

Exploring the Eurocentric Heart: A Postcolonial Reading of Graham Greene's *The Heart of the Matter*

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ABSTRACT

A literary text can be a propagator of values- both explicitly and implicitly. As Edward Said claims in his book, *Orientalism* (1978), for centuries Eurocentrism pervades Western literary pieces; they somehow justify and/or uplift European values and perspectives as superior ones while portraying lands, people and cultures of the colonized nations elsewhere, especially in the East. Sometimes, it may become more oblique as the apparent issues dominating the text seem to be something very different, but the writing, however, in the undercurrent, portrays things in a Eurocentric way, often by "othering" the non-Europeans. Said famously terms, this process of creation of an alter ego of the West in the East as "Orientalism". Graham Greene's novel, *The Heart of the Matter* (1948), set in West Africa's Sierra Leone, a then British colony during WWII, summons rethinking of its presentation of the non-White people and the land of Africa. This study would like to take the focus away from the dominating themes of religion, sin, pity, mercy, responsibility, love, etc. in this piece of fiction to assess its underlying colonial issues which often go unnoticed. The novel portrays a variety of characters- both the British colonizers and the colonial subjects- though the roles and space occupied by the non-British characters are mostly marginal. The "Whites" are portrayed sympathetically, whereas the "non-Whites" are presented as evil, naïve, weak and mystic. This study, thus, argues that the portrayal of Africa (Sierra Leone), the Africans, and the major "non-White" characters in the novel, in contrast to the empathetic presentation of the major "White" European characters, indicate an obvious "othering" of "non-Whites" and the marginalization of non-Europeans in the narrative of the novel. The paper further opines that this process of "othering" and marginalization underlines the operation of an underlying Eurocentric attitude in the representation of the Europeans and non-Europeans in Greene's fiction.

1. Introduction

The proverb "a jackal in a sheepskin" may seem quite harsh for Graham Greene's *The Heart of the Matter* (1948) since the novel is mostly seen as "one of the most traditional of Graham Greene's novels" (Jha 163) which deals with issues of Catholicism, religiosity, the sinner-saint syndrome, pity and responsibility etc., and it is also regarded as one of Greene's Catholic trilogy novels together with *The Power and the Glory* (1940) and *The End of the Affair* (1951). Moreover, *HM* is generally evaluated as a novel that upholds human compassion, sacrifice, kindness and charity, in conjunction with sketching of the possible dilemma, conflict and sufferings faced by the virtuous.

However, the novel has an obvious narrative that creates binary opposites- the West (British colonizers) and the rest (the colonized and other subjects) which seems similar to what Edward Said (2016) calls Orientalism, European ways of creating and seeing the East, where "the idea of European identity as a superior one in comparison with all the non-European peoples and

cultures" (p. 7) simply prevails. Now, a plethora of characters can be found in *HM*, where the protagonist Henry Scobie has been sketched masterfully with all his virtues and "sins"; in addition, other important figures are also noticed- Scobie's wife Louise, his young mistress Helen Rolt, Wilson- a government spy, Father Rank- the priest, Yusef- a smuggler, Tallit- a corrupt businessman, Ali- an innocent local African and Scobie's servant, and many more. Careful analysis of these characters can bring out the undeniable presence of Eurocentric attitudes. We find an exceptional "saintly" character in Scobie who sacrifices for others' cause; we see a good humane character in father Rank, an honest human in the Commissioner of Police etc. We face bad and evil characters too, like Yusef. Yusef has been presented as a devil-like character. Now, if thought is a bit deeper, it can be seen that there are stark differences in characterization in the novel, as Harris calls it "the original Tower of Babel" (Greene, 2004, p.6). Firstly, there are three major categories of them- the Whites (British colonizers), the local colonized Africans, and the Asians- two Syrian traders and a minor Indian character, Deen. Secondly, we can differentiate them in the categories of "good", "bad" and "neutral". Interestingly, the "whites" are portrayed as the good characters- Scobie has saint-like capability of pity and mercy, Father Rank is a good soul; even, the apparently criticized characters like Louise and Wilson are portrayed empathically with many good virtues in them. The smugglers' accomplice, the Portuguese Captain is portrayed sympathetically as a desperate wretched father. On the other hand, the local Africans are portrayed as either naïve, illiterate, or quarrelsome and greedy, who can be bought by money and who are even indulged in prostitution for the White sailors' money. The Asians like Yusef and Tallit are either evils, who compels young innocent White colonial officers like Pemberton to commit suicide, or frauds like Deen- the Indian astrologer who lives on telling fortunes of White masters like Harris and Wilson.

So, the text creates "others" – "the colonized subjects" who are characterized through various discourses and thus, establishing a binary between the colonizer and colonized. (Ashcroft et al., 2013, p. 186); and also substantiates supremacy of the colonizing "Other"- "the imperial centre, imperial discourse, or the empire itself" (Ashcroft et al., 2013, p. 186). Consequently, the process of "othering", "the social and/or psychological ways in which one group excludes or marginalizes another group" (Ashcroft et al., 2013, p. 188), takes place. This leads to the question of Eurocentric attitude in the novel. Frank (2010) says-

Eurocentrism, simplistically, puts Europe at the "center of the universe." It interprets the world through Western values but should more accurately be termed Western-centrism since it incorporates Europe as well as the cultures of North America and Australia. Although it has existed in varying degrees for centuries, it was fortified by the physical and economic power of the twentieth century, which increased its presence around the world. ("Eurocentrism")

Eurocentrism, thus, is an attitude that places Europe, West and its values above the rest of the world and thus "others" the Orient. In *HM*, this is done mainly through characterization; the Europeans are superior figures and dominate the narrative in every way; they and their values are the center here while the non-Whites are peripheral. Even when a non-European character gets importance in the narrative, he gets it negatively, as a villain, as an evil. While Europe is presented as the home they long to go back, Africa is portrayed as a land they want to escape from. Harris and Louise are eager to leave this land of heat, humidity, persistent rain, mosquitos, and fever; at least, they want to escape to a more Europe-like place nearby- to South Africa. Thus, the process of "othering" is evident in *HM*. This paper, thus, offers a postcolonial reading of Greene's current novel, and intends to investigate the process of "othering" of non-Europe and non-Whites in the text by analyzing the sharp contrast in the portrayal of White and non-White characters, romanticizing Europe, while harshly sketching African lands; hence, it probes what I will call the Eurocentric heart of Greene's current novel by exposing the operation of Eurocentrism in this apparently innocent fiction.

2: Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

The current paper attempts a postcolonial analysis of Greene's *The Heart of the Matter*. Postcolonial literary criticism "draws attention to issues of cultural difference in literary text" (Barry, 2010, p. 191) and "examine the representation of other cultures in literature" (Barry, 2010, p. 192) to attain this goal. For Barry (2010), again, postcolonial critics "reject the claims to universalism made on behalf of canonical Western literature and seek to show its limitations of outlook, especially its general inability to empathize across boundaries of cultural and ethnic difference." (p. 193). Greene's current novel requires a postcolonial reading as it fails to equally accommodate a liberal outlook to the racial and cultural representation in its narrative structure by providing prominence to Western beliefs and characters.

Postcolonial criticism again tries to unveil the process of "othering" present in texts, which tries to create a binary between the colonizing subjects and colonized ones by creating an "other". Tyson (2011) says:

One of the clearest symptoms of colonialist ideology is the practice of othering: judging those who are different as inferior, as somehow less than human. For example, the colonizers saw themselves as the embodiment of what a human being should be, the proper "self"; the peoples they conquered were different, "other", and therefore inferior, subhuman. Othering divides the world between "us"- the civilized, the moral,

the intelligent- and "them": the "savages", the immoral, the unintelligent. The "savage" is usually considered evil (*the demonic other*). But, sometimes, the "savage" is perceived as possessing a "primitive" beauty or nobility born of a closeness to nature (*the exotic other*). In either case, the "savage" is *othered*" (p. 248).

The concept of othering, hence, will be applied to this novel in its treatment of non-White people as "other"- as evils like Yusef, savage like Deen, exotic beauties like the African women and the subaltern black officers and "boys"; on the other hand the imperial "Other"- the Whites are the subjects of the narrative where the plot develops and ends from their perspectives.

Thus, this study tries to foreground the implicit Eurocentrism present in this work of fiction. Tyson (2006) affirms, "... the use of European culture as the standard to which all other cultures are negatively contrasted – is called *Eurocentrism*." (p. 420). Again, Tyson (2006) refers to Said's idea of orientalism that, for Said (1978), has the objective to "produce a positive national self-definition for Western nations by contrast with Eastern nations on which the West projects all the negative characteristics it doesn't want to believe exist among its own people." (Tyson, p. 420). This research, accordingly, probes how these concepts of Other/other, "othering", Orientalism, etc. discreetly operates in the novel and hence substantiates a Eurocentric perspective.

3. The "Whites"

The Whites, by Greene, are portrayed from a superior political, socio-cultural and moral perspective with an obvious tone of sympathy. They hold the power position in the narrative of the novel. As a whole the White Europeans are the colonizing class in this far land of Africa. For Said (2016) cultural exposure makes a better understanding of people of different civilization, as he says in *Orientalism* (1978), "The more one is able to leave one's cultural home, the more easily is one able to judge it, and the whole world as well, with the spiritual detachment and generosity necessary for true vision." (p. 259). However, for the "superior" Europeans- the British colonizers in this distant African port city of Sierra Leone, it is rather different; it's not a respectable civilization for them, it's a place of "niggers", of intolerable heat, of malaria fever, of Syrian smugglers, and of people to be pitied. Most of them hate this place (except Scobie of course), as we see Harris uttering, "I hate the place. I hate the people." (Greene, 2004, p. 5). If they get the chance they would leave this place and go to "somewhere far better, better climate, better pay, better position." (Greene, 2004, p. 10). For these Europeans this place is like a hell, so unlike their Europe or Britain, even South Africa would have been better for them. Now, why South Africa? It is not Europe! The point is South Africa has always been a better place for the Whites throughout their colonial history in Africa as the Whites' colony has been a flourishing and Europe-like there with attractive colonial cities of Cape Town and Johannesburg. So, Louise craves for South Africa at least to live. She pleads to her husband, "If only we could go to South Africa. I can't bear the people here." (Greene, 2004, p. 15). In the following passages, delineation of the major European characters- Henry Scobie, Louise, Wilson, Harris and Father Rank will be analyzed with a view to understanding their position in the narrative of the fiction.

Central character of the novel, the protagonist, Scobie's portrayal is the most striking example of how "othering" can happen in disguise of compassion. For Scobie, this place is his responsibility that he cannot deny. It is not love but pity, not friendship but compassion for the "wretched" people and land of Africa that keeps him here. Scobie thinks, "I've been here too long to go." (Greene, 2004, p. 9). Scobie as a person is an extraordinary character unlike the other colonizers. He has a unique, almost saint-like, sense of responsibility for the fallen, the wretched, not for the happy people.

He had no sense of responsibility towards the beautiful and the graceful and the intelligent. They could find their own way. It was the face for which nobody would go out of his way, the face that would never catch the covert look, the face which would soon be used to rebuffs and indifference that demanded his allegiance. The word "pity" is used as loosely as the word "love": the terrible promiscuous passion which so few experience. (Greene, 2004, p. 147).

He has an unmatched capability of pity that pours on the fallen, miserable and downtrodden from his heart instinctively; the only person who summons no pity is Scobie himself:

Pity smoldered like decay at his heart. He would never rid himself of it. He knew from experience how passion died away and how love went, but pity always stayed. Nothing ever diminished pity. The conditions of life nurtured it. There was only a single person in the world who was unpitiable, oneself. (Greene, 2004, p. 163).

Thus, Africa is the place that asks for his pity the most as he questions himself why:

Is it because here human nature hasn't had time to disguise itself? Nobody here could ever talk about a heaven on earth. Heaven remained rigidly in its proper place on the other side of death, and on this side flourished the injustices, the cruelties, the meanness that elsewhere people so cleverly hushed up. Here you

could love human beings nearly as God loved them, knowing the worst: you didn't love a pose, a pretty dress, a sentiment artfully assumed. (Greene, 2004, p. 26).

Scobie's portrayal in this novel is almost Christ-like. He takes responsibility for all the people suffering. His wife Louise is the subject of his pity, because he does not love her anymore. So, he feels an extreme sense of responsibility for her happiness. He blames himself for failing to arrange her happiness- money, position and power. He even cannot arrange enough money for her passage to South Africa, and later, takes a loan from "dangerous" Yusef. He takes the responsibility of Helen's (one of the shipwreck survivors) comfort and happiness. Even when Helen refuses to be the subject of his pity, he cannot get out of the relationship with Helen, just for his compassion and responsibility for her. He even pities Wilson when Wilson spies on him and accuse him of disloyalty and corruption. He lets the Portuguese captain of the ship *Esperanca* escape from the charge of smuggling out of his compassion and pity. He also feels a sense of sympathy for the corrupt and devil-like Yusef. Hence, for Scobie everybody else is the other- subject of his pity and compassion, while the non-Europeans and Africa are doubly-othered, a term that can be used to understand the different levels of Scobie's pity. Africa and the non-Whites are better subjects of Scobie's pity as they are more abandoned, mean and corrupt. So, he cannot leave them and this place even after fifteen years of service here. Henry Scobie becomes a kind of a martyr, very much Christ-like, in the novel when he, in the end, faking a heart attack, commits suicide by taking sleeping pills only to create happiness for both Louise and Helen. As a Catholic he commits grave sins of adultery, false communion and suicide, but his depiction is more a sympathetic and saintly one than a sinner, who sacrifices for the case of the miserable.

The novel is sympathetic to the portrayal of some other major non-White characters too. Louise has been a devoted and rigid Catholic throughout the novel. She is the reason Scobie embraced Catholicism in the time of their marriage. Louise has been a complaining and dissatisfied wife throughout the text. She is, in many ways, responsible for Scobie's miseries. Her various complain regarding Scobie's little love for her, lack of professional ambition, unwillingness to retire and leave this land, being irregular to Sunday masses etc. continuously haunts Scobie. Her desire to leave this place for South Africa forces Scobie to take a loan from Yusef. Furthermore, she hides her knowledge of Scobie's affair with Helen and forces Scobie to join communion (which he finally attends without confessing and abandoning Helen). These things do not dent her position in the novel as she has been portrayed strongly as a victim. She has been a wife who does not get love from his husband still remains loyal to him. She rejects Wilson's advances, returns from her comfort zone of South Africa to the port city only for Scobie's sake and remains a loyal wife and Catholic.

Wilson has been portrayed as a romantic. He has been posted as a spy of the British government to collect information on the colonial employees in Sierra Leone. He is a romantic who "liked poetry" but "absorbed it secretly, like a drug", and "*The Golden Treasury* accompanied him wherever he went..." (Greene, 2004, p. 4). He finds his match in this distant land of Africa in Louise- the "literary Louise" who is ridiculed by most in this place for her taste for art and literature. Wilson's overall antagonistic attitude towards Scobie has been overlapped in the narrative of the novel through Wilson's presentation as a young emotional romantic who fails to convince Louise as a lover, who breaks down and cries being defeated to Scobie's personality and honesty. Wilson as a spy does not convince, since he seems to fit better as a young officer full of romance and imagination. Thus, when Wilson plays the nonsense "Cockroach Championship" and quarrels with Harris for a cockroach, he becomes more of a child to the readers. Hence, Wilson- a possible antagonist in the novel- calls for more sympathy than dislike due to the subtle tone of his representation. Accordingly, Harris has been portrayed as a person lonely, tired and exhausted with his "eighteen bloody months" in this alien land of Africa and who if given the chance to go back to home will never return to this place and people that he hates. (Greene, 2004, p. 5). His portrayal, very much like most other White characters, is full of empathy in *HM*.

Father Rank represents a humane version of religion and Catholicism in the novel. *HM* in many ways is a critique of Catholic rules and regulations, but Father Rank offers a compassionate outlook of Catholicism in life. He, in contrast to Louise and Father Clay in Bamba, does not see every human folly through the glass of church rules. He is the local confessor for the Catholic people, has been in Sierra Leone for twenty-two years and knows all the rumors and stories of the White community. He has been portrayed as a person of kind heart, jovial manner and amiable nature. He is forgiving and laughs off the incident when Louise and Wilson are caught kissing in a roadside shelter; he is a sympathizer to Tallit- the Christian Syrian merchant as Tallit- "a Catholic" was "humbugged by a Mohameddan" named Yusef. (Greene, 2004, p. 57). He is different in his views of sins- while Father Clay is appalled at the possible damnation of Pemberton's soul for committing suicide, Father Rank believes whether Henry Scobie will be eternally damned or not for committing suicide will be decided by only God, not the church rules as he says: "I know the Church says. The Church knows all the rules. But it doesn't know what goes on in a single human heart." (Greene, 2004, p. 254). He has been, as the local confessor, the only person knowing Scobie's heart-his nature, sins and conflicts, and despite being a propagator of Catholicism he believes Scobie really loved God. (Greene, 2004, p. 255). Thus, Father Rank, as a representative of the Catholic Church, offers a more good-hearted, benevolent humanistic view of religion and God- a God who

is merciful and kind. He is a stark contrast to rigid religious views of Louise and Father Clay who cannot think beyond church rules.

4. The "others"

The idea of "other" comes from Freudian and post-Freudian psychoanalytic theory- especially from the Lacanian psychoanalysis. "Lacan's use of the term involves a distinction between the 'Other' and the 'other'." (Ashcroft et al., 2013, p. 187). It may create some misunderstanding for us as they seem confusing, but in postcolonial criticism it becomes very useful as the small "other" represents the colonial subjects while the big "other" indicates the colonial power, the empire. The small "other", in postcolonial theory, "can refer to the colonized others who are marginalized by imperial discourse, identified by their difference from the centre and, perhaps crucially, become the focus of anticipated mastery by the imperial 'ego'." (Ashcroft et al., 2013, p. 187). In this chapter, we will focus on these others- the non-Whites, non- Europeans, the racial other. These Orientals can be found in three categories in the novel- Africa and the Africans, the Syrians and the Indian. In the following passages their portrayal will be analyzed and that would help us to understand the contrast in sketching of the Orientals and the Occidentals in *HM*.

4.1. Africa and the Africans

Africa has been presented from a sense of "other". For the Europeans, the place is an alien unattractive land, full of sufferings and misery; a place they long to leave as soon as possible. Firstly, the weather of the land has been portrayed in alignment to the sad tone prevalent in the novel. Sierra Leone has been presented as a place that contrasts the English cities, shores and weather. Harris waits for the time when he can get out of this place and then nobody will see him again in this place. It is a place of "bloody niggers" for him, a place he hates. (Greene, 2004, p. 5). Africa for him becomes a stark contrast to his native England; thus, he passes time in inventing and playing games like the "cockroach championship" and longing for his Downhamian school days. For Scobie, this is a place of "unfriendly shores" that the early settlers first met with, a land of "damp" that he has to remove from the books, and "black water fever" that almost made him an invalid; this place is only his saintly responsibility. Sierra Leone, hence, becomes a place of excessive heat, humidity, incessant rain, mosquitos, mosquito nets and creole huts- a place Louise cannot tolerate and seeks to move away from. "Little beads of sweat started where their skins touched." (Greene, 2004, p. 15) – such intolerable is the weather here for the Whites like Scobie and Louise. Greene (2004) describes-

In the evening the port became beautiful for perhaps five minutes. The laterite roads that were so ugly and clay-heavy by day became a delicate flower-like pink. It was the hour of content. Men who had left the port for ever would sometimes remember on a grey wet London evening the bloom and glow that faded as soon as it was seen: they would wonder why they had hated the coast and for a space of a drink they would long to return. (p. 17).

Africa, for these Whites, is a place they hate while they love London. Even for Scobie, a compassionate White man, the place becomes beautiful for five minutes. For other Europeans it is a place they wait to leave for ever. Thus, we find a view of Africa through European eyes in this novel. The image of Africa has been a miserable place that summons pity and responsibility from the "enlightened" Europeans with kind hearts like Henry Scobie. As can be found in Scobie's thought:

Why ... do I love this place so much? Is it because here human nature hasn't had time to disguise itself? Nobody here could ever talk about a heaven on earth. Heaven remained rigidly in its proper place on the other side of death, and on this side flourished the injustices, the cruelties, the meanness that elsewhere people so cleverly hushed up. Here you could love human beings nearly as God loved them, knowing the worst: you didn't love a pose, a pretty dress, a sentiment artfully assumed. (Greene, 2004, p. 26).

African people have been sketched in a stereotypical way in the novel. They are the subalterns to the colonial officers who work as subordinates or servants to the Whites who seeing their superior Europeans almost immediately clicks their heels in the doorway to salute. (Greene, p. 8), who, like Ali, waits for their masters to return home and places food on their table when the master shouts "'Ali' ... 'Lay two places. Missus better.'" (Greene, 2004, pp. 16-17). Besides, they are the trouble makers who cannot live peacefully with their own people and quarrels with the landladies as Miss Wilberforce who picks up a quarrel with her landlady and comes to complain at police. They are people who fail to understand good officers like Scobie who received "stones flung at his car window, slashed tyres, the nickname of the Bad Man" (Greene, 2004, p. 11) for being intelligent and cautious to deal with their in-fights. Moreover, they are people indulging in prostitution with young school girls and little boys as their pimps chanting nursery rhymes- "'Captain want jig jig, my sister pretty girl school-teacher, captain want jig jig.'" (Greene, 2004, p. 3). Furthermore, these local Africans are morally weak and greedy; they can be bought by money too as we see Wilson tempting and threatening one of Yusef's boy:

'I pay you five shillings more. If Yusef sack you I pay you ten shillings. If you stay with Yusef one year and give me good information - true information - no lies, I give you job as steward with white man. Understand?' 'Yes,

sah.' 'If you give me lies, then you go to prison. Maybe they shoot you. I don't know. I don't care. Understand?' 'Yes, sah.' (Greene, 2004, pp. 156-157).

Africa, thus, in contrast to Europe has been a place that does not suit the Whites- both physically and mentally; they suffer physically in the hot, humid and unhealthy weather of malaria, while they feel miserable as they find this alien land a prison from which they wait to escape after finishing their terms. The local African people are either "boys" (servants) for them or subalterns in office and jobs. They are weak and submissive like Ali, or greedy like Yusef's boy.

4.2. The Syrian/s

In Greene's current novel, presentation of the Syrians (the Asians) is not only Eurocentric but also partisan. There are two Syrian Asians in the novel- Yusef and Tallit. Both of them are businessmen- they run shops in different towns, while Yusef, between the two, is a notorious businessman- suspected smuggler. Tallit is a competitor of Yusef despite being a fellow countryman. Tallit's business has not been a suspected one- at least to the level of Yusef's. The religious discrimination within a racial one is evident in the novel in portrayal of Yusef and Tallit. Yusef is a Muslim Syrian while Tallit is a Christian like the White Europeans. Yusef's delineation in *HM* is an excellent example of how racial difference can become a tool of "othering". "He's a dirty dog"- Father Rank, a kind-hearted priest, introduces Yusef's name to the newcomer Wilson in a party at Tallit's house while Tallit acknowledges about his fellow countrymen- "'Yusef is a very bad man.'" (Greene, 2004, p. 57). The compassion of the European churchman seems to be full with only Tallit the Christian, when he soothes the Syrian of an assumed framing by Yusef- the Muslim Syrian- "Yusef humbugged you, eh, Tallit, you young rogue? Not so smart, eh? You a Catholic humbugged by a Mahomedan." (Greene, 2004, p. 57). In the early chapters of the novel, thus, Yusef has been presented as an evil character; in fact, he has been framed as the villain here, in a way that reminds us of the devil itself. The only person who befriends him or comes closer to him is Henry Scobie though that is an act of Scobie's (a Catholic Christian who feels a sense of Christ-like responsibility to the fallen) compassion and sense of pity. Now, Yusef, firstly, is an alleged smuggler who helps anybody for money; he smuggles diamonds to the Germans, the arch enemy of the British Empire in World War II. For that purpose, he uses different strategy- he collaborates with the Portuguese captain of the ship *Esperanca* (which becomes obvious later in the novel when Yusef blackmails Scobie to deliver a parcel to the captain), he befriends or tries to befriend the policemen and local administrators (as in the case of Scobie and Pemberton), and later uses them or blackmails them. The Syrian, then, is a dangerous money-lender who reminds us of Shylock in Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*. He lends money to others' doom- he lends money posing as a friend to Scobie and later takes chances; he is has been portrayed responsible for Pemberton's suicide as it is he who lends money to Pemberton, indulged in gambling and alcohol to get out of his depression, and later Pemberton cannot escape from the trap of huge debt. Furthermore, he is a cunning and cruel person. It is most probably his goons who kill Ali, the local innocent African servant of Scobie, when Scobie, a person torn apart by his conflict of mind, communicates his suspicion of Ali telling Louise of his affair with Helen. Moreover, Yusef has his own interpretations of religious laws. He drinks alcohol which is forbidden in his religion. But, Yusef has his own interpretations- sidestepping one of the core religious teachings of the Prophet to not drink alcohol he says that there was no existence of such bottled beer or whisky at that time, and "We have to interpret his words in modern lights" (Greene, 2004, p. 92). Yusef, thus, is depicted as a dangerous person who can twist even religious teachings for self-interest. Finally, Yusef has been portrayed as a Mephistophelian character who, as Mephistopheles did to Faustus in Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, tempts, promises friendship, and in the end, deceives. He tirelessly offers his friendship to Scobie: "'One needs a long spoon to sup with you, Yusef.' 'My enemies do. Not my friends. I would do a lot for you, Major Scobie.'" (Greene, 2004, p. 80). In the end, he deceives and betrays him when he steals Scobie's love-letter to Helen and blackmails Scobie to serve him to smuggle a packet (of diamonds) to the Portuguese captain and his servant will return the letter back to Scobie: "My boy will be waiting on the wharf. In return for the captain's receipt he will give you an envelope with your letter inside." (Greene, 2004, p. 184). Later, Yusef makes Scobie more miserable by killing Ali to make things "all right" for his "friend" Scobie. Thus, like Mephistopheles' one to Faustus, Yusef's friendship for a wretched Scobie pushes him towards his peril.

4.3. The Indian

Deen, the only Indian character in *HM*, represent a stereotypical portrayal of Indians in the eyes of Europeans. He is an astrologer with peculiar characteristics- he reads palms in bathrooms; he lives on the money he gets from this unscientific profession. He targets the newly arrived Europeans like Wilson and tries to impress them showing letters of praise from other Europeans.

The Indian rose from his table and approached with deference, 'You remember me, Mr Harris. Perhaps you would tell your friend, Mr Harris, of my talents. Perhaps he would like to read my letters of recommendation ...' The grubby sheaf of envelopes was always in his hand. 'The leaders of society.' 'Be off. Beat it, you old scoundrel,' Harris said. (Greene, 2004, p. 4)

Ganga Deen, the old bearded Indian, is nothing but a scoundrel in the White European eyes; he represents India for them a place of poor, snake-charmers, astrologers etc. who gets elated when praised by the superior Whites.

Mahima A Jain (2018) in her article "Racism and stereotypes in colonial India's 'Instagram'" points out to an exhibition at London's SOAS university showcasing more than three hundred postcards which were sent from India to Europe between 1900 and the 1930s. The analysis of these British colonial-time postcards in India depicts how Indians were often stereotyped based on their culture, beliefs and lifestyle.

The postcards also reflect how Indians were often stereotyped based on ethnicity, gender, religion or caste. Some of these photos, such as the one above, were carefully staged in studios, part of a common photographic genre known as the "native type", according to the curators. Indians performing menial jobs for Europeans were also a common feature of these postcards. (Jain, 2018)

Ganga Deen's portrayal somehow substantiates the idea of stereotyping India and Indians as poor, rustic, mystic and inferior to the more modern and cultured Europe.

5. Analysis

Said, in his book, *Orientalism* (1978), states that each culture creates a different and obviously competitive "other" which serves as the "alter ego" for its own existence and development. Hence, Europe, in its attempt to build a self-image, developed the 'Orient' (the Middle East) as the "other". Concepts of the Orient and the Occident (the West) are not suggestive of any consistent reality which exists naturally. They are simply constructed ideas.

The Orient is not only adjacent to Europe; it is also the place of Europe's greatest and richest and oldest colonies, the source of its civilizations and languages, its cultural contestant, and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other. In addition, the Orient has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience. (Said, 2016, p. 1-2)

Said's concept is very much true in this current novel of Greene where we see a certain process of "othering" is evident and it creates an alter image of Europe and Europeans. Said's focus in *Orientalism* is mainly the Middle East. But, here, in this research we can appropriate the idea to cover anything that is not Europe or White. The image of Africa, the Africans, the Asians- the Syrians, the Indian, as have been analyzed in the earlier chapter, is a contrast to the Occident (Europe), the Occidentals, and their values and emotions. Thus, a Eurocentric heart is present in *HM* where Africa becomes an "alter ego" to Europe, the non-Whites and their values are mostly "othered", and the European Christian values dominate the whole narrative. Let's start with the highly contrastive portrayal of Scobie, the saint-like White, and Yusef- the devil-like Syrian Asian.

Henry Scobie has been portrayed, as have been discussed earlier, as almost a saint, a person with Christ-like ability to pity the fallen, and Prometheus-like capability to carry burdens of other people's happiness. The novel even presents Scobie's situation through a metaphor- the story of "A Bishop among the Bantus" that he reads out to the rescued young shipwrecked boy recovering in the make-shift hospital in Pende. A Bishop named Arthur is the "hero" who can be seen in a photograph where "the bishop sitting in his robes on a hard drawing-room chair outside a little tin-roofed church: he was surrounded by Bantus, who grinned at the camera." (Greene, 2004, p. 115). These Bantus are then introduced to the boy by Scobie as "a peculiarly ferocious lot of pirates who haunted the West Indies and preyed on all the shipping in the part of the Atlantic." (Greene, 2004, p. 116). Scobie makes up many things in the story to make it an adventure to the boy, but the point to think is that this story on one hand represents a White Christian bishop from Europe and on the other hand a "ferocious" non-White group of people- the "others". Arthur Bishop could "never forget the glimpse of the continent where" he "was to labour for thirty of the best years" of his life. (Greene, 2004, p. 117). The bishop becomes a teacher and precept for those savage Bantus by teaching them "humanity" (Christianity) and other things the "gentlemen" of Europe do, as see a portrait of the bishop "in whites with a clerical collar and a topee, standing before a wicket and blocking a ball a Bantu had just bowled him" (Greene, 2004, p. 117), which can be considered as his success to teach these non-White "others" the Whites' ways. Henry Scobie metaphorically can be argued as "the bishop" in *HM* who for more than fifteen years has been working in this land of Africans and "others", and who feels great pity and kindness for them and is willing to take responsibility for these fallen people's happiness together with his own people. Scobie's sense of pity for others though can be argued as a rather self-concentrated one which just feeds his super ego; as Mazumder and Yeasmin (2020) argues in the article "When Pity Meets Pride: Understanding the Relation between Scobie's Pity and his Unconscious in The Heart of the Matter"- "Scobie's super ego is a proud one and the pity the conscious mind projects is a manifestation of that pride in the super ego" (p. 132) which pities others but refuses to be pitied by "others". So, even for Scobie, the compassion to the "others", (I will consider only the non-Whites here), is a possible "othering" of the Africans and other non-Whites. His sense of pity and responsibility for them is different from his feelings for the Whites, for whom he possess

a sense of pity too. Miss Wiberforce, Ali, Yusef are subjects of his pity not only because they are wretched, fallen, but also, because it places his super ego- the White Christian super ego- above them. Africa as a continent becomes his responsibility not because he loves it, but because he detects "the odour of human meanness and injustice" (Greene, 2004, p. 7) there which is a cherished responsibility for Christ-like Scobie to take care of.

Yusef has been the villain in *HM* that clearly presents an alter ego for Scobie. Said in *Orientalism* (2016) asserts that "European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient as a sort of surrogate and even underground self." (p. 3). If Scobie can be considered as the metaphor of that European Christian values, Yusef becomes the opposite self of those values. Yusef is a pitiless person- he leaves his own driver on a barren road in a dark night with his car when he himself takes a lift; he is a smuggler, a cruel money lender, a killer, an untrustworthy friend, a shrewd person who can frame and blackmail with smiling faces etc. Above all, he is a Muslim who cannot be trusted by the Christian Europeans. It is Yusef who is the reason of a young promising European officer Pemberton's suicide. Furthermore, his blackmailing is the reason of Scobie's professional dishonesty since he compels Scobie to smuggle diamonds to the Portuguese captain. To Father Rank he is a dog who deceives Tallit- a Christian Syrian. Throughout the novel, Yusef has been portrayed as Mephistopheles while Scobie has been his major victim. Hence, Yusef is a bright example of how Orient becomes the alter ego, the opposite of Occident and how to project and highlight itself as a superior moral entity and culture, a villainous "other" with inferior values and nature can be created.

A. Nejat Tongur (2015) in his paper "Colonial World in The Heart of the Matter By Graham Greene delineates how the colonial "other" is found in portrayal of the non-White people in *HM*.

The novel offers a dark and gloomy country where the non-white, non-British people have a propensity for criminal activities like bribery, blackmailing and murder, and that they are predisposed to lying and cheating. The native people are also described as corrupt, untrustworthy, illiterate, violent, polygamous, and sexually promiscuous, and their low-moral qualities and big families are underlined several times. Obviously the local people do not have any moral, social, commercial, ethical concerns and it is not possible to find any honest and decent person without a stain in their characters. (p. 107)

So, here, the imperial "Other" is a superior self who is educated, cultured, lover of literature (as Louise and Wilson), mostly religious and God loving (like Louise, Scobie), honest to duties (as Scobie, The Commissioner of Police and Wilson), while the colonized "other" is almost a total opposite. For an example, when Scobie looks around Yusef's place, he finds no sign of literacy: "There were no bookshelves, for Yusef couldn't read: no desk, because he couldn't write. It would have been useless to search for papers, papers were useless to Yusef. Everything was inside that large Roman head." (Greene, 2004, p. 136).

Another major point of "othering" is found in the presentation of Sierra Leone's climate. This African climate is intolerable for these Europeans. The unbearable climate here is a reminder for the Whites of their home weather in England. They count the days, months and years here in Sierra Leone as a prisoner counts his days to become free. The colonizing officers and their families want to leave this place of damned weather as soon as they can. Tongur (2015) depicts:

Climate is depicted hostile to the colonials and there is frequent reference to rain and unfavorable weather conditions. Again and again the characters in *The Heart of the Matter* complain about scorching hot weather, humidity, dampness, sweating, torrential rain and darkness... (p. 108)

Louise constantly asks Scobie to retire and leave Sierra Leone, Harris is determined to escape once he gets a chance and Pemberton becomes mentally so disturbed in this alien land that he drowns in gambling and alcohol, and eventually commits suicide. The climate is such an adverse one that Wilson had to wipe the windscreen of his car by a handkerchief every few hundred yards (Greene, 2004, p. 159). Wilson when confronts and charges Scobie for mistreating and betraying Louise he suddenly breaks down and a sympathetic Scobie blames the sun for it: "You are overwrought, Wilson. It's the climate. Go and lie down." (Greene, 2004, p. 223). The priest, Father Rank, refuses to accept Scobie's confession of being a disbeliever. He rather refers it to climate effect: "The penance I would give to a lot of people if I could is six months' leave. The climate gets you down. It's easy to mistake tiredness for disbelief" (Greene, 2004, p.140). Dr. Travis writes a death certificate for Scobie's death citing angina pectoris without having a postmortem as he decides "In that climate a post-mortem was difficult" (Greene, 2004, p. 250). Moreover, the Whites are harassed by tropical insects like mosquitos, cockroaches etc. We see Louise sleeping inside mosquito nets despite the hot and humid weather; Scobie suffers from malaria fever while Harris and Wilson kill cockroaches through competition to get rid of them.

Thus, *HM* creates a narrative of contrasts, binaries between Africa and Europe, Whites and non-Whites which, in reality, uplifts the European values and concepts, as Aladaylah (2012) says, "colonial ideology [which] is achieved through comparison – binary opposition: the colonial form versus the native formlessness, colonial order versus native chaos, et cetera" (p. 125).

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, the present study attempts to uncover the existence of a rather coarse heart of Greene's fiction, *The Heart of the Matter*. In that purpose this study has analyzed the sketching of the major European and non-European characters, and also the land and climate of Sierra Leone in the novel. Thus, the research endeavours to expose the binaries constructed throughout the plot of this fiction.

HM has a "Eurocentric heart" that ultimately foregrounds the European values, both religious and cultural, in the narrative as superior than the non-European, non-White ones. The British colonizers and their values are the centre of discussion in the novel while the "others" ponder in the margin. The novel, hence, presents an "Other" vs. "other" picture for the readers while the Imperial colonial ones are dominant and heroic, while the Orientals are either too much villainous or extremely submissive. Africa and Africans are either illiterate, barbaric, corrupt, or naïve. Thus, Scobie feels pity for them- the weak ones, the fallen ones, and refuses to leave them; he feels a sense of Christ-like responsibility for these "miserable" people; he wishes to carry all these "burdens" of a "white man" as Kipling expects in his poem "The White Man's Burden" (1899). Hence, he becomes a symbol of the so called White European humanity. This is a projection of Kipling's view of a responsible "White Man" who carries the burden of the "barbaric" and "illiterate" miserable "other" of the world. Furthermore, most of the Whites in *HM* are portrayed sympathetically while the vices and weaknesses of the non-Whites do not get any mercy. The negativity around them is clearly visible. Yusef becomes doubly "othered" for being a Syrian first, and secondly, for being a Muslim; on the other hand, Christian Tallit gets more sympathy for being a Christian Syrian. Both the form and content, thus, in *HM*, Greene propagates those Eurocentric views- what Said described as creation of a stereotypical Orient by the Occident. This current study, thus, analyzes the phenomena of "othering", marginalization, and stereotypical representation of the Orient or the non-Occident which continuously and significantly dominates the literary and cultural spaces all over the world even in the 21st century.

The paper, however, has its limitations. It focuses more on the binaries created in the novel through the representation of the Europeans and non-Europeans; as a result, it does not explore the possible individual psychological effects of "othering" on the colonized subjects found in this fiction, or the socio-cultural implications of it. Hence, the paper suggests further studies on the psychological and socio-cultural implications of colonial "othering" and marginalization of non-White communities in *The Heart of the Matter*.

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