

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

As one of the six continents in the planet, Africa was called the “dark continent” in the past, due to the world’s lack of knowledge about its realm. Nowadays, however, as the growing technology and science significantly assist people in their exploration and exploitation, almost all the features provided by the exotic land are finally revealed, especially its fascinating landscapes and assorted inhabitants, which are described quite noticeably in the novels discussed in this thesis.

I have chosen to discuss the portrayal of black African societies in the novels *She* by Henry Rider Haggard and *The Leopard Hunts in Darkness* by Wilbur Smith, which contain vivid and detailed descriptions of black African societies. The two novels are concerned with different literary eras, colonial and post-colonial ones, and I expect to get a deep insight into the developments of the black African societies in the two different eras, which seemingly cannot be found so obviously in other genres.

As for the authors' significance, which is also the main reason why I have chosen their works, Henry Rider Haggard is a prolific English writer, who once got acquainted with the Zulu culture in Africa, and is the author of thirty-four well-known adventure novels, including the romantic adventure tale *King Solomon's Mines* and *Allan Quatermain* (<http://www.classicreader.com/author.php/aut.22>), while Wilbur Smith is also a bestselling author of adventure fiction (<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0810335/bio>); he is a writer with an abundance of power in his words. (<http://www.gnooks.com/discussion/wilbur+smith.html>). The two novels, *She* and *The Leopard Hunts in Darkness*, are chosen because of their quite comparable aspects, including the dissimilar portrayals and the developments of the black African societies, which makes it necessary to analyze the setting of the stories, and other aspects such as the portrayal of African cultures.

Considering the captivating contrasting aspects, I decide to analyze the differences in the depictions of the black African societies in both works, which are the results of the changes and developments in the colonial and post-colonial eras. I find that there are some deviating descriptions of the black African societies in the novels that cannot be simply ignored in viewing the two novels. I find it interesting to compare them in order to reveal the two different views on the black African societies.

I choose the Post-colonial Approach to analyze the portrayal of the black African societies in the novels, as I find it effective in finding the particular differences in the portrayal of the black African societies.

Post-colonialism is ‘...a term which refers to a broader understanding of the modern representations of race and ethnicity and the history of these representations.’ (<http://www.adamranson.freeseve.co.uk/postcolonialism.htm>). The quotation shows that the post-colonial approach deals with changes of representations.

In analyzing the black African societies, I also refer to some elements of post-colonialism. I learn that ‘...the Nations created by the end of Empire have been irrevocably altered by the experience of Colonisation (Culturally, Politically & Economically)...’(<http://www.adamranson.freeseve.co.uk/postcolonialism.htm>). The quotation refers to some general elements of post-colonialism which concern various changes in their representations. Those changes are mainly caused by the long-term experiences of colonization, including the colonizers’ influences in the related issues (culture, politics and economy).

Furthermore, to support my analysis of the portrayal of the black African societies in the novels, I would also like to refer to another element of Post-colonialism, ‘Post-colonialism deals with many issues for societies that have undergone colonialism: the dilemmas of developing a national identity,...’ (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Post-colonialism>). This particular element makes me learn that the colonized people also have problems in developing their own identity in the post-colonial era.

To sum up, the elements of post-colonialism that I refer to are the various changes in the colonized people’s representations and their problems to develop an identity in the post-colonial era. Based on those particular elements, I would like to analyze the portrayal of the black African societies in the novels, including

their physical and mental developments and the various changes of their representations in the colonial and post-colonial eras. In referring to them, I would also analyze both the internal and external aspects which become the reasons why such changes and developments can inevitably occur in the black African societies described in the novels.

Statement of the Problem

1. How do the authors portray the African societies in the novels?
2. What are the developments and differences in the portrayal of the black African societies found in both novels?
3. Why are there differences in the representations of the African societies found in both novels?

Purpose of the Study

1. To describe how the authors portray the black African societies in the novels.
2. To define the developments and differences in the portrayal of the black African societies in both novels.
3. To show the main reasons for the differences in the representations of the black African societies in both novels.

Method of Research

I use library research in carrying out my study. I read *She* and *The Leopard Hunts in Darkness* as the primary texts, and then read several references that are relevant to the topic being discussed. I also read the biographies of the authors. I then analyze the portrayal of the black African societies in the two novels by using the primary texts and references to support my analysis. Finally, I draw a conclusion from my analysis.

Organization of the Thesis

I organize my thesis into three chapters. I begin with Chapter One, the Introduction, which contains the Background of the Study, Statement of the Problem, and Purpose of the Study. Chapter Two contains a comparison of the contrasting portrayal and developments of African societies in the novel *She* and in the novel *The Leopard Hunts in Darkness*. The last chapter is the Conclusion, which contains the analysis of the major causes of the differences in the portrayal and representations of the African societies in the two novels. The thesis ends with the Bibliography and the Appendix, which contains the synopses of the novels and the biographies of the authors.