



ECO-COLONIAL RUINS: THE DUAL FRACTURES OF NATURE AND HUMANITY IN *HEART OF DARKNESS* AND *LORD OF THE FLIES*

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Abstract

The present research is intended to provide a comparative analysis of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* in the context of Malcolm Ferdinand's Decolonial Ecology, with specific emphasis being placed on his theoretical concept of double fracture- simultaneous subjugation of the human population combined with the exploitation of natural ecosystem. Using Ferdinand's theory, through the analysis, it is shown how both novels challenge the Eurocentric narrative of colonialism as a civilizing force demonstrating its dehumanizing and devastating effects to nature. In *Heart of Darkness*, the exploitation of African natives and looting of Congo's natural resources are the manifestations of the corrosive nature of imperial greed. While, in *Lord of the Flies*, the boys' decline into savagery and the desolation of the island through environmental degradation. The study finds that when approached from the perspective of decolonial ecology, these texts become profoundly anti-colonial literary accounts of the unfolding of the colonial modernity that demonstrates the human and ecological interrelation of the suffering. While applying a decolonial ecological lens on traditional literary works, this research finds participation in academic discourse concerning the topic of postcolonial literature, environmental justice, and more sustainable relationships between man and planet.

Keywords: *Decolonial Ecology, Double Fractures, Eurocentrism, Heart of Darkness, Lord of the Flies*

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1. Introduction

The entanglement of colonial violence and environmental degradation is still one of the most overlooked aspects of the process of imperial expansion and its literary representations. While traditional colonial narratives often justified imperialism as a civilizing mission, postcolonial ecocriticism reveals a deeper, dual exploitation of both human life and the natural world (Miller, 2012; Nixon, 2011). Malcolm Ferdinand's concept of the double fracture—the simultaneous colonization of people and nature—exposes how colonialism not only dispossessed indigenous populations but also devastated ecosystems in the name of progress (Ferdinand, 2021). Yet, canonical texts like Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* subtly portray these fractures, challenging Eurocentric myths of order and moral superiority. The problem, however, lies in how such environmental dimensions have often been marginalized in postcolonial critique, which tends to focus predominantly on human oppression while overlooking the ecological scars of empire.

Previous comparative studies of *Heart of Darkness* and *Lord of the Flies* have predominantly focused on themes of civilization, savagery, and internal colonization. Khalil (2006) explores the quest for order in both novels, emphasizing the psychological and moral breakdown that follows the collapse of societal structures. Similarly, Gouffi (2022) offers a postcolonial reading of *Lord of the Flies*, arguing that the novel subverts the Western Eurocentric discourse by portraying the degeneration of so-called civilized individuals into “internal colonizers,” thereby critiquing the myth of European moral superiority. Gupta and Tyagi (2022) confirm this interpretation and decode the bipolarity of civilization and savagery, demonstrating how being cut off from social norms in both novels leads to the development of the intrinsic human evil and the collapse of morality. Although these studies provide insights on postcolonial and psychological dimensions, they neglect ecological consequences of colonial violence, specifically, the way in which colonialism messes up not only human lives, but natural settings as well.

This study seeks to fill the gap by combining Malcolm Ferdinand's Decolonial Ecology Notes – especially his concept of double fracture into a comparative literary analysis of *Heart of Darkness* and *Lord of the Flies*. Previous studies have mainly explored the psychological, moral and symbolical aspects of these texts; however, this research

breaks out of the aforementioned readings and reveals the environmental destruction encased within the imperial ideologies. Through adding a decolonial ecological lens to the examination of the subject, the study exposes how colonial violence at once dehumanizes indigenous populations and exploits natural ecosystems, thus testing the myth of the Eurocentric colonialism as a civilizing mission. This twofold critique, focused on the concept of dual fractures, which combines human subjugation and ecological degradation, in colonialism, not only deepens the postcolonial reading of such canonical texts, but also connects them with the looming present-day issues. By explaining the ways *Heart of Darkness* and *Lord of the Flies* depict the simultaneously destroyed people and ecosystems, this research positions these works in the context of a larger debate on environmental justice and sustainability. As such, it provides important seeds for thought for scholars of literature, ecocriticism, decolonial studies, and for an interdisciplinary conversation on how lasting legacies of colonial violence have left a mark on both man and nature.

The construct of dual fractures in colonialism proposed by Malcolm Ferdinand speaks of the interconnected processes of human and ecological domination. The colonization of the world by European imperial powers entailed not only the violent subjugation and exploitation of indigenous peoples but also the systematic plundering of their lands and ecosystems (Peters 2025; Gill 2024). This double exploitation placed nature and colonized populations as resources to be exploited, appropriated, or destroyed in the guise of progress and civilization. In this setting, ecological degradation did not come about as a by-product but as a main engine of imperial power co-operative with cultural and political domination. This work is theoretically related to Ferdinand's concept of the eco-decolonization process and makes it possible to apply his ideas to literary studies. The archetype of the literary models of environmental injustice can be used as a paradigm of re-visioning canonical Western literature such as *Heart of Darkness* and *Lord of the Flies*. Through such, the research introduces a new critical lexicon to link-up ecological collapse with colonial violence as a discourse in literature. Empirically, the study provides close readings close to the text that unfolds patterns of environmental abuse and domination conceptually ingrained in the colonial mentality of the novels, bringing out how the landscape is not simply symbolic background but is an arena of exploitation and revolt. This contribution goes deep into the understanding of the selected texts and broadens the range of both ecocriticism and postcolonial theory by bringing decolonial ecological thought into the core of literary interpretation.

This research informs the field by decolonizing the celebrated colonial literature through the under-explored lens of ecological decolonization to show nature as not only as a setting but as a space of colonial violence. By recruiting Malcolm Ferdinand's

Decolonial Ecology it brings a perspective that moves the environmental degradation to the front stage as inseparable from human exploitation in colonized settings. This approach is restaurants of re-examining literary works which have hitherto been read in a psychological or symbolic or even political perspective, in favor of an integrated reading that also incorporates the environmental aspects of colonial domination. The study, thus, does not only expand the methodological range of postcolonial literary criticism but also connects literary studies with ecological ethics reminding us of literature's function as shaping the decolonial and sustainable worldviews.

2.Literature Review

The body of writing on colonialism unravels a very tangled relationship between the oppression of human populations and exploitation of natural ecosystems. Colonial ventures that were based on the Eurocentric ideal of civilization, and advancement intentionally disturbed the indigenous societies and their environs (Said, 1978; Grove, 1996). This dual violence, as Malcolm Ferdinand defines the double fracture, demonstrates how the European imperialism was dehumanizing people and plundering ecological landscapes at the same time. These fractures were sustained and justified through cultural narratives that celebrated Western superiority, portraying colonization as a civilizing mission while masking its destructive impacts on both humans and nature (Castellino 2024; Beinart 2007; Oppermann 2007).

Literary texts produced during or about the colonial period often reinforced these ideologies. Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* depicts Africa as an untamed wilderness and its inhabitants as shadowy figures, awaiting European redemption—a narrative that underscores both racial dehumanization and environmental othering (Drummond 1986; Loomba, 1998). Similarly, William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* presents a supposed return to savagery among British boys on an uninhabited island, echoing colonial anxieties about the thin veneer of civilization and the latent barbarism within the non-Western world (Rogers, 2012; Galtung, 1981). Though these novels have been examined through psychological, symbolic, and postcolonial lenses, their environmental dimensions, particularly how they echo or critique the ecological implications of imperial ideology—remain underexplored.

Indeed, the recent scholarship has started to question these traditional readings by pointing to the silencing of indigenous environmental knowledge, and the ecological devastation inscribed in colonial discourses. Colonialists did not only introduce cultural hegemony but also eliminated sustainable relationship between the indigenous people and their environment (Escobar, 1995; Shiva, 1989; Mignolo, 2000) . These critiques uncover

how the colonial myth of progress frequently involved massive degradation of ecosystems, ecological issues that were very commonly missed from the literary representations or even quietly promoted (DeLoughrey & Handley, 2011).

There is an interesting oppositional framework proposed by Malcolm Ferdinand through which these stories can be reconsidered, the concept of Decolonial Ecology. His concept of the double fracture – the concurrent breakdown of the human dignity and the environmental balance – is a useful device to an examination of literature which reflects the enterprise of the imperial (Ferdinand, 2022; Yang, 2016). Decolonial Ecology does not simply critique colonialism's environmental legacy; it reinvents the human connection with the earth, by reorienting to indigenous knowledge, environmental justice, and the restoration of balance. This understanding exposes how colonial narratives are implicated in both the ecological violence and the exploitation of man.

This literature review therefore maps out how colonialism's cultural, as well as ecological, effects have been expressed, justified, and at certain times defied in literature. It describes an evolutionary shift from Eurocentric readings of literature to more justice-oriented, and inclusive analyses that give preference to human and environmental consequences. In this developing discourse, the use of Ferdinand's decolonial ecological lens in *Heart of Darkness* and *Lord of the Flies* allows for a more comprehensive reading of both texts which recognizes the way that they both in conscious and unconscious ways have to do with the ecological destruction inherent in colonial thinking. This outlook finds not only the civilizing myths promoted within these works but also brings the literary studies in line with the current ecological and decolonial interests.

Chinua Achebe's seminal critique of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* foregrounds the novella's racial biases, particularly its portrayal of Africans as voiceless and primitive, which Achebe argues reinforces colonial ideologies and dehumanization (Achebe, 1977; Brantlinger, 1985). His analysis led to the critical rereading of the canonical texts from the postcolonial perspectives, exposing the way the imperial narratives tend to cloak violence under the mantle of civilization. As a complement to this, Hawthorn & Conrad (1990) study the narrative construction of *Heart of Darkness*, emphasizing Conrad's multilayered narration and symbolic confusion as core for its analysis of moral collapse and psychological darkness. Such critiques highlight the role this novella plays in the colonial discourse and its close involvement with the imperial ideology, but such critiques often privilege the racial, moral and philosophical themes over the ecological consequences (Lothe, 2000).

On the contrary, people tend to explore the *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding with regards to its psychological, allegorical or pedagogical meaning. For example,

Irmawati and Mayasari's empirical work look at the experience of students with collaborative online learning of a given novel, emphasizing its educative value in digitized settings (Irmawati & Mayasari, 2022). Their phenomenological perspective offers insights into the student engagement, critical thinking, and interpretive development and what a text resonates with the learners. While useful in educational settings, these studies do not take up the extensive socio-political or ecological critiques that are made a part of the narrative. In the same way, the traditional readings tend to view the island location symbolically, ignoring the environmental aspects of the boys' progress into savagery and the ecological violence reflective of colonial devastation.

Although there is a wealth of studies on these two texts, there still appears to be a marked gap in the Decolonial Ecological application – particularly of Ferdinand's concept of double fracture – to the interpretation of these two texts. The framework critically reveals the manner in which colonial systems ravage both human communities and the natural ecosystems at the same time, a dynamic that remains under-examined for most existing literature. Revisiting *Heart of Darkness* and *Lord of the Flies* through this lens enables a deeper interrogation of the environmental degradation accompanying imperial ambition, as well as the texts' complicity or critique of such processes. This work therefore aims to make an original contribution to filling a gap between postcolonial and ecocritical approaches towards our increased understanding of how canonical texts reflect and reinforce the ecological violence of colonial ideologies.

3. Research Methodology

Ecocriticism is one of the literary theories that explore the link between both literature and the natural environment. It investigates how literature reflects the nature, how it expresses cultural ideas about nature, and how it can be used to raise the awareness and trigger the activism for preservation of the environment. Ecocriticism frequently addresses the relationship between humans and nature making one aware of the effect of human pursuits on the environment as well as the necessity to have human ways of living that do not destroy the environment. Decolonization on the other hand explains the process of undoing colonialism effects which range from political, economic, society and cultural domination and exploitation. Decolonization resists and removes the colonial ideologies and frameworks; it brings to the fore the indigenous epistemologies as well as the restoration of sovereignty and autonomy to the colonized. Literature can combine ecocriticism and decolonization to analyze the way colonialism impacted the environment, humans, and the indigenous cultures. For this, the book *Une écologie décoloniale* (A Decolonial Ecology) by Malcom Ferdinand, translated by Anthony Paul Smith, likely explores the concept of eco-decolonialism. It is likely that in this book, Ferdinand analyzes

the interconnectedness of colonial exploitation of people as well as the environment, paying attention to the effects of colonialism on the ecosystem and old ways of life.

The theoretical framework of this study, inspired by Ferdinand's Decolonial Ecology, revolves around the concept of the double fracture, encompassing both environmental and colonial dimensions that have profoundly shaped modernity. The existing paradigms of an environmental nature adopted in Western modernity, which place high value on economic growth and extraction of resources at the cost of ecological stability, are criticized by the decolonial ecology. Ferdinand (2021) argues: "This technocratic and capitalist approach perpetuates a dualistic hierarchy where humanity is positioned above nature, leading to widespread exploitation and degradation of Earth's ecosystems (p.75). This understanding highlights how the Western attitude towards nature, informed by the colonial histories, has contributed to global environmental crisis impacts on non-human communities along with human ones. At the same time, Ferdinand defines the colonial fracture as an important element of the double fracture paradigm. As he states, this fracture embraces the ongoing effects of the Western colonization and imperialism such as racial slavery, the subjugation of the indigenous populace, and subjugation of women (Ibid., p. 27).

These historical injustices have deepened social and economic disparities that continue to the modern societies where they intersect and aggravate the environmental degradation (Ryder, 2017). Ferdinand's decolonial approach emphasizes the inseparable link between environmental exploitation and colonial legacies, arguing that addressing environmental crises necessitates confronting the underlying structures of colonial and neocolonial domination. When the Caribbean perspective is made central by Ferdinand, a revealing of how ecological and social combat come together in the Global South is made (Ainsworth, 2024; Vivian, 2023), to show how collaborative movements for environmental justice and decolonialism takes place. His framework is for holistic understanding that combines environmental justice with other broad social justice goals, opposes exploitative aspects of capitalism and promotes change that ought to be transformative, guided by a decolonizing perspective. Therefore, this study employs Ferdinand's theory of Decolonial Ecology as a theoretical framework with a particular emphasis on his concept of the double fracture: Colonial and Environmental. Ferdinand's framework allows for a nuanced analysis of both Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, examining how colonialism not only exploited human populations but also inflicted lasting environmental damage.

4. Data Analysis

In her analysis, Tyson posits: “colonialist ideology emanates from the colonizers' belief in their inherent superiority, contrasting this with their view of native peoples as inferior” (qtd. in Sultana et al, 2023, p.50). This perspective is exemplified in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, where Marlow, the protagonist, seeks to obscure the morally reprehensible actions of white colonizers in Africa. Marlow reflects the colonial mindset, seeing the colonizers as exemplars for the native Africans whom they regard as fundamentally different and inferior, even dehumanizing them. The conclusion of the novel underscores Europe's dualistic worldview, sharply dividing the world into the civilized “us” and the savage “them,” reinforcing the notion of European superiority in intelligence and capability over Africans (Lezra, 2014).

As Khan (2024) observes, Golding's *Lord of the Flies* reinforces problematic dualistic binaries of culture versus nature and men versus women. Through a qualitative analysis of textual references, the study, as Khan (2024) would analyze in similar contexts, reveals the novel's association of nature with women and culture with men, solidifying the dominance of culture and men over nature and women. Similar to Marlow's desire to conceal the immoral actions of white people in Africa, Khan highlights instances in *Lord of the Flies* where the men justify their behavior and perceive themselves as superior to the “savages” on the island (Mazumder, 2021, p.113; Khaleefah, 2018, p.59).

4.1. Eco-Decolonial Perspective of Human Exploitation

Heart of Darkness by Conrad and *Lord of the Flies* by Golding are classic novels that offer rich data for Decolonial Ecology analysis due to their exploration of colonialism and its impact on humanity. Here are some quotes from the selected texts related to human exploitation:

“Six black men [advancing] in a file.... [he] 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 with a chain” (Conrad, 1990, p.28).

In Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, the depiction of enslaved African men expresses the profound injustices of colonialism from a Decolonial ecology perspective, particularly focusing on the colonial fracture as articulated by Ferdinand. The picture of these men in their emaciated forms with obvious struggles on their faces depicts the brutal face of the exploitation of colonialism. The colonial fracture refers specifically to the historical and ongoing impacts of Western colonization on indigenous peoples (Lloyd, 2000). In this scene, Conrad portrays these African men not as individuals with agency or dignity but as

dehumanized tools of labor, physically marked by their chains and collars. This representation underscores how colonialism systematically reduced indigenous populations to mere commodities for economic gain, stripping away their humanity and subjecting them to extreme physical and psychological violence. This depiction also highlights that the colonial power viewed indigenous peoples as their own property to exploit without consideration for sustainability. Moreover, the colonial myth of superiority and civilizing mission is challenged by this portrayal. Instead of uplifting or educating the colonized, colonial practices were fundamentally about extracting labor to enrich the colonizers (Battiste, 2000). Conrad's depiction of enslaved African men serves as a stark illustration of the colonial fracture within the double fracture framework. It illuminates the profound injustices and violence inherent in colonialism towards humanity.

"We've got to have rules and obey them. After all, we're not savages. We're English, and the English are best at everything" (Golding, 1987, p.41).

In Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, Jack's statement reflects a deeply ingrained belief in the superiority of Western culture and values over others. By equating Englishness with being civilized and superior, Jack legitimizes the imposition of English rules and norms upon others, portraying them as less civilized and in need of guidance. This justification was central to colonial ideologies, which portrayed colonized peoples as inferior and lacking in their own systems of governance and cultural values (Brown, 1993; Greer & Neu, 2009). This mindset justifies the subjugation of human populations and also perpetuates a hierarchical relationship where the colonizers positioned themselves as the educators and civilizers of the colonized. This attitude undermined indigenous autonomy and wisdom, reinforcing the colonial myth that Western intervention was necessary for progress and development. Golding's quote exposes the exploitative nature of colonialism, which subjugates humanity for the benefit of the colonizers. Golding's portrayal of self and other through Jack's assertion "we are best at everything" starkly illustrates the colonial fracture within Ferdinand's double fracture framework, exposing the deep injustices and inherent violence of colonialism toward humanity.

"Oh, she had to be out of it. You should have heard the disinterred body of Mr. Kurtz saying, 'My Intended'" (Conrad, 1990, p. 99).

In Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, Kurtz's reference to the African woman as "My Intended" epitomizes the deeply exploitative and objectifying nature of colonial relationships. This phrase underscores Kurtz's sense of entitlement and ownership over the woman, reducing her to a mere possession or object of his desires. Kurtz's language exemplifies how colonialism justified and perpetuated exploitation under the guise of civilizing missions. The term "My Intended" not only demonstrates Kurtz's patriarchal

dominance but also symbolizes the broader colonial practice of erasing the identities and agency of indigenous peoples. By using possessive forms when speaking of the African woman, Kurtz deprives her of individuality and independence, strengthening the imbalanced power relations implicit to colonialism. This act of appropriation points to a more general trend in which colonizers took human beings and commercialized and exploited them towards their self-interests. Ultimately, Kurtz's use of "My Intended" serves as a stark reminder of the dehumanizing effects of colonialism, particularly its impact on women who were often doubly marginalized by both gender and colonial oppression (Bertolt, 2018; Nejat, & Jamili, 2014; Bhatia & Priya, 2021). It shines the light on ways colonial discourse and practices consistently ignored the humanity and dignity of colonized peoples upholding a narrative of supremacy and rights, which deemed to press home the exploitation in the name of civilization and advancement.

"What are we? Humans? Or animals? Or savages?" (Golding, 1987, p.86)

In Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, Piggy's question itself is a great critique of the colonialist story and a powerful one that reeks from an eco-decolonial perspective. The epithet "savages," used by the colonizers to look down on native populations in the past, goes hand in hand with the boys' turn to violence and madness on the island. Piggy's question prompts us to re-think the very idea of humanity and civilization fueled by colonialism. It reveals the hypocrisy of colonial powers, which pretended to bring progress, while exploiting human populations. This quote gives a highlight of the insidious effect that colonial exploitation had on human societies. Colonial powers justified their actions stipulating that the cultures of the natives were primitive and needed to be enlightened about their ways without considering their moral degradation and exploitation (Carey & Festa, 2009). This colonial split, in the manner of Ferdinand, shows the continuation of systemic exploitation and violence brought on by colonialism (Conrad, 2012). It emphasizes the need for an immediately decolonial perspective that challenges these legacies that call for justice, equity, and indigenous peoples' respect. Piggy's question also makes us question the ethical impact of colonialism and its continued presence in our conceptions of mankind and civilization. It calls for a paradigm shift towards recognizing and rectifying the historical injustices inflicted upon colonized peoples, fostering a more equitable and sustainable relationship towards humanity.

"They were conquerors, and for that you want only brute force nothing to boast of when you have it, since your strength is just an accident arising from the weakness of others" (Conrad, 1990, p.9)

In Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, Marlow's assertion penetrates the romanticized veneer of colonialism to reveal its true nature. Marlow's observation challenges the

sanitized narratives of colonial benevolence and civilizing missions by exposing the reliance on brute force and exploitation for conquest. It illuminates how colonial powers justified and perpetuated their dominance through the oppression and plundering of indigenous peoples. The acknowledgment that colonial strength derives from exploiting the vulnerabilities of others lays bare the inherent injustice in colonial power dynamics. It invites critical reflection on the narratives of colonial superiority that have justified centuries of exploitation and dispossession. Ferdinand's concept of the double fracture, particularly the colonial fracture, emphasizes how colonialism was fundamentally rooted in the systematic exploitation of human beings. Colonial powers framed their conquests as acts of civilization and progress while disregarding the profound human and ecological costs imposed on colonized peoples (Blaikie & Brookfield, 2015). Marlow's observation in *Heart of Darkness* compels us to reassess the ethical implications of colonial histories and their enduring impacts on global systems of power and human exploitation.

“Roger, with a sense of delirious abandonment, leaned all his weight on the lever. Ralph heard the great rock before he saw it. He was aware of a jolt in the earth that came to him through the soles of his feet, and the breaking sound of stones at the top of the cliff. Then the monstrous red thing bounded across the neck and he flung himself flat while the tribe shrieked... The body of Piggy was gone...The great rock that had killed Piggy.” (Golding, 1987, pp.170-180)

In Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, the tragic event where Roger dislodges the boulder that kills Piggy reveals the profound impact of colonization on human societies. Roger's reckless act, driven by delirious abandonment, symbolizes the unchecked power and disregard for consequences typical of colonial exploitation. His action mirrors the historical pattern where colonizers prioritized their own interests and ambitions over the lives and well-being of indigenous peoples. The boulder itself embodies the disruptive force of colonization on the world. This imagery suggests how colonial incursions bring about upheaval and destruction, altering landscapes irreversibly. The tribe's reaction, marked by shrieks of horror and acceptance, reflects the historical trauma experienced by indigenous peoples due to colonial violence and dispossession. This response echoes Ferdinand's concept of the colonial fracture, highlighting how colonization inflicted profound psychological and cultural wounds, erasing indigenous voices and knowledge systems in favor of colonial dominance and control (Lorenz & Watkins, 2001). Such as Piggy's death beneath the boulder serves as a symbol of the silencing and erasure of indigenous identities and perspectives under colonialism. His body disappearing under the rock metaphorically represents the brutal suppression of dissent and difference, as well as the destruction of indigenous cultures and their ways of life.

“And this also,” said Marlow suddenly, ‘has been one of the dark places of the earth’” (Conrad, 1990, p.6).

In Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, Marlow's solemn declaration encapsulates the profound legacy of colonialism's impact on people. Marlow's characterization of the Congo metaphorically alludes to the shadows cast by colonial exploitation, encompassing not only physical landscapes but also moral and ethical dimensions tainted by colonial practices. This quote prompts a critical reflection on the environmental and human toll exacted by colonial endeavors. It highlights how colonial powers exploited natural resources with impunity, disrupting ecosystems and leaving enduring scars on the land (Dunlap, 2022; Bales, 2016). The phrase “dark places” underscores the moral ambiguity of colonialism, where notions of progress and development often masked the reality of exploitation and suffering inflicted upon indigenous communities. Marlow's observation compels us to confront the lasting legacies of trauma and inequality perpetuated by colonial exploitation, emphasizing the need for restitution and social justice. This quote exemplifies the colonial fracture whereby colonial powers imposed their will upon lands and peoples, disregarding indigenous knowledge and sovereignty.

4.2. Eco-Decolonial Perspective of Nature Degradation

Heart of Darkness by Conrad and *Lord of the Flies* by Golding are classic novels that offer rich data for Decolonial Ecology analysis due to their exploration of colonialism and its impact on nature.

“Going up that river was like traveling back to the earliest beginnings of the world, when vegetation rioted on the earth and the big trees were kings” (Conrad, 1990, p. 67).

In Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, the discussion of the river region of Congo creates a colorful scene of ecological richness and vigorousness that was sheltered from the pillage of colonial powers. This depiction from an Eco-decolonial perspective therefore comes in to compare the richness of nature for the environment before European interference and what ensued subsequently which was the environmental degradation. Before the colonialism, indigenous societies in Africa had evolved complex relations with their surroundings on the grounds of sustainable practices, such as rotational farming, agroforestry, etc. These practices ensured that biodiversity was in place and diverse ecosystems existed while ensuring that the locals were in wellbeing. Colonial powers on the other hand saw African environments mainly as sources of vital resources to exploit for economic gain regardless of the sustainability and indigenous knowledge of the environment. This mode of exploitation resulted in large scale deforestation, destruction

of habitats and degradation of soil within the continent (Shanguhya, 2018; Bryant, 1998). The way the Congo is presented as a fresh unsullied landscape points to the jarring environmental effects of colonial intercession that results in the loss and imbalance of biodiversity out of brutal resource extraction. This strategy is not only concerned with restoring ecological degradation, but also in using indigenous peoples' sustainable practices and the deep roots of their cultures to the land.

"The shore was fledged with palm trees. These stood or leaned or reclined against the light and their green feathers were a hundred feet up in the air. The ground beneath them was a bank covered with coarse grass, torn everywhere by the upheavals of fallen trees, scattered with decaying coconuts and palm saplings" (Golding, 1987, p.10).

In Golding's *Lord of the Flies* the description of the island's landscape first of all appears as an idyllic and rewarding location. This depiction causes a feeling of natural beauty and fecundity associated with dense vegetation and an abundance of riches such as coconuts and palm saplings. Nevertheless, such a portrayal also prefigures the ecological implications of the human presence and its exploitation. The fact that "the ground beneath them... torn everywhere by the upheavals of fallen trees" and "scattered with decaying coconuts and palm saplings" has been mentioned indicates that the landscape is already being altered by humans. This initial decay resembles the historical trends which occurred in the colonial settings, where the initially rich natural surroundings were unchecked for the sake of sustainability and the long-term equilibrium of ecosystems (Pollini, 2010; Worster, 1993). The boys' activities on the island, cutting down trees and harvesting coconuts, parallel these historical patterns of exploitation seen in colonial practices. This exploitation reflects a mindset that views nature primarily as a resource to be extracted and utilized for immediate human benefit, disregarding the intrinsic value of ecosystems and the knowledge systems of indigenous peoples who traditionally maintained ecological balance through sustainable practices (Chew, 2001). Golding's description urges us to adopt a more sustainable and respectful relationship with the natural world. This perspective calls for recognizing and restoring ecological health and promoting sustainable practices that uphold the integrity of ecosystems for future generations.

"The great wall of vegetation, an exuberant and entangled mass of trunks, branches, leaves, boughs, festoons, motionless in the moonlight, was like a rioting invasion of soundless life, a rolling wave of plants, piled up, crested, ready to topple over the creek, to sweep every little man of us out of his little existence" (Conrad, 1990, p.59)

In Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, the vivid description of the jungle evokes a sense of awe-inspiring vitality and natural abundance. The jungle is portrayed as a tangled and matted bundle of trunks, branches, leaves, and boughs that represent an abundant nature

with life. This imagery emphasizes the interrelatedness and the complexity of nature such that the whole richness and equilibrium of nature are each participated in. Such a description also highlights the jungle's ability to evolve and adapt to thrive in time, notwithstanding external forces and natural adversities. Underneath this skin of natural beauty, there is this subtle message of humanity intervention, especially colonial exploitations (Domínguez & Luoma, 2020; Blanc. 2022). In this passage, the colonial mindset which saw nature as a store for resource for exploitation for economic benefit is criticized. Colonial powers ended up enforcing their will on the land, and this resulted in deforestation, destruction of habitats, and destroyed biodiversity. Conrad's "*Heart of Darkness*" depiction of the jungle reveals the necessity to unmask and deconstruct the legacies of colonialism for reestablishing the harmony between people and nature on the basis of environmental justice and eco-decolonization ideals.

"Kill the pig! Cut her throat! Spill her blood!" (Golding, 1987, p. 65).

The chant of the hunters in *Lord of the Flies* represents the violent and exploitative colonialism views on nature. This same chant represents the high tones of civilizing missions but against the stinging exploitative measures of the colonial powers. Oftentimes, colonizers characterized themselves as bearers of enlightenment and progress to allegedly dark parts of the world when their actions were usually characterized by heartless exploitation of natural resources for economic reasons (Adams, 2012; Philip, 2004). It also speaks of a consciousness which celebrates dominance of the natural world, which turns it into a mere resource to be used to meet human ends. This approach pays no heed to the innate existing value of the non-human life and the environment, which is completely opposed to eco-decolonial tenets that dictate that all forms of life, including ecosystems, should be recognized to be interconnected and possess inherent value. Colonial ideologies tended to commodify the nature whereby animals were seen as things to be killed or domesticated without regard for their welfare or for any ecological relevance. What is more, the violence presented in the chant reflects larger trends of environmental destruction by colonial powers. Examples from the past will show how colonialism caused massive deforestation, habitat destruction, pollution, and extinction of species, having devastating effects on local ecosystems and threatening the ways of life of the indigenous peoples that were so connected to the ground.

"Evidently the appetite for more ivory had got the better of the— what shall I say?" (Conrad, 1990, p.118).

In Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, the above quote indicates the rapacious grabbing and exploitation of natural resources of colonialism. The emphasis on ivory as a commodity of value in the colonial period speaks to wider trends of environmental

degradation and plunder during the colonial period. Natural resources were considered only as economic resources which should be taken and used irrespective of sustainability and well-being of ecosystems by the colonial powers (Munyai, 2020). The ivory trade is a good example of such an attitude, whereby the goal of earning profits and economic benefits from extracting ivory caused extreme impacts on the wildlife populations (Somerville, 2017), especially African elephants. This exploitation not only reduced the number of the animal populations but also distorted the ecological balance in the habitats. This moral decay mirrors the larger narrative of colonialism, which often justified its actions through narratives of progress and civilization while simultaneously perpetuating environmental harm and exploitation.

“*They had smoked him out and set the island on fire*” (Golding, 1987, p.184)

In *Lord of the Flies*, the above quote portrays a stark image of environmental destruction attributable to colonial-like behavior. The boys, akin to colonizers, initially encounter an island teeming with natural resources and pristine wilderness. Yet as their civilizations crumble and primal nature takes over, they start polluting the island with rampant exploitation of resources without a consideration of its ecological balance. The decisive moment comes when they set fire to the island, which is an indication of a subsequently more destructive activity (Kelly, 2019). This act resembles historical examples of utilizing natural resources on the part of colonizers for the purposes of increasing one’s wealth, usually at the expense of the environment. The fire does not only symbolize the loss of vegetation and wildlife, but the destruction of the island’s fine ecology. Besides, burning the island symbolically suggests the imposition of foreign systems and values that sidetrack native living and co-existence with nature.

5. Discussion

Comparative approach in the work of Conrad *Heart of Darkness* and *Lord of the Flies* by Golding unveils the way imperial ideologies exploit human lives as well as natural ecologies. These texts are not the mere description of the collapse of the individual morality or social order; rather, they demonstrate how these very structures of colonialism and domination of the west are established on the systematic devastation of indigenous peoples and their environments.

In *Heart of Darkness*, Conrad reveals the savagery of the European encroachment in Africa where the denaturation of the African populations mirrors the ecological rape of the Congo. The land is not just the setting for anything that happens: it is a victim – silenced, looted for imperial gain, especially in the ivory trade. Kurtz’s madness is indicative of a wider moral and ecological breakdown due to overspill from colonialism

and abandonment from moral restraint. In *Lord of the Flies*, Golding puts English schoolboys on an unexplored island, and their transformation into murderous savages is what represents the reproduction of colonial logic. The self-established hierarchy among the boys and the resulting chaos reflect the colonial formations of domination, and the island's metamorphosis, from an Edenic landscape into a scorched and torn up landscape, reflects the pollution of the environment in the wake of colonial conquest.

Seen through the frames of decolonial ecology, these texts refuse the European colonialism myth as a civilizing subject and reveal the legacies of empire. Both works overthrow the Eurocentric view of nature as a mute storage for profit, demonstrates instead how colonialism divides both relations of culture and of eco-system. They illuminate the interdependency of how people are oppressed in relation to how the earth is ruined and support Ferdinand's view that the colonial project is ultimately an exploitative duality as an action onto people and nature. By exposing this entanglement, the novels advocate for the decolonial rethinking of environmental justice in which restitution of the indigenous knowledge systems and ethical environmental stewardship are the major concern. This discussion highlights the fact that *Heart of Darkness* and *Lord of the Flies* are not only the literary criticisms of imperialism but also critical ecological writings. This portraying of environment destruction as well as human dehumanization draws a wider consideration of colonial histories and stresses necessity of ecological decolonization in the contemporary times. As this lens of analysis of literature, historical injustices come to the fore, and possibilities for just, sustainable and inclusive futures are seen.

6. Conclusion

According to the comparative analysis of *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad and *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding through the prism of Decolonial Ecology and the concept of double fractures by Malcolm Ferdinand, this study finds out that both of the novels are a strong criticism of the conjoined colonial and environmental violence that took place in the times of European imperial. Instead of maintaining the Eurocentric myth that colonialism is a civilizing drive, the texts expose how imperial ideologies ensued in the concomitant domination of indigenous peoples and exploitation of natural ecosystems. In *Heart of Darkness*, the process of extracting ivory does not only represent the empire's economic greed but also environmental devastation and moral decay that lie at the marrow of the empire. On similar lines, in *Lord of the Flies*, the devolution of the British school boys into violence and ecological carnage would demonstrate how colonial way of thinking, even on a micro scale, achieves social ruin and environmental destruction. Foregrounding the ecological dimensions of colonial violence, this research moves the purpose of literary analysis to environmental costs of empire and decriminalizes the

legacies of Eurocentric superiority entrenched in the Western narratives. Finally, this study serves the process of eco-decolonization by deconstructing the prevailing historical paradigms and breaking down the vanguard of North American ethnic literature and colonialism, as well as their relationships with the contemporary crises of this planet.

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