

Free heart of darkness by joseph conrad book review example

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Analysis of Heart of Darkness by Joseph Conrad

The novel Heart of Darkness develops its storyline around Charles Marlow describing his experience as an ivory dealer. He transports ivory using the Congo River located from Central Africa. The events in the novel happen between two societies that are completely different, the civilized and uncivilized communities. As such, imperialism and colonialism take charge of the story filled with evil. The characters, setting, events and storyline revolve around developing the events of imperialism and colonialism in the novel.

This analytical essay looks into the above elements of the story.

The story develops the themes of hypocrisy of imperialism and colonialism.

As Marlow travels around, he encounters incidences of torture and cruelty to Africans. He comes to know of the near slavery conditions that the Africans are subjected to by his fellow Europeans. When Marlow comes to know of Kurtz, he knows him to rule and trade through violence. This shows how Africans are suffering from both their leaders and Europeans, who are their colonizers. The story brings out the evils and atrocities that were being committed by the foreigners to the African people, and Marlow is torn between his honest and aligning himself with his fellow evil associates.

The characters Marlow and Kurtz help the reader understand Conrad's novel themes of imperialism and colonialism. Marlow is brought out as an independent thinker, capable, intelligent and a tough man. The story is narrated through the central character Marlow giving accounts of his travelling to Africa and his encounters. His independence and intelligence are reflected in his ability to decide and act wisely during tough times in his journey. Kurtz can be viewed within a bigger tradition. Kurtz is depicted as a

man of high character who struggles to live to the end. He is also shown as malicious, evil and to some extent insignificant in his thoughts. Marlow shows him as being hollow and empty at most of the times, although this can be attributed to the hardships faced in the region it was still a setback for the leader. Kurtz is presented as a man of many faces as different people in the story are portrayed as having different perceptions of him. He was a great politician and leader to the journalist, a musician to his cousin, and a genius and humanitarian to his fiancé.

The events of the novel bring out the characters as great British explorers who embark on a voyage to explore the African territories. The story shows the relationship between the sailors as being cordial. They would play games in the steamer as they set sail. Upon arriving in Africa, the relationship is brought as professional and sour as the pilgrims, cannibals and the leaders interact in their expeditions. The setting of the novel is initially in a steamer that is cruising on the waters that link the British territory to the African Nation. Later the setting is in the foreign African nation where the British sailors colonize and use the Africans to provide labor in their country. These settings are very critical to the story in the sense that they produce an appropriate background that is relevant to the story flow for exercising imperialism and colonialism. Historically, the British explorers used water as the means of transport to venture into other nations. Thus, the setting of the story is very appropriate to the events flow.

The story timeline is that of the past when the British used to explore and colonize other nations. As Marlow tells the story, it brings out the historical saying of the sun never sets in the British Empire with the crew and the

leader Kurtz struggling to establish their power and carry on with their activities in the foreign land. The natives are seen to rebel against the explorers. As the story ends, a confrontation occurs between the pilgrims and the explorers as they set sail to leave the country and return to their motherland. The story is solidly grounded to the events of the past and can only be used to tell the history of the ancient explorers and those they colonized.

The story is organized in a chronological order with the narrator giving the story from the time they set sail all through the events that occur in a foreign land up to the time they returned to their motherland. The telling of the story is chronological in both the timing and the places. The author of the story tells it in a detailed manner describing the events and places in depth. The story covers comprehensively all the character actions, different places and occurrences at various periods that allow the reader to be able to visualize and flow with the story to the end.

Symbolism is a style of writing that is employed by many authors in writing; it is used to describe concepts and thoughts by making use of objects, figures, and colors. In the novel, Heart of Darkness, the river can be said to represent the core or the path for Europeans to enter Africa. The river is depicted trying to throw out the explorers from Africa as it makes sailing from Africa faster, and easier compared to the sailing into Africa, which is slow and hard. Another symbol used in the story is that of the fog to represent uncertainty or unclear circumstances. Marlow's steamer is caught in the fog as he is sailing showing that he is getting into uncertainty. Women are used to showing the heritage of the society and as a show of a man's

prosperity in the story.

Based on the above analysis, it is possible to conclude that all the elements of the story make the novel very captivating and exciting to read, hence effectively bringing out the themes of imperialism and colonialism. It is through the author's way of telling the story that the reader can visualize and understand the message of the story.