

Memory, Identity and Narrative: Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and Siegfried Sassoon's "Glory of Women" as Paradigms and Depositories of British Cultural Memory and Collective Identity

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Abstract

This study investigates the representations of memory in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and Siegfried Sassoon's "Glory of Women" with the aim of demonstrating that the two works teem with versions of collective remembering in the form of genres, linguistic parameters, ideological and cultural discourses, images and metaphors of history (what critics call "historiographic metafiction" understood to mean writing history in arts); mythical and travel narratives that can attract the attention of creative writers, critics, and researchers interested in reproducing or exploring the interconnection of cultural memory, collective identity and narrative (narratological) aspects of literary texts. Focusing on the representations of memory in these two texts, and using the narratological aspect of perspectivity or focalization, this paper answers the questions: Whose memory and which versions of the past are transmitted from generations to generation through these "fictions of Memory"? What (narrative) approaches are available for research focusing on memory cultures within literary studies? What functions do the texts fulfil as repositories/depositories of British cultural memory and identity? It emerges from the study that the two texts are paradigms and depositories of British cultural memory and collective identity.

Keywords

Cultural Memory, Identities, Narrative, Fictions, Empire, Conrad, Siegfried Sassoon

1. Introduction

Erl (2010: p. 2) asserts that memory is more practised than theorized. While

such an assertion may imply that memory is not a coherent critical literary theory with interpretive and analytical categories, it does not rob this emerging critical theory of its interpretive parameters, nor does the statement suggest that memory critics lack a critically informed memory-sensitive agenda. Narratology is a systematized and comprehensive theoretical framework with which a methodological wedding with memory has been forged. Vera and Ansgar Nunning, Astrid Erll, and Birgit Neumann, have provided conceptual, interpretive and analytical categories for a memory-sensitive analyses of texts on which this study largely draws for a context-sensitive narratological methodology that can link literature to cultures, social contexts and history. A study of how memory is represented in literature draws the following questions: How is memory represented in a text, discourse, image or genre, be it a novel, poem or drama? To which social group or individual is the facet of memory, or version of the past remembered ascribed? Are the values, norms, world views, stereotypes, perceptions, perspective or psyche contained in the representations linked to an individual, a group or a nation? Significantly too, memory has been viewed as an active force in forging identities, individual, cultural or national which are fundamental issues in literature, especially in fictions of memory from the West.

This study investigates the representations of memory in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (HOD in subsequent usage)¹ and Siegfried Sassoon's "Glory of Women" with the aim of demonstrating that the two works teem with versions of remembering in the form of genres, linguistic parameters, ideological and cultural discourses, images and metaphors of history that can attract the attention of creative writers, critics, and researchers interested in reproducing or exploring the interconnection between cultural memory, collective identity and narrative aspects of literary texts. Using the narratological aspect of perspectivity or focalization, this study ascribes the values, beliefs, stereotypes and world views remembered and embedded in the two texts to imperial Britain. In doing so, this paper argues that the two English works are model "fictions of Memory" and functions as repositories/depositories of British cultural memory and collective identity.

The inspiration for this study was no doubt hatched out of my interest in memory and narratology, but it is even more strongly motivated by my experience of teaching and supervising dissertations in literary studies in the English Departments in some Cameroonian State Universities, an activity that has drawn my attention to a disproportionately critical void in the analysis of literary texts, especially canonical texts like Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* which has proven to be an indispensable part of the undergraduate literary program of most universities. A survey of dissertations and existing literature on Conrad's HOD reveals a fascination for historical approaches (New Historicism), author-oriented approaches (biographical and psychoanalytical), text-centered approaches and most of all, postcolonial criticism, hence, leaving the larger area of memory and narrative still unaccounted for. While the above cited theories have enjoyed a

¹Conrad (1983). *Heart of Darkness*. New York: Penguin. All references to Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* are taken from this edition.

lion's share of attention from students writing dissertations on the novel, drama and poetry in most Cameroonian state universities, the sizeable dimension of memory and narratology is still to be fully explored.

Although the significant role that narrative strategies might play as textual sites of memory and as tools in the analysis of memory and identities (individual and collective) has over the last few decades featured as a crucial area of research in literary studies (Neumann, 2010; Nunning and Nunning, 2004; Erll, 2010), an over-trodden data such as Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and also Siegfried Sassoon's "Glory of Women" seem to have received less attention in the area of memory and narratology. In privileging narratology as a suitable theoretical framework for locating, interpreting and analyzing sites of collective memory in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and Siegfried Sassoon's "Glory of Women", the study takes into consideration the fact that the two texts teem with a sizeable amount of fictions of cultural remembrance including images and metaphors of history, mythical narratives or fictions of empire and notably the colonial discourse it breed, all of which still seem to anxiously waiting to be analyzed. What needs to be adequately addressed in canonical texts like Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and Siegfried Sassoon's "Glory of Women" is the close interrelation of narrative aspects to memory. By focusing on memory and narratology, this study holds that one of the partially unresolved issues inherent in the literary data chosen for this study is that it teems with a sizable volume of unelucidated "fictions of memory" with myths, metaphors, linguistic parameters, stereotypes, ideological discourses, genres, images of history and colonial discourse among others constituting the literary cultural womb in which British memorial cultures are preserved and circulated. Since the study relies on the findings of memory and narratology for its methodology and theoretical orientation, a statement on these theoretical approaches may be a good starting point. But before that, it will be important to clarify some key concepts in the study.

2. Theoretical and Conceptual Clarifications

2.1. Individual and "Cultural", "Collective" or "Social" Memory

The terms, "cultural or collective memory" or "social" memory are often used interchangeably and denote the "connections of memory on the one hand and socio-cultural contexts on the other" (Erll, 2010: p. 2). Confino (2010: p. 81) defines collective memory as an exploration of a shared identity that unites a social group, be it a family or a nation, whose members nonetheless have different interests and motivations. Erll (2010: p. 2) further defines cultural memory as "the interplay of present and past in socio-cultural contexts", adding that "individual acts of remembering in a social context, group memory, national memory and transnational memory" are forms of cultural memory. The definition allows us to also consider images of history, discourses/fictions of memory, perceptual devices and linguistic structures through which the past is remembered in the present, as depictions of collective memory. Astrid Erll's association of collective

memory with shared knowledge permits this study to consider the structures that transmit, and through which are perceived shared values and norms relevant for constructing national, religious, gender-sensitive and cultural identities, as forms of collective memory.

From the above, “Collective memory” implies the memory of shared values that unite a people and that give them their identity. It implies that the individual memory of many people, a social group, a nation, partly overlaps. But, “How does a given society or class of people remember its past when it hasn’t got the same/a single mind/brains?” Erll (2010: p. 4) clarifies this by asserting that the notions of “cultural” or “collective” memory proceed from an operative metaphor, adding that the concept of “remembering” (a cognitive process which takes place in individual brains) is metaphorically transferred to the level of culture. This metaphorical line of thinking permits the transfer of the traits of one linguistic field to another, enabling critics to speak of levels of memory such as, a cultural community’s memory, social memory, individual memory, literature’s memory etc. These levels of memory also draw attention to “two radically different concepts of culture [...], one that sees culture as a subjective category of meanings contained in people’s minds versus one that sees culture as patterns of publicly available symbols objectified in society” (Erll, 2010: pp. 4-5). Culture and memory thus intersect at two levels: the individual (the cognitive level) and the collective (which embodies the social).

This study adopts Astrid Erll’s explanation of how a given society/group can remember its past. “Memory” is used in a metaphorical and not literary sense in that societies do not have minds and therefore do not remember literarily in the way an individual uses his cognitive processes to remember. Rather, what a text does to reconstruct a shared past “bears some semblance to the process of individual memory, such as the selectivity and perspectivity inherent in the creation of versions of the past” (Erll, 2010: p. 5).

The view that memory is both individual and collective, and resides in versions of the past associated with the individual, a social, cultural or political group inevitably makes the following questions vital to any study of memory: What approaches are available for research focusing on memory cultures (or specific versions of the past) within literary studies? Whose memory and which versions of memory are transmitted from generation to generation? The above questions are of interest to this study and to any criticism applying memory tools to the analysis of narratives in general.

2.2. Fictions/Metaphors of Empire as Fictions of Memory

Given the ambiguity inherent in the imprecise use of words and phrases such as “fictions”, “fictions of empire” and fictions of memory, there is need to shed light on these concepts in the light of this study. To Nunning and Nunning (1996: p. 11):

...the word fiction has quite different meanings. On the one hand, the word

can designate “[t]hat which, or something that, is imaginatively invented” or, more specifically, “[t]he species of literature which is concerned with the narration of imaginary events and the portraiture of imaginary characters”, viz. [a] work of fiction; a novel or tale. On the one hand, fiction refers to any supposition known to be at variance with fact, but conventionally accepted for some reason of practical convenience, conformity with traditional usage, decorum, or the like.

The meaning of fiction as both literary and narrative is very vital for the study because it can address questions that deal with how stories are told. Notice that questions about narrative transmission or mediation, or about “who speaks”, “who perceives” or “who focalizes” (Genette’s conceptualization), whether an individual or a collective community, often draw attention to mediums such as narrative voice, focalization and perspective. The meaning of fiction as a “theoretical construct” (Nunning and Nunning, 1996: p. 11) is also adopted given that it can answer one of the questions raised in the study, specifically that dealing with how works of fiction focusing on the nation’s (Britain) cultural heritage, including the representation of the colonizers and the colonies, can construct their collective voice, collective perspective (focalization) and thus their cultural memory.

Metaphors, myths, Images, history, all constitute literary vehicles by means of which specific versions of the past are created and preserved, hence, they are “fictions of memory”. Fictions of memory can therefore be said to mean those narratives (metaphors, myths, legends, historical events, war images etc.) that are largely shaped by, and embody the values, norms, customs traditions and beliefs, of a community. When such fictions of memory are largely shaped by British German or French imperial experience, they are generally categorized under “fictions of empire”, understood by Nunning’s to mean the ideological fictions that were shaped by imperial world views and perceptions of Empire; works that are shaped by the German, British and French imperialism in Africa; works that valorise or challenge the imperial ideals. They additionally refer to novels, narrative poems and narrative drama that replicates or deconstructs imperial worldviews. They are largely the works of fiction that embody the ambivalent heritage often traced to the British and French colonialism in Africa. They are also narratives that embody the ideological, political, social and cultural values, preconceptions and cultural stereotypes associated with imperial worldviews. They are conceptual and ideological fictions through which images of empire and representations of the colonizer and colonized are preserved.

The view of metaphors, myths, references and images of history are fictions of memory: carriers of versions of memory deserve a special attention here considering their relevance for forging British collective memory. The concepts of cultural (collective) memory and remembering in this paper are inevitably linked to metaphors of history and imperialism. “Postcolonial literary studies in general tends to pay particular attention to the construction of collective memo-

ry in both colonial and postcolonial literature” (Birk, 2006: p. 5) using metaphors and images of history amongst other textual representations. Research focusing on the function of colonial and postcolonial texts as depositories and residues for collective memory tends to pay attention on the role of “metaphors/fictions of Empire” (and myths of imperialism) in the process of shaping the collective perception of the British Empire in the nineteenth century². As “fictions of memory”, the two texts selected for this study share affinities with other European fictions of memory.

The notion of metaphors as textual wombs where collective processes of remembering circulates needs further attention. Metaphors have been viewed as crucial devices for negotiating the collective processes of remembering. Cognitive metaphor theory has conceptualized empire metaphors as culturally specific formulas of meaning. The material, mental and social aspects embedded in such metaphors are important considerations for determining the role of metaphors in the mediation of collective memory (Birk, 2006: p. 266). Genres, norms, values and stereotypes associated with biases emanating from historical processes manifest themselves in metaphors, hence “metaphors...have a share in the formation of discourses and thereby in the affirmation of the collective identity of [given] culture[s] of memory” (Birk, 2006: p. 270). Birk’s argument that metaphors of empire can construct imperial collective memory is crucial and motivates the present study to consider, in addition to metaphors of empire, myths, images of history and literary devices through which British collective memory, the collective memory of the colonizers in general as well as that of the colonized circulates, as literary vehicles of collective memory. Such literary devices by which the past is (re)constructed or remembered are called, fictions of memory, and these fictions are generally embedded in what in postcolonial theory is called, “colonial discourse”.

2.3. Colonial Discourse and Its Ingrained Fictions/Metaphors of Empire as Sites of (British) Collective Memory

Since Edward Said’s *Orientalism* played a great role in bringing to the forefront what is known in post-colonial criticism as “colonial discourse”, a term that is very instrumental to our understanding of how England’s cultural memory as well as the cultural memory of the “cultural products of the former colonies of the European empires”³ (the colonies) was (re)invented in texts, it is important to briefly revisit the concept of Orientalism. In *Orientalism* (1978), Said initiated a hitherto unprecedented area of theoretical inquiry called “colonial discourse” also known as “colonial discourse theory”. In this seminal work which consists of a revisionist look at the roots of imperialism in European culture, Said provides an overview of European representations of, and attitudes towards the Middle East (Nunning and Nunning, 1996: p. 10). According to the critics, Said

²See Hanne Birk’s article entitled “Mediating Imperial Collective Memory: Metaphors of Empire”, Erll Astrid and Ansgar Nunning (Eds.). 2006: 265-280.

³See Nunning and Nunning (1996: p. 10).

tried to reconstruct the ways a particular kind of mind-set shaped both the Western conceptions of the Orient. Said drew attention to Western attitudes towards the East (Orient), and how the West constructed and continues to represent the East or Orient as its “Other” by means of style including figures of speech, narrative devices, structures of thoughts and textual stereotypes (which serve in this study as representations of colonial discourse).

Seen as such, Orientalism as a theme has come to be understood as the way by which imperialism was constructed by the West as a basis for their imperial project. In Post-colonial criticism, Orientalism is analysed as a thematic representation of the East by the West, as the “Other”, and the “inferior”. The Orient was associated with the values, perceptions and also a mind-set which the West do not associate with themselves: vile, cruelty, barbarism, inhospitability, irrationality, etc. The upshot of Said’s analysis of textual devices and stereotypes by which the West had continued to represent the East and other cultural products of former European empires was “colonial discourse”.

The term, “colonial discourse” has also been defined as the set of codes, stereotypes, and vocabulary employed when the relationship between a colonial power and its colonies is written, or spoken about (Nunning and Nunning, 2004: p. 10). Tyson (1999: p. 366) also relevantly opines that colonial discourse, which was inherently Eurocentric, was the language by which colonialist thinking or ideology of innate superiority and civilised culture of the West, which was contrasted with the inferiority of the indigenous peoples, was expressed. An analysis of colonial discourse needs to consider the variety of textual forms by which the West produced and codified knowledge about the non-metropolitan areas and cultures, especially those under colonial control (Chrisman and Williams, 1994: p. 5). In view of its potential in breeding fictions of Empire, the analysis of images, myths and metaphors of empire including codes, stereotypes, vocabulary, and any form of linguistic and perceptual representations is essential to our understanding of collective memory of both the colonizer and the colonized, especially in works like Conrad’s HOD and Siegfried Sassoon’s “Glory of Women”. In other words, such works are essential in constructing, first, the voice, perspective (focalization) and memory of a given social group, and further, in any investigation on the role that English fictions can play in the (re)production of British cultural memory and the cultural memory and identity of the cultural products of the former European empires. If we adopt the view that genre is a memory marker, then fictions of empire, as well as colonial discourse and its myths and metaphors of Empire, need to be considered amongst the category of genres with a potential for collective memory.

On the issue of how colonialism, imperialism or colonial discourse in general shaped British collective memory, Nunning and Nunning (1996: p. 7) explain that the British imperial past is preserved through fictions of empire specifically through perceptual and ideological fictions and the images, myths and metaphors of Empire that they generate, which in turn constitute her collective

memory and thus her cultural identity.

The social, political and cultural stereotypes that originated from colonialism and imperialism and are passed from one generation to another, as part of British collective memory, are fictions of Empire, notably inherent in “colonial discourse⁴” which engendered such fictions in the form of myths and metaphors of British and European imperialism, images of the British Empire, and the “ingrained stereotypes about the Oriental or the African” (Nunning and Nunning, 1996: p. 14). Vera and Ansgar Nunning deploy the label “fictions of Empire” to additionally denote literatures broadly construed in the imperial imagination of the British and French Empires; ideological fictions that were largely shaped by imperial world views and perceptions of empire. Seen as such, images, myths, metaphors and stereotypes dealing with the British imperial experience, the social and political experiences as well as the values, preconceptions and cultural stereotypes associated with imperialism and colonialism, are viewed first, as an example of colonial discourse, and second, as the means by which the imperial past has been preserved in Britain’s cultural memory.

This paper focuses on the two British works chosen for this study, examining in particular, perceptual myths, metaphors, War memory, political history, ideological myths that serve as reservoir or as textual evidence of how cultural traditions (associated with imperialism) are represented in discursive practice as part of the collective memory and identity of a nation. Analytical data for the first part comes from Conrad’s *HOD* a work whose settings is the colonial context, and the second part focuses on Siegfried Sassoon’s “Glory of Women”, a poem whose context is the World war. But delving into analysis, the role of narrative in the construction of cultural memory is required.

2.4. The Invention of Memory via Narrative: The Role of Perspectivity in Perceptual Fictions, Myths and Metaphors of Empire

To address the question of how (British) cultural memory can be reinvented in textual practice, one needs to answer this question: What is the place of images, plot, characterisation as well as myths and metaphors of empire in shaping cultural memory, and how can the perception in these literary aspects be attributed to a group or nation?

The view that memory resides in versions of the past and can be associated with groups, which can be social, cultural, or political, inevitably makes the following questions vital to any study of memory: Whose memory and which versions of memory are transmitted from generation to generation in the texts? But even more important is the question, “What approaches are available for re-⁴Postcolonial criticism generally holds that Edward Said’s *Orientalism*, published in 1978, inaugurated the area of inquiry known as “colonial discourse”. Tyson (1999: p. 366) draws attention to the fact that “colonial discourse” or colonialist ideology, is often used to refer to the language in which colonialist thinking was expressed, adding that “colonialist ideology” was inherently Euro-centric, and based on the colonizers’ assumption of their own cultural superiority which they opposed with the alleged inferiority of the natives of the areas they colonized.

search focusing on memory cultures (or specific versions of the past) within literary studies?” Given that one of the goals of the present study is to show that memory is transmitted by narrative structures, the question of what approaches are available for research focusing on the representations of memory cannot be satisfactorily answered without recourse to narratological approaches to memory. The above questions therefore draw attention to the fact that the various carriers of memory so far enumerated: myths, images, historical events, metaphors, norms, values etc. like all other texts and discourses of culture are devices of memory with narrative potentials and can thus be conceptualized using culture-specific categories.

In her article, “The Literary Representation of Memory”, Neumann (2010: pp. 334-343) identifies narrative forms and aesthetic techniques through which literary texts stage and reflect the workings of memory. She proceeds from the assumption that “novels create new models of memory”, of culturally given discourse, of the remembered and the forgotten, as well as versions of the past by means of narrative devices (Neumann, 2010: p. 334). The critic suggests characteristic features of narrative mediation, the experiencing I or the remembered I and narrating or remembering I (336), perspective structure, multi-perspectivity, and self-narration, as specific acts of discourses by which novels can reproduce the past, or stage individual and collective memory and identity. Neumann’s self-narrative device called the “remembering I” is most crucial for retrieving from memory, the perspective and past experiences of the “experiencing I” in a homodiegetic narrative situation, and can be useful when analysing forms of individual memory in first-person novels. But how can narrative constitute a methodology for collective memory?

In his theory of cultural narratology, Nunning (2009: p. 61) suggests that voice and focalization can be reconceptualized to make them narrative-sensitive cultural categories, adding that cultures be conceptualized as “narrative and memorial cultures”, since memory is generated by narrative structures from which it originates and continues to shape:

Without doubt it is narratives that form the basis of collective, national memories and that constitute politics of identity and difference. Culture should always be conceived of as narrative communities which are distinguished from each other by their reservoir of narratives⁵.

The view that narratives form the basis of collective (national) memories as well as constitute sources of identity formation permit the study to rely on perceptual images and references to history including cultural texts like myths, metaphors, and other shared forms by which social groups remember their norms and values. They thus serve as narrative-sensitive discourses and representations relevant for forging collective identities. The notion that myths, images, meta-

⁵See Nunning (2009: p. 61). Interestingly, Nunning defines narrative communities as communities forged and held together by the stories their members tell about themselves and their culture as well as by conventionalized forms of storytelling and cultural plots.

phors and other written processes of remembering are representations of narrative communities and of their collective memory permits the study to attribute to them voice and focalization (perspective) to constitute memory-shaping instruments. The narratological concept of perspectivity is a fundamental consideration in the process of constructing versions of the past of a cultural group, in this case, British collective memory. Erll's (2010: p. 5) view that societies construct a shared past by means of the "selectivity and perspectivity" inherent in the creation of versions of the past allows this study to consider the memory-sensitive categories of narrative perspective: communal perspective, or focalization in constructing versions of the past of both the colonizer represented by Britain and the colonized Africans.

Since collective memory circulates in genres like myth, metaphors, images etc., and in shared norms, beliefs and values, and since texts and discourses of culture necessarily embed the shared values, norms and perceptions of a social group, some critics have proposed the terms collective perspective, multi-perspectivital memory, communal memory, and dialogic memory as narrative processes of collective remembering, and thus sites of memory. This study however, privileges the concept of communal/collective perspective or focalization to describe a narrative situation where memory is assigned to a shared social group and textually inscribed via a strand of cultural discourse, an image of history or a cultural genre (metaphors, myths, images etc.).

3. Representing British Collective Memory in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* through Colonial Discourse and Its Inherent Fictions of Empire: The Role of Images, Myths and Metaphors of Empire

Colonial discourse has provided and continues to engender fictions of empire, specifically in the form of imagery, myths and metaphors of Empire. Such discourses of Empire serve as the means by which the British self-image, cultural memory and also national identity were textually represented, specifically beginning from the 19th century. The myths and metaphors of empire also played a crucial role in terms of codifying "the relationship between a mother country and her colonies" (Nunning and Nunning, 1996: p. 19), they relevantly served as fictions of memory by which the British collective memory, her cultural identity as well as the collective memory of cultural products of the former European Empires (the colonized), was and continues to be preserved in textual representations. Prominent examples of myths and metaphors by which imperialism and colonialism live on and serve as means of retrospective and propagandist justification, "because they legitimized imperial rule" (Nunning and Nunning, 1996: p. 21), and thus play key roles in the construction of both British self-image, her collective memory, and collective identity, and the collective memory of the cultural products of the former European Empires, appear in the following analysis.

Joseph Conrad's HOD has proven its methodological merit as a testing

ground for how British collective memory as well as the collective memory of the Africans who lived the imperial experience is remembered in fictions of Empire and fictions of memory. The role played by myths and metaphors in retrospectively remembering imperialism and by extension, in shaping British cultural memory and her collective identity cannot be discussed in all its ramifications without referring to *HOD*. *HOD* is a novel whose setting is the colonial context as can be inferred from its manifold myths, metaphors, images, character types, beliefs, values, biases, preconceptions and stereotypes associated with imperialism, and notably the racially biased portrayals of Africa and its native inhabitants.

To begin with its plot, the memory of imperialism is deeply ingrained in the plot and thematic content of the novel. The plot replicates that of an adventure novel in its presentation of characters exploring Africa for its rich mineral resources. In terms of subject matter, the narrator of this first-person narrative has obtained a job with a Belgian company whose commercial activities were done on the River Congo. One of the company's captains at sea had been killed in a brawl with the natives and Marlow had to travel to Africa to replace the murdered captain. In the text, Marlow recounts the story of a voyage that he took as a young man up the Congo River. The narrative shares conspicuous similarities not only with colonialism and imperialism but also Joseph Conrad's personal life. Conrad was born in 1857 in Poland. Before his death, he went to sea and made a number of voyages to the West Indies and Africa (specifically in 1890 and travelled up River Congo which Marlow describes in his narrative). Another similarity is that on arrival in Kinshasha after a tedious trek, Conrad was sent to Stanley Falls to collect and bring to Kinshasha, Georges Antoine Klein, an agent of the company who had fallen ill and who later died on board. Such similarities had invited the following interpretations of *HOD*. On the one hand, the first-person narrative has been viewed as a biographical (a fictional autobiography) account of Conrad's experiences in Africa. On another level, critics have seen imperialism as the central issue in the novel. Interestingly, some have argued that the novel is a record of personal history submerged in national and international history. When, at the beginning of the voyage Marlow draws attention to the need for Britain to pass on the light of civilization (*HOD*, 39), what is evoked is British imperialism. The above plot elements shed light on why *HOD* is categorized in this study under "fictions of Empire" which also includes colonial discourse and travel writing.

In view of its plot focus on the British Empire that appeared during the colonial and imperialist phase in the late 19th century, and was characterized by the acquisition of territories in Africa and elsewhere by the European powers (Nunning and Nunning, 1996), *HOD* has become a canonical text within the corpus of English colonial or imperialist literature and like other English colonial fictions, it swarms with myths and metaphors by which colonialism/imperialism and political history of the colonies and cultural products of former European

empires are represented as mythical events. The same myths and metaphors of empire also serve further purposes, first, as representations of English superiority and English civilization, secondly, as racially prejudiced representations of the colonized as the “Other”, and third and most important, as the fictions of Empire, or perceptual and ideological discourses by which British cultural memory as well as the cultural memory of the colonized “Other” was invented and preserved. The following examples from *HOD* serve to elucidate the above points.

Postcolonial critics recognize the role of colonial discourse in establishing oppositions between “us” and “them” as well as between “self” and the “other” which were very important in shaping Britain’s cultural memory and by extension their national identity. This is equally true of Conrad’s colonial discourse and the metaphorical fictions and stereotypes of empire it engenders. Such stereotypes and metaphorical fictions feature specifically when Conrad makes references to Africa and Africans as perceived by the (British) colonizer. One of the best examples of how the legacies of colonialism or imperialism live on as an integral part of British cultural memory features conspicuously in metaphors and cultural stereotypes often associated with imperialism. Right from the very beginning of Conrad’s *HOD*, colonial discourse features prominently. The Congos, perceived as the heart of the continent is described as the “[H]eart of darkness” hence constituting a justification for its being cast in the British imperial imagination as a place that needs to be civilized or lighted up. It is important to note that Marlow starts his narrative of adventure by describing his childhood fascination with an empty map of the continent and its big rivers (33), which he, as a boy promises to explore. In the metaphor of empire discussed above, Marlow discusses his childhood and how he used to look at maps portraying colonialist conquest, noting that he enjoyed looking at the blank spaces. At some point in the story, Marlow says the blank space became “a place of darkness” (33). There is no doubt therefore that Marlow is captivated by the “many blank spaces on the earth” which, are “desperately waiting for imperialism and colonialism” to populate them (Nunning and Nunning, 1996: p. 15). Marlow’s reasons for travelling to Africa are therefore not innocent. The colonial setting clearly indicates that, the novel is designed to remember British imperialism in Africa, or that of any other European colonial powers, a fact that serves to highlight the historiography of the colonizer’s political history.

The role played by the above metaphors of empire in constructing British collective memory can be analysed as follows. The description of Africa as a dark continent is not different from the British Empire’s perception of Africa, a fact which they used to legitimize their supposed civilizing mission. One of the reasons advanced by the colonizers for embarking on imperialism was that Africa, for instance, lacked history and civilization which covers education and religion. Guided by colonial discourse theory, the “darkness” and “blankness” of the map of Africa could be seen as a direct result of barbarism, lack of history, and there-

fore lack of civilization. There is no doubt therefore that the “many blank places on the earth” and “a place of darkness” are perceptual and ideological metaphors that serve to legitimize the imperial conquest. The metaphors of imperialism portray Britain as a nation of great power destined to bring civilization to its former cultural subjects (the colonized) or to an empire that is characterized by lack of history, barbarism and darkness. The blankness with which Africa is associated draws attention to intellectual bareness with which Africa, before colonialism, was associated. The images of blankness and darkness used in association with Africa also suggest that Africa had no culture, no history and no religion prior to her encounter with the West. The metaphors which serve as metaphorical fictions of empire cognitively or perceptually structures the relationship between Britain (the colonizer) and her colony (the colonized African) as that of the civilized master and the primitive dependent colony relying on the master for civilization. In this ideological relationship, Britain is the colonizer, and is thus assigned the role of a civilizing mission in the colony (Africa) characterized by “blank spaces” and “darkness”. Africa, like a dark and blank dependent colony, is assigned the role of a child dependent on the mother for nurture, or for civilization. Such metaphors in general encourage a cognitive or perceptual view of the colonialist as master and of the colonized as a dependent. The metaphors of empire projected in the above phrase not only appear to validate the imperial project of a civilizing mission. Britain is assigned the role of a teacher on which its former colony, perceived as uncivilized, desperately relies for knowledge, religious, political and economic nurture and survival. What is established is the mother-child relationship. Through such metaphors of empire, which also serve as ideological fictions of Empire, British history of colonialism and imperialism, which also constitutes part of her political history as well as that of Africa’s generational memory, live on as part of her cultural memory. The metaphors of empire further play the role of structuring the narrative perspective as collective or communal because it is definitely in Britain’s or the colonizer’s perception that the colonies are viewed as “blank spaces” or “dark” spaces understood to mean lack of history, culture, education and civilization.

Further examples focusing on the role of metaphors of Empire in shaping Britain’s cultural memory abound in the following lines in which Conrad associates the image of “darkness” with Central Africa, and by so doing, projects stereotypes about the former African products of European empires as they became ingrained in the imperial imagination of Britain and France prior to colonialism and imperialism:

1) ...the brown current ran swiftly out of the heart of darkness (109).

In a similar metaphor of Empire, Conrad likens the beating of drums to the beat of the heart of Central Africa which seems to be completely conquered by darkness:

2) “...the beat of the drum...like the beating of a heart, the heart of a conquering darkness” (72).

To Kurt who is the symbol of British Expansionism and civilization,

3) "...his words [are compared to a] pulsating stream of light or the deceitful flow from the heart of the impenetrable darkness" (83).

4) In a further metaphor of empire which seems to assign the perspective from which the natives are perceived to the colonizer although the words one hears originate from Kurtz, the reader is told that: "...his [Kurtz's] stare [was] piercing enough to penetrate all the hearts that beat in the darkness" (113).

In the above examples, references to Africa as the "heart of darkness", "heart of a conquering darkness" and "heart of the impenetrable darkness" metaphorically construct the image of Africa and Africans as a dark, barbaric and uncivilized continent apparently waiting to be occupied and civilized. The metaphorical reference to Africa and its map as "blank spaces" should particularly be understood to mean the supposed intellectual, historical, cultural and moral vacuity of pre-colonial Africans, an idea the imperial powers capitalized on to legitimize their colonization and expansionist project. What is suggested is the fact that Africa and Africans represent the "blank spaces", "the heart of darkness", "the heart of impenetrable darkness", and thus the dark "Other" that needed to be civilized. The spoken by Marlow, the perspective is that of the colonizer, Britain. Since such views were advanced to legitimize the imperialist project of a civilizing mission, and granted that Conrad's metaphors constitute cognitive and perceptual frames of references, it can be argued that although the voice the reader hears is that of Conrad's narrator, Marlow, the perspective from which Africa is seen and represented originates from the British colonizer. If one agrees that the above ideological and perceptual metaphors locate perspectivity in the colonizer (Britain), and thus embody the shared views and perceptions the British had of the colonies and their subjects they colonized, it can be said that the perspectivity or focalization textually inscribed is communal. This study has suggested that the kind of perspective (focalization) or memory that originates from a given social group as part of that group's heritage, shared beliefs and values or collective consciousness can be described as collective perspective, collective memory or communal memory. In the case of Conrad's metaphors analysed above, there is a need to emphasize that they serve as a filter through which the imperial experience and legitimizing views associated with imperialism came into being in Britain's public consciousness (Nunning and Nunning, 1996: p. 13) as part of their collective perceptions and thus collective memory. Such metaphors are important considerations for constructing British self-image, her national and thus collective identity.

As further examples, many references support the claim that metaphors of empire serve as either cultural fictions or fictions of empire through which African generational memory, or her origin, lives on. Conrad describes Africans as "unhappy savages", "dusty niggers" (46) and Africa itself as "darkness" and a blank space, which could again trigger the impression of lack of history and civilization. He likens Africans to "prehistoric man", and to "a dog in a parody of

breeches" (70), and goes on to describe their speech as resembling "no sound of human language" (109). While such phrases characterize Africa and Africans, from the shared perspective of the former British imperial power, in clearly racist, dehumanizing and animal depictions, the animal imagery, the references to ancient uncivilized Africa, that is, Africa before the coming of civilization, the implied metaphoric references to the early man as well as the hints to lack of a recognizable linguistic culture further and legitimize imperialism and serve to draw attention to how stereotypes about Africa came to live on in the consciousness of the colonizer-Britain. Such images of history call to mind the view of Britain's superior self-image as a great colonial power "destined to wield its civilizing influence over 'an empire on which the sun never set'" (Nunning and Nunning, 1996: p. 20). The same perceptual metaphors draw attention to African history prior to imperialism as conceived by Britain, and this constitutes an important aspect of British collective memory.

In another example that describes the journey up River Congo, the creation myth is evoked in ideological and perceptual images that draw attention to Africa as a family with a generational beginning and therefore constitute her generational memory:

Going up that river was like travelling back to the earliest beginnings of the world, when vegetation rioted on the earth and the big trees were kings. An empty stream, a great silence, an impenetrable forest. The air was warm, thick, heavy, and sluggish. There was no joy in the brilliance of sunshine. The long stretches of the waterway ran on, deserted, into the gloom of an overshadowed distance. On silvery sand banks, hippos and alligators sunned themselves side by side. The broadening waterways flowed through a mob of wooded islands; you lost your way on that river as you would in a desert, and butted all day long against shoals, trying to find the channel, till you thought yourself bewitched and cut off forever from everything you had known once-somewhere-far way-in another existence perhaps. There were moments when one's past came back to one, as it would sometimes when you have not a moment to spare for yourself; but it came in the shape of restful and noisy dream, remembered with wonder amongst the overwhelming realities of this strange world of plants, and water and silence. And this stillness of life did not in the least resemble peace. It was the stillness of an impalpable force brooding over an inscrutable intention. It looked at you with a vengeful aspect. I got used to it afterwards. I did not see it anymore... I had to keep guessing at the channel: I had to discern, mostly by inspiration, the signs of hidden banks, I watched for sunken stones. I was learning to clap my teeth smartly before my heart flew out, when I sighted by fluke some infernal sly old snag that would have ripped the life out of the tin-pot steamboat and drowned all the pilgrims (66-67).

The entire paragraph looks like a mythical narrative of the creation of Africa

especially in its references to the early beginnings of civilization and could thus be said to constitute an ideological articulation of Africa's generational memory from the perspective of the British colonizers, a description that casts focalization of Africa as collective. The first line contains a simile that likens the movement forward into the African continent with travelling back in time to prehistoric Africa. There is the idea of the silence of nature (the wilderness) and of the predominance of animals over humans. Everything is in its wild and undomesticated stage. The stream is empty, there is silence everywhere meaning no human presence. The forest is "impenetrable" which could imply that prehistoric Africa was uninhabited and devoid of human existence. The waterways which were "deserted" and its "shadowy" course still serve as a recollection of ancient Africa. African is in everything backward, completely cut off from civilization, and different from the West described as "somewhere-far away in another existence". Africa is empty, the only thing being, gigantic trees (instead of humans), wood, water, silence and "stillness of life that did not in the least resemble peace". Even nature, in this supposed prehistoric Africa seemed unfriendly, as exemplified by the "stillness" of the environment which frightens the narrator with its apparently "vengeful" intention. The idea of being cut off from the world of humans and being placed in a vacuum of dead silence that looks frightful accentuates the idea of travelling to the earliest beginnings of the world, and again serves to project the shared views about Africa that were deeply-rooted in the British imperial imagination, and were passed from generation to generation. Such a stereotyping draws attention to the genealogy of Africa as it existed in the colonizer's collective imagination.

The idea of navigating through the untamed state of nature with its obstacles takes the reader back to the myth of the origin of the world, an idea expressed again when Marlow sees himself performing like a monkey and his friends doing summersaults or tumbles on their respective ropes. What the similes and metaphors of empire remember through the idea of travelling back to the roots of humanity is not only ancient or prehistoric Africa; the fictions remember a version of the past similar to Darwin's theory of evolution, a theory that also fostered colonialism. The version of memory that seems to have survived in this myth of creation is not just African genealogy, but also the evolutionary vision of Darwin and thus literature's memory. The journey upriver thus remembers the images of the early beginnings of Africa and of her level of civilization at the time, as manifested in textual representations. The ideological and cultural fictions of empire by which genres such as creation myths, metaphors and similes created stereotypes about Africa and the colonized in general, including the notion of bringing civilization to primitive people functions as mediums through which the history of Africa's origin, her evolution and civilization filtered into the British communal consciousness.

The following excerpt focusing on colonial settings and rudimentary humanity, again contains references to history, metaphors of empire, and the creation myth through which imperial world views and the idea of civilization entered

the British public psyche:

Trees, trees, millions of trees, massive, immense, running up high; and at their foot, hugging the bank against the stream, crept the little begrimed steamboat, like a sluggish beetle creeping on the floor of a lofty portico [...] The reaches opened before us and closed behind, as if the forest had stepped leisurely across the water to bar the way for our return. We penetrated deeper and deeper into the heart of darkness. [...] We were wanderers on a prehistoric earth, on an earth that wore the aspect of an unknown planet. [...] The steamer toiled along slowly on the edge of a black and incomprehensible frenzy. The prehistoric man was cursing us, praying to us, welcoming us—who could tell? We were cut off from the comprehension of our surroundings; we glided past like phantoms, wondering and secretly appalled, as sane men would be before an enthusiastic outbreak in a madhouse. We could not understand, because we were too far and could not remember, because we were travelling in the night of the first ages, of those ages that are gone, leaving hardly a sign-and no memories. The earth seemed unearthly. We were accustomed to look upon the shackled form of a conquered monster, but there you could look at a thing monstrous and free. It was unearthly, and the men were—No, they were not inhuman. [...] They howled and leaped, and spurn, and made horrid faces; but what thrilled you was thus the thought of their humanity—like yours—the thought of your remote kinship with this wild and passionate uproar. Ugly, Yes, it was ugly enough; but if you were a man enough you would admit to yourself that there was in you just the faintest trace of a response to the terrible frankness of that noise... (*HOD*, 68-69)

References to imperial/colonial history, creation myths, cognitive and ideological metaphors of empire teem with representations in the above lines and serve to project Britain's shared perceptions about Africa and Africans (specifically at the time of imperialism), and thus her collective memory. The said idea is conveyed in a variety of expressions such as: "many blank spaces on the earth", "a place of darkness", "the heart of a conquering darkness", "heart of darkness", "the heart of the impenetrable darkness", "no sound of human language", "prehistoric man", "unhappy savages", "dusty niggers", "shadowy stillness", "earliest beginnings of the world", "the big trees were kings", "Trees, trees, millions of trees, massive, immense, running up high", "prehistoric earth...an earth that wore the aspect of an unknown planet", "we were travelling in the night of the first ages, of those ages that are gone, leaving hardly a sign-and no memories", "They howled and leaped, and spurn, and made horrid faces". Such references to history and the genealogy of ancient Africa play a relevant function. The first paragraph compares Africa to prehistoric nature. The image of nature and of Africa it represents is that of a distant, unknown planet. Here we find prehistoric man, whose behaviour typifies that of a monkey that "howled and leaped and spun and made horrid faces" (69). This implies a rudimentary

form of humanity that someone who is “so remote from the night of first ages” would not understand.

Marlow’s description of the natives, particularly the savage fireman who is bewitched by the vertical boiler, replicates the colonizers’ view of the colonized as an uncivilized savage, and is thus worthy of note here:

He was there below me, and, upon my word, to look at him was edifying as seeing a dog in the parody of breeches and a feather hat, walking on his hind-legs. A few months of training had done for that really fine chap. He squinted at the steam-gauge and at the water-gauge with an evident effort of intrepidity-and he had filled teeth too, the poor devil, and the wool of his pate shaved into queer patterns, and three ornamental scars on each of his cheeks. He ought to have been clapping his hands and stamping his feet on the bank; instead he was hard at work, a thrall to strange witchcraft, full of improving knowledge. He was useful because he had been instructed; and what he knew was this-that should the water in that transparent thing disappear, the evil spirit inside the boiler would get angry through the greatness of his thirst, and take a terrible vengeance. So he sweated and fired up and watched the glass fearfully (with an impromptu charm made of rags, tied to his arm, and a piece of polished bone, as big as a watch, stuck flat-ways through his lower lip). (70)

Marlow’s description of the savage fireman replicates features of colonial prejudiced portrayal of the native inhabitants of the countries they colonized and thus seems to constitute a remembrance of Britain’s legitimization of the colonial enterprise. The supposed savage is compared to a dog even after having received training that has improved him: “He was an improved specimen”. In each sentence, there is an insinuation that the savage fireman is by nature, primitive and has only been tamed. Such negative representations of the African accounts for why Chinua Achebe described Conrad as a bloody racist, a judgement based on the imposing presence of racist discourse, on his portrayal of Africa as a dark continent with its natives as savages, uncultured, primitive, barbaric and lacking history, language, civilization and basic moral values. These racist views are even more clearly expressed, when Marlow and his team are stepping out of the boat. The narrator describes the African members of crew thus:

It was paddled by black fellows. You could see from afar the white of their eyeballs, glistening. They shouted, sang; their bodies streamed with perspiration; they had faces like grotesque mask-these chaps; but they had bone, muscle, a wild vitality, an intense energy of movement, that was as natural and true as the surf along their coast. (40)

The representation of the natives as rudimentary souls and of Africa as the beginning of the world has a lot to do with our understanding of the role played by fictions of empire. Such fictions of empire fulfilled a legitimizing function because they provided rationalizations and justifications of imperialism in the

way they legitimized colonial conquest and imperial rule by dignifying them with a high-minded mission which putatively aimed at conferring moral, religious, and material benefits onto the colonies (Nunning and Nunning, 1996: p. 21)⁶. Since they constitute ideological fictions through which imperialism and colonialism survived and lives on, the above fictions of empire serve as cultural reservoirs for conserving British cultural memory, her national identity and also African political history which itself is vital for the analysis of her cultural memory. On the whole, the fictions of empire serve as modes of referring to the African past and therefore of constructing her generational memory. Besides legitimizing colonialism, these fictions of empire are cultural fictions through which imperialist ideologies and their racist beliefs, are fundamentally remembered in the public psyche of both the colonizer (Britain) and the colonized.

4. Remembering British Political History in War Metaphors: Siegfried Sassoon's "Glory of Women"

Fictions of memory have provided and continue to engender War metaphors that serve to remember World War I, and by so doing interpret and structure historical and political events in ways that represent British Empire's perception of War. While such war metaphors have ideological and cultural implications, they illustrate the British Empire's patriotic and propagandist views that the poem projects. As would be seen, the war metaphors that occurred in English poetry and other discourses of the 19th Century shed light on the perspective from which the Wars were interpreted and described and thus structured the relationship between imperial Britain and her citizens as a relationship of political power which imposes the duties of patriotism on its citizens. War metaphors thus constructs political history, and shed light on British self-image, the way her patriotism and national identity were textually represented beginning from the 19th century.

Siegfried Sassoon's historical poem, "Glory of Women" focuses on war, specifically World War I, and thus contains fictions of memory and what Nunning and Nunning (1996), using different examples, had variously described as "fictions of empire" (11, 15, 20), and "historiography of empire" (21), which have much to do with the construction of British political history, her patriotism, and thus her cultural memory and national identity. Erl's (2010: p. 7) opinion that "war...can be remembered as a mythic event", as a traumatic experience, as part of family history, and most important, "as part of political history", makes Sassoon's "Glory of Women" with its horrific war scenes a memory of British political history or historiography. The stanza quoted below illuminates this claim:

You love us when we're heroes, home on leave,

⁶It is important to note how Conrad speaks of colonialism as a religion, calling it a "sacred fire" thus dignifying it with a high-minded mission aimed at conferring moral and religious benefits on the colonized. Marlow's aunt for instance sees his appointment to the company as an opportunity for him to serve as a bringer of light, an apostle to participate in "weaning those ignorant millions [Africans] from their horrid ways" (39)

Or wounded in a mentionable place.
 You worship decorations; you believe
 That chivalry redeems the war's disgrace.
 You make us shells. You listen with delight,
 By tales of dirt and danger fondly thrilled.
 You crown our distant ardours while we fight,
 And mourn our laurelled memories when we're killed.
 You can't believe that British troops "retire"
 When hell's last horror breaks them, and they run,
 Trampling the terrible corpses-blind with blood.
 O German mother dreaming by the fire,
 While you are knitting socks to send to your son
 His face is trodden deeper in the mud.
 (Quoted in: [Nunning and Nunning, 2004: p. 56](#)).

Siegfried Sassoon's historical poem, "Glory of Women" sharply contradicts the common notion of war as destructive for, it glorifies war as suggested in the title key word, "Glory". Although the voice glorifying war is that of the poet persona, focalization is attributed to a group of British women who propagate a patriotic view of war. Seen thus, the poem constitutes a collective memory of World War 1, the collective memory here being that of British women whose husbands fought as soldiers during the war.

What largely makes the poem a memory of World War I is the attitude of the British women towards it. In its description of war scenes in the following phrases: "we fight", "we're killed", "British troops retire/When hell's last horror breaks them", and "Trampling the terrible corpses blind with blood", the poem seems to constitute a remembrance of World War 1, specifically its horrific scenes, and thus of British political history with historiography serving as a textual trail by which her cultural memory is reinvented. The horrors of war featuring in the lines "When hell's last horror breaks them", and "Trampling the terrible corpses blind with blood" make the poem serve as a memory of British political history, and further, as a traumatic experience. References in the poem not only present war as a traumatic experience, they perceptually structure war as hell. An illustrative example of such a metaphor features in the lines "When hell's last horror breaks them", and "Trampling the terrible corpses-blind with blood." The first quoted line represents British soldiers' desertion in order to escape certain death in battle. Both the noun "hell" and its associated torments are transferred to the perceptual field of war, in order to express the horrors to which the soldiers are exposed. "The metaphor of "corpses-blind with blood" is also used to express the poet's view point about the horrific experiences of the soldiers. Such metaphors serve to remember the damages and horrors of gunfire, shelling, shooting, and thus the negative perception/remembrance of World War I as it became permanently engraved in the psyche of the British collective public.

Another and important possible meaning of the poem can be that the war metaphors provided justifications of World War I and serve as a means of retrospective and propagandist rationalizations and legitimizations of wars of conquest, imperialism and colonialism fought by Britain. In other words, some references and images used in the poem serve to outline the duties of patriotism imposed on British Soldiers hence featuring the patriotic views of World War I as the British public saw it. Nunning and Nunning's (1996: pp. 20-21) opinion that conceptual fictions of empire constructed and propagated a patriotic view of imperial history and transmitted it from one generation to the next is nowhere better projected than in the poetic lines from Siegfried Sassoon's poem "Glory of Women". Many references feature in the poem in the form of patriotic myths of imperialism and World War I as they seemed not only to render legitimate British involvement in World War I but also to suggest a propagandist view of war as a patriotic feat as the British soldiers were made to believe. Such references can serve as typical examples of how imperialism and World War I are profoundly remembered in the British public psyche. For instance, in the first line of the poem, the soldier or narrator refers to soldiers who sacrificed their lives fighting for their country, Britain, "as heroes", a patriotic perception echoed in the further lines when the soldiers who died fighting for Britain during WW I, are perceived through the collective perception/focalization of British women (referred to seven times as "You"), as "laurel[ls]. The "laurel" image links together the semantic fields of heroism and war. While the image represents war as an epic heroic feat, it represents British soldiers as heroes of war and serves to express the honour credited to the soldiers who fought and died for Britain. There is no doubt that the English women whose husbands died fighting for Britain during World War I as well as the German Mother who made socks for her son fighting in the same war, instead of mourning "listen" with "delight" to war stories ("tales of dirt and danger fondly thrilled"). The English women, presented as a collective addressee also "worship decorations" or commemorations on behalf of the fallen soldiers. Glorified patriotic references to the fallen soldiers such as "heroes", and laurels suggest that imperialism and war were equated with patriotism and the love for fatherland, here represented by Britain. Such views convey the honour the British public attributed to wars of conquest and self-defence. In addition to references such as heroes and laurels, commemorations organised on behalf of the fallen soldiers which their women worshipped as suggested in the lines: "you worship decorations;/You believe that chivalry redeems the war's disgrace", not only suggest that patriotism and love for "Motherland" supersedes individual interest; the historical references draw attention to patriotism as a legacy of World War I. Such an analysis once more shows that historiography, the history of World War I and patriotic views associated with the war survived in Britain's public psyche as part of her collective memory and collective identity. Notice that the commemorative events and views about heroism mentioned in the poem point towards the patriotic perceptions that Britain attached to imperialism and World War I. The view that to fight a war on behalf of

one's fatherland is both heroic and patriotic, is particularly of interest to this analysis. Such views serve to highlight the set of values, norms, beliefs, preconceptions, misconceptions and stereotypes associated with both World War I and imperialism, and of how such imperial legacies came to live in the British public psyche as part of her collective memory.

Written in the manner of other World War poems and also historical novels and narratives inspired by colonialism and imperialism, "Glory of Women" thus expresses patriotic views of war and imperialism as acts in defence of the honour of Britain, as ingrained in the British communal psyche. Imperialism and World War I are perceived as deeds of glory and honour because they were conducted in response to the imperial power or colonizer's patriotic propaganda of a defence for fatherland and vision of a civilizing mission. That is perhaps why the English women are proud of the soldiers who died fighting for their fatherland. The imperial culture of the poem "produces heroes who reflect its values" (Nunning and Nunning, 1996: p. 21). The patriotic views of war as a feat in defence or honour of the British Fatherland constitute a textual representation of historiography and history of wars, and of the role played by fictions of empire in the construction of British collective memory, her national history and collective identity.

The way masculinities (men and power) and gender differences are constructed in Sassoon's "Glory of Women" reflects the role of British poetry and the fictions of memory which it embodies in reproducing socio-cultural processes and traditional views and perceptions about gender differences inherited from the Victorian era in England, and which continue to be passed from one generation to another as an integral component of British collective perceptions. The role of cultural texts in reproducing masculinities and femininities has been recognized by Mugambi and Allan (2010: p. 4) when they argue that the two terms are "socially constructed" and reflect the "environments in which they are produced". In Sassoon's "Glory of Women", men are constructed as "soldiers" and warriors and associated with bravery and heroic deeds, while women are culturally stereotyped in the kind of roles assigned to them as they are associated with domestic roles such as "knitting" (of socks): "O German mother dreaming by the fire, /While you are knitting socks to send to your son. /His face is trodden deeper in the mud." What is recalled here is the traditional view of the woman as a child-making factory, removed from the professional and public spaces, and assigned only domestic professions and roles including knitting, getting married, making children and taking care of her husband and children, which are all legacies of the Victorian society of the 19th century and even earlier periods, a Victorian legacy that continues to pass from one generation to another as part of Britain's collective memory. The perception of the man as a hero and laurel of wars of imperialism, and of the woman as domestic caretaker not only shed light on how masculinities and femininities were constructed in the 19th century Victorian period from the perspective of the British public, the view also serves to shed light on the shared gender-sensitive socio-cultural processes,

perceptions and values that had come to live on as part of the British collective memory and thus her cultural identity.

5. Conclusion

The present study set out to analyse English “Fictions of memory” using *HOD* and “Glory of Women” as analytical data and employing the integrated framework of a narratological approach to cultural memory. It investigated the sites of memory drawing from fictions of Empire and relying on setting, thematic content, characterisation, plot, motives, myths, metaphors, imagery, and historical events, with a potential for memory.

The analysis began with a theoretical orientation that brought together narrative and memory in a methodological wedding that produced the narratological and memory-sensitive interpretive and analytical categories of collective memory, communal memory or communal focalization. This concept was particularly useful for constructing the shared past of imperial Britain and was most applicable when myths, metaphors, fictions of empire and other cultural text types were used as memory sites and devices. The narrative concept of perspective was useful for constructing collective memory.

The English novel and poem chosen for this study were described as paradigms and depositories of British cultural memory and it has been shown that they provide evidence for constructing British collective memory. Both texts emerge from this study as privileged literary fictions dealing with first, the historical event of World War I, and the British Empire that featured in the colonial or imperialist period in the late nineteenth century and which was characterised by the acquisition of territories, mainly in Africa, by the European powers. British (the colonizer’s) attitude towards the empire as well as indigenous cultures (the colonized) was analysed as has been replicated in colonial discourse, specifically in fictions of empire, represented by metaphors of Empire, images of what the imperialist regarded as his mission, and of the colonized, “the Other” (Nunning and Nunning, 1996: p. 12) with emphasis on their role in shaping Britain’s cultural memory. In analysing images and metaphorical constructions of both the British Empire and the colonized, the work not only draws attention to the generic properties of fictions of memory; British imperial history which is a real historical event has been remembered in literature as part of British collective memory. Through the analysis of the English prose work and poem as fictions that construct discourses of Empire, it was noticed that Conrad’s *HOD* and Sassoon’s “Glory of Women” do not only reinvent the imperial ideology of the late 19th century which was based on acquisition of territories in Africa and legitimising justifications for such an imperial project, but presents war, exploration, and annexation as a memory of colonial and imperial history.

In view of the above, the following constitute the findings of the study. The literary data in English used for this study contains fictions of memory, fictions of Empire, narrative evidence and images of history with potentials for memory,

and for investigating the relationship between narrative and memory. The two English fictions focus largely on fictions of Empire with its characteristic colonial discourse that features in the form of stereotypes, myths and metaphors of Empire which largely legitimized the imperial project. The very discourses of memory in these texts enable them to serve as paradigms of British cultural or collective memory. The study shows the analytical merits of myths, metaphors and stereotypes as essential discourses/fictions of memory relevant for constructing collective identities. The study has also particularly demonstrated how the narrative device of perspective can be particularly relevant for constructing memory which itself has been shown to have many dimensions including, though not limited to, the social, historical, cultural and political. Another relevant finding of the study is the realization that the construction of memory is closely related to the construction of identity and narrative. It is realized that identity is constitutive of culture and that cultures forge memory and identities. Given that the concept of “narrative” is a privileged category of research in memory studies, and granted that narrative is crucial for constructing memory or versions of the past (whether individual or collective), it can be said that narrative serves a memory and identity construction device.

I mentioned in the introductory part of this study the motivation or inspiration behind this study: the predominance of certain approaches to English literature and thus the neglect of the more recent memory-sensitive narratological approach to the English novel, drama and poetry, notably in writing dissertations at the postgraduate levels. There is no doubt then that, the memory-sensitive narrative concepts and devices used in analyzing the identified sites of memory in the study can be transferred to the analysis of other literary fictions with potentials for memory, hence the study contains transferable interpretative and analytical methodological tools. In other words, the study supplies interpretative criteria and conceptual guides for analysing fictions of memory. The narratological approach to memory used in the study can reveal its usefulness as interpretative and analytical guides to students writing dissertations or thesis; to teachers when teaching fictions of memory and to other researchers interested in memory cultures. Postgraduate students, teachers and researchers on fictions of memory can benefit a great deal from the memory-sensitive Narratological approach of this study given that the framework suggests sites of memory as well as interpretive and analytical categories of constructing memory.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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