

GOOD VS EVIL IN HEART OF DARKNESS

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Abstract: Heart of darkness is one of the famous works written by Joseph Conrad. Kurtz the main character of the novel is characterized by his greed for his own gain and power. His evil side is reflected towards the Africans with his sense of superiority and dominance over the colonial people.

In Heart of Darkness, it is about Marlow's struggle to keep his sense of morals which made him angry and people around him. The mysterious figure of Kurtz attracts Marlow's curiosity. Marlow's desire to do good became more difficult as he is forced into a world which has no goodness. And he had to choose between collections of nightmares. Eventually, we see that the characters become unable to distinguish between good and evil, between the River Thames and the Congo until we find that there is no difference at all.

Keywords: Introduction, about good and evil in novel, Distinguish between good and evil and Conclusion.

INTRODUCTION

The Heart of Darkness is a story of two men Marlow and Kurtz. Mr. Kurtz represents himself as very civilized moral self. Marlow saw that Africans were incapable of self-governance. The desire to rule the Africans developed in Kurtz mind. Having seen lots of animal tusks, Kurtz's greed increased. Kurtz became more uncivilized than the natives. When he came to face to face with savage people and culture, he tried to control his moral self. He controlled his lust for things which are tempting and destructive by nature. He was so engulfed by barbarism he started saying- Exterminate all brutes! It is also the story of barbarian and civilization, the story of the savages of a dark country and the invasion of that country by a white man. But Marlow and Kurtz are the two men through whom the prevailing state of affairs in the Belgian Congo has been shared with us. These two characters are important in the story. The best thing about this novel is that the hostile character of the outside world suggests the evil in men. The darkness in the jungle symbolizes darkness in men's heart. Both have dangerous and evil look. We also find the concept of good and evil as a moral conflict in men. The white men used to exploit the backward countries which they had invaded by force. Heart of Darkness tells us about deceit, fraud, robberies, murder, slave trade and general policy of the Belgian rule in the Congo. All the characters of the white people are concerned with evil. The manager of the central station is a hateful person who can neither give fear, love and respect and can only give uneasiness. The white men of the company are seen roaming around the central station. They were carrying sticks in their hands but doing nothing. The only thing they can do is evil deeds.

The white men go to Africa on a social mission. Their mission is to take the light of religion on Africans who are uncivilized who don't have any religion or human values. The white people are in Africa as saviors but in reality they are nothing but exploiters. They are more brutal than the savages whom they pretend to civilize. Their mission gets a sarcastic treatment and their negligence, brutality and lust for their practical gain are exposed. Kurtz is a symbol for white people. While coming to civilize the barbarians, there are so many things which are very evil.

Marlow tells his view about Mr. Kurtz saying that was a remarkable man and that he had something important to tell him before he died. What he wanted to say was - The horror! These words were telling some truth which Mr. Kurtz heard before dying. Mr. Kurtz last words were a declaration and a victory over all his countless defeats in life. Mr. Kurtz has experienced miserable terrors for his abominable satisfactions. He became unsatisfied.

Mr. Kurtz has two personalities. There is an evil side which he recognizes himself when he utters the words - The horror! Because of his evil side, he became so cruel that he was ready to kill his own best friend just for a small piece of tusk. He also became so sexual that he forgot about his own girlfriend and he began to enjoy with an African woman. But unlike Kurtz, Marlow kept himself intact. The evil in Mr. Kurtz which dominate his stay in Congo has not only increased his passion for ivory but has also awakened his simple and undeveloped instincts so that he becomes a complete slave to his own instincts and then he began to share the life of the savages. But there is also a good side to his personality which is recognized by the Russians and Marlow. He is seen as an immortal by Russians that has greatly influenced the outlook of Russian people about life. He has even enabled the Russians to see into essential things. The good side is slightly represented by Mr. Kurtz's passion and the command of language in which he speaks. Mr. Kurtz good side is also seen in his last words in which he realizes the evil done by him. His evil side has been controlling most of his actions which made him angrier. Because of his good side Marlow also becomes Mr. Kurtz admirer. At last, the good side of the man is seen in his fiancée's love for him and her endless devotion to his memory. Thus, good triumphs over evil at the end.

CONCLUSION

Heart of darkness is a mixture of psychological case study, satire and black humor comedy. In heart of darkness, I believe the good was symbolized by light and darkness is used to represent the evil in the world. Thus, Conrad has shown his concept of good and evil in man through Kurtz in his novel. All the characters become unable to differentiate between good and evil in the end.

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