religious principles. This is well illustrated through Melville's description of the Chaplain as "the minister of the Prince of Peace serving in the host of the God of War" (*BB*: 50), since the Chaplain is fed and paid by the Navy not by the church. For Melville, religion has to subordinate itself to "the discipline and purposes of war" (Ibid). The Chaplain is quite powerless to change Billy's fate because of his subordinate role on board the warship, and he knows that he is in no position to put his Christian code of morality above the commands of the officers. Ironically, he has to modify his conviction as required by the circumstances of war and naval discipline.

Many of the earlier critical essays on *Billy Budd* address themselves to the imponderable question of whether or not Vere was right to hang Billy, whether the tale should be seen as a reactionary endorsement of legal formalism or a liberal critique of its authoritarian assumptions. As Thomas Brook observes, the question is that, rather than seeing Vere as a tragic hero or nefarious hypocrite, it makes more sense to consider the internal logic

through which different systems of government operate and the ways in which the structural indeterminacy of Melville's narrative exposes law as an ambiguous and historically contingent process (Brook, 1987: 212). It is important to establish the context within which the events of the novel take place. In this sense, the "text" in the novel announces its "worldliness", to borrow Edward Said's parlance.

The story is set during an important period in American history, the rising tide of imperialism. It was the time when the nation was about to build its first large scale standing Navy to prepare for its imperial Manifest Destiny. The story was set in the summer of 1797, just after two major mutinies that occurred in the ranks of the British Navy during the spring of the same year, one at Spithead and one at Nore and Sheerness. They were the result of abuses endured by sailors in the British navy - including bad food, brutal discipline and irregular pay. In chapter 3, the narrator explains that this mutiny "was indeed a demonstration more menacing to England than the contemporary manifestoes and conquering and proselyting armies of the French Directory" (*BB*: 18). Hence, the law reinforces the Navy as an important means for Britain, and later American empires. Melville, in a way, prophesizes that the American laws overseas will become dominant, and the American power will be expanded using war. So, the removal of Billy from the *Rights of Man* and his execution on a warship named *Bellipotent* shows Melville's scepticism towards the Western empire.

The importance of the navy as a means of empire highlights the significance of Billy's affair. The latter creates an atmosphere of fear to the point of paranoia on the part of the officers of the *Bellipotent***,** as the surgeon says about his captain's order, "to argue his order to him would be insolence. To resist him would be mutiny" (*BB*: 61). In fact, the Captain's reaction is to "call a drum head court" (Ibid. 60) immediately. His insistence on procedure is to send a message to the crew: Billy will be viewed in the eyes of the military law. He resolves to keep the matter secret and to act on it quickly to avoid any potential mutinous

activity that might develop, when Billy's plight becomes public. He appoints a small drumhead court consisting of the first lieutenant, the Captain marines, and the sailing master. Vere, as a sole witness, relates the events of the day to the court and announces that Billy must be executed quickly under the Mutiny Act. He explains to the court that the matter at hand is to judge the pertinent actions and their consequences, regardless of their causes, motives, or intentions. Vere's formula inspires a deep- seated sense of surprise in both Billy and in the court. Moreover, when the court asks for a more complete understanding of the context in which Claggart accused Billy and by consequence the context in which Billy struck Claggart, Vere dismisses the court's wish. He argues that such contextual information is irrelevant to the question of guilt or innocence with regard to Billy's deed. For the Captain the court response to Billy's crime is execution.

To sentence Billy to death, Captain Vere reminds the members of the court that they owe their "allegiance" not to "nature", their "heart" or their "private conscience", but entirely to the "King" and his "imperial power is formulated in the code under which alone we officially proceed" (*BB:* 50), the code to which Vere refers was known in the nineteenth century as the "Bloody Code". Captain Vere states that Billy has committed a "capital crime", but Billy, we know, is charged not with murder but with conspiracy for mutiny, and this is considered by Vere as a capital crime under the Articles of War of the Georgian Code. We suggest that Melville's Orientalist discourse allows him to satirize the American blind imitation of the English law in the US Navy.

Melville in *Billy Budd* attacks the practice of the Navy's military law because - as he explained it in *White-Jacket*,

> flogging in the Navy is opposed to the essential dignity of man, which no legislator has a right to violate; that it is oppressive and glaringly unequal in its operations; that is utterly repugnant to the spirit of our democratic institutions; indeed, that it involves a lingering trait of the worst times of

> a barbarous feudal aristocracy; in a word, we denounce it as religiously, morally, and immutably wrong.
>
> (*WJ*: 148)

Melville's criticism here and in *Billy Budd*, suggests that such laws are perverting the nature of a space, which is considered as a "free-state". Maritime law itself, then, constitutes an attempt at imposing an order on the space, i.e., America and such attempts and acts contradict America's founding ideology. The passion of Melville's criticism shows his objection towards any act or attempt inspired from a British model.

It is Melville's way to indicate how the draconian methods of martial law found their way into the American Navy through the influence of English models. The English "Authority" or culture allows Melville to create a space where American "Authority" has to free itself from the mother culture; i.e., English "authority". Thus, this imaginary space allows Melville to reflect upon the growth and development of American culture. Melville's fiction expresses this New England literature as being "remarkable for its quality, its gospel of self-reliance, its high ideals, its call to the soul to build itself stately mansions**"** (Quoted in Fielder, 1984:30). Melville in *Billy Budd* still looked at the world from a moral point of view to express new ideals, but some of these ideals were illusions.

B. Billy Budd: The 'Latent' Oriental

The character of Billy occupies an important place in the novel; he plays a significant role in Melville's Orientalist discourse where Billy serves as a vehicle through which Melville mediates nineteenth-century cultural, political - racial anxieties of the New World. We can speak of an oriental discourse where Billy is considered as the "Other" and English as a cultural power that dominates the West. In this sense, Melville, as an American writer of the American Renaissance, reacts passionately towards this domination by satirising the British Justice. Buell states that *Billy Budd*, even other fictional works, as a postcolonial text shows Melville "manifesting a prolonged struggle over the business of writing an American

narrative in any or all these senses- over whom he was writing for, what his subject would be, what his models would, where his social values lay" (Buell, 2004:95). For Melville the literary 'model' should be American. In this context, this novel shows Melville expressing the spirit of the American Renaissance literature where he urges a detachment of the American letters from the English traditions in an effort to create "American" literary literature. "We listened too long to the courtly muses of Europe", now "we will walk on our", says Emerson, Melville too, urges American writers to abandon their "leaven of literary flunkeyism towards England" (1987:247). It is Melville's way to show that American literature needs to break from British literature.

The political dimension of the novel is introduced through Billy. Billy is executed because he is considered as a threat for the English Navy. Remember that Billy is a foreigner on the *Bellipotent*, and consider how news from the *Mediterranean*, a British publication, circulates the news that Billy Budd was a foreigner "though mustered into the service under an English name the assassin was no Englishman, but one of those aliens adopting English cognomens" (*BB*: 86). Accordingly, insurrection becomes associated with what is foreign or alien. The characterization of Billy suits the Oriental description, where the Oriental is inferior and alien "Other". The Oriental is depicted as feminine, weak, yet strangely dangerous because he poses a threat to white. Billy is physically attractive, he is described as a "sweet and pleasant fellow" (Ibid. 11) with a "feminine [...] complexion" (Ibid. 14). The feminine side is reinforced by his voice that can be "speechless". The feminine and weakness are often seen as markers of Orientalism. Besides, the fact that Billy is a constant object of speculation and inquiry reinforces the Oriental dimension that serves Melville to introduce issues in relation to nation and race.

We have seen Billy's execution as a major event in the novel; let's investigate the reason causing Billy's execution. His execution is marked by a racial difference that Melville

specifically signifies that Billy is not English, stressing the fact that he is an 'alien'; that is, an Other. He is introduced as an orphan that has been abandoned. Billy recalls: "I have heard that I was found in a pretty silk-lined basket hanging one morning from the knocker of a good man's door in Bristol." (Ibid.16) So, Billy is depicted as someone with no origin. However, the narrator speculates over his origins when he states: "Yes, Billy Budd was a foundling, a presumable by-blow, and, evidently, no ignoble one. Noble descent was as evident in him as in blood horse."(*BB*: 16) Billy's description, both as an uprooted and noble man, is Melville's way to refer to the anxieties of racial origins of America whose identity depends on an exclusion of racial impurity. Billy naiveté may refer to the New World 'naiveté' in relation to democracy and race.

John Claggart, the ship's master-at-arms, by contrast, is represented as a loyal servant of his Majesty, "his function was a responsible one […] and his fidelity in it the greater because of his strong patriotic impulse" (Ibid. 86). However, the narrator has some difficulties in describing him. In the midst of this description, the narrator explains some of the unpleasant means that were employed to recruit men to ships at that time. He considers that suspects and convicted criminals make up a significant portion of any given crew, especially in a time of war. Later, the narrator concludes that Claggart is naturally depraved. His depravity is said to be sinister because in every outward appearance he seems rational, temperate, and free from sin. His madness clearly hides itself deep within him. Not only Billy but also Claggart allow Melville to mediate the American racial discourse where these characters may refer to the different ethnic origins of the immigrants. So, through the metaphor of the characters' duality, Melville deals with an important cultural and racial issue. Melville's Orientalism stands as a critique for both Britain and America.

Billy Budd becomes more and more allegorical where Melville satirises the "purity" of Westerners. As an allegory, the story introduces universal issue in relation to human being:

the threat of evil. The narrator introduces, in chapter 2, his view of the elusive quality of evil with the discussion of Billy's intermittent speech impediment. The narrator interprets the stutter as an indication that nature did not make Billy perfect. He compares this imperfection to a calling card left by the devil, suggesting that the devil is fond of learning such reminder that he has a hand in everything created on earth, however beautiful. This mysterious presence of evil comes as an opposition to Emerson's positive transcendentalism whose belief gives rise to his remarkable optimism for the future, to his conviction that evil is but a stepping stone to good. In *Nature* (1836), he says: "All things which we deal, preach to us. What is a farm but a mute gospel, The chaff and the wheat, weeds and plants, blight, rain, insects, sun, - it is a sacred emblem from the first furrow of spring to the last stack which the snow of winter overtakes in the fields." In this book, Emerson sets forth his idealistic philosophy: "Idealism sees the world in God". This philosophy seems to him to free human beings from the tyranny of materialism, to enable them to use matter as a mere symbol in the solution of the soul's problem, and to make the world conformable to thought. His famous sentence in this connection is, "The sensual man conforms thoughts to things; the poet conforms things to his thoughts" (1971: 48).

The notion of evil adds another dimension to the novel. It prevents us from reducing the story to the conflict between the individual and society and sees more the universal issue that the story may suggest. In fact, Melville doesn't portray evil as a product of society, but he does not explain where it comes from or what it means. This opens the field to different suggestions. One of them is that the figure of Billy is shaped by Melville in a way that he could not quite function as the plausible tragic hero in the traditional Greek context. The reason is that Billy's extraordinary goodness and innocence, which could have worked as a "tragic flaw", is foreshadowed by the threat of evil –"the envious marplot of Eden" (*BB*: 30). The Original Sin, which Melville had called the source of "the power of blackness" was thus

sutured on the angelic Billy. The demonic imagery (Frye) in Billy expresses the perversion of human desire. Melville, probably, refers to the imperial desire since this narrative was written at a period where the world was dominated by the supremacy of the British Empire, and for him, the British power overseas could endanger universal's goals as stated in America's ideals.

C. Ideological Otherness in *Lord Jim*

Conrad, like Melville, refers to the British power overseas. *Lord Jim* was published at a moment when the Boer war and increasing international competition on the seas, particularly from America and Germany, raised doubts about the sustainability of empire. For Allan H. Simmons, " The factual basis for *Lord Jim* involves recognition of the degree to which Conrad historicizes and politicizes the sea and British imperialism in the novel, and thus the degree to which the novel both reflects and critiques its age" (Allan H. Simmons, 2006: 100). Placing this novel in a larger context can provide an additional suggestion of the sea's global role. One of Conrad's earlier letters, written shortly after the publication of *The Nigger of the Narcissus* in 1897, provides an alternative view of the various "worlds" he associated with the ship's situation: "I […] wanted to connect the small world of the ship with that larger world carrying perplexities, fears, affections, rebellions, in a loneliness greater than that of the ship at sea" (CL JC VI: 421). For Conrad the connection of those two worlds indicates that the ship possesses some relationship with the larger social environment in which it evolves. The fact of creating such worlds inevitably suggests that they have a direct bearing on the real world, if only as an alternate space in which contemporary social, political and racial problems are absent. Such a "possible world" facilitates utopian elements since they provide an "alternative" to contemporary society.

J.H. Stape observes that *Lord Jim* is obsessively concerned with the mechanics of its telling and the procedures that generate and shape its thematic (1998:65). Conrad, like

Melville, uses the *Patna* to introduce social, political, and philosophical issues related to the "Other". The Oriental discourse in this fictional work under scrutiny here is ironical. In this respect, Conrad's ironical discourse towards the 'White' supremacy and civilization is treated through the British Navy. The British Navy was representative of British power overseas, since Britain was one of the leading industrial nations in the world after having harnessed shipping technology. We consider that the *Patna*, as an English vessel, allows Conrad to criticize the British Navy as one of the most powerful means of imperialism overseas. From the opening chapters, Conrad invokes colonialism by locating Jim and the *Patna* in the "Arabian Sea" (*LJ*: 19), one of the parts of the world that has been claimed by European powers.

Jim engages as chief mate on the *Patna*, a decaying steamer ferrying a boatload of Muslim pilgrims to Mecca and commanded by a crazy German skipper. The 'bad state' of the *Patna* refers to the 'decay' of the fleets of those times. Accordingly, it is no wonder that Jim expects the ship to sink after the collision rips a hole in it. Brian Spittle refers to un-sea worthiness of ships which let them vulnerable to all manner of accidents. He states that elements of risk were among the inefficiency of land-based operators and the greed of some owners. He notes that in Conrad's formative sea-going years, the period in which many of sea stories are set, safety regulations governing ships were inadequate and even such laws as those in force were poorly supervised and implemented. Spittle refers also to some owners who had insured an old ship for more than it was worth in the hope that it would be lost at sea. They would then get rid of a vessel that needed expensive repairs, and collect some profit from the insurance company into the Bargain. (Spittle, 1992:9-10) This financial interest based on grand insurance allows Conrad to mount some criticism on the British Navy, using the *Patna*, a ship depicted in the novel as: "eaten up with rust worse than a condemned water tank" (*LJ* 53).

Thanks to Conrad's experience in the British Navy, *Lord Jim* can be seen as the writer's great perception of that life experience by the sailors, especially the crew who had chosen a career to which such risks were inherent. Ships gradually pass from hand to hand, until bought by some needy and reckless speculators, who send them to sea with precious human lives. Every winter, hundreds and hundreds of brave men are sent to death so that a few speculative scoundrels may make unhallowed gains. (Spittle, 1992:15) It is no wonder that Jim, then, expects the ship to sink after the collision and later justifies his act to Marlow by declaring: "have you watched a ship floating head down, checked in sinking by a sheet of old iron too rotten to stand being shored up?" (*LJ:* 11) In a way, Jim could not stay in a damaged ship, but his mistake as a seaman is abandoning a still-floating ship, and not waking any of the pilgrims. The *Patna*, like the *Bellipotent* expresses Conrad's irony towards the pseudo-supremacy of the British Navy and the colonial system.

The tag phrase 'one of us' then suggests a racial dynamics issue. When Marlow first noticed Jim, who stood out from the rest of the *Patna*'s crew, he immediately considered him as "one of us". It suggests what the Europeans have in common, i.e., their supremacy overseas. The idea of colonialism is reinforced when Jim is welcomed in *Patusan* because he is white. This feeling of credibility engendered by the colour of his skin shows both economic and racial versions of the Colonial dynamic. This idea is explicitly presented in Abdul Jan Mohamed's "Manichean allegory". This allegory characterizes the relation that lies between dominant culture and subordinate culture. Everything is reduced to a set of dichotomies, such as black or white, civilized or savage, etc. (Jan Mohamed, 1986:82).

In the Eurocentric world, skin-colour is always culturally loaded and may be a strong element in the formation of subjectivities whose identity it masks. Racism is as vulnerably reliant as colonial authority on a frustrated desire to make skin-colour signify identity. Its political and ideological function was to sustain the social cohesiveness of the colonizers.

These are the people invoked in *Lord Jim* when Marlow calls Jim 'one of us'. The sense of alienation produced by colonialism originated partly in the way in which knowledge was linked to such clumsy and deceptive 'positioning'. In the colonial world, 'white masks' might indicate the hopeless plight of the 'natives' condemned to never know their rulers. However, Jim's white-skin allows him to be known as the ruler in Patusan.

Jim as a white man is significant since the colour is linked with ideology, i.e., white supremacy. Jim is truly a man in "white from shoes to hat" (Ibid. 9): fair-haired, clad in white clothing, and often showing like radiant specks against dark backgrounds. Marlow's account of Jim's visit to the Rajah's palace in Patusan is a classic statement of godlike power implicit in whiteness:

> In the midst of these dark-faced men, his stalwart figure in white apparel, the gleaming clusters of his fair hair, seemed to catch all the sunshine that trickled through the cracks in the closed shutters of that dim hall, with its walls and a roof of thatch. He appeared like a creature not only of another kind but of another essence. Had they not seen him come up in a canoe they might have thought he had descended upon them from the cloud.
>
> (*L J*: 229)

Jim appears as "a creature of another essence"; the mythical investiture of Jim by the inhabitants of Patusan, who believe him to be greater and wiser than the natives, plays upon a familiar imperialist trope. Jim, as a radiant demigod or what Marlow calls their "racial prestige", prepares to invoke the authority of the white man in Patusan. Marlow adds: "[Dain Warris] was still one of them; while Jim was one of us [...] He had not Jim's racial prestige" (Ibid. 361).

This notion of whiteness as an 'imperialist trope' is quite explicit in *The Rescue*, another of Conrad's Malay fictional work, where Lingard's whiteness entitles him to direct the conversation, and to speak bluntly to Babalatchi, without ritual or circumlocution, and thus without respect. He not only looks white, he talks white. He reminds Babalatchi: "I am

like other whites, and do not wish to speak many words when the truth is short." (*R*: 222) Accordingly, Whiteness in both fictions expresses the power and the supremacy of the white man over the natives**.** Conrad's Malay fictions can be read 'as cautionary tales' in which white men sometimes behave well, but more often badly, under 'special' circumstances that put their racial or cultural loyalties to the test; yet, they can also be read under increasing pressure from the well- armed emissaries of Western progress and enlightenment. For Gene M. Moore, the Malay fictions can be read as explorations of interracial relations and the local politics of ethnic survival in a context of colonial myopia and cultural arrogance (1992:22). Lord Jim arrives at Patusan for a Dutch trading firm owned by a German. Imprisoned by the local Malay rajah, he escapes and achieves power by helping an exiled Bugis chief to expel an "Arab half-breed". This Malay fiction reveals the white man's power and necessity to the stability and order of the distant colonies.

However, the notion of "whiteness" is questioned by Conrad when Jim recalls: You said also - I call to mind - that "giving your life up to them" (them meaning all of mankind with skins brown, yellow or black in colour) "was like selling your soul to a brute". "You contented that 'kind of thing' was only endurable and enduring when based on a firm conviction in the truth of ideas racially your own, in whose name are established the order, the morality of an ethical progress" (*LJ*: 339). Yet, the narrator does not refute the point of view; he just concludes by: "possibly! You ought to know" adjusting the colonial discourse by, "of all mankind Jim had no dealings but with himself" (Ibid).

The Daily Chronicle of 12 August 1880, commenting on the real event of the *Jeddah* affair of 1880, from which the story of the Patna was inspired, reinforces Conrad's ironical Oriental discourse. The text reads: "We sincerely trust that no Englishman was amongst the boat load of cowards who left the Jeddah and thousand passengers to shift for themselves" (Quoted in Norman Sherry, 1966:66). A text of similar texture has already been seen in the

British publication in *Billy Budd,* which states that "the assassin was no Englishman" (*BB*, 86). In Melville's work, Billy the "alien" allows Melville to mount his criticism towards the supremacy of the 'English'. In Conrad's work, the person that committed an outrage is an English young sailor, a son of a parson whose church "had stood there for centuries" and "had belonged to the family for generations" *(LJ*: 10-11). Like Melville, Conrad questions this English 'purity'. It is as if Conrad completes Melville's criticism towards English supremacy, with Jim standing as a black spot in the English "whiteness".

In a letter to Cunninghame Graham, Conrad notes that Courage and truth are strangely out of place in this epoch of material preoccupations. He adds:

> In the noblest cause men manage to put something of their baseness... Every cause is tainted: and you reject this one, espouses that other as if one were evil and the other good while the same evil you hate is in both, but disguised in different words [....] Not that I think mankind intrinsically bad. It is only silly and cowardly [...] in cowardice is very evil [....] but without it mankind would vanish.
>
> (CLJC VII: 25)

Conrad in the above quotation seems to join Melville's notion of duality of good and evil in man with no distinction of race or class - that aspect of humanity. To Albert Guerard, the secret of the novel's "universality" lies in human fallibility, "since nearly everyone has jumped of some *Patna* and most of us have been compelled to live on, desperately quietly engaged in reconciling what we are with what we could like to be" (Guerard,1958:127). The night before the court delivers its verdict, Marlow hears Jim's story; not for a moment does he condone Jim's cowardly desertion, instead Conrad dramatizes Jim's consciousness when Marlow states: "he talked soberly, with a sort of composed unreserve, and with a quiet bearing that might have been the outcome of many self-control, of impudence, of callousness, of a colossal unconsciousness, of gigantic deception. Who can tell?" (*LJ*: 70)

The tag “one of us” enlarges its scope to man versus nature where Marlow expresses the vulnerability of man. Through Jim Conrad introduces the vulnerability of human beings. In this sense Jim’s vulnerability makes him, in some way, “one of all of us”. It also emphasizes Jim’s inability to escape his past, a fact which results in his tragic end. Here, Marlow sees Jim as “one of us” and looks for what this tells us about human nature:

> why I longed to go grubbing after the deplorable details of an occurrence which, after all, concerned me no mere than as a member of an obscure body of men (sailors) held together by a community of inglorious toil and by fidelity to a certain standard of conduct, I can’t explain, he tells us: … Perhaps, unconsciously, I hoped I would find that something, some profound and redeeming cause, some merciful explanation, some convincing shadow of an excuse.

(Ibid: 206)

Lord Jim raises the philosophical issue of “how to be”. This novel takes us back to Conrad’s past. It depicts the situation of the orphaned child and expatriate adolescent, the victim of tragic national and family circumstances. It expresses also some of the insecurities and anxieties that Conrad felt throughout his precarious adult life. As a creative artist, he used his experience to shape an interior vision in a foreign land and language. In a sense, Conrad was, like Jim, a heroic exile in search of a social identity from an audience that could only partially understand him. In this sense, Jim’s story focuses on an exile where the protagonist undergoes moral complexity in his confrontation with conflicting rights. Acting out of self – interest, Jim betrays a basic trust; inevitably the latter culminates in self-betrayal where the protagonist undergoes moral complexity in his confrontation with these conflicting rights.

Marlow, “the Englishman that Conrad would have liked to have been” (Simmons, 2006:79), is positioned between the story and the English audience for whom Conrad is writing. Jim’s dereliction of duty in the *Patna* is also formulated in terms of gentlemanly conduct by the ensuing Court of Inquiry. In fact, Marlow’s interest in Jim’s case stems from the broader challenge it poses to the tacit gentlemanly agreement, the code of “decency” that

binds the profession: “I thought to myself – well, if this sort can go wrong like that…” (*L J*: 40) Jim’s ideals are, in fact, untenable when applied to any form of reality. The moment he had jumped he found himself into darkness: “I didn’t think any spot on earth could be so still”, he said: “‘you couldn’t distinguish the sea from the sky; there was nothing to see or hear not a glimmer, not a shape, not a sound’ ” (Ibid. 72). Darkness here refers to Jim’s loss of his honour since, according to one of the judges in the Court of Inquiry, he has failed to “preserve professional decency” (Ibid. 68).

Jim’s leap from the *Patna* alienates him from both marine and domestic tradition. Thus, the ship as a spatial element introduces the notion of a code of honour in relation both to the British society and Maritime World. In his “Author’s Note”, Conrad identifies the subject of the novel as “the acute consciousness of lost honour” (*L J*: IX). The question is as Simmons well poses it: “The Lord / Tuan translation implicitly questions whether honour lost in one “world” that of the Patna, can indeed be redeemed in another, that of *Patusan*” (2006:103). As in Melville’s work, the *Patna* functions as a microcosm that reflects the British Society, the one described by Charles Dickens in *Great Expectations* which demonstrates the status of a gentleman in the British Class System. Jim confesses to Marlow during their conversation at the Malabar House: “of course I wouldn’t have talked to you about all this if you had not been a gentleman. I ought to have known… I am – I am a gentleman, too.” (*LJ*: 131). The understanding of the lieutenant of Jim turns on the concept of honour; “The honour”, Stein exclaims, “[...] that is real-that is!” (Ibid. 91)

D. Patusan: A ‘Manifest’ Otherness

Herman Melville and Joseph Conrad have abandoned an unsatisfactory world and have sailed away into far lands. In their stories the sea is a sort of out of place, a geographical place where it is possible to be free, nevertheless, as we have seen above the ships are

fragments of land and host the same social, cultural and political problems. John Peck observes that:

> while the majority of tellers of sea stories are content just to relate maritime adventures, more ambitious writers are alert to the potential within a maritime story to consider fundamental questions about imposing a shape, and, as such, an interpretation upon life. It is Melville and Conrad who exploit this potential to the full.
>
> (Quoted in Peck, 2001: 108)

One of these 'fundamental questions' is imperialism; this 'imperialist trope' can be identified through the setting. *Lord Jim* is set in a colonial world. In Conrad's day Singapore had already long been under British rule. It became Independent in 1959. Conrad was familiar with the area from three visits he had made, during his sailing years (1883). Most of the action of the novel takes place in and around Singapore and the Malay Archipelago, a chain of islands extending from Asia to just north of Australia, including Indonesia and the Philippines. Marlow never names the city in which the *Patna* inquiry is held, but his description of the harbour office, the hospital, and the hotel suggests that the place is Singapore. The city is a port situated on the small island of Singapore, off the southern tip of the Malay Peninsula. It is actually in one of these English colonies that Conrad bases Jim's refuge where he becomes Tuan Jim, Lord Jim. There, in Conrad's terms a "primitive region", Jim is respected because he brings order and stability to the area with his strength. Conrad's literary Oriental construction is quite significant in relation to the setting. The resemblance between the words "Patna" and "Patusan" reveals that both as space mediate Conrad's ironical discourse of the Oriental.

Some critics have argued that the tag- phrase "one of us" which organizes much of *Lord Jim* deals with the question of Conrad's own situation in relation to the "Patna" and "Patusan" sections of the books as two halves of an ironic dialogue in which the desire to build a community (an "Us- prinzip") is persistently undercut by the centripetal forces of

ideological disruption: “Jim’s us- ness is more clearly recognizable as a form of *negation* than as declaration of self-identity” (Nico Israel, 1999: 19). We argue that the text is a privileged place for discovering the ironies at work in imperialist discourse by paying attention to the discontinuities between form and content. The point is not, then, merely to recognize that the narrative of *Lord Jim* generates contradictory ideologies - that the text philosophically debunks the idea of a national and a racial belonging ultimately only to valorise these same concepts. It is, rather, that race, nation, and the problematic of belonging in general is dealt with in an ambivalent and sometimes contradictory way that troubles any critique of imperialism that does adequately account for the disturbing dilemma of difference as encoded in the thematic, and also in the narrative form itself.

As the *Bellipotent*, the *Patna* shows the author’s scepticism toward the British Navy. It is used by Conrad as an imaginative space for the reflection of the “Other”. The Patna as “a crowded planet” draws a demarcation line between superior and inferior crew. The Muslim pilgrims are othered. In chapter three, when Jim recalls the *Patna* incident he describes the pilgrims awfully; they are “mastiffs” with an eye on the top of their head and ugly mouths. He qualifies them as “reptiles” and “pink toads” mirroring a disgusting image of the ship. These “brutes” as he defines them are seen as a burden to clear out as quickly as possible. (*LJ*: 46) These pilgrims are described as prone bodies, “[...] a chin upturned, two closed eyelids, a dark hand with silver ring, a meagre limb draped in a torn covering, a head bent back, a naked foot, a throat bared and stretched as if offering itself to the knife” (Ibid. 20). The description reveals that they are packed in the ship like animals. This image reinforces the Oriental discourse by introducing them through their body-parts as if they do not deserve the status of human beings. The place is described through Jim’s listing of objects as “the Arab’s belongings” which denotes disorder and dirt; and among the “mass of sleepers” there is “a woman covered from head to foot, like a corpse” (Ibid). Both the place and the Arabs suit the

negative representation of the Oriental and show the extent to which the Europeans reduce them not only to animals but also to nasty creatures. However, the irony lies in the pilgrims' economic importance. While Jim and the rest of the *Patna* crew, as the ship's officers, are placed in a position of superiority, they are nevertheless economically dependent on the Muslim pilgrims, just as many European countries were at the time economically reliant on the natural resources of their colonies. The juxtaposition of the economic reliance and the use of stereotypes suggest that Conrad is fully knowledgeable of his literary actions and means to be, perhaps, subversive.

Patusan is another space that highlights Conrad's Oriental discourse. The place is introduced as an abandoned territory, difficult to reach, and was ruled by a youth with congenital deformities. This implies that the place needs the technological superiority of the white man. As such, different points of view about Patusan are reported by the principal narrator, Charlie Marlow. First, an omniscient narrator presents the region as a "Virgin forest" and "the Malay jungle village", this means that the region has not yet been explored and is still in its primitive state. Marlow, the narrator, also reports that this region is known for its irregularities and aberrations. So, Patusan "an unfamiliar heaven" is first introduced through Stein since his 'butterfly-hunting' has allowed him to discover the different places of the Archipelago "in the original dusk of their being, before light (and even electric light) had been carried into them for the sake of morality and – and – well - the greater profit, too" (*LJ*: 167). Patusan offers a site of Western imperial fantasy, complete with the European gentleman-adventurer winning the trust of the natives, instituting a system of government, and, indulging in an exotic romance. For Simmons, the diminution of psychological intensity after the Patna narrative is that "the Patusan sequence self-consciously replicates the stereotypical and formulaic representation of exotic space in colonial fiction where the European succeeds to achieve greatness as genuine as any man ever achieved" (2006:244). Effectively, it is chosen

willingly by Stein to send Jim there, “this representation fails to account for Conrad’s sheer audacity in *Lord Jim* in forcing the colonial narrative to encounter alien ways of thinking that undermine its assumptions and threaten its coherence” (Ibid. 111).

One of these representations is the imaginary construction of the Oriental as the Other. Patusan town is “situated internally” (*LJ*: 240), and the inhabitants “exist as if under an enchanter’s wand” (Ibid. 330). On his departure, Marlow declares: “I had turned away from the picture and was going back to the world where events move, men change, light flickers, life flows in a clear stream, no matter whether over mud or over stones” (Ibid**).** The exotic description of this area is reinforced by the first description of the region by Marlow. He refers to it as a “forest country” with “somber coats” and “crumbling shapes”. It is noticeable, then, that it is associated with darkness and mystery. As this fixed image is vague and imprecise for Marlow, so, it also lacks clarity and creates confusion in the reader’s mind. This geographical space refers to “Malay Writing”, and the East as viewed by Europeans. The Orient as ‘an imaginative geography’ is a European invention; it is both “a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences,” and Europe’s “deepest and most recurring images of the Other”(Said, 1979: 4). Marlow says: “this was, indeed, one of the lost, forgotten, unknown places of the earth” (*LJ*: 243). So, Marlow’s description makes the reader see the island as an exotic, strange, mysterious and immense place. Besides, the region is shown as if it is haunted by some spirits that reinforces its mystery. It follows from the above description that Patusan, as seen by Marlow, is a land of mystery full of magic powers. We can then speak about a land of Marlow’s imagination, as Edward Said states above.

In the case of Jim, foreign lands are a refugee for him to escape his guilt. He thought that in “untouched wilderness” (Ibid. 30), he could leave a peaceable life. He felt in love with Jewel, he acted in a heroic way, and he finally gained the respect of others. But Jim’s guilt

concerning the *Patna*, where he violates a fundamental law of duty and responsibility, haunts him. People around him wonder about his past, while spectacular rumours circulate outside of Patusan: he is somehow "too good" for this place; therefore, his presence there must indicate a dark secret that makes it impossible for him to live in the outside world.

In chapter 28 Jewel asks Marlow to tell her what the "things" is to which Jim often refers, the thing that made him afraid and that he can never forget. Although Jim seems to have found what he was looking for and thus heal his wounds, he would never be able to leave the island. The *Patna* is still haunting him "I've been only two years here, and now, upon my word I can't conceive being able to live anywhere else. The very thought of the world outside is enough to give me fight; because don't you see. I have not forgotten why I came here. Not yet!" (Ibid.190). Not long after his arrival in Partusan - "one of the lost, forgotten, unknown places of the earth" (Ibid. 202) – we almost have the impression that we are reading about a different Jim: "there was nothing within sight to compare him with, as though he had been one of those exceptional men who can be only measured by the greatness of their fame; and his fame, remember, was the greatest thing around for many a day's journey" (*LJ*: 170). He is an exceptional character possessing both fame, and greatness. Jim possessed none of these qualities before going to Patusan. The latter, as a British colony, reveals Jim's greatness. Then, the foreign world means peace whereas the outside world means the recollection of his shame. Thus, Patusan as a foreign place is both a "primitive region" that needs to be civilized, and a peaceful heaven that provides peace, love, and happiness to Jim. This ambivalence shows Conrad's ambiguous relationship with colonialism and his sympathy to the Malay.

Such, we would argue, is the larger narrative perspective of *Lord Jim*, which exposes the limitations and self-contradiction of Marlow's views to open up a complex dialogue on issues of history, culture, and race. The dark 'unknown' place is also fascinating for the

possibilities of imaginative exploitation and appropriation it offers. In the case of Jim the exotic 'otherness' provides him power and respect but couldn't hide his shame. For Terry Colitts, the fact that "Marlow insists that Jim is one of us, Conrad is more interested in the degree to which he is not, which is why this novel is about indeterminacy - even at the end of the novel he is a man 'under a cloud' - rather than definition" (2005: 33).

Patusan is an appropriate place for Jim who desperately tries "to smash, to destroy, to annihilate "by all means his past, even "by the simple and appalling act taking his life" (*LJ:* 42). He is ashamed of living in a world of brave sailors, his life- long dream, and the agony of such feeling "filled him with a despairing desire to escape at any cost" (Ibid). Although he wants to hide from the eyes of the world, he cannot abandon the sea-life, which is like a spell, a "bewitching breath" that eventually will give him the chance of redemption. Haunted by his failure and stripped of his officer's certificate, he wanders from job to job, finally with the help of Stein, an expatriate trader, Marlow gets Jim situated as post manager in the remote territory of Patusan; there he becomes a hero by defeating a local bandit. Jim becomes the spiritual leader of the area. Its citizens place their trust in him and rely on him to enforce justice. Jim's arrival there is as a salvation to the area. The territory is said to be a degenerated place that needs civilization. Jim as a symbolic hero, possessing supernatural powers, comes to save the region. The latter as 'a remote land' will allow him to recover from the Patna's incident. This relationship mediates Conrad's reference to colonialism. Jim's relationship to Patusan alludes to the relationship of the European powers to their colonies. It is a dependent relation as a self- other dialectic.

E. Westerners/Easterners under Westerners' Eyes

As Billy, Jim occupies an important place in the novel; he plays a significant role in Conrad's Orientalist discourse where Jim serves as a vehicle through which Conrad mediates cultural, political-racial anxieties of the Victorian age. The novel opens with a full description

of Jim. He is healthy, robust, assertive and well dressed. He is a very popular water-deck in the eastern ports. The omniscient narrator portrays him in the following words:

> He was an inch, perhaps two, under six feet, powerfully built, and he advanced straight at you with a slight stoop of the shoulders, head forward, and a fixed from-under stare which made you think of a charging bull. His voice was deep, loud, and his manner displayed a kind of dogged self-assertion which had nothing aggressive in it…He was spotlessly neat, appareled in immaculate white from shoes to hat and in the various Eastern ports where he got his living as ship-chandler's water-clerk he was very popular.
>
> (*LJ*: 9)

Marlow shows also the positive effect that Jim has on him and evokes the origins of this intelligent gentleman. In this regard, Marlow says: "I watched the youngster there, I like his appearance, I knew his appearance; he came from the right place; he was one of us" (Ibid. 38). This quote shows that a certain categorization and classification among the human beings has been already established. If Jim is introduced as someone that "came from the right place", it means that there is a 'wrong' place. This discourse of differentiation and categorization adhere to the racial and oriental discourse of the time where the right place may refer to the West as superior and the "wrong" place may refer to the East as inferior.

In Patusan, Jim is invested with a mythical investiture to show his importance as the white European savior. Marlow declares solemnly, "There he stood clean-limbed, clean-faced, firm of his feet, as promising a boy as the sun ever shone on" (Ibid. 36). Thus, Jim is presented as a genius, an exceptional and very talented person who gathers all qualities including the "ability in the abstract". This means that Jim is a promising young man endowed with rare capacities. The reader thus, is prepared to see this ability proved by Jim's extraordinary deeds in Patusan. This description of Jim may be justified by the ideology of the white supremacy of the period.

It was thanks to this exceptional European character that order and peace are brought to that area. Before Jim's coming, the region was in perpetual conflicts between two antagonist parties over trade. In this sense, Marlow states: "he had regulated so many things in Patusan" (Ibid. 168). He becomes very important to that region and its population. This means that its population is unable to establish order by itself. So, as an Eastern region, it is in need of Europe to order things there. This civilizing mission in overseas region is labeled as the "White Man's Burden"; in other words, the white men have to provide the Eastern populations with progress, since these people are unable to do it by themselves. The notion of progress justifies the ideology of imperialism where Conrad's Jim suits this imperialist trope. Jim is admired and respected by the natives who trust and believe in his extraordinary capacities, "Jim appeared to the people of Patusan like a creature not only of another kind but of another essence" (Ibid. 174). There, he is no longer Jim but Tuan Jim, Lord Jim.

Jim is also "outwardly so typical of that good, stupid kind we like to feel marching right and left of us in life"; in other words, Marlow claims to pity Jim. Later, Marlow gives a mere complicated reason for his interest, and he concludes that Jim fascinates him because "he look (s) as genuine as a new sovereign, but there (is) some infernal alloy in his metal". So striking is that *Lord Jim* as *Billy Budd* changes from seafaring adventure into a psychological and metaphysical investigation, and develops not to a final resolution but to a deep uncertainty about human complexity where the infernal alloy echoes the envious marplot of Eden in Billy. For Malcolm Bradbury, "Marlow teases the story backward and forward, seeking the essence among the multiplied meanings of Jim - coward and hero, outcast and Tuan, the man who tries to redeem his moral crime by confronting the 'destructive element', and finally meets the positive and negative faces of his own self in an apparently senseless act of sacrifice" (1985: 97). Conrad's ambivalence in his Oriental discourse demonstrates how the racial-cultural difference cannot be contained by a creation of race hierarchies adopting

superior/inferior and civilized/uncivilized dichotomies; instead, Conrad's novel questions the Oriental as the "Other" through the complexity of the human being and the circulation of trade and the imperial desire.

Stein is another important character, in our analysis, that will allow us to investigate the Oriental discourse in *Lord Jim*. He is Marlow's friend who sent Jim to Patusan, which he considers as the suitable place for Jim's predicaments. He holds an important place among the inhabitants; he is the advisor of a Malay sultan. Marlow relies on him to solve Jim's problem because he is as "full of information about the native states as an official report…" (*LJ:* 173). As Edward Said states, knowledge about the Orient facilitates the task of ruling it easily. Said notes:

> What they share, however, was not only land or profit or rule; it was the kind of intellectual power I have been calling Orientalism. In a sense Orientalism was a library or archive of information commonly and, in some of its aspects, unanimously held. What bound the archive together was a family of ideas and a unifying set of values proven in various ways to be effective.
>
> (1979:41-42)

So, Stein shares with Jim the fact of being an important Westerner in a colonial world. He is portrayed by Marlow, another Westerner, as someone endowed with both honesty and indulgence, "he was one of the most trustworthy men I had ever known" (*LJ*: 154). He is considered by Marlow as "an eminently suitable person to receive my confidences about Jim's difficulties as well as my own" (Ibid. 155). Like Jim, he displays a good physical appearance. He is "tall and loose-jointed stoop, with an innocent smile" that makes him appear "benevolently ready to lend you his ear" (Ibid).

Thus, Stein as the proprietor of a large trading company with posts in "out-of-the-way places" is extremely trustworthy and wise; however his ambivalent discourse can be seen as Conrad's narrative strategy to criticize the ideology of the Other. Stein was "born

in Bavaria" who "had taken an active part in the revolutionary movement of 1848" (Ibid. 156). As Jim, he is "heavily compromised, he managed to make his escape [...] to Tripoli" and worked as "a sort of assistant" (Ibid.) with a Dutch naturalist. As "entomology was his special study", Marlow sees in Stein the one that could understand Jim's case. As an entomologist and "naturalist of some distinction" (Ibid.203), Stein deals with an exact science where documenting and analysing exact specimens and scientific facts count. Marlow had gone to Stein for a diagnosis of Jim's dilemma. However, the main impression of Stein that Marlow and the reader are left with is his incorrigibly romantic and dreamy position since their "talk did not grow more practical" (Ibid.164). Conrad refers to ethnology via Stein and draw an ironic discourse where Nature is the "balance of colossal forces" and "Man is amazing, but he is not a masterpiece" (Ibid.159). So, "classing and arranging specimens" and "writing up a descriptive catalogue" for entomologists in Europe may be seen as a vain attempt to classify man.

The Oriental description of the Patusans is not so stereotyped as the description of the *Patna* Muslim pilgrims. Let's focus on two natives: Doramin and Dain Waris, the father and the son. The first is the chief of the second power in Patusan, the Bugis. He is presented as the most remarkable man of his race. He is a respected old man who disposes of important moral qualities. In fact, he is intelligent, revengeful with "frank" courage. Physically, he is imposing and monumental. He has a huge head with a round face. In giving a physical description, this native is individuated contrary to the pilgrims who are introduced through body pieces and reduced to inanimate objects. This racial distinction in the description of the natives alludes to social stratification of these regions. But more important, is Conrad's Oriental discourse that shows Doramin as a "war-comrade" of Stein, suggesting the good influence of the Westerner, Stein, on the native, Doramin.

Doramin, Jim's soul mate, is a young native, who is portrayed rather positively. He too, as his father, is revealed as a distinguished youth of his race. He is a man of bravery who fights like a white man. He serves as Jim's second-in-command where he leads the initial attack on Gentleman Brown, but he is not entirely successful because he lacks Jim's charisma as a leader of men. This description is ambivalent since Dain Warris is neither the stereotyped Oriental Other nor the Self-Westerner. Neither Doramin nor Dain Warris can be grouped in Marlow's 'one of us' though they share the European's friendship and "mind". They may be considered as "civilized natives" because they learned how to resemble the Europeans. The Oriental as the "Other" is quite explicit in the comparison between Jim, the English gentleman, and Dain Warris, Jim's native friend. The former expresses the white man with the "ability in the abstract" that "had proved his grasp of the unfamiliar situation" (Ibid. 199). The latter is a white-like man who has a "European mind". Though he is intelligent and brave Dain Warris lacks Jim's "racial prestige". He is one of "them", not good enough to be Marlow's "one of us". The difference in relation to the "Other" is made on the basis of man's race or origin. So, even if the Patusans have the same qualities as the Europeans they are considered as "Others"; that is, inferior because they do not belong to the white race.

The portrayal of Cornelius and Gentleman Brown, European characters in Patusan, prevents us from treating Conrad as an Orientalist. Marlow' description of them differs from the description of Jim and Stein. Gentleman Brown has Portuguese origins, and is in charge of Stein's trading post before Jim's coming to Patusan. Cornelius is the manager of Stein's Patusan trading post, whom Jim is sent to replace. Marlow hears about Cornelius when he was in visit to Jim in Patusan. He depicts him as a man clothed strangely; "his feet shod in dirty white shoes." Marlow describes him as:

> Cornelius was creeping across in full view with an inexpressible effect of stealthiness, of dark and secret slinking. He reminded one of everything

> that is unsavory. His slow laborious walk resembled the creeping of a repulsive beetle
>
> (LJ: 29)

The above description shows him as repulsive and bad. He takes advantage of those weaker than him, most notably his wife and stepdaughter. Cornelius is also an awful man who ill-treats and insults Jewel, his wife's daughter. As Marlow reports, "your mother was a devil [...] you, too, you are a devil" (Ibid.208). He hates Jim and he is compared to a "vermin", the one that can harm. He secures his position as the king of the jerks by betraying Jim (and most of Patusan, for that matter) and allying himself with Gentleman Brown. This one traitorous decision leads to the deaths of Dain Waris and Jim.

The second character, Brown, is presented as a "ruffian" of "arrogant temper of misdeeds and a vehement scorn for mankind at large and his victims in particular" (Ibid.265). He is a white pirate in the archipelago, he kidnaps people and robs ships, and spreads terror in the region. We are informed he has escaped Spanish officials in the Philippines and has come to Patusan to steal some provisions. He leads a lawless life; he is a thief and the chief of a gang who attacks both the natives and the white. Both Cornelius and Gentleman Brown stand as an important contrast to Jim. Conrad portrays them as inferior people since they threat devil for others; and more importantly, they spread disorder. As white men, they behave in complete contradiction to the "civilized" white man, the bringer of order and progress. Through their portraits, he questions the concept of "white supremacy". We could have thought that these characters mediate Conrad's ironical racial discourse of the Oriental if he were not so ambivalent in the description of Cornelius. In Chapter 21, we are told that Cornelius is "Malacca Portuguese." Malacca was a Portuguese colony in Malaysia, which presents the possibility that he might be half-white, half-Malaysian. In any case, he is definitely not English. In the passage we mentioned above, in which he antagonizes his stepdaughter, Marlow mentions his "yellow fist." That his non-English, non-white heritage is

mentioned in the same breath as his "unsavory" personality traits is telling, because of the racially charged atmosphere of the time. Does Conrad suggest a parallel between Cornelius's ethnic differences and his general bad behavior? Is Conrad making a connection between Cornelius's ethnicity and Cornelius's behavior, or is he merely reflecting the way people might have thought at the time?

As a result of the above analysis, we can speak of an intercultural dialogue between Melville and Conrad. The literary construction of the Orient where Billy stands as a 'symbolic use of ethnic difference' highlights Melville's engagement with Orientalism which expresses racial national anxieties. The characters are rendered into allegorical presences whose bodies are sometimes subject to very acts of colonization that Melville has hoped to criticize. Yet, Melville has found an epistemological escape from such bondage by portraying English and Americans as ethnic creatures marked by the codes they had invented to malign others. In *Lord Jim*, there is no fixed opposition between the self and the native, and no clear statement between the binary opposition "superior"/ "inferior", and "civilized"/ "uncivilized**.** In these novels, the space is not only referential but also textual which provides images and emotions, and urges the reader to project himself in the "other" space, the one of the novel. Thus, the notion of space is thematic, a possible experience for the 'reception' of ideas and the questioning of the ethnic "Other". Both Melville and Conrad criticize the idea of the New World's and Europe's hermeneutic power by reversing the gaze, destroying the raced certainties on which the imperial hermeneutic identity of the hero depends.

Melville and Conrad are iconoclasts, demystifying notions of progress and the European encounter with the "Other". They also display the contemporary representation and modes of perceptions of the Oriental by the Westerners. Both writers can be seen as outsiders who sought in the sea the fulfilment of their frustrated expectations and that – "pursuit of happiness" that reads the American Declaration of

Independence. Melville's travels among the diverse crews of the whaling industry and the navy, his exposure – during his voyages - to Pacific cultures, European countries, and eastern Mediterranean societies confronted him with different cultural practices that disrupted the sway of "local and social prejudices". He registered a global affiliation with the ethnic, the alien, and the Other as in the expansive and creative literary imaginary *Billy Budd*. Reading Conrad's work as a Polish text necessarily involves recourse to post-colonialism, since Conrad's Poland was occupied by the Russians. Conrad, who witnessed the oppressive realities of Western imperialism, may appear critical of imperialism in the Malay islands. His ambivalence in *Lord Jim* illuminates the truth that his resistance to imperialism could be seen as directed to the Russian Empire - representing the East - which had killed his parents.

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Chapter VI: Unstable Gender Identity: The Representation of the Gender 'Other' in Melville's and Conrad's Selected works

> What present day or month it was she could not say. Time was her labyrinth, in which Hunilla was entirely lost.
>
> (Melville, 1986: 113)

In the previous chapters, the analysis of Africanism and Orientalism has shown oppositions which are deployed to repress or allay fears about the wholeness and stability of America in the face of Native American, African American and diverse ethnic immigration presences; and of Europe in the face of natives of overseas colonies at the period of high imperialism. In this chapter, we intend to use the term 'Other' to explore gender issues in selected works of Melville and Conrad. We rely on the work of recent post colonial studies that associate women with the oppressed.

We consider that the presence of women in Melville's and Conrad's fictional works is rich and surprisingly progressive. First, we shall refer to the women in Melville's and Conrad's lives and the fictive women in their works, like, Hunilla, the Indian woman, in "The Encantadas", and the unnamed African woman in *Heart of Darkness*. Then, we shall explore how the gendered polemic within these works resists the discourse on empire by questioning both the masculine and the heteronormative gender constructions, especially, in *Moby Dick* and *Heart of Darkness*.

The development of gender studies and the debate on the notion of masculinity has resulted in an increasing interest in women's questions in these authors' works. The role of gender and sexuality in Melville's writings has recently been explored because of the prolific works in Cultural Studies. Some critics have studied the male-dominant social structures in his fiction. In *The Paradise of Bachelors And The Tartarus of Maids,* the narrator gives voice to

the oppressed women. The “slave” image has two connotations: one describes the exploitation of the women through physical labor, and the other describes the exploitation of the women’s reproductive organs as models of women’s oppression; the two are clearly intertwined. In the end, the narrator is never fully able to come to term with the contrasting masculine and feminine modalities. “Clarel”, Melville’s major poetical work, has also been studied by critics for its theme of sexuality. In the course of the poem, Melville considers that every form of sexual orientation - celibacy, homosexuality, hedonism, and heterosexuality - raises the same individual questions. When the narrator, Clarel, is separated from Ruth, with whom he has fallen in love, he is free to explore other sexual possibilities before deciding at the end of the poem to accept marriage as a social institution. Other critics have suggested possible homoerotic overtones in *Moby-Dick* as an interpretation of malebonding from what they term the “marriage bed” episode involving Ishmael and Queequeg.

Conrad’s work, too, has been studied in relation to the gender issue. The debate over this issue is whether Conrad is a sexist or not. Some critics, notably Nina Pelikan Straus and Karen Klein, have analyzed gendered structure and have brought masculinity into question in Conrad’s fiction. The feminist reading of *Heart of Darkness* by Nina Pelikan Straus is one of the interesting works about female characters in Conrad’s work. Straus thinks that the ‘chivalrous’ sexism of the novel cannot be attributed solely to its narrator. Even if the attitudes expressed represent the masculine limitations of Marlow as a narrator, there is no space for the female reader as a *woman:*

> Even if the sexism of Marlow and Kurtz is part of the ‘horror’ that Conrad intends to disclose, the feminist reader cannot but consider that the text is structured so that this horror - though obviously revealed to male and female reader alike - is deliberately hidden from Kurtz’s Intended.
>
> (Straus, 1996: 49)

Straus justifies her feminist critique by arguing that this episode (the encounter of Marlow with the Intended at the end of the novel) should be read as dramatizing a still further 'horror' in the masculine world of Kurtz's and Marlow's Congo: namely that Conrad deliberately shows Marlow's 'redeeming' idea to be based on a lie to the Intended. Besides, feminist criticism questions whether Conrad himself or his narrator Marlow is responsible for the sexism that silences the female voice while continuing at the same time to distinguish the wild sensuality of the African woman from the civilized purity of the Intended. This criticism interprets Conrad's narratives as predominantly patriarchal, seeing the representation of women as an obvious and uncomplicated misogyny. Joyce Carol Oates, for example, is convinced that Conrad's "heroine" is always someone who effaces herself completely, who is eager to sacrifice herself in an ecstasy of love for her man.

Other critics, like Roberts, argues that Marlow's – and Conrad's – sexism stems from the entirely patriarchal European world of which both author and character were products. Men were the sole occupiers of positions of power in this culture, and thus Roberts comments, "…a whole matrix of inter-male relationships involving competitiveness, desire, bonding, the sharing and appropriation of power and knowledge...functioned in [this] Western society" (Roberts, 2000: 458). To maintain this system, women are used as sexual scapegoats by men and revered as a "shared desire" or common goal. As a result, women are prohibited from attaining "positions of power, knowledge and desire." Due to this domineering social construct, the women of *Heart of Darkness* are shown as hopelessly weak, helplessly ignorant, and irreversibly subservient to men.

Recent critics have revaluated the female presence in Conrad's major works, and have stated the merits of his women characters. For Suzan Jones, Conrad "was not all together the lonely seaman uncomfortable in female company, but rather a

sympathetic interpreter of women's contemporary situation" (Jones, 1999:1). In his *Conrad and Masculinity*, Andrew Michael Roberts suggests that the epistemology of Conrad's work is explicable in terms of social structures of male power and psychic structures of male desire. The discourse of knowledge based on both truth and ignorance plays a crucial part in the maintenance of these structures, reinforcing both masculine identity and male access to empowering knowledge, while enabling the symbolic, psychic and social exploitation of women. He adds that this discourse does not simply attribute knowledge to men and ignorance to women, but variably associates women with particular forms of ignorance and knowledge in such a way as to make them available as symbols of a mysterious truth and object of a secret knowledge while largely depriving them of the role of knowing subject. (Roberts, 2000:121) For Roberts then, Conrad's texts participate in an ideological discourse which both produces 'truths' about women and produces a concept of 'feminity' constructed as the 'Other' of male knowledge.

The above review shows that the most hotly argued issue in current criticism of Conrad can be summed up in the question: Is Conrad fundamentally a sexist writer? We consider that it is in Melville's and Conrad's works that the social and psychological meanings of gender difference are extensively negotiated and exposed. So, the questions that seem more adequate in this work are the following: Does the woman in Melville's and Conrad's fiction stand as the 'Other'? Are *Moby-Dick*, *The Encantadas* and *Heart of Darkness* or *Pierre* and *The Secret Agent* sexist works? It is not the intention of this chapter to defend the two authors' treatment of masculinity or attack it, but rather to chart the gender discourse: the ways in which the woman stands as the 'Other' through the analysis of the themes, settings and techniques used by both Melville and Conrad. It seems to us that the writers' texts could be read otherwise. We consider that the inherent ambiguities and

contradictions in Conrad's narrative, and its open-endedness make it possible to interpret the female character in *Heart of Darkness* more favorably. Our intent in this chapter is to analyze the possible discourse in this fictional work and put it in dialogue with Melville's literary works. According to Sara Mills: "Discourses are sets of sanctioned statements which have some institutionalized force, which means that they have a profound influence on the way that individuals act and think" (Mills, 1997:55).

Melville and Conrad, as sea writers, following masculine tradition - men in men's world, could have neglected women's themes and felt not prepared to engage in their concerns. However, we shall argue that the evidence of their biographies, correspondences, and fictional works suggest a complex relationship between the writers' relation to the women in their lives and their female characters. We consider that Conrad, just like Melville, initiated an astute exploration of female identity in fiction. Both authors have produced prominent female figures whose position offered an important critique of imperialism; a role that can also be seen in their "urban" novels as *Pierre* and *The Secret Agent*.

During the early 1850s, Melville's life was encircled with women. After the death of his father (in 1832) and his older brother Gansevoort (in 1846) he lived with his family in a farm near Pittsfield in Massachusetts. He was the only male in the house besides his young son. Meanwhile, his wife Elizabeth and his mother Maria, as well as his four sisters kept the house with him. Even letters from Melville's sisters confirm that he participated in the family's domestic life. (Wyn Kelley, 1998: 93) Probably, this female-centered household made him write in *Moby-Dick* that "man must eventually lower, or at least shift, his conceit of attainable felicity; not placing it anywhere in the intellect or the fancy; but in the wife, the heart, the bed, the table, the saddle, the fire-side, the country"(*M-D*: 105).

The second important point worth citing in relation to Melville's domestic life is his reading and knowledge of what have been called the "literary domestics"; that is, women who wrote family romances or sentimental novels. In *Redburn*, for example, Melville refers to Susanna Rowson's *Charlotte Temple.* He also urged his sisters to read Catharine Maria Sedgwick, a prolific writer of domestic novels, and also read the popular female authors published in the magazines of that time. Besides, Melville exchanged books and ideas with several women who loved to read, particularly Anne Lynch, Sarah Morewood, and Sophia Hawthorn, who read *Moby-Dick* with singular appreciation.

The importance of the female character, as Winnie Verloc, in Conrad's fictional works may be explained by the fact that women played a vital role during his formative years in Poland. Without the sacrifice of a devoted mother during the initial period of the Korzeniowskis' exile, it is doubtful whether the sickly infant Conrad would have survived. After Ewa Korzeniowski's death in 1865, his father Apollo relied heavily on the support of Conrad's grandmother, Teofila Bobrowska. She is described by her son and Conrad's uncle Tadeusz, in his memoirs, as a proud, intelligent, open-minded, warm-hearted woman (Jones, 1999:40). When her son Apollo died in 1869, she was appointed one of Conrad's legal guardians, and her part in his upbringing extended to that of a nurturer. Always anxious about his health, she stayed with the orphaned Conrad in Cracow for long periods after his father's death. (Najder, 1996:11-12) In a letter of 1900 to Garnett, Conrad himself remarked on the benefit he had received from the close bond established amongst the Bobrowski women: "There was an extraordinary sister-cult in that family, from which I profited when left an orphan at the age of ten" (Jean-Aubry, 1927: 291).

The female companionship might probably have helped him during those years. Najder shows us that women occupy prominent roles in Conrad's earliest

years; yet, he considers that Conrad has attached little significance to their presence as a substitute to his mother. Conrad, poignantly, recalled the intensity of feeling for his mother in the Author's Note of *A Personal Record* (1919). He describes the memory of her presence as one that dominated his recollections of the many people who wandered through the Korzeniowskis' household at number 45, Nowy Swiat, in Warsaw in 1861:

> Amongst them I remember my mother, a more familiar figure than the others, dressed in the black of the national mourning worn in defiance of ferocious police regulations. I have also preserved from that particular time the awe of her mysterious gravity which, indeed, was by no means smileless. For I remember her smiles, too. Perhaps for me she could always find a smile. She was young then, certainly not thirty yet. She died four years later in exile.
>
> (*PR*: x)

Conrad's relationship to his mother, along with the evidence of his early experiences and reading, shows that his childhood recollections, both personal and literary, offered a fundamental source for his later presentation of women in his fiction. In a letter to Edward Garnett Conrad recalled: "my mother was certainly no ordinary woman [...] I shall never forget my delight, admiration and unutterable regret at my loss (before I could appreciate her), which only then I fully understood." (CLJC VII: 245) The "no ordinary woman" is expressed in Jewel, Winnie and other fictive women in his fiction.

A. Domesticity as Gender Othering in *Pierre* and *The Secret Agent*

Operating from the knowledge that gender is culturally determined, feminists like Simone de Beauvoir, criticize male-dominated patriarchal societies, which they argue marginalize or discount women by limiting their opportunity for self-definition and self-actualization. For Heidi Hartmann, patriarchy is a "relation between men, which have a material base, and which, though hierarchical, establish or create interdependence and

solidarity among men that enable them to dominate women" (1981:14). This definition makes the power relationships between men and women appear to be dependent on the power relationships between men and men. The question that needs to be addressed, then, is: Is gender construction in *Pierre* and *The Secret Agent* constructed around stereotypical representations of gender relation? Or can these works be read otherwise? Our aim is to examine the way gender is constructed in these authors' selected works. Thus, we shall examine the depiction, position, and treatment of female characters within these literary texts.

Melville's *Pierre* and Conrad's *The Secret Agent* offer a different reading of the gender roles and domestic structures that have produced profound distress in Western middle-class culture. *Pierre,* Wyn Kelley notes, reveals the fault lines in the American family - not simply in extremis in patterns of incest, abuse, betrayal, and the hypocrisy that surround them - but also in the enormous and seemingly artificial labor required to maintain the illusion of ordinary, day-to-day respectability. (Kelley, 1998:110) In *The Secret Agent*, the heaviest irony is reserved for the domestic drama. Conrad's irony is aimed not only at Verloc's indolence, mediocrity, and domestic egoism, but also at that of the ordinary respectable citizen. Conrad goes further to state that the ultimate reduction of man is "nothingness,"

> Nothing brings them [the dead] back, neither love nor hate. They can do nothing to you. They are as nothing...Now he was of no account in every respect. He was of less practical account than the clothing on his body, than his overcoat, than his boots-than that hat lying on the floor. He was nothing... [He] was less than nothing now...
>
> (*SA*: 226-7)

Conrad, through Winnie, expresses the notion of otherness felt by women, and also by men in the modern world.

Examining Melville's *Pierre* and Conrad's *The Secret Agent* will indicate that they share the notion of the 'Other' that we have already explored in their sea tales. These "urban"

works introduce the complex question of gender identity where Melville, more than Conrad, negotiates the homoerotic gender identity. Particularly, the novels' setting establishes the perspective of otherness. New York and London become a space that allows both writers to explore the 'Other'. Their choice of the city, New York or London, is not accidental. Much contemporary urban fiction questions whether a family culture nurtured in the country could survive in the city. Both fictional works show the struggle of the protagonists to maintain their lives in the face of urban pressures.

At the beginning of the novel, Melville emphasizes that Pierre has grown up in the country, away from the city. For Melville:

> […] it had been the choice fate of Pierre to have been born and bred in the country. For to a noble American youth - more than in any other land - is a most rare and choice lot. For it is to be observed, that while in other countries, the finest families boast of the country as their home; the more prominent among us, proudly cite the city as their seat. Too often the American that himself makes his fortune builds him a great metropolitan house, in the most metropolitan street of the most metropolitan town.
>
> (*P:* 13)

The above quote indicates the country-city opposition as America's social structure where Pierre emerges as an outcast whose nobility is associated with the country rather than with the city. This idea is reinforced by Melville's description of New York as "empty" and "heartless". Melville's representation of the city as empty and emotionless mediates an abstract meaning. Throughout *Pierre,* Melville is charging the hypocrisy of domesticity through the suffocating nature of urban New York. Even if *Pierre* lacks the obsessive focus of the city's destructive nature omnipresent in the *Secret Agent,* where the city of London fits the myth of the monstrous town, both novels reveal the hypocrisy of domesticity in the Western culture.

Melville is influenced by the popular stereotypes of the nineteenth-century of the 'model woman' in his portrayal of women in *Pierre*. However, he uses the stereotypes,

probably, to mock the gender distinction making Pierre share many of the traits of female protagonists. Pierre's mother worries about his "sweet docility": "Now I almost wish him otherwise than sweet and docile to me, seeing that it must be hard for man to be an uncompromising hero and a commander among his race, and yet never ruffle any domestic brow" (*P:* 20). His heroism does not consists in assuming or displacing his father's position in the household, but rather in sacrificing his own identity and wishes to his mother's social status and Isabel's need. For this sacrifice, he is called later in the novel by another female character, Lucy, an angel, the name usually reserved for self-negating women.

Pierre opens itself to a gender study because three of the four main characters in the novel are women. Significantly, Melville includes American women as developed characters that are integrated into the text. Pierre's relationship with the female characters is ambiguous and complex. First, his relation with his mother which is referred to in the novel as "a romantic filial love" (*P*: 5) suggests an implied incest. He is "the only son of an affluent, and haughty widow" (Ibid. 3), and the latter is described as a beautiful woman that still eclipsed far younger charms. Melville suggests an ambiguous relationship between the mother and son showing Pierre in his mother room, in the space of intimacy, behaving with total veneration. Greeting his mother in her boudoir, he helps her dress for breakfast, calling himself "First Lady in waiting to the Dowager Duchess Glendinning" (Ibid.14). Placing a ribbon around her neck, he kisses it, fastens a cameo, attends to her hair, and bends to tie her slipper before escorting her down to breakfast. The implied incest seems more obvious in the domestic sphere binding Pierre and his mother: "In the playfulness of their unclouded love, and with that strange license which a perfect confidence and mutual understanding at all points, had long bred between them" (Ibid.5).

Pierre's manipulative and domineering mother will later prevent him from having 'normal' relationships with other women in the novel. Pierre is engaged to Lucy Tartan in a match approved by his mother; however, he elopes to New York City with Isabel Banford, a mysterious dark lady. Later, Pierre hears from Isabel the claim that she is his half-sister, the illegitimate and orphaned child of his father. He reacts to the story (and to his magnetic attraction for Isabel) by devising a remarkable scheme: to marry Isabel. His aim is to preserve his father's name, spare his mother's grief, and give Isabel her proper share of the estate. Through these ambiguous relationships, Melville offers a different kind of domesticity.

Locating the story in the domestic sphere allows Melville to refer to gender politics, especially the subject of marriage. In *Pierre*, then, he expresses his dissatisfaction with marriage through the father's adulterous relationship that results in an illegitimate daughter, Isabel, and the apparent marriage of Pierre with Isabel. Ironically, he is presented as the heir of an honorable house. He has inherited the name that he is the last family member to bear. As a male, he has the responsibility to marry in order to perpetuate the family name through his children. So, to marry, as his mother wishes, would also afford him a fine estate surrounded by a landscape that with "all its hill and swales seemed through their [the Glendinnings'] very long uninterrupted possession" (*P*: 8). The ancestral portrait of the Glendinning's house refers to the cultural patriarchal system where the male role is significant for the perpetuation of the family name. In this house, a vital woman, Mary Glendinning, presides and proudly upholds the family patriarchal legacy. She also sheds a strong feminine influence over her house. This point shows Melville adhering to a patriarchal domestic structure of an American family. However, Melville shifts in his position when he makes Pierre flee the patriarchal domesticity of his ancestors, leaving for New York with Isabel, the illegitimate daughter.

Melville pares down the Glendinning domestic arrangements, first, to the mother-son relationship thus stressing the impact on male children in the concept of motherhood, which is both praised and maligned but also pictured as all-powerful, "Pierre, through the unavoidable weakness of inexperienced and unexpanded youth, was strangely docile to the maternal tuitions in nearly all the things which thus far had any ways interested or affected him" (*P*: 5). Also, this in effect casts Mary Glendinning, the proprietress of the Glendinning estate, as a symbolic (phallic) male. Pierre is "an infant" in the legal sense, with his mother the sole beneficiary of his father's will (Ibid. 179). Second, Melville turns into another relationship, the one between Pierre and Isabel; the Isabel-as-sister plot with its erotic (incestuous) but also social implications (Isabel's illegitimacy threatens the Glendinning status). This relation is rendered inoffensive as the Isabel-as-wife plot emerges, and this movement in turn precludes the collapse of the canonized father-image in the son's mind, an image cast as "a shrine in the fresh-foliaged heart of Pierre [...]; around which annually he had hung fresh wreaths of a sweet and holy affection" (Ibid.68). Pierre's moral riddle is that the challenge posed by female illegitimacy is constitutive of patrician, upper class respectability, as ironically observed by the narrator in the matter of America's "long pedigrees - pedigrees I mean, wherein is no flaw" (Ibid. 11).

The house of the Glendinning, as a patriarchal institution, is questioned and mocked through the ambiguous relationships of the characters. So, this house is not a home. Freud refers to the etymology of the term 'home' in German to show that "heimlish" is a word the meaning of which develops towards an ambivalence, until it finally coincides with its opposite, "unheimlich". In other words, the homely somehow necessarily involves the "unhomely" that which resists the home. Antebellum American writers celebrated the home as a symbol of "America", the site of nurture and republican fraternity, the embodiment of equality, affection, and toleration. So, the 'home', as a symbol of the nation, expresses that

American society exemplified egalitarian social, economic, and cultural ideals; in other words, the common ideology of domesticity in the Jacksonian era. The latter is referred to as the middle-class home underscoring the connection between class and value. Melville presents a multilayered image full of ambiguities of this domestic ideal. The home's domesticity seems to offer a way for Melville to challenge contemporary issues in relation to Jacksonian ideology of domesticity.

Melville's *Pierre* is different from the novels of the period for the reason that it parodies the culture's idealization of domesticity. Thus, the home as the separate domain of women, a place where men are domesticated and the forces of capitalism and patriarchy held at bay is not the case in this novel. In this novel, Melville locates both masculine and feminine spheres on the same site. In his appearance, Pierre emerges from "the embowered and high gabled old home of his fathers" (*P:* 3), a house as ancient, patriarchal, and burdened with family secrets. The house, then, is a space where feminine and masculine ideological struggles work out on the same ground. Conrad uses a similar structure in *The Secret Agent* (1906), but with strikingly different results. If Melville in *Pierre* resolves the conflict between the patriarchal house and maternal home by making Pierre leaving both, Conrad in the *Secret Agent* shows the physical isolation and mental isolation of both man and woman through the Verlocs.

Rather than limiting *The Secret Agent* to a political novel, we clearly aim at extending our examination to encompass a broader view of the city's social atmosphere in relation to domesticity and gender "Other". Thus, we are interested less in the overt political dimension of the novel than Conrad's abstract sense of gender issue. Recalling his decision to set *The Secret Agent* in London, Conrad wrote in his "Author's Note" to the novel that:

> The vision an enormous town presented itself, of a monstrous town more populous than some continents and in its man-made might as if indifferent to heaven's frowns and smiles; a cruel devourer of the world's light. There was enough room there to place any story, depth enough there for any passion, variety enough there for any setting, darkness enough to bury five millions of lives.
>
> (*SA*: xxxvi)

Conrad describes the setting as a "monstrous" place; the city is the place imposing the mode of human relationship peculiar to modern life. It is also "man-made", a monstrous human construction which surrounds man with his image, and hides from him the light and truth of nature. The city generates its own darkness, a human darkness, an obscurity made of illusion, and blindness, the blindness of people who agree with Winnie Verloc that life doesn't stand much looking into.

The characters move in a city which appears to be indifferent, or even hostile in their existence. Mr. Verloc is observed marching along "a street which could in every propriety be described as private. In its breadth, emptiness, and extent it had the majesty of inorganic nature" (Ibid.14). The city is even described as an "almost cannibalistic organism" that consumes its own inhabitants. London, then, is a mass grave, the inhabitants are simultaneously figured as trapped in death-in-life existence, ghosts drifting through society's amoral structures. Brett Street itself acts as an induction into the gloom and isolation of the Verlocs' home which, in turn, mirrors that of their domestic life. Conrad's description of London as a cosmopolitan center, a picture of a foreigner who himself felt as the "Other", as he notes it in the Author's Note: "I had to keep at arms-length the memories of my solitary and nocturnal walks all over London in my early days" (Ibid. xxxvii). It is also a space that refers to imperialism symbolized by the words: "cannibalistic organism", and "a mass grave". So, Winnie, as the female character, plays an important role in the criticism of imperialism.

Conrad's characters are trapped in the city: "it was not earthly good going out. He [Verloc] could not find anywhere in London what he wanted. But he went out […] along dark

streets, through lighted streets, in and out of two flash bars […] and finally back again to his menaced home" where his "domestic happiness seemed to drive the obscurity back upon itself, make it more sullen, brooding, and sinister" (Ibid.151). This foreshadows Mrs. Verloc's otherness in the city where she commits suicide.

The theme of personal relationship in the private sphere is introduced by the female character, Winnie, where this private sphere is full of misguided assumptions. Verloc is just a safe provider to Winnie, and Winnie is a costly possession to Verloc, though they both believe they are loved for their own sake. Winnie's illusion of material security is stagnant; it is "without beauty and almost without decency" (*SA*: 244), shutting out the world until the world explodes in her face. Mr. Verloc, who believes that he is fascinating enough to be loved for himself, has also been living in a stagnant illusion without beauty. Towards the end, when the idiot Stevie has been killed through Verloc's irresponsibility, Verloc quite steadily expects the tragedy to make no difference to his relation with his wife. Apparently, Verloc is not aware that his wife is "maternal and violent" (Ibid. 241). "She had to love him with a militant love. She had battled for him - even against herself. His loss had the bitterness of defeat, with the anguish of a baffled passion" (Ibid. 246). When she discovers that her husband is a monster, and she does not see - in the sense of being aware - what he has planned, and that his reply to grief is "let her have her cry. I'll go to bed with her, that'll put her right", a terrifying woman rises up with a carving knife in her hand to end her "contract with existence" (Ibid.251) personified by Verloc. She confronted her husband, without listening to anything he has to say, and in her rage, grabbed a carving knife and stabbed him in the heart, and Verloc died in the couch whereas Winnie has a tragic end - committing suicide after being tricked by Ossipon.

To reinforce the theme of isolation where the woman is considered as the Other, Conrad regulated the couple's domestic life without any exchange or communication. Verloc

loves his wife "as a wife should be loved - that is, maritally, with the regard one has for one's possession" (Ibid.179). This statement is a comment, not only on the Verlocs, but on marriage itself. This institution in the Victorian age regards the wife and her inheritance as the property of her husband. She has no right to dispose of her possession without her husband's approval. To fully understand this view and other sexist overtone that Conrad provides in the novel, the cultural framework and societal situation in which Conrad lived should be considered. We should argue that Verloc's – and Conrad's – sexism stems from the entirely patriarchal European world of which both author and character were products. Men were the sole occupiers of positions of power in the Victorian society. The Western cultural agreement is based on a whole matrix of inter-male relationships involving competitiveness, desire, bonding, and the appropriation of power and knowledge. To maintain this system, women are used as sexual scapegoats by men and revered as a "shared desire" or common goal. As a result, women are prohibited from attaining positions of power. Due to this domineering social construct, Winnie in *The Secret Agent* is shown as hopelessly weak, and subservient to her husband.

The woman as 'man's property' is also dealt with in the chapter "Fast-Fish and Loose Fish" in *Moby Dick*. In this chapter Melville draws an analogy between whaling law and divorce law and whether a divorced husband has any claim to the possessions of his remarried former wife,

> […] a gentleman, after in vain trying to bridle his wife's viciousness, had at last abandoned her upon the seas of life; but in the course of years, repenting of that step, he instituted an action to recover possession of her […] when a subsequent gentleman re-harpooned her, the lady then became that subsequent gentleman's property […]
>
> (*M-D*: 380)

The ironic tone of this passage shows Melville's criticism toward the law's assumption that considers women as property. The end of the chapter takes a philosophical meditation on

possession referring first, to his personal tragedy through his father's bankruptcy criticizing the system of capitalism, which kept his family in starvation; then, to imperialistic illegal possessions both for Britain and America, "What was America in 1492 but a Loose-Fish, in which Columbus struck the Spanish standard by way of waifing it for royal master and mistress? […] What India to England? What at last will Mexico be to the United States? Finally, to the "Rights of Man and the Liberties of the World" that Melville considers as a "Loose-Fish and a Fast-Fish too" (*M-D*: 381). This meditation can also be interpreted as Melville's willingness to explore and denounce America, which deprived the black Americans, the Indians, and women of their basic "Rights of Man".

Conrad's criticism of such patriarchal system is done through the ironical behavior of Winnie. To preserve the economic security that marriage has brought to her and to Stevie she has to find a sharp way to maintain this 'security'; a security "growing into confidence, into a domestic feeling, stagnant and deep like a placid pool" (*SA*: 243). So, stagnation becomes an attribute of domesticity. This can be well exemplified by the scene where Winnie first tells Verloc he would have to go abroad without her. She immediately regrets "the unwisdom" of her words; but removes their effect by giving Verloc, over her shoulder:

> A glance, half arch, half cruel, out of her large eyes - a glance of which the Winnie of the Belgravian mansion days would have been incapable, because of her respectability and her ignorance. But the man was her husband now, and she was no longer ignorant, she kept it on him for a whole second, with her grave motionless like a mask, while she said playfully: " you couldn't. You would miss me too much"
>
> (Ibid. 196)

Winnie uses her 'charm' to negotiate with her husband and reverses the power relationship through the confident appeal to a sexual habit as a conjugal right. However, the use of the phrase "grave motionless like a mask" expresses Conrad's criticism of the hypocrisy of marriage that he considers as an institution that has no improving effect on the moral qualities of men and women.

To make the reader share the characters' isolation and despair Conrad takes off the inside characters' veil concerning their thoughts and feelings towards each other. In chapter 11, "Verloc presumed that his wife had understood him but he would have been glad to hear her say what she thought at the moment" (Ibid. 246). Contrary to Mr. Verloc, the reader knows Winnie's thought: "this man took the boy away to murder him. He took the boy away from me to murder him!" Verloc is shown as one who does not understand his wife. The characters don't understand each other and themselves, people feel lost because they apparently have no idea of what the appropriate norms of feelings and actions are. As Albert J. Guérard expresses it, "*The Secret Agent's* vision is of 'a mediocre mankind' in an 'imperfect society" (Quoted in Jeremy Hawthorn, 1992:99).

The female character, Winnie, expresses another important theme: the disintegration of modern life. Actually, of the three deaths in *The Secret Agent*, those of Stevie, Verloc, and Winnie, only one is described directly, Winnie's murder of Verloc. The emphasis in chapter XI is not on the death of Verloc, but on Winnie and the extraordinary state of mind she reaches. This state is described in an accumulation of details which shows her progressively approaching a state of anonymity and melting into the blackness of death. Her state is like that of a somnambulist or insomniac. She watches with a lucid vigilance, but she does not see anything. She looks at a blank wall: "[Mr. Verloc] was startled by the inappropriate character of his wife's stare. It was not a wild stare, and it was not inattentive, but its attention was peculiar and not satisfactory, inasmuch that it seemed concentrated upon some point beyond Mr. Verloc's person". The impression is so strong that Mr. Verloc "glanced sideways, with his head down. Mrs. Verloc gazed at the whitewashed wall. A blank wall- perfectly blank. A blankness to run at and dash your head against […] She kept still […] in astonishment and despair" (*SA*: 239-244). 'Blankness' here expresses darkness.

Indeed, everything Winnie sees has been turned into another expression of death. If what she sees is a symbol of death, she also contains death within herself: "[Mr. Verloc] looked straight into his wife's eyes, the enlarged pupils of the woman received his stare into their unfathomable depths" (Ibid. 248); "a tinge wildness in her aspect was derived […] from the fixity of her black gaze where the light of the room was absorbed and lost without the trace of a single gleam" (Ibid.259). Winnie's depersonalization goes on through the sequence of events leading from her discovery that Verloc has caused Stevie's death to her murder of her husband, her meeting with Comrade Ossipon, their return to the shop, and his abandonment of her on the train going toward the Channel Boat from which she will leap at last into the dark water.

At the end of Chapters III and VIII, the last words said by Verloc to Winnie are: "Put it [the light] out" (Ibid.60). The link between darkness and domesticity is too obvious here to be ignored, more so when one considers Winnie's reason and description of her marriage:

> He wanted me, anyhow. What was I to do with mother and that poor boy? Eh? I said yes. He seemed good-natured, he was freehanded, he had money, he never said anything. Seven years--seven years a good wife to him, the kind, the good, the generous, the--And he loved me. Oh, yes. He loved me till I sometimes wished myself—Seven years. Seven years a wife to him. And do you know what he was, that dear friend of yours? Do you know what he was? ... He was a devil!"
>
> (Ibid.276; ellipses Conrad's)

The Verlocs' union is horrible, Verloc himself is demonic. This drives Winnie to murder her husband. But, for Winnie the situation has originated as the release from a still earlier awful experience, the horrible paternal domination of her childhood which she recalls by entertaining:

> She had the vision of the blows intercepted (often with her own head), of a door held desperately shut against a man's rage (not for very long); a poker flung once (not very far), which stilled that particular storm into the dumb and awful silence which follows a thunder-clap. And all these scenes violence came and went accompanied by the unrefined noise

> deep vociferations proceeding from a man wounded in his paternal pride, declaring himself obviously accursed since one of his kids was a "slobbering idjut and the other a wicked she-devil." It was of her that this had been said many years ago.
>
> (Ibid. 242)

As we can see in the above quote, the memory of her father and his rage towards her is still alive in her mind. Winnie tries to express these scenes of violence through visions full of "unrefined noise", "deep vociferations", and "awful silence" that she witnessed in her infancy. Such torture emerging from absolutist/patriarchal arrogance is Conrad's disappointment in the development of the family.

The irony that shapes the final scene between Verloc and his wife results from the couple's mutual ignorance about their personal motives that Conrad, as artist, organized through the whole book. The sudden knowledge of Stevie's death makes Winnie's "moral nature […] subjected to a shock of which, in the physical order", as "the most violent earthquake" (Ibid. 255). The reader witnesses the moral isolation that has kept the Verlocs, in their decent marital domesticity, strangers to each other: "Do be reasonable, Winnie, what would it have been if you had lost me!" Verloc was persuaded of being loved for his own sake. Winnie is, then, the central figure in the novel because she stands as a tragic character that goes from the most complete innocence to the most shattering knowledge of what lies beyond the world, the patriarchal world that othered her.

The themes of physical and mental isolation in *The Secret Agent* describe a condition of social fragmentation in gender relationship in the modern world. In its portrayal of women, Conrad seems to stir on popular stereotypes of the Victorian society, such as the domestic angel, the devoted matriarch and the obedient wife. Both Winnie and her mother have sacrificed themselves for Stevie. However, Conrad criticizes the patriarchal system where the woman is considered as the "Other". We consider that the female character in this fictional work, as the above analysis has shown, has a great importance since she introduces important

issues of the novel. She stands as a modern tragic character in a modern society. Arthur Miller in his "Tragedy and the Common Man" (1949), states that the modern tragedy raises issues and questions that disturb and shock the society. As we have seen above, Winnie stands as an important character that mediates Conrad's criticism towards the British culture and one of its important elements, the family.

The purpose of the two novels is analogous: an investigation into and a critique of a perceived sickness undermining Western culture. Both narratives are highly complex inquiries into English/American culture. The two authors revise the patriarchal institution through their female characters. Although Isabel and Lucy remain victims without the possibility of full lives, Melville uses these women to reflect gendered inequalities and inequities and abuses in nineteenth-century American society. Isabel who sits "petrified in her chair, as one embalmed" and Lucy, a "marble girl," who sits equally unstinting as if "enchanted" or "tranced" (*P*: 415), in his last wish for them, Pierre reveals Melville's as much as his own inability to fashion a better world: "'For ye two, my most undiluted prayer is now, that from you're here unseen and frozen chairs ye may never stir alive"' (Ibid). Tragically, he gets his wish, as even in death they mirror his desires. Winnie Verloc in *The Secret Agent* is, also, a victim of the patriarchal system that reduces her to the "Other". She could not defend herself against her father's brutality in her childhood, but she could stand to confront her husband's brutality towards Stevie. Conrad states the importance of his female character in his Author's Note where he writes: "Personally I have never had any doubt of the reality of Mrs. Verloc's story; but it had to be disengaged from its obscurity in that immense town, it had to be made credible, I don't mean so much as to her soul but as to her surroundings, not so much as her psychology but as to her humanity" (Ibid. xxxvii).

The Edenic home "America" that would embody the two authors' cherished ideals - Melville's home oppressed by debt, and Conrad's home browbeaten by a political

exile - ironically, ends with the falling down of the novels' houses. In the Gliding family in *Pierre*, Lucy dies of shock when Isabel addresses Pierre as her brother. Pierre then seizes upon the secret poison vial that Isabel carries and drinks it, and Isabel finishes the remainder, leaving three corpses as the novel ends. In *The Secret Agent*, the ruin of the house is first expressed through the explosion of Stevie's body into pieces, then through the harsh murder of Verloc by his wife, and finally the suicide of Winnie. Both novels proffer visions of the fallen house, in the latter novel, the house of an overweening, unquestioned patriarchy; in the former novel, the house of the Glindinning brought down by the incestuous struggle between Isabel and Pierre. On one hand, these fallen houses symbolize the 'idealization' of the Western society. On the other hand, these novels raise ideological issues in relation to the "Other", the oppressed: Melville's native at home (America) and Conrad's overseas natives outside home (Britain). Melville refers to the foundation of the anxious young nation that must destroy Indian tribes or homes to allow the American settlers to inhabit comfortably their homes. Conrad refers to London as the centre of the British Empire, and the negative description of this city, "monstrous" and "cannibalistic", probably, refers to the deeds of the colonial system in the overseas-colonies.

The above fictional works show the authors' gender discourse criticizing an important institution: marriage. In one of his letters to Edward Garnette, Conrad states: "I had your letter on the last day of my first year of married life. It was good of you to remember me and even accident was kind by bringing your missive on an ominous day" (CLJC I: 14). Conrad's relationship with his wife could not be called affectionate when he characterized their first anniversary as "ominous" day. This may explain the ambivalent or even sarcastic tone of Conrad's portrayal of the Verlocs.

Melville seems more explicitly engaged with feminist issues and gender relations than Conrad. His novel challenges the conventional sexual morality through the ambiguous sexuality of Pierre. The crux of Judith Butler's argument in *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (1990) is that the coherence of the categories of sex, gender, and sexuality - the natural coherence, for example, of masculine gender and heterosexual desire in male bodies - is culturally constructed through the repetition of stylized acts in time. In other words, gender ontology deals with questions concerning what entities exist or can be said to exist, and how such entities can be grouped, related within a hierarchy, and subdivided according to similarities and differences. This is the sense in which Butler famously theorizes gender, along with sex and sexuality, as performative. She locates the construction of the gendered, sexed, desiring subject within what she calls, borrowing from Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*, "regulative discourses". These, also called "frameworks of intelligibility" or "disciplinary regimes," decide in advance what possibilities of sex, gender, and sexuality are socially permitted to appear as coherent or "natural". In *Pierre* the ambiguous gender identity of Pierre is expressed through his fears of his own incestuous passion for Isabel, and his ambiguous mother-son relationship. So, Melville's 'un regulative discourses' as incest, and illegitimacy made contemporary reviewers denigrating the novel, which became increasingly popular in the twentieth century.

B. Unstable Gender Identity: Masculinity/Femininity in *Moby-Dick* and *Heart of Darkness*

Biographical elements show that both Melville and Conrad went to sea at an early age; hence, both authors were probably aware of intimate relationships between sailors at sea. So, their exposure to male intimacy was extensive. Such relationships are, of course, very hard for contemporary historians to trace. But, there are several diaries of sailors from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that deal frankly with what we would now call homosexual

relationships at sea. One of these diaries is Philip C. Van Buskirk's, *An American Seafarer in the Age of Sail: The Erotic Diaries of Philip C. Van Buskirk 1851-1870.* The diarist writes frankly of these sexual encounters both of his own and other sailors and officers. It is unlikely; however, that Melville and Conrad could have been unaware of a conduct that seems to have been quite widespread aboard nineteenth-century ships, both in the Navy and the merchant marine.

Both authors show ambiguous male-male relationship in their works. Indeed, the erotic male friendship is well expressed in *Moby-Dick* through the couple relationship between Ishmael and Queequeg. Another pair of such ambiguous male-male relationship is Conrad's two characters, Marlow and Kurtz. Ishmael's or Marlow's anxieties speak for the shift in male intimacy that renders homo-social relations ambiguous in both fictional works.

What is quite interesting in both works is that both writers express through this ambiguous intimacy the shock of an encounter with the "Other" in which cultural assumptions are put into question. In *Moby-Dick* Ishmael's fear of sharing a bed and admitting the possibility of sexuality is resolved by the affirmation of affection and a male marriage, "I [Ishmael] found Queequeg's arm thrown over me in the most loving and affectionate manner" (*M-D*: 43), and this offers the possibility of working against the forces of an aggressive phallic system of power on the *Pequod* and inherent in a system of capitalism and colonialism. Domesticity expressed through Ishmael and Queequeg like "man and wife" allows Melville to deal with the unstable gender "Other".

Having to share a bed with Queequeg provokes Ishmael's sexual and cultural fears, even if these fears cannot be expressed directly. Ishmael notes:

> How it is I know not; but there is no place like a bed for confidential disclosures between friends. Man and wife, they say, there open the very

> bottom of their souls to each other; and some old couples often lie and chat over old times till nearly morning. Thus, then, in our hearts' honeymoon, lay I and Queequeg—a cosy, loving pair.
>
> (*M-D*: 68)

This passage comes at the end of Chapter 10, when Ishmael is forced to share a bed with the tattooed "savage" Queequeg at the Spouter-Inn. At first, Ishmael seems horrified, but he is quickly impressed by Queequeg's dignity and kindness. The homoerotic overtones of their sharing a bed and staying up much of the night smoking and talking suggests that, "The Melville of the earliest travel writings still operates largely in a realm of undifferentiated sexuality" (Robert K Martin, 1998:186) and also, a profound, close bond born of mutual dependence and a world in which merit, rather than race or wealth, determines a man's status. The men aboard the *Pequod* are everything to one another, and the relationship between them is stronger and more meaningful than even that between man and wife. In this world without affection, in which all is profit and loss or desire, domesticity is provided by the couple, Ishmael and Queequeg, "a cosy, loving pair". Ishmael's willingness to describe his relationship with Queequeg in such conjugal terms ("honeymoon") symbolizes his openness to new experiences and people.

In British imperial tales of adventure, men leave England (a country ruled by a woman while the popularity of these tales was at its height) in part to get away from women. In adventure stories, men confront challenges together and gain an intimacy that transcends anything achieved between men and women. We consider that both *Moby Dick* and *Heart of Darkness* follow this pattern of tales of adventure. Before leaving for Africa, Marlow says goodbye to his aunt over a cup of tea, the symbol of English domestic comfort which she represents. Like those mothers who will send their sons off to the war, with no knowledge of it, she gives him her blessing, expecting him to return the hero, which it is his duty as a man

to become. As we know it, Marlow returns more domesticated than heroic, more the 'feminized male' than the 'conquering hero'.

Daphna Erdinast-Vulcan suggests that Conrad's fiction in general, and his best works, "are never well-wrought. It is, in fact, their very defiance of the aesthetics of closure, solidity of structure and generic containment - their 'strangeness' […] - which makes them so powerful and compelling" (Quoted in Ruppel, 2008: 5). This quotation can also be applied to Melville. Whether they depict colonialism, betrayal, gender, sexuality, or alienation, strangeness might be their works' most characteristic quality. Ideas of empire and nation in the nineteenth century, as in the present, were raced, and racial distinctions often depended on gendered distinctions. For theorists of nationalism, nation and gender are often intimately related. As the beginning of modern nationalism in the late eighteenth century coincided with the Protestant revivals in Germany and Britain, leading to an alliance between nationalism and respectability, "an alliance that regarded control over sexuality as vital to the concept of respectability" (Schueller, 2001:10). Deviance, aberrance, and excess were unnational, while respectability, normativity, and control were national. Nationalism was increasingly associated with an ideal of a sensual heterosexual manliness, and even though female national symbols were invoked, these were essentially static rather than dynamic. (Ibid) Thus, we consider that both writers challenge the notion of 'normativity' in relation to gender.

In his provocative *One of Us: The Mastery of Joseph Conrad*, Geoffrey Galt Harpham claims that Conrad as a novelist of identification can be qualified as the greatest explorer of male-male attraction in the English language, far more interesting, subtle, and even candid than the elusive Wilde (1996: 5). He writes:

> What seems to be happening is that - especially in the period of his concentrated greatness, 1897-1900, from *The Nigger of the Narcissus* to *Lord Jim*-Conrad makes "mistakes" by failing to perform the kind of "screening" that is performed more or less effortlessly by native speakers. He fails to censor inappropriate or excessively revealing

> connotations […] this candor also signals a certain instability of gender identity. Most heterosexual adult native speakers manage their utterances to accord with their established genders; keenly sensitive to unruly nuance, they repress heavy prods and dirty dicks with the same unconscious efficiency with which they repress the homosexual effect itself.
>
> (Ibid. 176)

Harpham suggest that Conrad's "mistakes" may reveal confession of unconscious homosexual desire since he writes not in his native language but in a foreign language, the one that may trap him and reflect unconsciously his own unstable gender identity.

While biographers and scholars have privileged Conrad's correspondence with his many male literary friends, his letters to Marguerite Poradowska, Emilie Briquel, Canstance Garnett, his wife Jessie, and others reveal an identification with women that has gone largely unnoticed. Indeed, his letters to Marguerite are affectionate, sincere, and flirtatious. While in Africa in 1890 he wrote, "You have endowed my life with new interest, new affection; I am very grateful to you for this. Grateful for all the sweetness, for all the bitterness of this priceless gift" (CLJC VI: 55). In another letter to her, he closes it with "Your very loving [trés aimant] nephew" (Ibid. **57**).These letters reveal that Conrad told her things he told no one else.

Conrad suffered from various physical and psychological ailments which doctors diagnosed as symptom of neurasthenia, a disease caused by excessive mental labor, especially when conjoined with anxiety and deficient nourishment. It is also traceable to depressing emotions, grief, domestic trouble, prolonged anxiety, followed with depressing mental influences and sleeplessness. During one such attack, Conrad wrote to Marguerite:

> I no longer have the courage to do anything. I hardly have enough to write to you. It is an effort, a sudden rush to finish before the pen falls from my hand in the depression of complete discouragement. That's how it is […] I

> regret having told you all this. Never have I said so much to anyone. You will do well to forget what you have just heard.
>
> (CLJC VI: 164)

This relationship is described by Nadjer as a relation, "certainly not devoid of erotic feeling". He adds: "Korzeniowski was bold in writing but hesitant in actions". The eroticism that has been detected by Nadjer is revealed in another letter where Conrad compares himself to a puppet. He describes himself as a Punch discarded in a corner, "spine cracked, nose in the dust." He asks, "Would you kindly scrape together the poor devil, put him tenderly in your apron, introduce him to your dolls, make him join the dinner party with the others?" (CLJC VI: 99) We agree with Ruppel who states, "The convergence of the erotic and the maternal in this fantasy foreshadows Conrad's relationship with Jessie [Conrad's wife], and it nearly characterizes all of Conrad's erotic relationships with Women" (2008:9). In her biography, Jessie writes, "all my maternal instincts were centered upon the man I was about to marry, he became to me as much a son as a husband. And this state of accord lasted all our married life" (Ibid).

What we may deduce from the above information that concerns Conrad and two women that share his intimacy is an ambiguous relationship with them. According to Nadjer, "Conrad visited Madame Marguerite quite often, but only when he was on his way somewhere else, and usually only for a few hours" (Nadjer, 1983: 174), though nothing came of this. Besides Marguerite and Jessie, there was one other woman Conrad courted in 1890s, Emilie Briquel. They met at Champel, where Conrad was being treated for neurasthenia. Conrad carried on an epistolary relationship with Emilie before he married Jessie. One of the letters written by Conrad in 1895 asserts:

> Your letter is undoubtedly the most charming missive an author ever received. It would be impossible for me to describe how deeply grateful and appreciative it made me feel. I can assure that your judgement carries a lot of weight because, after all, we write for our friends…
>
> Your appreciation flatters me, fills me with joy but also with sadness and regret. Sadness- because I know myself scarcely worthy of your lenient judgement; regret- at not having done much better.
>
> (CLJC VI: 236)

It seems as if Conrad would have difficulties to share an intimate relationship with a woman. Lady Ottoline's comments on Jessie Conrad corroborated this line of thinking. She saw Conrad's relationship with his wife not as one of compatibility, but one where Jessie merely represented a good and reposeful mattress for this hypersensitive, nerve-wrecked man, who did not ask from his wife high intelligence, only an assuagement of life's vibrations (Jones, 1999: 6).This description reinforces Conrad's image as the isolated sailor of exotic Polish origins, who married beneath him to provide himself with a housekeeper, but who still preferred male camaraderie to women companionship. Marlow's listeners on board the Nellie belong to exclusively male professionals, "tolerant of each other's yarns - and even convictions" (*HD*: 5). The primary narrator introduces Marlow and the four members of his audience in highly affectionate terms. He begins with the Director of Companies, "our Captain and our host. We four affectionately watched his back as he stood in the bows […] He resembled a pilot which to a seaman is trustworthiness personified." The affection is general, for between them "there [is] … the bond of the sea," which holds their "hearts together through long periods of separation" (Ibid.7).

This 'male camaraderie' has already been expressed by Melville in *Moby-Dick*. John Bryant in his Essay, "Sexuality and Politics" (2004), refer to *Moby-Dick* as a male-oriented text where the female gender is barely represented. Bryant considers that Melville's pursuit of identity invariably leads to sexuality, and Melville's representations of sexuality invariably

promote a gender-crossing politics. We agree with Bryant that *Moby-Dick* is not so purely male, since to know what it means to be, Ishmael must know what it means to be a male; for Melville, to know the meaning of maleness requires his knowing other males. The erotic male friendship is well expressed in the early chapters of *Moby Dick*. Queequeg stands both as male and 'Other'. So, to know himself Ishmael must know the 'Other'. Melville portrays sexuality as a gendered cosmopolitanism wherein (to borrow from the period's definition of "cosmopolite" one is "nowhere a stranger" in either sex. For Bryant, this "pansexuality" is the seed of a political ideology designed to call authority and capitalism into question and to bring apparent opposites - female and male, civilized and savage - together. For us, the dialogue that Melville shares with Conrad over the unstable gender identity is not merely a matter of a lack of masculinity but indeed a sexual nonconformity.

Heart of Darkness involves a pair of men, Marlow and Kurtz and Marlow's obsessive desire to reach Kurtz. Critics have found different ways to explain Marlow's desire to reach Kurtz. Those who read *Heart of Darkness* as a dark journey into the soul see Kurtz as the end point of Marlow's quest for himself. The other explanation lies in Marlow's hope to find in Kurtz a model of success for his career in Africa. We consider that the homoerotic subtext of the novella may provide another explanation for Marlow's obsessive search for Kurtz. Marlow remarks, "The approach to this Kurtz grubbing for ivory in the wretched bush was beset by as many dangers as though he had been an enchanted princess sleeping in a fabulous castle" (*HD*: 61). Marlow intends an ironic simile; the venal trader "grubbing for ivory in the […] bush" is the reverse of an "enchanted princess." Kurtz here is represented as an object of sexual desire, an "enchanted princess."

The culmination of such ambiguous erotic relation is expressed through the first meeting of Marlow with Kurtz. Marlow recounts this first seeing: Kurtz "rustle[s] one of the letters" someone had written to him about Marlow and "looking straight into [Marlow's] face

[says], “I am glad. A voice! It was grave, profound, vibrating” (Ibid. 67). When he intercepts Kurtz to prevent him from rejoining his followers, Marlow suggests that, “the foundation of [their] intimacy was being laid” during this encounter. When Marlow returns the letters to the Intended, this “intimacy” stands between Marlow and the woman; perhaps, the vision of Kurtz prevents Marlow from attempting any relationship with the woman.

The homosocial world in both *Moby-Dick* and *Heart of Darkness* is daring since male-male homoerotic attachments shape both narratives, especially in *Moby-Dick*. The couple relationship created by Melville through Ishmael and Queequeg is a perverse mirror of “normal” homosocial world. The ambiguous relationship between Marlow and Kurtz reveals both admiration and sex-attraction that questions the masculine and the heteronormative gender constructions.

C. Hearts of Silence: The Female Muteness in “*The Encantadas*” and *Heart of Darkness*

The surprising parallels between Melville’s “The Encantadas” (1854) and Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* (1899) allow us to investigate the gender issue in these fictional works, too. In both works the female muteness destabilizes the masculine world of the narrators. It raises the question about the power of a confident male narrator to contain his story within the convention of language itself, and the masculine world in general. Speech breaks down in both fictional works. Hunilla abdicates her own storytelling; whereas, the African native woman makes use of a language of codes and gestures. In these works, female muteness creates a space for the authors’ questions about experiments with language, but more importantly about the native woman as the “Other”. Hunilla and the unnamed African woman stand as a principled and active response to the wreckage of masculine dreams of heroism-often a mask for oppression and cruelty. In this context, the gender issue extends into colonialism and mastery. Hence, silence in the face of the unspeakable in both fictional works

suggests a powerful ethical and political position of the two writers to the power relations that enforced gender and class subordination as well as racial difference.

"The Encantadas" consists of a group of sketches of the Galapagos Islands. "Encantadas," the name given by the Spanish when they discovered the islands in 1535, means "bewitched" as much as "enchanted". The double meaning of the name of the isles suggests Melville's symbolic reference to race and gender. Sketch Eighth, opens with:

> At last they in an Island did espy
> A seemely woman, sitting by the shore,
> That with great sorrow and sad agony
> Seemed some great misfortune to deplore,
> And loud to them for succor called evermore.
>
> (*E*: 106)

From the beginning the woman is associated with "sorrow" and "sad agony", the figure of the woman as the oppressed "Other". Hunilla, a native woman, is discovered by the narrator's fellow seaman. Aboard the ship she tells her story. A French captain has left her with her husband and brother on the island to gather tortoise oil; but, the captain never returns for them. More dramatically is the fact that she has watched her husband and brother drown while fishing. So, widowed by a boating accident that she had witnessed, she spent time counting the days after her husband's and brother's death. Melville would, probably, agree with Fanon, who revises Hegel's dialectic, to suggest that it underestimates the white master's dominance over the natives since the master differs basically from the master described by Hegel. Fanon considers that in Hegel's dialectic "there is reciprocity; here the master laughs at the consciousness of the slave. What he wants from the slave is not recognition but work" (1967:220). Hunilla, her husband, and her brother are used by the French Captain to collect tortoise oil. This oil as ivory in Africa dramatizes trade as a means of exploitation in both Melville's and Conrad's work. The complexity of this narrative is Hunilla's deep secrets,

which the narrator refuses to unfold, and his frequent exclamation of pity confirms that the woman is sad, helpless, and mournful.

Melville imbues this Indian character with complexity and mystery. The narrator admires her stoicism in the face of this tragedy. She is described as a proud and resolute woman. She shows little emotion when she left the island - making a final visit to the grave she dug for her husband. Hunilla's story is dominated by the cross as the symbol of her suffering and her endurance. The word "cross" is used five times in significant contexts and more if we consider less direct references. First, Melville cites the "rude **cross**" she planted "of withered sticks no green ones might be had at the head of that lonely grave" (*E*: 111) where she buried her husband, and then he reinforces the image by referring to "another **cross**," the invisible one of "dull anxiety and pain touching her undiscovered brother" (Ibid.112). The crosses gain further meaning as the narrator watches Hunilla's tender farewell to the grave site of her husband. Here, Melville makes the point of the story by setting the quality of Hunilla's singular endurance against the desultory of man and of life. She also appears at the end as "lone Hunilla […] riding upon a small gray ass; and before her on the ass's shoulder, she eyed the jointed workings of the beast's armorial **cross**" (Ibid.121). The meaning becomes more symbolic and allows us to refer to Hunilla as the "Other". She stands as a woman, but more as a native woman that has been subjected to both gender and racial otherness expressed through textual elisions and omissions.

Critics state that there is a stronger textual evidence, in the form of elision and cryptic remarks, and that Sketch Eight was subjected to the publisher's censure which forced Melville to omit parts of it. The elisions begin as Hunilla gives her account of what happened to her on the island. Note this series of elisions and the narrator's commentary.

> What present day or month it was she could not say. Time was her labyrinth, in which Hunilla was entirely lost.

And now follows -

> Against my own purposes a pause descends upon me here. One knows not whether nature doth not impose some secrecy upon him who has been privy to certain things. At least, it is to be doubted whether it be good to blazon such…

When Hunilla -

> Dire sight it is to see some silken beast long dally with a goden lizard ere she devour. More terrible, to see how feline fate will sometimes dally with a human soul, and by nameless magic make it repulse a sane despair with a hope which is but mad…

(Ibid. 113)

The implication here is that Hunilla is victimized in some way, and that the malicious acts perpetrated against her are dangerous to announce in public. Melville later gives us a clue about the nature of these acts, intermingled with more elisions. When the Captain wondered if other ships had passed on in the isle, she just replied, "Senor, ask me not". What follows is full of interruptions that the narrator explains, "those two unnamed events which befell Hunilla on this isle let them abide between her and her God" (Ibid. 115). What she could not tell the "Captain…shall… remain untold" (Ibid). These interruptions in the narrative that we have tried to report in the above quotation suggest that Hunilla was raped by a group of seamen, who then left the island without saving her. Melville's omissions may refer to the seamen as American whale men. So, to identify the American crew as participants in the rape who then abandoned Hunilla on the island could not be accepted by any publisher even if it is for the sake of truth. The fact that the woman was Indian and Spanish may have made it more problematic to reveal the truth in public at that time. These could have been some of the reasons why Melville left the story "half" told. The racial and sexual significance of rape in this fiction is expressed in the confrontation of Hunilla and the Captain of the ship that rescued her. Hunilla's mystery is introduced through a multiplicity of omissions and elision. To clear up the mystery of what happened in the island through these omissions means reading Melville's novel according to the narrative demands of the American policy of the

time. To read the mystery itself as an effect of the American expansion is to see in it the imprint of a racial and gender issue that Melville strategically introduced through language.

The narrator's description of Hunilla reinforces the theme of otherness where she stands as the "Other" because she is a woman. Her twofold otherness, the native and female as distinguished from the civilized and male, designates her as the living embodiment of these dualities, the binary oppositions upon which Western civilization rests

> Hunilla was partly prostrate upon the grave; her dark head bowed, and lost in her long, loosened Indian hair; her hands extended to the cross-foot, with a little brass crucifix clasped between; a crucifix worn featureless, like an ancient graven knocker long plied in vain.
>
> (E: 119)

Her 'double otherness' is expressed in the figure in which race and gender emblematically intersects. This is to say that racial and sexual differences are to be equated, and this dramatizes the power relationship between the native and the colonizer where the white male colonizer has both racial and sexual superiority. Reading this fictional work through contemporary postcolonial critics, Melville's use of rape may be seen as a tactic and metaphor to describe America's guilty practice with the Indians. Authors and critics as Frantz Fanon, Edward Said, Jenny Sharp, and Malek Alloula have identified rape as a master trope of colonial discourse and a sign of the colonizer's bad faith. In *Orientalism*, Said uses rape as a discreetly understated metaphor to describe the relationship between West and East. He argues, "A certain freedom of intercourse was always the Westerner's privilege: because his was the stronger culture, he could penetrate, he could wrestle with, he could give shape and meaning to the great Asiatic mystery, as Disraeli once called it" (1979: 44). In the above passage, Said invokes rape to characterize the Occident's relation to the Orient; the one based on violence and domination.

Hunilla's otherness as we have seen above is most fully articulated by Melville's elisions and textual interruptions, 'You saw ships pass, far away; you waved to them; they passed on; - was that it Hunilla?" (Ibid. 115); she just replies, "Senor, be it as you say" (Ibid) as if words could not express what happened to her on the isle. Her otherness shows her vulnerability as a woman, the one that has been subjected to rape. So, she feels shame, and she could not tell the captain about her dishonor. Equated with the wilderness of the Encantadas , Hunilla like the isles looks "much as the world at large, might, after a penal conflagration", and their curse is that " to them change never comes; neither the change of seasons nor of sorrows" (Ibid. 70). Although she couldn't recount all the events, the "native" woman is not without purpose—since "during the telling of her story the mariners formed a voiceless circle round Hunilla and the Captain" (Ibid.116). Throughout his account, the narrator highlights her power, revealing her courage to survive on the island and when she has to cross the isle to reach the high land in the centre to be rescued by the narrator's ship. Hunilla's importance amplifies through her rape that may symbolize the whole colonial enterprise that takes the land by force to exploit and abuse their legitimate proprietors. Melville makes her stand as the "Other" which is ultimately penetrated but not destroyed.

The distinctions between 'knowing', 'acknowledging', and 'recognizing' the woman as the "Other" is quite important. Knowing someone's pain is a different thing from acting in response to it. In "The Encantadas", at first sight, there is not the urgency to take action against oppression. Even if the American crew has saved Hunilla and were compassionate with her suffering they did not act to denounce the atrocities that she had abided in the island. De Beauvoir insists that we are ethically compelled to do all we can to change oppressive institutions. Referring to Djamila Boupacha, the young Algerian woman raped and tortured during the Algerian Revolution war, De Beauvoir demonstrates the need to take sides, acting politically and with an ethical vision. Her action illustrates the links she sees between the

embodied individual, consciousness, and political action. For her the alternative is simple and clear-cut. Either you align yourself with the "contemporary butchers rather than their victims" (1962: 20) or reject their atrocities and stand against them through active fights.

Melville was relatively unengaged with the day-to-day workings of the political world. The letters Melville wrote to friends and family during the 1840s and 1850s are for the most part without political content. But, a letter that Melville wrote to his brother Gansevoorts shortly after President James K. Polk declared war on Mexico, provides a significant exception that will allow us to deduce Melville's politics of action in "The Encantadas". In a letter to his brother Ganssevoorts, a democratic politician who passionately supported U.S expansionism, Melville poked fun at the military pomp and self-righteousness attending the "state of delirium about the Mexican war", reminding Gansevoorts of war's ultimate reality: "Nothing is talked of but the 'Halls of the Montezumas'. And to hear folks prate about those purely figurative apartments one would suppose that they were another Versailles where our democratic rabble is meant to 'make a night of it' ere long […] But seriously something great is impending…Lord, the day is at hand, when we will be able to talk of our killed and wounded like old Eastern conquerors reckoning them up by thousands" (Quoted in Robert S. Levine, 2008:148). The sarcastic tone of this letter shows Melville's disapproval of the Mexican war and his doubts about Manifest Destiny. Thus, Hunilla's rape mediates Melville's politics as action even if it has been done through elisions. In this fictional work, Melville is denouncing not only the literal rape of the Indian woman but also the economic rape of South America. Through Hunilla's rape, Melville challenges the prevailing capitalist relations of the period. The word "rape" in English initially referred to the theft of goods or the abduction of a woman when it began to circulate in the early 1400s, and it only gradually acquired its most common modern meaning denoting a woman's sexual violation in the 1580s, usages that Shakespeare employed in the "The Rape of Lucrece" (1594).

South America in “The Encantadas” as the African Continent in *Heart of Darkness* is the site of ‘a vast colonization scheme’ that forms the core of Melville’s and Conrad’s fictional works where the female character plays an important role. At first sight the narrative of *Heart of Darkness* appears to follow the masculine/patriarchal pattern of a hero who overcomes obstacles to rise to more important positions in the social, economic scheme of society. Both Marlow’s journey and the narration of it are basically masculine quests. His desire to encounter Kurtz entails excluding ‘the woman’, who must be kept out to preserve the ‘goodness’ he attributes to them. Inadvertently mentioning ‘the girl’, he reflects: “Did I mention a girl? Oh, she is out of it- completely. They - the women I mean - are out of it- should be out of it. We must help them to stay in that beautiful world of their own, lest ours gets worse” (*HD*: 69). That is what happened in the final scene of the novel when Marlow lies to Kurtz’s ‘Intended’ to protect her from the truth about her ‘fiancé’.

In *Heart of Darkness* all along the journey, the plot vacillates in its presentation of the male journey motif where the structure itself evades closure and judgment. As we follow Marlow, the narrator, up the serpentine river we would like to suggest that Conrad exhibits moral dilemma of patriarchy that marks *Heart of Darkness*. The first way in which Conrad shows Marlow's journey as linked to the female world is by making him turn to women to secure a job. Just as a woman needed to go to a man for power during the late 1890’s, when this story takes place, so Marlow must go to women. It is clear that Marlow experiences this need to ask a woman for a help in getting him a position as captain of a steamer as an indignity. “Then - would you believe it? I tried the women. I, Charlie Marlow, set the women to work- to get a job. Heavens!” (*HD*: 12) His aunt secures a job for him as the skipper of a steamboat. Conrad, too, got his job in Africa thanks to a woman. After months looking for employment Conrad’s position was secured through the good offices of Marguerite Poradouska, not his ‘aunt’ but the widow of a second cousin. Their extensive

correspondence reveals how important a role she, a novelist herself, played in Conrad's life, particularly in encouraging him to pursue his early literary interests.

From the beginning, Conrad shows Marlow's feminine side. Firstly, he depicts Marlow as a passive man in the pose of a preaching Buddha (who is the image of peace through Nirvana), which is in contrast with the role of the male conquering hero, whose tale he is ironically telling. Secondly, the ambiguities of the text - who and what is Kurtz? How does Marlow actually feel about him? Does Marlow hate or love Kurtz? - reveal Marlow's uncertainty about himself, and the text's uncertainty about seeing everything in terms of the binary oppositions: male\female.

Marlow, right from the start, is not certain that he can become the "conquering hero", and exhibits the "feminine" quality of self-questioning when he says I don't know why a queer feeling came to me that I was an imposter. (Ibid. 15) Once at the station in Africa, Marlow again exhibits his feminized self when he overhears a conversation between the station master and his nephew, in which they seem to be plotting against Kurtz. Marlow, who is dozing on the deck of his boat, awakens in time to hear their disloyalty; yet, repulsed as he is by this, he does not protest. Powerless and marginal, he chooses to remain silent in the relative safety of his womb-like enclosure, once again exhibiting his feminine side. With such doubts, why does Marlow undertake the journey? The ostensible answer lies in his boyhood (masculine) passion for maps where he saw the many blank spaces on earth, and one that looked particularly inviting was in the center of Africa. By the time he grew up, it was not a blank space anymore; it had rivers and lakes with names, and it had become a place of darkness, no longer virginal. Others had gone before him, filling the blank space with phallic power. Now, what is left to fascinate him is a mighty big river resembling an immense snake uncoiled, with its head in the sea, its body at rest, curving afar over a vast country, and its tail lost in the depth of the land. He concludes that the snake had charmed him.

Marlow sees the image of the river as a snake on a map in a Brussels office, where two women function as female guardians to the gates of Hell, the darkness dead in the center of the map. Of this river, Marlow says, it was fascinating – deadly - like a snake - ugh! (Ibid. 23) When the office door opens to admit Marlow to the chief commissioner's office, symbolically he is being admitted to the dark underworld of the serpentine river. The river represents to Marlow, the sinister, unknowable female power which he seems in need to explore, in order perhaps to expurgate the "feminine" side within himself. However, as the novel progresses, Marlow enacts, rather than expurgates, the feminine principle.

Conrad exhibits ambiguity in depicting Marlow's confrontation with the female principle embodied by Kurtz's mistress, who symbolizes both a matriarchal female goddess as well as a sensuous temptress associated in the English male mind with "savage" races. However, Conrad goes beyond the conventional colonial stereotypes of "natives" because the African woman is fully individualized and described in detail. She is the crux of *Heart of Darkness*.

We would argue that Marlow's fears, as represented in the text by the sensual power of Kurtz's mistress, show also Conrad's fear of the female energy. This feminine part manifests itself in the ambiguities and omissions of the text. On the one hand, Conrad struggles through his narrator, Marlow, to break into a speech of triumph of authority over the savage temptress; on the other side, he appears, finally unable to, or maybe even unwilling to block out the power of her inarticulate, gorgeous, presence. The passage that we are about to quote exhibits the text's divided attitudes toward the female power: on the one hand, Conrad/Marlow fears the savage woman's sexual mystery; on the other hand he admires and is fascinated by her. For closely linked to this issue of female power is the power of language versus the power of silence. In this passage, we see that the power to describe is one exercised

through language by Marlow; yet, in the final analysis, the silent gaze of the "savage" woman is more articulated and more powerful than Marlow's words.

> And from right to left along the lighted shore moved a wild and gorgeous apparition of a woman. 'She walked with measured steps, draped in striped and fringed cloths, treading the earth proudly with a slight jingle and flash barbarous ornaments. She carried her head high; her hair was done in the shape of a helmet; she had brass leggings to the knee, brass wire gauntlets to the elbow, a crimson spot on her tawny cheek, innumerable necklaces of glass beads on her neck; bizarre things, charms, gifts of witch-men, that hung about her, glittered and trembled at every step...She was savage and superb, wild-eyed and magnificent; there was something ominous and stately in her deliberate progress. And in the hush that had fallen suddenly upon the whole sorrowful land, the immense wilderness, the colossal body of the fecund and mysterious life seemed to look at her, pensive, as though it had been looking at the image of its own tenebrous and passionate soul.
>
> Her face had a tragic and fierce aspect of wild sorrow and a dumb pain...Suddenly she opened her bared arms and threw them up rigid above her head, as though in an uncontrollable desire to touch the sky [...] A formidable silence hung over the scene.
>
> (*HD*: 87-8)

Thus, the muteness, the formidable silence of Kurtz's savage/mistress, becomes emblematic of those blank spaces in the text which Conrad/Marlow wishes to inhabit and cannot. At the narrative level, he had wished to inhabit the "blank spaces" of Africa, only to discover that these blank spots are a mirage; just as, on the linguistic and textual level, he acknowledges that the "muteness" of the African woman as the "Other" is a reality. As his description shows, the savage mistress speaks a language as powerful as that of patriarchy and colonialism. As Gilbert and Gubar point out, "she is a silent hieroglyph in the language strange that articulates both her mysterious history and her threatening hystery" (1989: 45).

Her presence suggests another silence in the text, the taboo which Conrad never addresses openly, namely her sexual liaison with Kurtz. For as Kurtz's mistress, though the text never states this directly, she stands in direct opposition to Kurtz's Intended. Ironically, the text reveals Conrad's African version of womanhood and sexuality as real and potent

while the Intended is a pure Victorian fantasy, a tradition of the English novel which includes such stereotypes of the fair, insipid heroine, as Amelia in Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*, a tradition that Conrad has, probably, inherited.

In *Heart of Darkness,* Conrad reproduces this cultural misogyny and racial stereotyping in Kurtz's possession of his mistress. Mariana Torgovnick points out, Marlow clearly conceives of her as a substitute for, an inversion of Kurtz's high-minded, white 'Intended'. Like the Belgian woman, she is an impressive figure, but unlike the Intended she is not 'high-minded': she is presented as all body with instinctive emotion. The novella cuts from the figure of the African woman with outstretched arms to the Intended: one woman an "affianced bride, one woman all body, surely an actual bride" (Torgovnick, 1990: 146-147). The African woman, who, it must be noted, has no name, embodies Conrad's inherited notions of the savage female "Other" popularized in contemporary fiction. While she may be seductive, like Hunilla, her face has a tragic and fierce aspect of wild sorrow and a dumb pain. To take one step further, Conrad, like Melville, is struggling with his politics that resulted in the African woman's 'formidable silence', which later will express colonial anxiety. As Melville, Conrad expresses his politics through the native's silence.

In our view, the native woman also disrupts imperialist, racist, sexist attitudes. She is the real presence in the novella, and it is she who makes Marlow confront his boyhood male passion for filling up the blank spaces he had seen on the map. Now, instead of a blank space, he finds a human inhabiting the African landscape. Indeed, her presence betrays another multiple perspective in the novella, one suggested by the question: how can one fill up a blank space on a map in the name of culture/civilization when that space is already inhabited by another culture/civilization? This is one of the questions which though unarticulated are raised by Conrad through gender relation: the relation between masculinity and femininity, between colonialism's power and colonialism's weakness, between Conrad's racism and Conrad's

sympathy for the subjugated Africans. He embodies this question in the body of the African woman who is fecund, mysterious and passionate, and who belongs to the African landscape that looks at her as though it has been looking at the image of its own tenebrous and passionate soul. We suggest that this woman stands as the 'dark continent' (to use Kristeva's word) in Marlow\ Conrad's fears in himself but cannot express freely.

The native woman embodies multiple perspectives in the text. But, the one that interests us the most in this fictional work is the native woman as the "Other". By depicting the native woman as speechless, Conrad places her at the center of issues of colonialism. Frantz Fanon, in a somewhat different yet related context argues, "I ascribe a basic importance to the phenomenon of language [...] one of the elements in the man of color's comprehension of the dimension of the other. For it is implicit that to speak is to exist absolutely for the other" (1967: 17-18). Fanon argues further that, "Existence is language, and language is always a matter of politics" (Ibid 18). Thus, existence is a product of language and the colonized subject must learn the master's language in order to be human. By portraying the woman as mute, Conrad makes her less than human and powerless to engage in a dialogue with her master, Kurtz, except through her sexual power. As Benita Parry has also observed, Marlow hears the natives' speech as a black and incomprehensible frenzy, (1983:35) which echoes Fanon's sardonic observation that, "It is said that the Negro loves to jabber" (1967:26). So, on the one hand, as representative of the native people, she possesses animal instincts; on the other hand, if she lacks speech, Kurtz's speech is reduced to uttering the words: "The horror, the horror".

Kurtz's fall from eloquence contrasts, thus, with his mistress's mute eloquence, as if Conrad complicates the situation: who is conquered and who is the conqueror? It seems to us that Conrad ultimately reverses the attitude of colonial superiority in terms of language as rationality. One explanation for Conrad's ambiguous feelings about language can be

explained by the fact that he, too, as a foreigner with a heavy accent that made him constantly aware of linguistic difference, always reminds him that he is a racial outcast. This lends credibility to Conrad's feeling of kinship with the natives. We may even read Conrad's literary text favoring the native African speech over the European, as an ironic rebuttal to English attitudes toward his foreign birth. For if Conrad's friends saw him as a racial alien, a speaker of gibberish, (Quoted in Michael North, 1994:58) might not Conrad want to show strength and dignity of the native woman through a linguistic strategy that had its own essence?

Hence, the native woman's 'eloquent' silence speaks loud and clear to the powerful colonizer who is seen as the "Other" by her. Her fusion with the jungle landscape makes clear how Africa overpowers the colonizer's language and customs. In a reversal of Fanon's view that, "a colonized people finds itself face to face with the language of the civilizing nation; that is with the culture of the mother country, the colonized is elevated above the jungle status in proportion to his adoption of the mother country's cultural standards. He becomes whiter as he renounces his blackness, the jungle" (1967:18); the native woman retains her blackness, while Kurtz loses his whiteness. Furthermore, though, as previously suggested, Conrad partially dehumanizes her by making her mute, it is the text which speaks for her. The reader 'sees' her silence as eloquent through those gaps and ambiguities, as a preferable alternative of the male-signed hypocrisy of Kurtz's fiancée. In the latter's case, as the utterly hypocritical conversational exchange proceeds between the Intended and Marlow, we see how Conrad's text, while on the one hand setting her up as an unbearably pathetic contrast to the vital Native Woman, on the other reveals the absurdity of its own masculine-centered discursive strand that seeks to contain her within such a Victorian construct. By refusing to even give her a name of her own, Conrad's text questions the discursive narrative strategy which renders her

as an object of exchange between men; an object the price of whose innocence has been paid for by a lie.

The above analysis shows an important difference in the portrayal of the women characters in the two works. Melville's narrator appears to view his female character, Hunilla, more sympathetically than Marlow does with the African woman. Melville draws a heroic stature to his female character; she appears as a Christ figure that expresses humanity's suffering and woe. "To Hunilla, pain seemed so necessary, that pain in other beings, though by love and sympathy made her own, was unrepiningly to be borne" (E: 121). The 'savage' woman, as Marlow describes her, is a distillation of alluring but frightening otherness. His view of her highlights her beauty, leadership, and ferocity. She is "wild", "gorgeous", and proud. Wearing a helmet, armor, and magic charms, she is fearless in the face of the pilgrims' bullets, and is obeyed by her tribesmen. She is "like the wilderness itself, with an air of brooding over an inscrutable purpose" (Ibid. 87), a description sufficiently ominous but all the more so for echoing the previous description of the wilderness as "an implacable force brooding over an inscrutable intention" (Ibid.48). Marlow responds to her dangerous allure - dangerous because he sees her as partly responsible for Kurtz's "going native" - by insisting on her ineradicable otherness.

The deployment of silence with its different meanings is explored throughout Hunilla and the African woman. The implications and significance of this process in relation to colonial enterprise can be explored in another fictional female character, Jewel, in Conrad's *Lord Jim*. Jewel's role is not as substantial as Hunilla's, but she fulfils an important function in Conrad's critique of imperialism in this novel. Both female characters allow us to explore the male discourse of superior/ inferior dialectic.

Jewel bases her assumptions on what she knows about the colonists who came to Patusan: "I didn't want to die weeping" she says because her mother "had wept bitterly before

she died" (*LJ*: 208); she does not believe Jim when he swears that he will never leave her because her father had already sworn the same thing but he left them. Marlow fails adequately to justify Jim's action, retreating to a position of patronizing moral superiority over the woman by claiming that she simply fails to understand him. For Jewel, Jim's 'suicidal' act questions the validity of her status as 'heroin'. His decision to face death at the hands of Doramin, rather than escape with her signifies his renunciation of the life she offers him and constitutes the habitual betrayal of the woman of indigenous or mixed race by the white man. Her accusation to Marlow and Stein, that "you always leave us - for your own ends" (Ibid. 348) is actually what happened to Hunilla when the French Captain left her and never came back. In both works, the betrayal of the natives by the white man is dealt with through the female character.

The African woman in *Heart of Darkness* can be compared to the women of the islands in *Typee* (1846) who are perceived as "nymphs" and "mermaids", as mythic creatures in the Western culture. From the beginning, the narrator sets up an opposition between what is represented as the "natural" and the "civilized," in which sexuality allegedly participates in the former category and imperialism and religion in the latter (K. Martin Robert, 1998:187). Their erotic welcome to the crew signals an open sexuality that is immediately placed on the defensive by the narrator's judgmental comments, as he records the unholy passions of the crew and their unlimited gratification. The eroticizing of the black body of the African woman in *Heart of Darkness* is analogous to the eroticizing of the brown body in *Typee*. Thus, brownness/ blackness signify the primitive "Other". It expresses a complex and contradictory process by which the native is seen as disfigured and hence 'deserving' of colonization, and at the same time sexually appealing. Mary Louise Pratt in her work, *Imperial eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturalism* (1992), considers that the scene of the display of the erotic brown body, whether as object of desire or object of scorn, dramatizes the violence of the

colonial encounter. Thus the anti colonial lover of the colonized darker native participates in the very objectification and possession he (or, more rarely, she) protests.

Conclusion

What results from the study is that the notion of the "Other" is complex, but in Herman Melville and Joseph Conrad deployment of the notion in their works is even more because of the 'double-voiced' racial discourse in their texts of the African, the Oriental and the Woman. The construction/deconstruction of the African Other in Melville's *Moby- Dick* and Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* displays 'Africanism' as a racial dialogue. The analysis has shown that the authors' perceptions of the African 'Other' resemble and/or differ from those that the general ideologies of their times circulated. Africanism as a racial discourse was complex and problematic. It has no settled voice, vacillating in dialectic or continuing dialogue between Melville's ambiguities and Conrad's ambivalence. However, the polyphonic\dialogic africanist discourse might be seen as a metaphor for questioning the validity of 'scientific' theories and, sometimes, refuting the contemporary racial discourse.

Herman Melville was not directly concerned with the politics of slavery and abolition; however, Pip expresses the humanity of the African subject whereby the pseudo-emancipated black becomes a trope for a supposedly universal human liberation. In this sense, *Moby-Dick* includes among its multi-voiced modes what by 1850 is the highly evolved genre of the fugitive slave narrative, and through the person of Pip places the slavery issue at the center of Ishmael's tale of escape.

The (de)construction of the Oriental Other in Melville's *Billy Budd* and Conrad's *Lord Jim* has revealed a discourse in which questions of nation, empire and race are intimately connected. The two narratives have shown oppositions which are deployed to repress or allay fears about the wholeness and stability of America in the face of Native American, African - American and diverse ethnic immigration presences, and of Europe in the face of natives of overseas colonies at the period of high imperialism.

The woman as the "Other" in Melville's or in Conrad's fictional texts expresses issues of gender and sexuality. The novels under study have highlighted the social and psychological meanings of gender difference. The different connotations of male and female are exposed and extensively negotiated. At one level, these fictions have demonstrated how the ideals of masculinity and feminity were translated into social roles, and how they have established norms for that translation. At another level, they have shown the authors' resistance to the normative gender relations, and have revealed the two authors' 'politics' in relation to the Western culture and imperial expansion. *Pierre* and *The Secret Agent* offer a different reading of the gender roles and domestic structures that have produced profound distress in the middle-class Western culture. In *Heart of Darkness* women might have power and influence. Marlow's "excellent aunt" uses her influence to have him appointed captain of a steamship trading on the Congo River. Kurtz's mistress is another powerful female character that allows Conrad to introduce important issues.

To explain Conrad's ambivalence towards his women characters, we have pointed out that Conrad's own position as racial outsider, a Polish émigré in England, contributed to his sensitivity to marginal and oppressed groups, including women. Nor are we suggesting that women, as a whole, are portrayed only in a positive way, capable of making absolute moral judgments. We have simply desired to problematize the conventional readings of the text, and to suggest that Conrad, more than Melville, may have seen into the horror of the "heart of darkness" in more complex and ambiguous ways than a closed or univocal interpretation allows.

The woman in Melville's "The Encantadas" or the women in *Heart of Darkness* stay within the convention of adventure fiction, at the same time they become a commentary on those conventions, since the hero is the **woman** not the man. She struggles to keep her dignity in the face of rape or sexual harassments. Both Melville and

Conrad raise the issue of how to narrate a woman's experience of sexual violation without demeaning her; but, using her silencing as a strategy to introduce racial and gender issues. What matters in the end is not Melville's or Conrad's sexuality but rather their dialogue over a patriarchal, homophobic society where both writers, desperately, search to find both a place for love and a suitable partner. It would appear, in their fictions, that they found neither.

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General Conclusion

> As long as a work remained multi-leveled and multi-voiced, as long as the people in it were still arguing.
>
> (Bakhtin, 1984: 39)

What then has been the notion of the "Other" in this study, and how is it explored in Melville and Conrad's fictional works under postcolonial debate- the very issue of otherness? What follows here is a set of explorations, based on what we have seen so far. The hope is that the investigation this modest work has begun may continue. The representation of the Other in Melville or in Conrad is not neutral. The discourse of race and gender is malleable. The two authors have demonstrated a keen awareness of the perception of the Other and have eloquently challenged the habitual thought that circulated in their times. This research work has revealed that the two authors' racial discourse results in an ideological dialogue on the notion of the Other. The fictional works under study reveal the two authors as if they were constantly changing camps, moving from one to another, and this is perhaps due to the different stages in their social lives and their spiritual evolution. Their personal experiences were profound, but Melville and Conrad did not express this knowledge as a direct 'monologic' expression in their works. We believe that their sea-experience only helped them to understand more deeply the extensive and well-developed contradictions which coexisted among people. Besides, the contradictions of the epoch did determine Melville's creative work, and Conrad's personal surmounting of contradictions in his personal history was expressed as ambivalent forces coexisting simultaneously.

The task of Melville and Conrad in their fiction seems as if they are constructing a 'polyphonic' world and destroying the established forms of the fundamentally 'monologic' (homophobic) European racial discourse. In their texts, words are always competing, winning and losing territory. Such imagery, in part, reflects both the American anxieties and the

Victorian rhetoric of imperialism, resurrecting the racial discourse of the Other, thus reflecting the aggression of the Westerners on the natives. It also reveals Melville and Conrad participating in the contradictory 'multi-leveledness' (borrowing Bakhtin's word) of their times. According to Bakhtin, "The epoch itself made the polyphonic novel possible" (Ibid. 27).

In the first part, we have introduced some biographical and historical materials to comprehend the authors' creation of a world in their fiction, as Conrad puts it, the word is "not a small undertaking" (*NLL*: 6) because, as Melville states it before:

> Life is a long Dardenelle […] the shores whereof are bright with flowers, which we want to pluck, but the rank is too high; and so we float on and on, hoping to come to a landing place at last- but swoop! We launch into the great sea: Yet the geographers say, even then we must not despair, because across the great sea, however desolate and vacant it may look, lie all Persia and the delicious lands roundabout Damascus.
>
> (Melville, 1993: 220)

The Melville's letter may be read otherwise under postcolonial criticism. The reference to 'Persia' and the 'delicious lands roundabout Damascus' reveals the influence of the Orient on Melville, showing him imbued with orientalist notions in his fiction, like romanticizing the exoticism and sensuality that this space may offer. However, Melville's orientalism in *Billy Budd* or in other novels expresses more than exotic entertainment. Orientalist conventions provided him a cultural resource through which he reflects on the complexity of human difference.

In the second part, we have explored the notion of the "Other" as racial, ethnic, and gender "Other". Although Melville's moral and political focus on the black African as a constituent of the American identity is more explicit than Conrad's engagement in his politics towards the othering of the African natives, the issue of Africanism in *Moby-Dick*, or *Heart of Darkness* reveals an ideological dialogue. The dialogue between the two authors' texts can be seen in the hermeneutic journey and the africanist characterizations. We believe that Melville

and Conrad have used the motif of the journey on water as a metaphor for racial enquiry. The water journeys reveal the protagonists and the narrators remove from the conventions and restraints of 'civilized' society, and force them to engage with the unknown, not only the physical word but also the social and cultural world with the Other. In our analysis of the novels mentioned above, we have shown that the journeys are constantly aligned to processes of textual interpretation. Both texts reveal the "Other" as a Negro expressing Africanism with different meanings, like the issue of slavery or the issue of colonialism. Melville was not directly concerned with the politics of slavery and abolition; however, Pip expresses the humanity of the African subject whereby the pseudo-emancipated black becomes a trope for a supposedly universal human liberation. In this sense, *Moby-Dick* includes among its multi-voiced modes what by 1850 is the highly evolved genre of the fugitive slave narrative, and through the person of Pip places the slave narrative at the center of Ishmael's tale of escape. Conrad shows the inhumanity of slavery through the different voices in the chain gang episode.

Moby-Dick exposes Melville's racial anxieties. In contrast to the situation in Europe, the idea of a nation in the United States, predicated as it was on the internal colonization of Native Americans and African Americans, was rife with instabilities. Toni Morrison considers that the values that are routed as prototypically "American", which often form the focus of white U.S. literature are shaped in response to an Africanist presence. The latter is either repressed morally and politically or constructed as an absolute Other (primitive, savage), against which a quintessential (white) national identity could be articulated. Morrison's argument compellingly places slavery (as "blackness") and racial alterity at the center of the construction of the American national identity.

To what extent, then, does Ishmael's question, "who aint a slave?" (*M-D*: 24) reflect Melville's attitude towards slavery? Melville took a much broader view than the abolitionists of his day. Instead of seeing slavery as unique to African descendants in the United States, he saw it as a universal condition that could afflict anyone. In *White Jacket* Melville draws the analogy between a sailor and a slave. The analogy is often used by naval reformers and labor activists to appropriate the figure of the black slave and the experience of the chattel slavery in order to advance the politics of white oppression and to establish a hierarchy of suffering. So, for Melville anyone under the control of someone or something becomes a slave. In his texts, slavery is not just a national disgrace or the 'great national sin' but a metaphor that can symbolize many different forms of oppression; the oppression that deprived Conrad of his land, mother, and home.

This traumatic dispossession may, partly, explain Conrad's sympathy to European's "Others". In the 'Author's Note' to *Almayer's Folly*, he states:

> I am content to sympathize with common mortals, no matter where they live, in houses or in tents, in the streets under a fog, or in the forests behind the dark line of dismal mangroves that fringe the vast solitude of the sea. For, their land- like ours- lies the inscrutable eyes of the Most High. Their hearts-like ours- must endure the load of the gifts from heaven: the curse of facts and the blessing of illusions, the bitterness of our wisdom and the deceptive consolidation of our folly.
>
> (*AF:* 4-5)

Melville's cosmopolitanism is analogous to Conrad's universal solidarity, which is expressed in the preface to *The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'*. Conrad considers that the writer's task is to "awaken in the hearts of the beholders that feeling of unavoidable solidarity; or the solidarity in mysterious origin, in toil, in joy, in hope, in uncertain fate, which binds men to each other and all mankind to the visible world" (*NN*: 20-1). Certainly, 'all mankind' includes women.

Melville's cosmopolitan imagination expressed in his fiction remains instructive despite its limitations, whereby Melville and Conrad, after all, stand as Westerners. The

special courage of Melville's artistic creativity rests upon his literary attempts to bridge and to name the alienation imposed by alterity. While exploring Melville's or Conrad's texts, we were confronted with the complexity of their representations of the "Other". However, it is important to outline the importance to understand the symbolic use of racial, ethnic, and gender difference as a dual purpose in the writers' works. On one hand, the representations of the "Other" allow them to deal with contemporary issues; on the other hand they mount a criticism of the ideology of race and show otherness as a tragic misanthropy where people emphasize their differences to the point of violating the sanctity of human unity.

If Marlow returns home, Ishmael never returns home. From the sinking of the *Pequod* to the moment of authorship, no evidence suggests that Ishmael stops moving for long, and the moments when he does stop are contained within the novel: the bower in the Arciades, and at the piazza in the Peru. Ishmael has rejected the notion of a home (and the domestic space) tied to either America or any specific geographic location. In this sense, he remains very much a savage: he, like many of the whale men he describes in *Moby Dick*, is on a long exile from Christendom and civilization and he does not care to return. Ishmael makes no claim to religious or economic affinity with any social class; his story begins and ends with him well outside the geographic and social boundaries of the United States. Ishmael the cosmopolitan wanderer rejects the American gospel of economic ascendency to seek a different sort of mobility. This is not the case for Marlow, the discreet and understanding man; he stands as the English civilized man who "remained loyal to Kurtz" (*HD*: 101).

In both writers' fictional works the missionaries, who come to preach the gospel, not as saving grace but as a route to economic glory, can be seen as ambassadors of capitalism while the sailors and natives remain the "Other(s)". Throughout *Moby Dick*, and, indeed, throughout his work as a whole, Melville emphasized the essential dignity and equality of all men regardless of background, class, culture, nationality, or race.

Melville minimized cultural differences and stressed the fundamental equality of all men: "We are all us- Anglo-Saxon, Dyaks and Indians- sprung from one head and made in one image […] And wherever we recognize the image of God let us reverence it; though it swing[s] from the gallows" (Melville, 1963: 231-232).

In the second chapter, we have examined the construction of the Orient in Melville's *Billy Budd* and Conrad's *Lord Jim.* We have explored Melville's and Conrad's texts, and we have deduced that Orientalism is not simply an abstract and mythical phenomena but an important indigenous discourse in which questions of nation, empire and race are intimately connected. In other words, the construction of the Orient in these fictional works has followed a complex and internally contradictory trajectory. *Billy Budd* shows Melville's postcolonial anxiety. Indeed, the novel expresses an interesting characteristic postcolonial motif: disillusionment at the incompletion of the social changes that ought to have followed from the political revolution. The second point that has been investigated is Melville's appropriation of Orientalism. The text has suggested specific parallels between imperialism and American-style democracy in its satire on American slavery and expansionist designs on Mexico and Cuba. Melville, also, Orientalised Billy in an anxious attempt to appoint the idea that the New World ought to cut link with the mother country – England. More importantly, it has shown the idea of a fragmented nation. Melville's depiction of tyrannical maritime laws and tyrannical sea captains reveal the continuing despotism as an antithetical category for reproving American republicanism. In *Billy Budd,* he portrayed Claggart and the captain as possessed by an oriental despotism to illustrate their injustice of their arbitrary and absolute command. By referring to the tyranny of the Articles of War Melville deploys orientalism to register his clamor for democratic reform.

Similarly, Conrad's tag "one of us" has demonstrated his critique of the idea of empire by reversing the gaze based on versions of the dichotomies: Europe righteousness, morality,

energy, and vitality versus Oriental corruption, deviance, lassitude, and passivity. These dichotomies helped to mystify internal racial divisions. Conrad's orientalising assumptions of the East do suggest ironical imperial discourse where we guess a *mélange* of dialogic, heteroglot voices, where it is difficult to distinguish Conrad's voice in *Lord Jim*; as in the following passage taken from *Youth* well shows it: "And then, before I could open my lips, the East spoke to me, but it was in a western voice. A torrent of words was poured into the enigmatical, the fateful silence; outlandish, angry words [...] The man up there raged aloud in two languages" (Y: 39). These 'two languages' express the dialogic relation in Conrad's fiction which may symbolize the constant tension between the patriarchal and totalizing language of British Empire and Conrad's own logos or language, the creed which asserts that "everyone must walk in the light of his own heart's gospel" (CLJC VI: 253). That same 'gospel' that we have already seen in Melville's *Moby-Dick*: "Though I wrote the Gospel in this century, I should die in the gutter" (*M-D*: 80).

Conrad's own language expresses his despair and his own sense of dislocation. Jessie's description of her husband, during a bout of illness, reinforces this idea when she described him speaking deliriously in an incomprehensible language:

> To see him lying in the white canopied bed, dark-faced, with gleaming teeth and shining eyes, was sufficiently alarming, but to hear him muttering to himself in a strange tongue (he must have been speaking Polish), to be unable to penetrate the clouded mind or catch one intelligible word, was for a young, inexperienced girl truly awful.
>
> (Jessie Conrad, 1925: 15)

The 'dark-faced', 'gleaming teeth', 'shinning eyes', and 'a strange tongue' remind us of an oriental description where Conrad is a foreigner for his 'English' wife.

In both authors' works the escape is from the home to the blank and wild spaces or contested boundaries or imaginary sanctuaries. Such 'deterritorializations' are necessarily an entrance into another territory, a 'reterritorialization'. Lord Jim cannot go back to England,

Kurtz cannot return to Belgium, Stein cannot return to Bavaria, and the revolutionaries in *The Secret Agent* will never be thought of as members of any nation.

While Karl, Najder, and many others speak of Conrad's projection of himself into this or that character, especially those stories where they see doubling or the case of the creation and repeated use of Marlow as narrator, seems to follow the model of wish-fulfillment in Freud's well-known "Creative Writers and Daydreaming"; we would argue that this is, instead, a way for Conrad to avoid exhibiting his true thoughts or feelings. Rather than being a wish-fulfillment, the obsessive refrain in his works, the situations of torpor, ennui, malaise, cannibalism, disease, degeneration, fires and explosions, suicide, violence, and, especially, revolution and exile are what Conrad feared and hated the most. His writing is a purposeful leading away from the self, an exile within an exile.

The contradiction is most apparent when we see Conrad's relationship to words and language. The master of the fictional situation is the master of words as Kurtz *in Heart of Darkness*; those who are swept up in an unpleasant situation, those who feel victimized, are those who feel the empowerment of others through words: Marlow listening to Kurtz, for example. Conrad felt disempowered and tried to regain control by pouring out or storing up words, as Marlow with his endless, inconclusive tales. However, Marlow continually doubts that others can understand his words.

This suspicion of language, this compulsion to use what he knows will be futile and ineffective, is typical of Conrad and of his narrators and characters. His complex relation to the English language is probably due to his awareness of his foreignness. In a letter of 1895 Conrad remarks that writing "is made up of doubt, or hesitations, of moments silent and anxious when one listens to the thoughts, - one's own thoughts, - speaking indistinctly, at the bottom of the heart." A year later, complaining that he can't write a single sentence, he writes, "To be able to think and unable to express is a fine torture […] I write in doubt over every

line […] I perspire in incertitude over every word!" (Karl, 1979: 377-8) In 1909, in the midst of writing *Under Western Eyes*, Conrad writes, "a sort of horror of pen and ink, a mistrust of the written phrase sits on me like a cold nightmare" (Ibid. 669). To take one extended example of this, out of many passages that can be quoted from the letters or from the Najder and Karl biographies, consider this letter of 1897:

> I assure you - speaking soberly and on my word of honour - that sometimes it takes all my resolution and power of self-control to refrain from butting my head against the wall. After such crises of despair I doze for hours till half-conscious that there is that story I am unable to write. . . . So the days pass and nothing is done. At night I sleep morning I get up with the horror of that powerlessness I must face through a day of vain efforts.
>
> (Karl, 1979: 424)

We must remember that Conrad found little to encourage his writing, either financially or in criticism. Indeed, Polish reviewers treated him as a traitor for living in England, changing his name, and writing in English, while British reviewers felt that by choosing to write in an adopted language and being "nationless", he could not rise above the second rate in English literature (Najder, 1979: 340-41). Everyone who met him seems to have commented on his thick accent, grammatical mistakes, odd pronunciation, and excited gestures. We might say that he was in a permanent state of internal exile, as well as external, and national exile.

The last chapter of the second part has revealed the two authors' dialogue in relation to gender issues. Their biographies, correspondences, and fictional works helped us to highlight the complex relationship between the women in their life, and their female characters. We consider that Conrad, like Melville, initiated an astute exploration of female identity in fiction. In the Malay fiction, for example Conrad has produced prominent female figures whose position offered an important criticism of imperialism; a role that can also be seen in his political works, as in *The Secret Agent*. Jewel's conflict of identity in *Lord Jim* can be seen as Conrad's comments on

the way in which women are denied access to the action in the masculine world of the adventure novel whereby the female presence represents both the white European male's romantic desire for oblivion, and the threat of the "Other" whom he wishes to overpower and colonize.

Women play significant roles in *Heart of Darkness*, even though Marlow's journey and the narration of it are generically masculine quests, since Marlow considers that women must be kept out and stay in their beautiful world. Marlow encounters women five times in the novella: Marlow's Aunt; the receptionists outside the Company offices; Kurtz's painting of the woman with a blindfold, holding a torch; Kurtz' African Mistress, and Kurtz's Intended. Through these women, Conrad challenges the contemporary issues in relation to gender relationship.

The homosocial world in both *Heart of Darkness* and *Moby-Dick* is daring because of the male-male homoerotic attachments that are exposed in both narratives, especially in *Moby-Dick*. The couple relationship created by Melville, through Ishmael and Queequeg, is a perverse mirror of "normal" homosocial world. The ambiguous relationship between Marlow and Kurtz reflects both admiration and sex attraction that question the masculine and the heteronormative gender constructions. The ambiguous intimacy articulates the shock of an encounter with the other in which cultural assumptions are put into question. In *Moby-Dick* Ishmael's fear of sharing a bed and admitting the possibility of sexuality is resolved by the affirmation of affection and, even, overcoming his presumed superiority since he states, "Better sleep with a sober cannibal than a drunken Christian" (*M-D*: 24). Domesticity expressed through Ishmael and Queequeg like "man and wife" allows Melville to deal with the unstable gender other.

Marlow and Kurtz and Marlow's obsessive desire to reach Kurtz demonstrated Conrad's ambiguity towards the representation of gender identity.

Melville's and Conrad's texts engaged in dialogue with the notion of the "Other" in varied racing knowledge. These discourses are clearly in cultural proximity with these heteroglossic languages (to appropriate Bakhtin's terminology) in which the "Other" is not simply part of an exotic or spiritualized imaginary but, more importantly, part of a political imaginary. For Terry Collits, "the best that the humanities can offer to political practice" is "a depth and precision in the interpretation of difficult texts that does not prescribe specific agendas", and they would have the politically desirable effect of inducing "habits of mind that are essential if politics is to avoid the disastrous blind spots that disfigure history" (Collits, 2005:192). Only by compassionately understanding and explicitly experiencing the intense suffering of 'the unprivileged of this earth', which have been marginalized because of simple-minded reading practices, would we be able to construct a healthier functioning body politic. In short, Conrad and Melville do not just invite, but demand that their readers engage in the kind of reading and thinking so central for creating the conditions for a more humane body politic. It is important to bear in mind that such careful and attentive reading is not calculated to resolve life's irreconcilable antagonisms, illuminate the human condition, or harmonize systems of thinking; to the contrary, such reading thrusts us into the "many cruel and absurd contradictions" (*PR:* 92) that make up our being.

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