

# Imperialism in heart of darkness assignment



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Imperialism in Heart of Darkness BY Publicly Marrows experiences in Africa reveal a shadow of the human race that few see. He speaks of the pervasive darkness that shadows all thoughts and actions In Africa. While this darkness can be perceived as the Congo corrupting moral European men, the motif starts in Europe, far before Marrow reaches Africa. Concord's first-hand experiences in Africa spurred him to write Heart of Darkness as a criticism of Imperialist Europe. Imperialism is often thought of as spreading Christ and necromancy, full of noble intentions and good works.

In fact, the whole purpose of the Belgians being in Africa was to obtain wealth, marring anyone's good Intentions from the start. This corruption Is present before the Europeans adventure Into the Congo. Several references are made to the purpose of the Europeans In Africa. With a man telling Marrow that everyone was down there " To make money, of course" (Page 35). The White Man's Burden, a phrase often associated with imperialism, shows the hollowness felt by the Europeans. Feeling as if they had a duty to spread democracy and religion, the men embarked upon a trip that ultimately did nothing but corrupt a region and hurt the natives.

The Insensitivity felt toward the natives In the novel further exemplifies the true reason for the Belgians' presence In Africa, " They grabbed what they could get for the sake of what was to be got. It was just robbery with violence, aggravated murder on a great scale, and men going at it blind?? as is very proper for those who tackle a darkness. The conquest of the earth, which mostly means the taking it away from those who have a different complexion or slightly flatter noses than ourselves, Is not a pretty thing when you look into It too much.

What redeems It's the Idea only. An idea at the back of it; not a sentimental pretence but an Idea; and an unselfish belief in the Idea" (Page 8). Marrow knows that there are no unselfish reasons or actions once a man becomes an imperialist. The only redemption is the fantastical ideal that is presented in association with imperialism. This idea is offered as the purpose of and excuse for imperialism, but the stark reality is that most of the Europeans did not have good intentions when first traveling to the Congo.

The lack of a good Intent when first traveling to Africa is what causes the ultimate demise of the Europeans, not the Congo itself. The Idea of the Heart of Darkness originating in Europe is further illuminated by Conrad's use of the motif of light versus dark. When Marrow is first signing up to travel to Africa, he sees a map shining on the wall of the dark waiting room. This map is color coded to show the work being done by Belgium in different regions of the world.

From the start, imperialism is literally painted with light, as the map is described as glowing. " Deal table in the middle, plain chairs all round the walls, on one end a large shining map, marked with all the colors of a rainbow (Page 13). This presentation of a shining map appears to affirm imperialism. However, the map is juxtaposed with the gloom of the waiting room where the good work of the imperialists supposedly starts. This deliberate juxtaposition demonstrates 19th century Rupee's views contrasted with what Conrad saw and experienced.

In the first chapter of the novel, the narrator describes London, the greatest town of Earth, with gloom and fog. Right away, the greatest town in the

world is presented as not-too-great, and shows Concord's skewed fades and disappears when it hits the clouds of the west. " Only the gloom of the Nest, brooding over the upper reaches, became more somber every minute, as if angered by the approach of the sun. And at last, in its curved and imperceptible fall, the sun sank low, and from glowing white changed to a dull red without rays and

Introit heat, as if about to go out suddenly, stricken to death by the touch of that gloom brooding over a crowd of men" (Page 4). The light of the sun bowing to the dark of the west embodies the corruption brought by the Europeans. The natural, untamed light falls when exposed to the dark corruption of the imperialists. Before Marrow even reached the supposed origin of the darkness in Africa, it is already clear that darkness resides in the Enlightened Europe, causing one to ponder whether the heart of darkness really is the Congo.