

## Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*: Debunking the Two Basic Imperial Clichés

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**ABSTRACT:** *Joseph Conrad's in his Heart of Darkness has been condemned as a supporter and defender of the imperialist views and in other situations he is thought to be ambivalent, ambiguous and indecisive concerning this same topic. This paper aims at proving that in Heart of Darkness Conrad employs strategy of introducing the long established imperial clichés to debunk them and to show how fake they are. This strategy is successful and convincing in depicting the cruelties that are caused by the power and authority of imperialism especially if we put this novel within its historical context; a time when imperialism and all of its byproducts were acceptable as practices of the white man's burden theory.*

**KEYWORDS:** Imperialism, atrocities, clichés, Victorian readers, Congo, efficiency, redeeming idea.

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### INTRODUCTION

Much ink has been shed on discussing Joseph Conrad's attitude towards imperialism in his *Heart of Darkness*. Sometimes he is condemned as a supporter and defender of the imperialist views and in other situations he is thought to be ambivalent, ambiguous and indecisive concerning this same topic. This paper aims at proving that in *Heart of Darkness* Conrad employs the strategy of presenting and highlighting the long established imperial clichés just to debunk them and to show how fake they are. To enhance his view as an anti-imperialist of his time, he feeds this strategy with examples of the cruelties that are caused by the power and authority of imperialism. This strategy proves to be so convincing each time it is applied to the atrocities he witnesses in his journey to the Inner station. Exposing the ugliness of imperialism through this gradual credible strategy has also been employed to intensify the shock effect among his readers. No other strategy can be described as more efficient especially when we take into consideration that Conrad published his novella in 1889. This was the Victorian era, the time when imperialism and all of its byproducts were acceptable applications of the white man's burden theory.

This two-step uncovering process has been a successful technique that has enabled Conrad to reverse the deeply rooted image of Africa as the land of darkness. Throughout this great literary work, one starts to absorb the idea that Europe itself and all of its ideologies and theories are the true sources of darkness.

**Historical Context**

Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* was a product of the turn – of – the – last century and because the way we comprehend and grasp the world is often established by the "dominant ideologies of a certain time, place and culture," we really need to dig deeper into the time that witnessed the birth of this canonical work (Shnauder, Ludwig 2005, p.1). Morgan Svenson (2010) supports the statement that it is not fair to expect a literary production of the colonial era to be totally post-colonial. He agrees with critics like Edward Said who believe that this specific text must be read as "an important time document" within its own historical context. Conrad as the son of his time does not imagine a substitute to imperialism, a normal given of that time because the natives presented in his works seem to be incapable of managing their life (pp. 11 – 14).

Jocelyne Corneille (2013) confirms Conrad's "progressivity" by saying that he wrote *Heart of Darkness* at a time when most people admired imperialism. It is of great importance to remember that this novel was written and published in the 1890s under the direct influence of the Victorian way of thinking against which Conrad was not hundred percent immunized. He was ahead and took the lead, however. Through this work and his description of the atrocities committed against the natives, he managed to give a hand to the international campaign against the Belgian presence in Congo. Corneille adds that the way Third World critics have perceived this work is not totally negative. Achebe, for instance; calmed down his storms against *Heart of Darkness*. Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, Wilson Harris, Frances B Sigh, and C.P. Sarvan unanimously agree that Conrad was progressive in his "satiric accounts of colonialism" (pp.62 – 63). Hunt Hawkins (1979) is a former supporter of this point. He reminds us that anti-imperialism was uncommon or that imperialism was something not unaccepted, to the degree that Karl Marx was a supporter of Victorian ideas concerning imperialism as the only means to bring industrial progress to Africa ( p. 294).

Thais Dinize (2002) concludes his/her paper by saying that we can never ignore the fact that *Heart of Darkness* was published in the closing years of the nineteenth century and Conrad was a man of his age in which colonialism was proper, accepted and defended. Cedric Watts (1983) wishes that Achebe had never ignored that *Heart of Darkness* was published in 1899, when imperialism was in its heyday so that he would skim the cream off this novella as a work that brought to the light the dark heart of imperialism and condemned all its kinds. Watts goes to the point of believing that *Heart of Darkness* and Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* are very similar and complete each other (pp.197- 204).

**The Ambiguous Conrad**

Critics since the early years that followed its publication up to now believed that *Heart of Darkness* is pregnant with multiple interpretations hindering any attempt to judge it as an anti-imperialist work. Igna Clendinnen (2007) traces the stages and phases of the reception of this masterpiece. The earliest responses, more than a century ago, welcomed it as a literary document highlighting the differences between the two kinds of imperialism ruling at that time. The first being the British imperialism described as "high minded," compared to the Belgian "money-grabbing form." After fifty years, E. M. Forster ignored the political side of this long tale and moved the spotlight to Conrad's skill as a writer. In fact, Forster was the first critic to raise the issue of Conrad's vagueness and mistiness. Then in 1977 came Achebe and redirected the stream of

criticism and reception of *Heart of Darkness* declaring it as "offensive and totally deplorable" and written by a "thoroughgoing racist." Clendinnen concludes her article by saying that her reading this foggy novella more than once just wraps it with more layers of mist.

Abdullatif Alkhaiat (2010) and Corneille (2013) view Conrad as a man of ambiguity and paradox who aborts any effort to understand his life and literary works especially those related to his Congo experience which best depicts his multi-layered complexity.

Laura Mooney (2015) finds no settled interpretation in this long tale. She only notices a contradictory narrative. Marlow's narrative is in the first person and this depicts the intensity of doubts and lack of certainty. To defend her opinion, our critic refers to the episode when the anonymous narrator warns the reader that Marlow's narrative is slippery and prone to be misdeciphered.

Hawkins (1979) is an early proponent of the belief that Conrad's attitude concerning imperialism is intricate since he usually deals with each case separately. His essays and letters express different views of imperialism depending on the colony being discussed, the dominating colonizing power and the topic or question under discussion. Hawkins adds that imposing one single interpretation on this work is almost impossible. Each and every critic can generate his own interpretation depending on the different assumptions they hold.

Terry Collits (2005) sees that Achebe in his merciless attack on Conrad has turned a blind eye to the fact that Conrad's language in this specific work is slippery, shifty and carries more than one meaning and as many interpretations as there are readers belonging to different political, religious and racial backgrounds.

This paper takes Conrad's anti-imperialist attitude as a starting point to prove how he employs this slippery, intricate and foggy language to serve the two-step strategy he opts for to uncover the horrors and hypocrisy of the whole colonial discourse.

Corneille (2013) is a supporter of this viewpoint. He believes that Conrad used different means like symbolism, situations of paradox and ambiguity to reach his intended destination which is criticizing imperialism and showing its dark face. Corneille supports her discussion by surveying many opinions of critics who really admire the great outstanding effort made by Conrad to scrutinize imperialism. Ezekiel Mphahlele and D.C.R.A. Goonetilleke claim that Conrad was one of the few novelists who managed to objectively portray people from outside their culture whose souls are enveloped in a skin of a different color.

The superficial inability of Marlow to "completely transcend the imperialist perspective" underlines the fact that this text feeds many different interpretations (Schnuder, 2005 p.11). Dinize (2002) frankly says that Conrad went "a step further" by showing us that it is impossible for a human being to contribute to colonialism and remain uncorrupted. The writer places *Heart of Darkness* within the postcolonial spectrum because it closely examines the whole experience of colonialism (p.129). Clendinnen (2007) concludes her article by insisting that the clearest theme in this novella is that attempting to exercise power to impose your culture over those who belong to a different culture brings catastrophic ends for both sides (p.17).

Edward Said (1994) defends Conrad and his narrator against being ambivalent by saying that for a person who lived at that time, it was almost impossible to imagine the world without imperialism and the African natives governing themselves in spite of his sharp direct criticism of colonialism as a form of land theft. Marlow while deeply reflecting on Kurtz' words at his deathbed, reaches the belief that this same darkness that Kurtz and his imperialism pretend coming to fight, is retaliating sooner or later. But it was too early for Marlow and Kurtz to foresee or name that retaliation as a struggle by the natives to gain their independence ( pp.23-30).

C. P. Sarvan (1980) documents a conversation with Ngugi Wa Thiongo who though accepts some of Achebe's points concerning *Heart of Darkness*, sees that the latter has ignored the fact that Conrad has severely attacked imperialism and unveiled its atrocities. Wa Thiongo highlights the skulls stuck on poles episode to back his argument.

Hunt Hawkins (1982) compares Achebe's speech in 1975 with his revised version in 1988. While in the earlier version Achebe turns a blind eye to Conrad's anti-imperialism, he concludes his later edition saying that "Conrad saw and condemned the evil of imperial exploitation" (p.365).

Cedric Watts (1983) sees *Heart of Darkness* a clear portrait of the barbarity and savagery of Western civilization while Laura Moony (2015) describes Kurtz as a "modern hero" because he exposes the ugly face, illegitimacy and hypocrisy of colonialism (p.59). A view also highlighted by Caryl Phillips (2003) as he concludes his interview with Achebe.

Conrad is a writer who transcended his time, and *Heart of Darkness* "is one of fiction's strongest statements about imperialism. "It is a long painful journey during which the novelist, his narrator and the readers witness a deep and immense change. A change that allows Arthur Conan Doyle to crown this novella as "the most influential and vigorous work ever to deal with colonialism" (Hunt Hawkins 1979, pp.286-293).

## **Two Important Issues**

### **Conrad and Marlow (The Author and the Narrator)**

To make the point of this paper clear to the full, it is important to deal with two points. The first point is the extent to which Marlow identifies with Conrad. Some critics like Achebe see that they are totally identical. Conrad once said that *Heart of Darkness* is in a way or another his own real experience with some slight modifications for literary reasons. But does this mean that the narrator and the novelist are identical or interchangeable? Digging into the biographies of both characters, it can be easily seen that they have many similarities, both were employed by a Belgian company with the help of a female relative, the two of them have gone through a long risky journey in Congo. Conrad in *Kenshasa* met some characters we meet in his novella. Many critics insist that these and many other features in common in the two biographies must not mean jumping to the conclusion that Marlow and Conrad are identical ( Inga Clendinnen, 2007, p.5).

This paper stands in the middle and deals with this novella as a track taken by Marlow following Conrad's steps, exposing the atrocities of imperialism, proving its lack of

efficiency and its departure from the original civilizing mission. It is the story of an ordinary man who has to go through a difficult experience to become " a good person" (Ramona Anttonen, 2001).

### **Why Is imperialism in Congo Different?**

The other point is to clarify how the Belgian imperialism differs from any other kind of imperialism. Hawkins (1979) gives a detailed description of the history and nature of the Belgian occupation in Congo. It was the time of king Leopold II who was bankrupt and in serious need for money. Congo was like his own property, not a Belgian colony. His policy was never to improve that colony; he only wanted money. The Belgian imperialism lacked the justification that stood behind any colonial case which is the claim of bringing light to the colonized area. The stumbling railway project and the inadequate currency system are some examples that demonstrate that the Belgian presence was also inefficient. These deficits made Congo the best starting point for Conrad to wage his war on colonialism. It is worth mentioning that Heart of Darkness inspired reformers in Europe who eventually managed to put an end for Leopold II's reign in Congo on 7<sup>th</sup> October, 1909.

### **Preparing the Turn-of-the-Last Century Readers**

Since the early beginning of the novel, the turn-of-the-last century readers are prepared to anticipate a story that consists of steps of change, a journey towards maturity and wisdom. Conrad opens the novel by making it clear that Europe is not the heart of light

Light comes out of this river since – you say  
Knight? Yes; but it is like a running blaze on  
a plain, like a flash of lightning in the clouds.  
We live in the flicker- may it last as long as  
the old Earth keeps rolling. ( *Heart of Darkness*, p.5)

The light in Europe is so temporary. It is like the "flicker." Marlow seems to suggest that even Europe itself has its own dark side.

Conrad allows Marlow to start accusing the Romans as "no colonists" but "conquerors" who " grabbed what they could get for the sake of what was to be got," to prepare the reader, and especially those of his time, to hear a new statement about what they call colonialism. He wants to expose the fact that a true experience of colonialism that allows "you to look into it too much" like the one he is about to narrate, will depict that "[t]he 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 ... ." Conrad's audience is made to prepare themselves to hear a new definition of colonialism, a definition they may not like. This is made clear when the unnamed narrator says that Marlow is like any other story teller who "seems so often unaware of what their audience would best like to hear;" ( Heart of Darkness pp.6-7).

Soon Marlow starts narrating his story which he describes as

It was the farthest point of navigation and the culminating point of my experience. It seemed somehow to throw a kind of light on everything about me – and into my thoughts. It was somber enough, too –and pitiful – not extraordinary in any way – not very clear either. No, not very clear. And yet it seemed to throw a kind of light. (*Heart of Darkness* p.7)

Marlow also tells his small audience on board the ship that his earlier experiences in the East have prepared him for " a heavenly mission to civilize you (*Heart of Darkness*, p.8). Again, Conrad through his narrator prepares his recipients to hear something new; the non-Europeans are also civilized and belong to cultures that deserve to be respected. Taramattie Singh (2004) thinks that Conrad was affected by Rousseau and his ideas about the civilized and the savages. Rousseau says that the civilized try to appear as good and caring but in reality they don't possess any of these good qualities (p.3).

### **Conrad's Two-Step Strategy**

Conrad debunks all of the colonial clichés through a strategy referred to by Watts (1983) as the "organizational principle of *Heart of Darkness*." Watts explains this principle as a two-fold step process. In the first step, the clichés are conjured up and then aroused only to be destroyed and undermined in the second step (pp.197-198). The first example to be traced of this strategy is the case when the primary un-named narrator starts talking about the greatness of the Thames and Marlow immediately interrupts him by saying that it "has been one of the darkest places of the earth" (*Heart of Darkness* p.4).

### **Debunking the Efficiency of Imperialism**

Marlow, our Buddah-like preacher begins his narrative listing the two reasons the Europeans usually resort to in order to justify their theft of other people's lands. The first is " efficiency" and the second is the "idea." (*Heart of Darkness*, pp.6-7). This part of the paper shows how Marlow debunks both lies and prove how fake they are.

Marlow tells us about his childhood. A chapter of his life spent studying maps. He has noticed that most of Africa was still "blank spaces" or uncolonized. Caught by the greatness of the Congo river, he has a child thought that the natives can never utilize that river without using "some kind of craft on that lot of fresh water – steamboats" (*Heart of Darkness* pp.8-9). At this point our narrator supports a cliché common at his time about the ability of the Africans to run their matters and that they inevitably need superior European civilization to bring them knowledge and progress.

In the case of this episode of the Congo river and the efficiency of the Europeans and their steamboats, the second step in Conrad's fore mentioned strategy is delayed. This whole idea of modern inventions which Marlow refers to as " efficiency" is gradually debunked later as our narrator show that in the Congo, the Europeans practice lacks this efficiency. While on board the French steamer, he notices that a French ship is bombarding a certain area in the African coast where there "wasn't even a shed there,

and she was shelling the bush. ... a little white smoke could happen. ... And nothing happens. Nothing could happen. There was a touch of insanity in the proceeding, ... ." The whole European presence in that continent is nothing more than a farce or " a weary pilgrimage amongst hints of nightmares" (*Heart of Darkness*, pp.17-18).

As soon as he arrives to his company's station, he sees a boiler moving slowly in the grass, a small railway truck lying on its back with its broken wheels in the air. Then he notices other broken machines that are covered with rust and some men aimlessly and in vain trying to blow a cliff which does not stand even in the way of the railway they intend to build. Then and while trying to avoid falling into a large hole that has been dug for no useful reason at all, Marlow nearly falls into a narrow ravine. In that ravine he discovers drainage pipes that are all broken (*Heart of Darkness*, p.19). So through these descriptions, Conrad wants to tell us that the so called efficiency depending on which some would support imperialism, does not exist. Corniel (2013) maintains that in *Heart of Darkness* most of the white characters lack efficiency, they are incapable of managing things successfully in Africa (p.49).

While trying to dodge seeing more of these horrible scenes of men being dragged like animals, Marlow decides to change his route just to find himself face to face with more unexpected horror, another devilish scene conjured by the presence of colonialism

Black shapes crouched, lay, sat between the trees  
leaning against the trunks, clinging to the earth,  
half coming out, half effaced, in all the attitudes  
of pain, abandonment, and despair. Another mine  
on the cliff went off, followed by a slight shudder  
of the soil under my feet. The work was going on.  
The work! And this was the place where some of  
the helpers had withdrawn to die. (*Heart of Darkness*, pp.17-18).

Those enslaved men who have been eating food not familiar to them become inefficient. Comparing them to those free Africans who are described earlier as being lively, full of life and healthy proves that whenever imperialism interferes, everyone and everything become inefficient.

When our narrator meets the company's chief accountant for the first time, he is bedazzled by the unexpected elegance of this white man with his white starched collar, unbelievably white trousers, shining shoes and well- styled hair. This elegant accountant is busy with his numbers and calculations. He really works perfectly and efficiently. This description may make us think that Marlow admires this super-efficient accountant, but a few lines later, our narrator smites us with his bitter words about this same person, say Hawkins (1979) and Taramattie Singh (2004). It is as if he tells us that what efficiency is to be admired while within a short distance of this accountant's desk and papers men are left to die silently in the grove of death.

As Marlow advances in his journey, he meets more and more inefficient white men. The manager in the Central Station with his untidy work, another white man trying to get water from the river to extinguish an eventful fire with a bail with a hole at its bottom. A third aristocratic employee who has been appointed to make bricks, a product which Marlow can trace no sign of. Add to this Marlow's waiting for more than three weeks for the nails to arrive so that he can fix the steamer. Other employees, white also, fighting and backbiting one another instead of minding their business.

All of these are examples that establish a strong disbelief in the whole civilizing mission. These examples shake the first pillar upon which imperialism depends to justify its theft of other people's lands and freedom.

### **Debunking the Idea**

As the novel moves on, Marlow apparently changes his views. Values and moral conduct become more important for him than efficiency. Conrad, through his narrator's eyes shows us the inhuman practices of imperialism both in the Outer and Inner stations, practices that contradict the beliefs common during the Victorian era about the noble mission of the imperial power (Ludwig, 2005 pp.2-3).

Some critics maintain that Marlow supports imperialism by believing in an "idea at the back of it" (*Heart of Darkness*, p.7). Corneille (2013) depicts that the essence of this "idea" which Said calls "a rhetoric of civilizational self-justification," is a belief that the Europeans or those who belong to the Western world are "superior" to the non-Western ones. And as a reward for their efforts in bringing light and civilization to those inferior races, they can go through commercial enterprises to strengthen their economy. In other words, colonialism is good for both sides. Hawkins (1979) presents us with a definition of the "idea" as a "commitment to the role, to the place, and to the men among whom he lives." A definition that not a symptom of can be traced in *Heart of Darkness*, making all the imperialists in this long tale "conquerors" rather than "colonists." As a result, Hawkins sees that both Conrad and Marlow refuse to accept the justification of "the idea" throughout the novel. Neither the idea nor the principles will stop the devil of greed that dwells in the European mentality. Contrary to that, Marlow sees that "the idea" behind the civilizing mission just urges and gives more pulse to the European devils of greed (pp.287-296). The narrator tells us that Kurtz occupies a major seat among the devils of this world. He is offered sacrifice and the natives treat him as a god. A false embodiment of the "redeeming idea." And this is just an example of people who come with the idea of the civilizing mission.

A striking example of Conrad's debunking strategy is the episode when Marlow goes to say good – bye to his aunt, the one who has helped him get the job. This aunt and her friends hail him as an exceptional creature and one of them tells him that he has a noble job there which is to civilize and pacify those ignorant people there. While she goes on talking about that noble mission, Marlow makes us recover from these clichés when he says that her words have made him feel uncomfortable venturing to say "that the Company was run for profit." A profit that even the doctor who has examined Marlow wants to share in his own way (*Heart of Darkness*, pp.14-15).

The sketch in oils that Marlow notices in the manager's messy office foreshadows the defeat of the discourse of the "redeeming idea." In this sketch drawn by Kurtz, a woman

carrying a torch is surrounded by darkness with her eyes covered by a piece of black cloth (*Heart of Darkness*, p.35). The woman in this sketch resembles Europe and its civilizing mission. The woman carries a torch, the Europeans are supposed to bring light and knowledge for Africa, but they become blinded by the pursuit of their interests and commercial benefits to the degree that they cannot see the dark side of imperialism (Coneille 2013, pp.87 – 94).

In fact, in the closing lines of the first part of this novella, our Buddha-like narrator prepares us to face this moment

I had plenty of time for meditation, and now and then I  
would give some thought to Kurtz. I wasn't very interested  
in him. No. Still, I was curious to see whether this man,  
who had come out equipped with moral ideals of some sort,  
would climb to the top after all and how he would set about  
his work when there (*Heart of Darkness*, p.44).

Using the word "whether" allows us to predict one option; the one not mentioned in the lines quoted above. The episode of the Swede captain and his story about the man, a Swede also, who has hanged himself intensifies the emotional impact of the loss of the "idea." The Swede captain struggling with his English cannot understand why people seem ready to commit the worst atrocities for the sake of money. He cannot understand what happens with his fellows when they go deeper in that land. When Marlow promises him an answer on his return, the captain tells him not to be so sure of coming back, mentioning the story of the Swede who has committed suicide for no clear reason. It is as if Marlow hints that if one sticks to the "redeeming idea," he will never stand the atrocities and ugly practices of those who have lost it. Reminding us again of the episode of the doctor at the beginning of the novella while Marlow was making a medical checkup before leaving to Congo. The doctor measures the "crania of those going out there," whom he never has the chance to meet again for a second measurement. The doctor thinks that making a post measurement is not of that importance because the anticipated change takes place inside the person. Marlow remembers this incident while travelling on foot under the hot African sun accompanied by some Africans and a European man. Marlow says that this man "was very anxious for me to kill somebody, ... . I remember the old doctor, - It would be interesting for sciences to watch the mental changes of individuals, on the spot" (*Heart of Darkness*, p.28).

All of these situations set our minds to accept Conrad's view of imperialism. Preparing the reader to see Kurtz' transformation to an archdevil spreading a darkness that has been intensifying in his heart. Conrad in each episode starts by flickering the privileges of imperialism, just to shock us with how ugly and inhuman it can be. He attempts through this technique to shake the long-established beliefs about the good intentions of the imperialist powers.

Even if we want to deal with the "redeeming idea" as bringing the light of Christianity to this continent, Marlow proves to us that it doesn't work.

Marlow starts his work trying to fix the steamer thinking that only work can sustain his ability to "keep hold on the redeeming facts of life" (*Heart of Darkness*, p.31). Here one may think that Marlow still believes in one part of the "redeeming idea." But he immediately subverts his belief by his description of the pilgrims as "strolling aimlessly", "faithless" and bewitched." The only word that can be heard in their murmurs is the word "ivory," to the degree that one may think that they are praying to it. Those pilgrims, like any other imperialists, have founded a new god called ivory (Sarvan,1980 p.9). Instead of spreading the light of Christianity, they twist their mission towards the pursuit of ivory. They are faking the religious mission or in Marlow's words "light can also be made to lie" (*Heart of Darkness*, pp.31-32).

Conrad has hinted at this process of twisting religion in the opening pages of his work. When Marlow goes to Brussels to sign the contract, he remarks that that city makes him think of Whited Sepulcher. This remark carries negative connotations. A sepulcher is in the first a brutal place. May be Conrad wants to tell us that all the ethics that one day stood behind and justified the imperial discourse are no more alive. Ramona Anttonen (2001) adds another negative connotation. Whited Sepulcher is mentioned in the Bible in Mathew 23:26 when Jesus likens the Pharisees to it intending to say that they look clean and nice on the outside, but the truth is that they are hypocrites and dark from the inside (pp.21-22).

*Heart of Darkness* concludes with a lie, says Kathleen Nigro (2012). The darkness that has grown in Kurtz' heart and consumed all his African surroundings can never be deciphered by someone who hasn't experienced it firsthand. Conrad wants to re-strengthen his theme in his reader's minds. A theme which demonstrates that the whole white man's burden assumption is nothing but a lie.

Dinize (2002), Clendinnen (2007), Singh (2004) unanimously agree that in Conrad's masterpiece, darkness is associated with Europe. Darkness does not lurk in Africa or among its dark skinned inhabitants. It deeply dwells in every European heart that takes part in the imperialist race or approves it. Imperialism is the key that opens the gates of the devils of greed and those of hatred. When Marlow tells the other sailors about the white or blank spaces on the maps he has noticed in his childhood, he hints at the fact that these places remain white and pure as long as they are not explored by the whites. This moral darkness is unstoppable and knows no limits, however. It is like a tidal wave that contaminates the farthest corners of the world, including Europe itself.

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