
THE SEA VOYAGE IN CONRAD'S HEART OF DARKNESS AND MELVILLE'S BILLY BUDD

Nazife AYDINOĞLU

D.E.Ü.Buca Eğitim Fakültesi

Buca Eğitim Fakültesi

İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı

Öğretim Görevlisi

ÖZET

Bu çalışma Joseph Conrad'ın **Heart of Darkness** ve Herman Melville'in **Billy Budd** isimli eserlerini karşılaştırmalı olarak ele almıştır. Her iki roman gerçekçi ve sembolik yönleri ele alınarak incelenmiş ve bu eserler bilinçaltının derinlemesine bir incelenmesi olarak yorumlanmıştır.

SUMMARY

This is a comparative study of Joseph Conrad's **Heart of Darkness** and Herman Melville's **Billy Budd**. Both Novels are analysed considering their realistic and symbolic aspects; and they are interpreted as a thorough analysis of human subconscious.

ANAHTAR KELİMELEER: Joseph Conrad, Herman Melville, **Heart of Darkness**, **Billy Budd**, Quest into Subconscious, Sea-voyage, psycho-analysis.

I.INTRODUCTION

Both Herman Melville, the American novelist (1819-1891) and Joseph Conrad, the British novelist (1857-1924), are preoccupied with sea and sea-voyage in their works. In **Billy Budd**, Melville tells the tale of a young handsome sailor

with an innocent, honest nature and how this excellent example of good is destroyed as a result of his relationship with a man in whom evil is innate. In **Heart of Darkness**, Conrad tells us the story of Captain Marlow, who went deep into Africa by the river Congo in pursuit of Kurtz, in whom evil won a victory over good when he cut all his ties with civilization. Both writers use sea and sea voyage symbolically, base their stories on their personal experience, and they are mainly concerned with the human nature and the existence of good and evil. These are some of the similarities in **Billy Budd** and **Heart of Darkness**. However, when the two novels are critically analysed; it is found out that there are more differences than similarities as it is seen in the approach of the writers to the theme and the symbols and the development of them, the writing techniques and the style, and the conclusions they arrive.

2.THE SEA-VOYAGE

A.Autobiographic Facts

Several aspects of the sea-voyage which is the basic adventure in both books strictly derive from the personal experiences of the writers. After living a month among the Cannibal Typee natives in 1842, Melville was taken to Tahiti by an Australian whaleship; where he was jailed with the rest of the crew for mutiny. However, he escaped and went to Hawaii by another whaling-ship after a few months; having spent another few months in Hawaii, he sailed home in the crew of the warship, United States. It is evident that this experience had a great influence on Melville as he used these adventures in many of his works such as **Typee**, **Omoo**, **Mardi**, **Redburn**, **White Jacket** and **Moby-Dick**. In **Billy Budd**, he spared a whole chapter (Chapter 3) to tell about the mutinies in the British Navy in the year 1797, and to show their influence on the British Empire. "It was the summer of 1797. In the April of that year had occurred the commotion at Spithead, followed in May by a second and yet more serious outbreak in the fleet at the Nore. The latter is known, and without exaggeration in the epithet, as the Great Mutiny. It was indeed a demonstration more menacing to England than the contemporary manifestoes and conquering and proselyting armies of the French Director." (p.18)¹ The story of

1. Herman Melville, **Billy Budd**, The American Library, New York, 1961.

Billy Budd is set in such a period when there was a great anxiety and threat in the British navy, and Billy Budd is accused and reported to the Captain by Claggart of plotting mutiny. Claggart said, "He had seen enough to convince him that at least one sailor aboard was a dangerous character in a ship mustering some who not only had taken a guilty part in the late serious troubles, but others also, who, like the man in question, had entered His Majesty's service under another form than enlistment" (B.Budd, p.52), and the name of that sailor was "Willam Budd. A Foretopman" (B.Budd, p.54).

In **Heart of Darkness**, Marlow begins his tale with an account of how he got to the Congo and this is very much account of how Conrad himself went there in 1890. In fact, Conrad's deep concern in Central Africa, the district alongside the River Congo began in his early childhood when he was only nine. He used to put his finger on the yellow blank space on the map of Africa and say, "When I grow up, I shall go there". He really did go there after a quarter of a century and on his return he wrote **Heart of Darkness**. Conrad gives Marlow the same childish dream about the Congo. "Now when I was a little chap, I had a passion for maps. I would look for hours at South America, or Africa or Australia, and lose myself in all the glories of exploration. At that time, there were many blank spaces on the earth, and when I saw one that looked particularly inviting on a map (But they all look that) I would put my finger on it and say, "When I grow up I will go there" (p.33)². Marlow just like Conrad finds it very difficult to secure a job on a ship. "Then I began to look for a ship- I should think the hardest work on earth. But the ship wouldn't even look at me. And I got tired that game, too" (H.of D.p.32). Marlow is helped by his aunt to find a job on a ship on the Congo in the same way Conrad's aunt helped him. "Then-would you believe it?-I tried the women. I, Charlie Marlow, set the women to work-to get a job. Heavens! Well you see, the notion drove me. I had an aunt, a dear enthusiastic soul. She wrote: 'It will be delightful' ... she was determined to make no end of fuss to get me appointed skipper of a river steamboat, if such was my fancy" (H.of D.p.34). Conrad's visit to the Congo was brief and disastrous and ended with severe ill-health and an enormous sense of

2. Joseph Conrad, **Heart of Darkness**, Penguin English Library, New York, 1983.

disillusionment. His childish idealism was crashed by the harsh reality he observed there. He underwent a personal crisis there and he was shocked into a moral and emotional maturity and after this experience a new era in his career opened up, in which his main concern is centered upon the mysteries of human nature and the existence of good and evil.

Although Conrad used his own experiences as the raw material of **Heart of Darkness**, he distorted actual experiences in several ways in his attempt to express his development from idealism to disillusion and greater understanding. He pre-dated his journey to Congo to exaggerate the isolation and primitiveness of the Congo. Although there were large settlements in the Congo he saw, he replaced them with native villages and small trading posts. He also stated that "Navigation is a matter of discovering the right channel, feeling one's way through an unknown waterway". Whereas the Congo Conrad knew was a busy river.

Melville, in **Billy Budd**, also pre-dated his experience of sea-voyage to explain the motives that provoke the characters and to strengthen the meaning of the symbols he uses. He sets the story in a time when bloody revolutions had shaken the world outside England (The French Revolution), when England itself was engaged in a war, and when there was the threatening shadow of mutiny within the British navy.

B. Realistic Aspects of the Sea-voyages: Mistreatment of a Human Being by a Human Being.

In both books, some social issues are carefully taken up and severely criticised by Melville in **Billy Budd** and Conrad in **Heart of Darkness**. Melville points out the historical facts about the British Navy whereas Conrad puts before us in detail the evil sides of colonialism in Africa.

Conrad's strong objection to colonialism is given at the very beginning of **Heart of Darkness**. "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" (H.of D.pp.31-32).

He deliberately points out the fact that this unexplored country is crowded by European soldiers in disguise of protectors to take care of customs-house officers. The insane shelling of the bush by a French man-of-war also reveals the fact how white men attacked the natives, and destroyed them and their country with their powerful guns. "Once, I remember, we came upon a man-of-war anchored off the coast. There wasn't even a shed and she was shelling the bush There she was, incomprehensible, firing into a continent There was a touch of insanity in the proceeding" (H.of D.pp. 40-41).

A vivid picture of the treatment of the natives by the white men is clearly depicted in the following quotation. "A slight clinking behind me made me turn my head. Six black men advanced in a file, toiling up the path. They walked erect and slow, balancing small baskets full of earth on their heads, and the clink kept time with their footsteps. Black rags were wound round their loins, and the short ends behind wagged to and fro like tails. I could see every rib, the joints of their limbs were like knots in a rope; each had an iron collar on his neck, and all were connected together with a chain whose bights swung between them, rhythmically clinking. (H. of D. pp.42-43).

The white men treat the natives as if they were animals, they beat them to death for no good reason. "A nigger was being beaten nearby. They said he had caused the fire in some way; be that as it may, 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" (H. of D.p.53).

Conrad protests and damns slavery in the following lines: "I've seen the devil of violence, and the devil of greed, and the devil of hot desire; but, by all the stars! These were strong, lusty, red-eyed devils, that swayed and drove men-men" (H.of D.p.43).

The first thing Marlow witnessed when he landed to the Company's station was slaves chained with iron collars on their necks, but this was nothing when compared with the next scene he confronted in the forest while he was walking towards the Company buildings. In the forest a number of black men were left to die

in great pains under the trees after they worked for their white superiors and sickened to death by the surrounding and the food they are not accustomed to and the most important of all by the white people's wild treatment. "They were dying slowly-it was very clear. They were not enemies, they were not criminals, they were nothing earthly now, -nothing but black shadows of disease and starvation, lying confusedly in the greenish loom. Brought from all the recesses of the coast in all legality of time contracts, lost in uncongenial surroundings, fed on unfamiliar food, they sickened, became inefficient and were then allowed to crawl away and rest" (H.of D.p.44) . Marlow gives one of these men a few biscuits but the unfortunate man dies before he can eat them. The terrible story goes on. "I stood horror-struck, one of these creatures rose to his hands and knees and went of on all fours-towards the river to drink. He lapped out of his hand, then sat up in the sunlight, crossing his shins in front of him, and after a time let his wooly head fall on his breastbone." (H. of D.p.45).

Another fact Conrad reproachingly tells is the reason of the Europeans' being in Congo. It is "To make money, of course." (H.of D.p.48), but they usually claim that they go there under the pretence of reforming and enlightening millions of ignorant niggers.

In **Billy Budd**, Melville mirrors some of the facts about the British Navy and the unjust treatment of the sailors. Although he frequently gives his own comment on every character and on every event, he is over-careful to be objective while he is writing about these social issues.

The way Billy Budd was impressed from a merchant ship to a man-of-war-ship gives an idea about how the best civilian sailors are forced to work on warships by the British Navy. Neither the Captain of the merchant-ship who is the master of Billy nor Billy himself can do anything to oppose the decision of Lieutenant Catcliffe who has chosen Billy to make him enter the King's service. "To the surprise of the ship's company, though much to the lieutenant's satisfaction, Billy made no demur. But, indeed any demur would have been as idle as the protest of a goldfinch popped into a cage. (B.Budd, p.10).

The other ways the British Navy gathered men are not better than impressment. Prisoners, debtors, criminals, all kind of questionable people were among the crew. "The London police were at liberty to capture any questionable fellow at large, and summarily ship him to the dockyard on fleet ... Insolvent debtors of minor grade, together with the promiscuous lame ducks of morality, found in the navy a convenient and secure refuge" (B.Budd, p.28).

The name of the merchant ship, the "Rights-of-Man", is an ironical comment as the rights of sailors are completely ignored by authorities. The protests of sailors to get better treatment had led to the mutinies at Spithead and at the Nore but these revolutionary movements ended in nothing. The reforms the mutineers wanted were considered by the authorities "Not only inadmissible but aggressively insolent,..." (B.Budd, p.19). The military service remained loyal and as a result the mutineers had to keep their obedience to the King. "Final suppression, however, there was, but only made possible perhaps by the unswerving loyalty of the marine corps and voluntary resumption of loyalty among influential sections of the crews" (B.Budd, p.19). So the Great Mutiny which threatened the British Empire severely came to naught; for this reason, Melville likens it to a contagious fever. "To some extent the Nore Mutiny may be regarded as analogous to the distemping irruption of contagious fever in a frame constitutionally sound, and which anon throws it off" (B.Budd, p.19).

The sailors are treated with ruthless discipline on the warships, they are whipped mercilessly even for a minor mistake. After being impressed into H.M.S. Indomitable, Billy was horrified when he witnessed how a young little novice was punished because he was absent from his assigned post, and Billy did his best to be punctual in performing his work not to undergo such a terrible experience "When Billy saw the culprit's naked back under the scourge, gridironed with red welts, and worse, when he marked the dire expression on the liberated man's face as with his woolen shirt flung over him by the executioner he rushed forward from the spot to bury himself in the crowd, Billy was horrified." (B.Budd, p.31).

The threat of mutinies is so prevalent in the air that the officers take very possible precaution; the events of the Great Mutiny are still fresh in the memory of

the authorities. This must be the reason why Captain Vere called a drumhead-court immediately to punish Billy at the spot though he was sure that Billy was innocent.

C.Symbolic Aspects of the Sea-Voyages

a.Hints and Foreshadowings: Sea-voyage is taken up symbolically by both Melville and Conrad in their respective works, but what it stands for shows many differences though the two writers come more or less to the same conclusion at the end of their revelations. There are many indications and hints at the very beginning of the two novels that they are far from being ordinary adventure stories and they should be read carefully and appreciated at symbolic level for a true understanding of them.

The very title of Melville's book is a warning to the reader that what he is going to read has a deeper meaning than the surface one. Under the title *Billy Budd* it writes in parenthesis (An inside narrative), which indicates what happens on the outside throughout **Billy Budd** is a reflection of what occurs on the inside. Melville also indicates that in his tale he is not concerned with the adventures of the warships but "The inner life of one particular ship and the career of an individual sailor" (B.Budd, p.18).

Marlow, the first person narrator in **Heart of Darkness**, prepares us for a spiritual voyage of self discovery alongside with the actual sea-voyage. "It was the farthest point of navigation and the culminating point of my experience. It seemed somehow to throw a kind of light on everything about me-and into my thoughts" (H.of D.p.32). "It is not only on exploration of a continent but a more difficult task of exploring "Self"., I felt as though, instead of going to the centre of a continent, I were about to set off for the centre of the earth" (H. of D.p.39).

In **Billy Budd**, the sea-voyage is the symbol of the life in this world, and Melville tries to convey the universal truth that in this world good and evil naturally exist side by side and "good" is inevitably doomed to be destroyed by evil. Billy, the representative of innocence and good, is defenseless before the evil mind of Claggart and the just mind of Captain Vere in whom the fulfilment of his duty is the domineering power.

b.A.Suitable Atmosphere for the Symbolic Usage: Both Melville and Conrad used various methods to create an appropriate atmosphere for the symbolic usage of the sea-voyage. Melville made many Biblical allusions, gave the narrative a mythical quality and alienated the reader by omniscient interruptions whereas Conrad preferred giving his narrative a dreamlike quality and used indirect narration.

Billy Budd can be read as a fiction-version of the crucifixion of Christ. Billy, this innocent child of nature, the unfallen Adam, is sacrificed at the end for the sins of the others and to rescue the rest of the humanity by Captain Vere, the wise and righteous Father.

The innocence of Billy is stressed throughout the novel by means of Biblical allusions. The story of "The Fall of Adam" is retold to describe Billy's purity. Billy is likened to Adam before he has been "Proffered-the questionable apple of knowledge" (B.Budd, p.16) and before "Serpent wriggled himself into his company" (B.Budd, p.17). He is "The lamb of God" (B.Budd, p.80). He is untouched by civilization and custom. "Exceptionally transmitted from a period to Cain's city and civilized man" (B.Budd, p.17). Cain is the eldest son of Adam and Eve. According to the Bible, after killing his brother Abel, Cain is condemned to leave his country where he used to farm; and he founded his cursed city where his descendents dwelled.

Claggart's jealousy is also given with religious allusions. He is likened to Saul. "Nor, as directed toward Billy Budd, did it partake of that streak of apprehensive jealousy that marred Saul's visage perturbedly brooding on the comely young David. Claggart's envy struck deeper" (B.Budd, p.39). The story of Saul and David is taken from the old Testament. David, who was a shepherd, was taken to the court of Saul where he was given the task of carrying the King's weapons. After his great success in wars David marries Saul's daughter and begins to reign the country together with him. In a short period of time he becomes such a loved and respected figure that Saul envies him because of the deep, strong fear in him that David will take his place. So he decides to kill him.

In another chapter of the book when Claggart went to Captain Vere to accuse Billy of provoking a mutiny, he is likened to the envious children of Jacob. "The

mood he evinced, Claggart, himself for the time liberated from the other's scrutiny, steadily regarded with a look difficult to render- a look curious of the operation of his tactics, a look such as might have been that of the spokesman of the envious children of Jacop deceptively imposing upon the troubled patriarch the blood-dyed coat of young Joseph" (B.Budd, pp.55-56). Jacop and Joseph are the names of the prophets mentioned in the Old Testament. Joseph is the most beloved son of Jacop as he was born when Jacop was very old. Joseph's brothers are so jealous of him that they sold him as a slave in Egypt, brought his blood-dyed coat to Jacop to convince him that Joseph was dead.

While telling about Claggart's death, Captain Vere says: "It is the divine judgement on Ananias. Ananias is mentioned in the Bible; He is struck dead on the spot where he tells a lie about the price of the land he sold for the others, because a lie told to people is a lie told to God.

During the last conversation between Captain Vere and Billy, Captain Vere is likened to Abraham. "He was old enough to have been Billy's father. The austere devotee of military duty letting himself melt back into what remains primeval in our formalized humanity may in the end have caught Billy to his heart even as Abraham may have caught young Isaac on the brink of resolutely offering him up in obedience to the exacting behest" (B.Budd, pp.72-73). Abraham is the prophet who is asked to sacrifice his son, Isaac, by God as a test of his belief. Abraham accepted to obey this order sadly but just as he was about to kill his son, an angel descended from the sky and saved Isaac. Both Captain Vere and Abraham are obedient fathers ready to sacrifice their sons for the sake of the high authorities.

On the other hand, Conrad insists on the dream-like quality of his narrative because his symbolic journey can only occur in sleep. Marlow declares at the beginning "It seems to me I am trying to tell you a dream-making vain attempt, because no relation of a dream can convey the dream sensation that commingling of absurdity, surprise, and bewilderment in a tremor of struggling revolt, that notion of being captured by the incredible" (H.of.D.p.57), and he likens his voyage to Africa to a nightmare. "It was like a very pilgrimage among hints for

D.p.41). He also adds that his contact with reality is cut during this voyage. "The idleness of a passenger, my isolation amongst all these men with whom I had no point of contact, the oily languid sea, the uniform sombreness of the coast, seemed to keep me away from the truth of things, within the toil of a mournful and senseless delusion... Now and then a boat from the shore gave one a momentary contact with reality" (H.of D.p.40).

As Marlow's ship approaches the Inner Station, the dream-like atmosphere thickens. "The dusk came gliding into it long before the sun had set. The current ran smooth and swift, but a dumb immobility sat on the banks. The living trees, lashed together by the creepers and every living bush of the undergrowth, might have been changed into stone, even to the slenderest twig, to the lightest leaf. It was not sleep-it seemed unnatural, like a state of trance" (H.of D.p.73). This state of trance, the silence and immobility, goes on till they arrive at the Inner Station. Marlow likens Kurtz to the sleeping princess. "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" (H.of D.p.77).

The narration techniques of both Melville and Conrad contribute to making their novels more than adventure stories. Melville interrupts his narration by omniscient comments very often, sometimes he even spares a whole chapter to supply additional information as it is in chapter 3 or to give his own comment as it is in chapter 12.

Conrad's employment of indirect narration gives him the flexibility of interrupting the narration wherever he wants. In addition to the story of Kurtz, the reader learns Marlow's observations and feelings, and is guided by his comments.

3.THE FATE OF UNFALLEN ADAM

A.Billy: Adam Before the Fall

Billy is a handsome image of young Adam before the Fall. "Billy in many respects was little more than a sort of upright barbarian, much such perhaps as Adam presumably might have been ere the urbane Serpent wriggled himself into his

company" (B.Budd, p.17). Billy's role in the novel is to project man's original human nature, his unfallen nobility. "Noble descent was evident in him as in a blood horse" (B.Budd, p.16), "He possessed that kind and degree of intelligence going along with the unconventional rectitude of a sound human creature, one to whom not yet has been proffered the questionable apple of knowledge" (B.Budd. p.16). But of course not all the seamen are free from vices; however as a result of "frank manifestations in accordance with natural law" (B.Budd. p.16), Most of them are less wicked and vicious when compared with landmen. He is a kind of miraculous real-life version of original human nature, pristine and unaffected by the process of civilization. "... it is observable that where certain virtues pristine and unadulterate peculiarly characterize anybody in the external uniform of civilization, they will upon scrutiny seem not to be derived from custom or convention, but rather to be out of keeping with these, as if indeed exceptionally transmitted from a period prior to Cain's city and citified man" (B.Budd, p.17).

Likewise Conrad's description of Kurtz reveals that he more or less shares the same approach to civilization. "The original Kurtz had been educated partly in England, ... His mother was half-English, his father was half-French. All Europe contributed to the making of Kurtz,..." (H.of D.p.86).

Billy is unusually handsome and strong. In him beauty and strength are combined. He is the "Jewel" of the crew, "the flower of his flock", "The handsome sailor" and "Baby Budd" "He was young, and despite his all but fully developed frame, in aspect looked even younger than he really was, owing to a lingering adolescent expression in the as yet smooth face all but feminine in purity of natural complexion..." (B.Budd, p.14). "As the handsome sailor Billy Budd's position aboard the seventy-four was something analogous to that of a rustic beauty transplanted from the provinces and brought into competition with the highborn dames of the court" (B.Budd, p.15). "He showed in face that humane look of reposeful good nature which the Greek sculptor in some instances gave to his heroic strong man, Hercules" (B.Budd, p.15). He is called as "Apollo" by Lieutenant Ratcliffe. As the above quotations show, Melville used mythical allusions and stressed the femininity of his looks to emphasize his beauty.

Billy is unbelievably quick in his physical reactions. While he was working at the merchantship, one day, the buffer of the gang on the ship gave Billy a dig under the ribs under the pretense of showing him where a sirloin steak was at. "Quick as lightning Billy let fly his arm" and "... anyhow he gave the burly fool a terrible drubbing. It took half a minute" (B.Budd, p.12). Likewise when Claggart accused him of mutiny, he lost his ability to speak, as he usually does when he is under a strong emotional stress, but he gave the master-at-arms a fatal hit on his forehead. "The next instant, quick as the flame from a discharged cannon at night, his right arm shot out, and Claggart dropped to the deck... the blow had taken effect full upon the forehead, so shapely and intellectual-looking a feature in the master-at-arms, so that the body fell over lengthwise, like a heavy plank tilted from erectness. A gasp or two, and he lay motionless" (B.Budd, p.58).

Apart from his beauty and strength, Billy is the peacemaker, and the centre of attention wherever he goes; his basic unspoiled purity makes him as appealing as if he were almost a god. The captain of the merchant ship is extremely disappointed when Lieutenant Ratchiffe chooses Billy to take him to work in the British Navy. He says: "Before ' shipped that young fellow, my forecandle was a rat-pit of quarrels. It was black times, I tell you aboard the Rights here. I was worried to that degree my pipe had no comfort for me. But Billy came, and it was like a Catholic priest striking peace in an Irish shindy. Not that he preached to them or said or did anything in particular, but a virtue went out of him, sugaring the sour ones" " (B.Budd, p.11).

Billy's mind and heart are so pure that he is utterly incapable of sarcasm and satire; straightforwardness is one of the products of his innocence and purity. "And yet, more likely, if satire it was in effect, it was hardly so by intention, for Billy, though happily endowed with the gaiety of high health, youth and a free heart, was yet by no means a satirical turn. The will to it and the sinister dexterity were alike wanting. To deal in double meanings and insinuations of any sort was quite foreign to his nature" (B.Budd, p.14).

He is so good-natured and naive that he cannot understand anything which is not honest and natural. "Like his sense of fear, his apprehension as to aught outside

of the honest and natural was seldom very quick" (B.Budd. p.43). This is why he couldn't understand the evil purpose of the sailor who called him from his sleep to a kind of meeting and why he couldn't immediately refuse him. He was so pure of evil that when he was personally approached in underhand intriguing fashion and offered two guineas to take part in the dirty plot of the sailors he was "like a young horse fresh from pasture suddenly inhaling a vile whiff from some chemical factory and by repeated snortings tries to get it out of his nostrils and lungs" (B.Budd, p.45).

Billy is childish in his innocence and purity. "But a young seafarer of the disposition of our athletic foretopman is much of a child-man" (B.Budd. p.47). A child's innocence is ignorance and he loses it as he gets experienced in life but "in Billy Budd intelligence, such as it was, he had advanced while yet his simplemindedness remained for the most part unaffected" (B.Budd, p.17).

He is so honest, open hearted and innocent that he cannot perceive evil and thinks that everybody else is like himself. "He had none of that intuitive knowledge of the bad" (B.Budd, p.47), "Innocence was his blinder" (B.Budd, p.49). He was not aware of the enmity of the master-at-arms though Dansker warned him saying that "Jimmy Legs is down on you" (B.Budd, p.46), and though from time to time he himself thought "The master-at-arms acted in a manner rather queer at times" (B.Budd, p.49). It is beyond his capacity of perception that Claggart has developed some sort of enmity and jealousy towards him, his innocence prevents him from getting the real meaning of Claggart's behaviour and words.

Now let's see what happens to this young sailor during the sea voyage and why. In fact, let's see what happens to the Adam before Fall in the world full of others which lack Billy's exceptional qualities. Melville chooses Claggart and Captain Vere as the representatives of the other forces.

B.Claggart: The Evil Force

Claggart is just the opposite of Billy; he is "The direct reverse of a saint" (B.Budd, p.36); that is he is the devil incarnate. Evil in Claggart is inborn. "Now something such as one was Claggart, in whom was the mania of an evil nature, not

engendered by vicious training or corrupting books or licentious living but born with him and innate" (B.Budd.p.38). Nevertheless, he is not an evil in person in the commonly used meaning of the word, he is not a portrait of a monster. Melville explains that he is an example of Plato's concept of "Innate" or "Natural depravity". He explains that examples of this depravity are not found in jails because "these have no vulgar alloy of the brute in them but invariably are dominated by intellectuality" (B.Budd, p.37). He adds that civilization is auspicious to it, that they are not addicted to alcohol, that they are "without vices or small sins", that they are excluded from anything "mercenary or avaricious" and that they are "free from acerbity". Therefore, it is clear that what Melville aims at is more complex than bringing white innocence against black evil.

Claggart is aware of the evil in him but he is incapable of getting rid of it, he apprehends good but he cannot be so because his evil nature is given to him at birth by God. "With no power to annul the elemental evil in him, though readily enough he could hide it; apprehending the good, but powerless to be it; a nature like Claggart's surcharged with energy as such natures almost invariably are, what recourse is left to it but to recoil upon itself, and like the scorpion for which the Creator alone is responsible, act out to the end the part allotted it. (B.Budd. p.40).

Claggart envies and hates Billy's beauty because he has noticed the truth that "The good looks, cheery health and frank enjoyment of young life in Billy Budd" were a part of "a nature that had in its simplicity never willed malice or experienced the reactionary bite of that serpent" (B.Budd, p.39). Claggart was perhaps the only one in the ship to appreciate "The moral phenomenon in Billy Budd"; he could have been charmed by the purity and innocence of Billy but he despaired of it. He undergoes a mental crisis when he meets Billy who is a manifestation of unfallen human nature. If he agrees to be attracted emotionally by Billy, he will have to face what he himself is by nature and he will have to be honest about his own corrupt nature. It is out of his control not to hate Billy; whenever he saw him, his "glance would follow the cheerful sea-Hyperion with a settled meditative and melancholy expression; his eyes strangely suffered with incipient feverish tears. Then would Claggart look like the man of sorrows. Yet, and sometimes the melancholy

expression would have in it a soft yearning, as if Claggart could even have loved Billy for fate and ban" (B.Budd, p.48).

As Claggart cannot help hating and envying Billy, there is only one way for him to return to his previous state of mind and to keep his balance; it is to destroy this unusual being that disturbs and threatens his peace of mind. Melville takes a quotation from Milton's **Paradise Lost** to express what Claggart feels, "Pale, ire, envy, despair" (B.Budd, p.39). These are the feelings of satan while he was approaching to the Garden of Eden for the first time. He knows he cannot bear observing this statue of innocence for a long time because monomania "like a subterranean fire was eating its way deeper and deeper in him. Something decisive must come of it" (B.Budd, p.50).

However, as a shrewd and clever man he must establish his own reasons to be able to retain his self-respect. First of all he cannot conceive of "an unreciprocated malice" (B.Budd, p.42). Therefore comes to believe that Billy also has hostile feelings towards him. Secondly his conscience was nothing but "the lawyer to his will" (B.Budd, p.41) so when Billy accidentally spilled his soup while Claggart was passing by, he thought that it was an open sign of deliberate insult towards himself and this event gave him an opportunity for self-justification of his hatred and revenge. Thirdly, he was encouraged by the reports about Billy given by Squeak, one of his cunning corporals whose nickname comes from his squeaky voice. Realizing that his master didn't have good feelings towards Billy he "made it his business, faithful understrapper that he was, to foment the ill blood by perverting to his chief certain innocent frolics of the good-natured foretopman, besides inventing for his mouth sundry contumelious epithets he claimed to have overheard him let fall." (B.Budd, p.41) As a result, Claggart went to Captain Vere and told him that Billy was involved in mutiny, for he knew that this was the quickest way to destroy him in such a period when the threat of mutiny was always in the air and the only punishment of that crime was immediate death. Innocent Billy, the unfallen Adam, could do nothing to defend himself before this planned and organized plot of strong evil.

Melville's description of Claggart conveys the fact that he divides the human-beings as being good and evil whereas Conrad's approach is more complex as both good and evil are existent in the character of Kurtz.

C.Captain Vere: Commitment to Imperial Conscience and the Intellect

Another force which helps destroy Billy is represented by Captain Vere during this sea-voyage. Billy is as defenseless towards the intellectually just mind of Captain Vere as he is towards the evil mind of Claggart.

Captain Vere is a man of about forty, a member of aristocracy, a well-educated capable sailor and master of his job. "a sailor of distinction ever in a time prolific of renowned seamen" (B.Budd, p.23). and "thoroughly versed in the science of his profession" (B.Budd, p.23). He is very modest and undemonstrative, he never uses nautical terms in his unprofessional talk and he avoids exerting his rank unnecessarily. "Any landsman observing this gentleman not conspicuous by his stature and wearing no pronounced insignia, emerging from his cabin to the open deck, noting the silent defence of the officers retiring to leeward, might have taken him for the King's guest" (B.Budd, p.24). He has an exceptional love of books, he always carries a new library while he is going to sea. He prefers the books "which every serious mind of superior order occupying any active post of authority in the world naturally inclines: books treating of actual men and events no matter of what era-history biography, and unconventional writer:, who free from cant and convention, like Montaigne, honestly and in the spirit of common sense philosophise upon realities" (B.Budd, p.25). His choice of books shows his loyalty to realities. His wide reading may also be a part of his pursuit to find out some sort of confirmation of some newly established convictions in him in addition to the ones which are set by his aristocratic background, his education and his unyielding intellect. He is loved and respected by his crew because as an officer he is "mindful of the welfare of his men, but never tolerating an infraction of discipline" (B.Budd, p.23). He was against the innovators because he believes these reformatory voices are "at war with the peace of the world and the true welfare of mankind" (B.Budd, p.26).

When Billy Budd was impressed from Rights-of-Man to H.M.S. Indomitable, Captain Vere was attracted by his good looks and cheerful character. After having

observed that he was good at his job too, he decided to promote him to a position where he would be more frequently under his own observation. So when he heard the accusations of Claggart about Billy, he didn't trust him and decided to test the accuser by confronting him with the accused one. Realizing that Billy was stunned under the shock of the news he heard and was unable to speak to defend himself, he tried to soothe him by putting his hand on Billy's soldier and said "There is no hurry, my boy. Take your time, take your time." (B.Budd, p.58). Billy was prompted by the fatherly tone of his voice and hit Claggart on his forehead like a lightning.

Captain Vere is aware of the basic good in Billy and he believes in the innocence of him, however his commitment to the rules and discipline forces him to accomplish his official duty. "The father in him, manifested toward Billy thus far in the scene, was replaced by the military disciplinarian" (B.Bud, p.59). "Struck dead by an angel of Gods" he said to the surgeon, "Yet the angel must hang!" (B.Budd, p.60).

After this unhappy event he could have jailed Billy, postponed further action till they joined the squadron and then referred the case to the admiral. Instead Captain Vere called a drumhead court to Judge Billy and determine his punishment. To a great extent his taking quick action is justified because his hesitaney could cause a rebellion in the ship. It was such a period that not only Captain Vere but all the other officers of the fleet were unusully alert to the least sign of unrest among men. Thus Captain Vere was highly sensitive to perform what should be done. "That the unhappy event which has been narrated could not have happened at a worse juncture was but too true. For it was close on the heel of the suppressed insurrections, an aftertime very critical to naval authority, demanding from every English sea commander two qualities not readily interfusable-prudence and rigor" (B.Budd, p.61).

Captain Vere tells the other members of the drumhead court that Billy is innocent before God, and that he finds it difficult and unnatural to sentence an innocent person to death; but he adds, "But do these buttons that we wear attest that our allegiance is to nature? No, to the king" (B.Budd, p.68). So they should act and

decide in accordance with their duty as naval officers and shouldn't let their hearts and instincts interfere in their decisions. "That however pitilessly that the law may operate, we nevertheless adhere to it and administer it" (B.Budd, p.69). His heart and conscience forces him to let this innocent sailor free who has entirely left himself in his hands but his reason never yields to his instinctive feelings and his personal conscience. He warns the other officers likewise. "But something in your aspect seems to urge that it is not solely the heart that moves in you, but also the conscience, the private conscience. But tell me whether or not, occupying the position we do, private conscience should not yield to that imperial one formulated in the code under which alone we officially proceed" (B.Budd. p.69).

Captain Vere is in a constant struggle with himself to remain a loyal military officer. His instincts, his real self, continuously threaten his reason and his loyalty to his mission. To be able to keep faithful to his imperial conscience he has to stifle and, in a way, violate his essential nature. He has such "a mind resolute to surmount difficulties even if against primitive instincts strong as the wind and the sea" (B.Budd, p.67). He is likened to a monk since he has to deny his true self in order to accomplish his duty. "But a true military officer is in one particular like a true monk. Not with more of self-abnegation will the latter keep his vows of monastic obedience than the former his vows of allegiance to martial duty" (B.Budd. p.62).

Consequently Billy has become the victim of the victory of Captain Vere's imperial conscience, high discipline and strong will over his private conscience and his real self. He was "sentenced to be hung at the yardarm in the early morning watch" (B.Budd. p.72).

4. THE JOURNEY WITHIN

A. Marlow's Quest into General Subconscious

The actual journey into the central part of Africa by the river Congo is a symbolic journey into Marlow's subconscious. The description of the upriver journey with its precise attention to the details of sensation and action throws a kind of light on what is happening simultaneously inside Marlow and all human beings. I say "all the human beings" because at the beginning of the book Conrad unites all

the rivers and the seas while he is describing the Thames "The sea-reach of the Thames stretched before us like the beginning of an interminable waterway" (H.of D.p.27). He describes the Thames and the Congo using similar language. "I was thinking of very old times, when the Romans first came here, nineteen hundred years ago. The other day ... But darkness was here yesterday Sand-Banks, marshes, forests, savages-precious little to eat fit for a civilized man, nothing but Thames water to drink ... Here and there a military camp lost in a wilderness, like a needle in a bundle of hay, cold, fog, tempests, disease, exile, and death-death skulking in the air, in the water, in the bush" (H.of D.pp.30-31). In the same way he connects all seas and rivers, Marlow connects all mankind. While describing the savage natives howling and dancing on the banks of the Congo, he tells there is a remote kinship between them and the civilized people. "No, they were not inhuman. Well, you know, that was the worst of it. The suspicion of their not being inhuman; it would come slowly to one. They howled and leaped, and spun, and made horrid faces; but what thrilled you was just the thought of their humanity-like yours-the thought of your remote kinship with this wild and passionate uproar" (H.of D.p.69). Therefore, what Conrad finds out during this journey into Marlow's subconscious can be applied to all the human beings in general.

Throughout the book, Marlow repeats several times that what he is telling is a spritual voyage of self-discovery. He remarks that he didn't know himself before setting out, saying that the journey seemed "to throw a kind of light on everything about me-and into my thoughts" (H.of D.p.32). He feels himself changed and a more knowing man when he returns from the Congo to Europe. "Ordinary people are now intruders whose knowledge of life was to me an irritating pretense because I felt so sure they could not possibly know the things I knew." (H.of D.p.113).

At the beginning of this journey Marlow doesn't know what he will come across because it is a journey into the unknown. Just like Marlow, Conrad doesn't know what he will find out at the end of this anaysis of the subconscious "What was in there? I could see a little ivory coming out from there, and I had heard Mr.Kurtz was in there. I had heard enough about it, too-God knows! Yet somehow it

didn't bring any image with it-no more than if I had been told an angel or a fiend was in there." (H. of D.P.57).

B. The Darkness

Throughout this voyage Marlow deals with a kind of darkness. What is this darkness? There is an ambiguity surrounding it all over the book. It can be many things: The subconscious, the unknown, the evil, the moral darkness or the spiritual emptiness he notices in some men, but above all it is the mystery itself. As Conrad attempts to solve the mysteriousness of man's spiritual life, he defines it as darkness. But this mysteriousness becomes too big for Conrad to describe, so he loses his control over his words; he uses a lot of unnecessary adjectives such as "indescribable", "inconceivable", "unspeakable", "unimaginable", "impenetrable", etc. and as he gets closer to the Inner Station, the heart of darkness, the number of these adjectives gets more and more. As James Quetti, a famous critic, explains in his essay, "at the end of the search we encounter a darkness and it is no more defined than at the beginning of the journey and the narrative; it continues to exist only as something unapproachable. Conrad himself is aware that he fails in his description of the darkness as he imagines it because it is far beyond his capacity to analyse the human sub-conscious. "One gets sometimes such a flash of insight. The essentials of this affair lay deep under the surface, beyond my reach, and beyond my power of meddling" (H.of D.p.72). He bitterly feels the inefficiency of the words to express the feelings and the ideas. "I've been telling you what we said-repeating the phrases we pronounced-but what's the good? They were common everyday words-The familiar, vague sounds exchanged on every waking day of life. But what of that? They had behind them, to my mind, the terrific suggestiveness of words heard in dreams, of phrases spoken in nightmares" (H.of D.p.108).

C.Super Ego, Ego, Id.

During this voyage there are three stations: The Outer Station, the Central Station and the Inner Station. As Marlow passes by these stations one by one, he penetrates into human subconscious deeper and deeper. In Freudian terms these three stations can be considered to be super-ego, ego and id. The information given about

Kurtz at these different stations reveals the facts about his super-ego, ego and id. Marlow's job is to go to the Inner Station and learn what happened to Mr.Kurtz, the agent of the ivory-trade company.

At the Outer Station, he gathered the information that Mr.Kurtz "was a first class agent" (H.of D.p.46), and "a very remarkable person". He was "at present in charge of a trading post, a very important one, in the true ivory-country" and he sent in "as much ivory as all the others put together" (H.of D.p.47). Mr.Kurtz appears to be a respected and successful person in the society. "He will be a somebody in the Administration before long. They, above-The Council in Europe, you know-mean him to be" (H.of D.p.47). It is apparently seen that Mr.Kurtz as he is known at the Outer Station responds to the demands of the society.

The man at the Central Station tells Marlow that the situation was very grave at the upriver stations, that he didn't know "Who was dead and who was alive" (H.of D.p.51) and that "There were rumours that a very important station was in jeopardy, and its chief, Mr.Kurtz was the best agent he had, an exceptional man, of the greatest importance of the Company" (H.of D.p.51) Kurtz at the Central Station still seems to be in harmony with the society but there seems to be some dark shadows on his character. Marlow has an eerie feeling that he can catch a glimpse of the reality about Kurtz but the man he talked to "sealed the utterance with that smile of his, as though it had been a door opening into a darkness he had in his keeping" (H.of D.p.51), he fancied "he had seen things-but the seal was on" (H.of D.p.51). During the months he spent at the Central Station while he was trying to repair the ship of which he was supposed to be the captain, he learned more about Mr.Kurtz sometimes by directly asking questions about him and sometimes by accidental eavesdropping.

He heard that Kurtz takes "advantage of this unfortunate accident" (H.of D.p.53). He is a prodigy. He is an emissary of pity, and science, and progress, and devil knows what else" (H.of D.p.55), that he sent his assistant down the river, with a note to the agent at the Central Station in the following terms: "Clear this poor devil out of the country, and don't bother sending more of that sort. I had rather be

alone than have the kind of men you can dispose of with me." (H.of D.p.63), and that once Kurtz had decided to return but after coming three miles down the river he had given up and gone back. All these news he heard about Kurtz made the shadows on him darker and darker. Marlow felt that he "seemed to see Kurtz for the first time. It was a distinct glance" (H.of D.p.64).

As Marlow approached the Inner Station, he came face to face with the reality that Kurtz had responded to the wilderness and become a savage. He had become part of the wilderness when he was surrounded by it far away from the restraints of the society, without "a policeman" and "the warning voice of a kind neighbour" (H.of D.p.85). Kurtz, once a civilized person, had become the leader of the natives. The simple-minded natives adored Kurtz and did whatever he asked for because to them he was a half god who brought thunder and lightning. "He came to them with thunder and lightning, you know and they had never seen anything like it and very terrible. He could be very terrible " (H.of D.p.95). Thus, Kurtz got the tribe to follow him, they raided the country for more ivory and killed those who resisted them. The cursed balls on the posts near Kurtz's cottage were dried heads of their victims. At the Inner-Station the true nature of Kurtz, all the savagery and evil in him comes to surface. As there is a kinship among all the human beings, there is evil and savagery deep in every person's subconscious.

The Freudian terms super-ego and id can be applied to both novels by considering the characters as separate representatives of super-ego and id. Captain Vere in **Billy Budd** and Captain Marlow in **Heart of Darkness** can be considered to represent super-ego as the outer forces subside the inner forces in them. Being old and experienced captains, they know the danger of unknown waters, and succeed to keep away from them by means of the methods and principles they have learned in the society. Captain Marlow finds shelter in hard work whereas Captain Vere keeps his ego balanced believing that "With mankind, forms, measured forms are everything" (B.Budd. p.84).

The characters of Kurtz in **Heart of Darkness** and Claggart in **Billy Budd** symbolize id as they cannot keep the inborn evil in them under control. Their instinctive forces are dominant over the outer forces.

5. AN OPTIMISTIC APPROACH TO EVIL

At this point both novels **Billy Budd** and **Heart of Darkness** appear to have entirely pessimistic messages; Melville tries to tell his readers that the good and the innocent have no chance of survival in this world of evil. Conrad attempts to show us that there is inherent evil deep in every human-beings. Yet is that all there is in these books or are there any indications, slight or distinct, to reveal a further and better understanding of these writers' thoughts and messages?

I think, it can be argued in **Billy Budd** that Melville deep in himself feels that the world will let the survival of the good if only the individuals have the courage to find out their true self and act accordingly. Billy could have survived if Claggart had had a better insight into his true-self and accepted the evil in him which prevented the truth and if Captain Vere had allowed his instincts and his private conscience to be dominant over his intellect and imperial conscience. Unfortunately even Melville himself cannot bring himself to convey this theme openly in his novel; however, "Keep true to the dreams of thy youth", the motto on the desk on which Melville wrote **Billy Budd** may be accepted as a hint.

The indications of a respectively optimistic side of Conrad's message are more distinct in **Heart of Darkness**. As a base he accepts that there is evil in the natural existence of the human-beings, but isn't there any way to prevent this evil from controlling us? Conrad discusses the solutions he finds to this phenomenon in four different ways.

First of all he claims that only through self-knowledge man can realize the idea which will save him from the dark powers he has faced within his being. In his definition of life he says, "Life is-that mysterious arrangement of merciless logic for a futile purpose. The most you can hope from it is some knowledge of yourself-that comes too late" (H.of D.p.112) . Kurtz had the victory of knowing himself just before he died when he cried "Horror, horror!" (H.of D.p.111) and gained the greatest reward life offers. We can keep the evil in us under control if only we are aware of its existence.

Secondly, Conrad explains that we are protected from horrible outcomes of the evil in us by means of work, hard work. Hard toil prevents us from responding to the temptation of the wilderness. By keeping our bodies physically busy, work helps us create a kind of restraint against savagery and violence. "I didn't go ashore for a howl and a dance? Well, no-I didn't. Fine sentiment, you say? Fine sentiments be hanged! I had no time. I had to mess about with white-lead and stripe of woollen blanket helping to put bandages on these leaky steam pipes. I tell you. I had to watch the steering, and circumvent those snags, and get the tin-pot along by hook or by crook. There was surface-truth enough in these things to save a wiser man" (H.of D.pp.69-70). This is not the only useful function of work, it also helps us know ourselves. "No, I don't like work. I had rather laze about and think of all fine things that can be done-but I like what is in the work-the chance to find yourself. Your own reality-for yourself, not for others. What no other man can ever know (H.of D.pp.59-60).

Thirdly, Conrad draws parallels with the Catholic belief that we are protected from ourselves by society with its laws and watchful neighbours. The external restraints of the society constantly hinders the evil from getting a control over our consciousness.

Finally, Conrad tries to defeat the evil by means of love. Marlow's lie to Kurtz intended about his last words can be accepted as a proof of his strong belief in the magic of love. "When asked about the final words Kurtz uttered, Marlow couldn't repeat his actual words and say "The horror! The horror!" (H.of D.pp.113). Thus by telling a lie to the woman who loves Kurtz and who is seeking some relief in Marlow's account of Kurtz's death, Marlow gives his final message that there is only one way to overcome the evil in us. It is LOVE.

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