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Rhetoric in Fiction: A Fantasy-Theme Analysis of Conrad's Heart of Darkness

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Rhetoric in Fiction: A Fantasy-Theme Analysis of

Conrad's Heart of Darkness

(TITLE)

BY

Thomas S. Caldwell

THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
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"Out of the dark we came, into the dark we go.
Like a storm-driven bird at night we fly out of
the Nowhere! For a moment our wings are seen in
the light of the fire, and, lo! we are gone
again into the Nowhere. Life is nothing. Life
is all."

--Umbopa, Zulu servant of Allan
Quatermain in King Solomon's
Mines (277)

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Abstract

This study meets three primary objectives.

First, it demonstrates how rhetorical theory and literary criticism are compatible fields of study and explains how Ernest Bormann's rhetorical theory based on "fantasy-theme analysis" can be used as an appropriate method for the analysis of literary works.

Secondly, this study identifies a trend in late Nineteenth Century "adventure stories" in which travel to foreign lands and European influence on the cultures of those lands is portrayed as "good" and "philanthropic."

Finally, this study concludes with a fantasy-theme analysis of Joseph Conrad's Heart of Darkness which reveals that Conrad's adventure fiction breaks away from the established trends of other adventure writers. Through the fantasy chains within this work, Conrad suggests that European involvement in foreign cultures is harmful to those cultures as well as the individual Europeans involved.

Chapter I

Introduction: Rhetoric and Literature

The purpose of this study is to establish fiction writing as a form of rhetoric and to demonstrate how theories of rhetoric, fantasy theme analysis in particular, may be effectively applied to the study, analysis, and criticism of literature. In this introduction, I will offer a brief history of rhetorical theory in an attempt to show how specific developments in rhetoric and rhetorical analysis lead up to, and include, the study of fictional literature. It is my intent to find one of the "particular and narrow avenues" of rhetoric as an "entrance into literary study" allowing a "wider vision that embraces literature" (Corder, 332). I will then suggest a working definition of rhetoric to be used in the study of literary analysis.

It is suggested in the pertinent literature that rhetorical and literary criticism differ in that rhetorical analysis is concerned with the here-and-now, the specific situation for rhetoric and its effectiveness, while literary analysis concerns itself with the permanent qualities exhibited in the work. As H. A. Wichelns explains:

Rhetorical criticism is necessarily analytical

. . . . It requires a description of the [writer's] audience, and of the leading ideas with which he plied his [readers]--his topics, the motives to which he appealed. . . . These will reveal his own judgement on the questions which he discussed. . . . Nor can rhetorical criticism omit the [writer's] mode of arrangement and his mode of expression 'Style' must receive attention. (56-57)

Wichelns stresses the importance of the here-and-now in rhetorical criticism. The work itself, the writer, the audience: all must be considered analytically to identify the situation and the rhetorical vehicle. But, as Wichelns points out:

literary criticism . . . is concern[ed] with permanent values; because it takes no account of special purpose nor of immediate effect; because it views a literary work as the voice of a human spirit addressing itself to men of all ages and times (57)

By pointing out this difference between rhetorical and literary analysis, Wichelns suggests that the two must remain separate. He claims that literary criticism is limited because "the influence of the period is necessarily relegated to the background; interpretation in the light of

the writer's intention and of his situation may be ignored or slighted. . . "(57). "In short," Wichelns claims, "the point of view of literary criticism is proper only to its own objects, the permanent works" (57).

Although Wichelns makes a credible observation about the difference between rhetorical and literary analysis, the two are not necessarily incompatible. Jim W. Corder (1987) offers an inconclusive plea in this direction:

I think that students of rhetoric and students of literature can learn to listen to each other. . . . We've lived apart within the study of literature for generations, with our divisions among eras, centuries, groups, themes, and individual authors, and good work has been done. Rhetoricians will probably think about rhetoric, and students of literature will probably think about literature, and I suppose that we can sing a hymn in praise of diversity and hope that the two groups will once in a while sally forth to meet each other. (334)

I would like to take Corder's idea one step further and suggest that rhetorical theory may account for both the here-and-now aspects of a fictional work and its permanent qualities in the same study, thus linking rhetoric and literature.

I will demonstrate that Ernest Bormann's (1970) rhetorical theory, fantasy theme analysis, allows us to identify the permanent structure, or the creation of fantasies within the literary artifact, while revealing the dynamic processes within that structure. In this way, the work may be analyzed as a here-and-now, ongoing event while at the same time its permanent significance is regarded. In order to illustrate this idea effectively, I will first discuss the relevant background of rhetoric and rhetorical theory and provide a working definition of rhetoric that is appropriate for modern literary analysis.

Among the first notable rhetoricians were a group of travelling teachers known as sophists. The sophists were prominent members of Greek society during the fifth century B.C. H. D. Rankin relates that a sophist was someone who claimed to teach "sophia" and "arete," the combination of "high moral virtue and worldly success." The sophists "developed uses of language for imparting skill in argument and persuasion" (14). Their approach to rhetoric included metaphysical concepts concerning appearances that, as will be shown, apply to modern fiction. Their ideas, however, were criticized harshly by Socrates, Plato, and others. Plato's dialogues, the best known accounts of the sophists, were "hostile" toward the sophists, and Plato gave them little credit as worthy thinkers and wise men (G. B.

Kerferd, 1981, 4-5). Although their ideas may be questioned on a philosophical basis, the sophists are relevant in the study of fiction, or implied, created reality. They taught that reality, or the truth of an argument (story), is relative to the truth or reality attributed to it by the individuals of its audience.

This concept serves as a guideline to the study of fiction: a fictional work may only be a fabrication of a writer, but its significance is determined by its readers, according to the extent that it is understood and accepted by them. In other words, if fiction is offered as a representation of reality and accepted as such by its readers, it is applicable to reality and thus incorporated into the readers' comprehension of reality. In this manner, participation in a fictional work on the part of the reader becomes a meaningful, significant experience.

An example concerning Mark Twain's Adventures of Huckleberry Finn may clarify this point. If a reader of Huck Finn identifies with Huck and agrees that his attitude toward Jim is proper and admirable, that reader may incorporate this attitude into his/her own comprehension of reality. That is, the reader may begin to behave or think like Huck and regard people as individuals rather than as members of certain ethnic or social groups. In this manner, the implied reality in Huck Finn becomes part of

the reader's comprehension of reality, and reading the work has become a meaningful, significant experience for the reader.

The sophists taught that if people have similar perceptions of reality, they are likely to agree on points in question, thus sophism was a form of rhetoric as persuasion. In turn, if a writer can create a situation or setting--implied reality--that the reader accepts and participates in, then the beliefs, attitudes, opinions, even courses of action within the fictional setting are also likely to be accepted by the reader.

The sophists were concerned with persuasion and "worldly success," which may also be a concern of fiction writers. Although modern writers persuade by example and suggestion through their writing, rather than through direct argument, worldly success comes from book sales and recognition, which depend on the acceptance and shared value of the work. John Steinbeck reinforces the idea of sophistry in fiction. As first-person narrator of his book, East of Eden, he suggests:

I think the difference between a lie and a story is that a story utilizes the trappings and appearance of truth for the interest of the listener as well as of the teller. A story has in it neither gain nor loss. (98)

It is this idea, that a literary work may be significant to its readers, beyond the personal intentions of its author, that I will concentrate on in this study. Unfortunately for the sophists, however, it allows us to eliminate the desire for worldly success as the underlying motive for writing, which means we'll have to go beyond sophistry to discover a rhetorical approach to literary analysis.

The sophistic ideas of individual perception and shared perceptions that affect persuasion through common beliefs, attitudes, and opinions are reflected in contemporary fiction. Through his character Ethan Allen Hawley, John Steinbeck further attests to the significance of sophistry in his book The Winter of Our Discontent:

A man who tells . . . stories must think of who is hearing or reading, for a story has as many versions as it has readers. Everyone takes what he wants or can from it and thus changes it to his measure. Some pick out parts and reject the rest, some strain the story through their mesh of prejudice, some paint it with their own delight. A story must have some points of contact with the reader to make him feel at home in it. Only then can he accept the wonders. (75)

Here, Steinbeck suggests that the reader of fiction becomes

involved in the work and attributes his/her own meaning and significance to it from a personalized perspective, a suggestion that parallels the ideas of the sophists. He claims that all readers have their own interpretation of fiction, but there must be shared meaning, or "points of contact," between writer and reader for the value of the work to be realized.

Joseph Conrad expands this notion so that when many readers make the same points of contact with a writer a "solidarity" is created. In his essay, "Preface to The Nigger of the 'Narcissus.'" Conrad suggests that the writer

speaks to our capacity for delight and wonder, to the sense of mystery surrounding our lives; to our sense of pity, and beauty, and pain; to the latent feeling of fellowship with all creation--and to the subtle but invincible conviction of solidarity in dreams, in joy, in sorrow, in aspirations, in illusions, in hope, in fear, which binds men to each other, which binds together all humanity (1924, p. xii)

Conrad stresses an appeal to the senses much as the sophists appealed to individual perceptions of reality. The sophists claimed that when perceptions are similar, there is a potential for agreement, or persuasion, much as

Conrad claims here that a work that arouses similar emotions among many people creates a "solidarity" in its audience.

Conrad continues:

My task which I am trying to achieve is, by power of the written word, to make you hear, to make you feel--it is, before all, to make you see. That--and no more, and it is everything. If I succeed, you shall find there, according to your deserts, encouragement, consolation, fear, charm--all you demand--and, perhaps, also that glimpse of truth for which you have forgotten to ask. (1924, p.xiv)

The sophists taught that once there is agreement, or shared perceptions, persuasion could take place. From a literary point of view, however, as Conrad shows us here, shared perceptions are not necessarily a way for the writer to persuade or actually change the reader, but rather a way to establish a sense of reality and convey a "glimpse of truth.

The application of sophistry to literary analysis, as demonstrated above, implies a change in the meaning of rhetoric itself. Whereas the sophists considered rhetoric synonymous with persuasion, rhetoric now seems to have evolved into a specialized use of language for effective

communication, whether that communication is intended to be persuasive or not. This evolution, however, was not sudden. Persuasion remained the primary purpose of rhetoric throughout the classical period although a gradual change was evident.

Edward Corbett defines rhetoric as "the art or discipline that deals with the use of discourse, either spoken or written, to inform or persuade or move an audience, whether that audience is made up of a single person or a group of persons" (3). He offers this contemporary view in his excellent account of the classical rhetoricians, Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student. It is interesting to note that this definition is particularly significant to literary analysis in that it enlarges the classical view, based on oral persuasion, to include written discourse (literature) and recognizes a single person audience (individual reader). Before discussing particular methods, however, we need to first investigate what is meant by contemporary rhetoric.

Although persuasion is still an important consideration of the contemporary view of rhetoric, it is no longer regarded as the exclusive end of rhetorical discourse. As Hoyt Hudson suggests, "the identification of rhetoric with persuasion seems to have vanished" (178). The province of rhetoric has expanded beyond mere

persuasion, but there is still no single, universally recognized definition of contemporary rhetoric. Donald C. Bryant suggests that rhetoric is "the rationale of informative and suatory discourse" (404). This definition adds an informative, or expressive, function to the original persuasive function, allowing Bryant to suggest that, in rhetorical situations, "human beings are so organizing language as to effect a change in the knowledge, the understanding, the ideas, the attitudes, or the behavior of other human beings" (411).

Bryant's concept of rhetoric as a use of language to effect change is reinforced and expanded by Lloyd F.

Bitzer:

In short, rhetoric is a mode of altering reality, not by the direct application of energy to objects, but by the creation of discourse which changes reality through the mediation of thought and action. The rhetor alters reality by bringing into existence a discourse of such a character that the audience, in thought and action, is so engaged that it becomes a mediator of change. (4)

Bitzer contributes the idea that the rhetor uses language to effect change through audience involvement. When an

audience reacts to discourse rather than the event, or topic, that inspired the discourse, reality is altered because the real event is replaced by a created discourse, or what Bormann refers to as a "symbolic reality" (1972, 398).

Bormann also calls the discourse that replaces a real event a "fantasy theme." He claims that the removal of a real event from its original context and its placement into a new, created context aids the audience in understanding the original event:

When [rhetors] select certain personae to be part of the fantasy theme, they begin to shape and organize experience. When they select a scene and incidents and place these incidents into a sequence, when they attribute motives to the personae, they interpret, slant, and organize their portrayal of what happened. Because fantasy themes are always slanted, ordered, and interpreted, they provide a rhetorical means for people to account for and explain the same experiences or the same events in different ways. (1982, 53)

Here Bormann claims that the rhetor slants, orders, or interprets his/her fantasy theme(s) in order to present a real event to the audience in an easily understood manner.

He also suggests that when reality is replaced by discourse then that discourse becomes a symbolic reality that is also subject to individual interpretation. Individual interpretations of the symbolic reality may be used in interaction, or what Bormann calls "symbolic convergence:"

Convergence refers to the way, during certain processes of communication, two or more private symbolic worlds incline towards each other, come more closely together, or even overlap. If several or many people develop portions of their private symbolic worlds which overlap as a result of symbolic convergence, they have the basis for communicating with one another to create community, to discuss their common experiences, and to achieve mutual understanding. (1982, 51)

Bormann's idea of an interacting symbolic community is reflected in Kenneth Burke's concept of rhetoric as a means of inducing cooperation:

Rhetoric . . . is rooted in an essential function of language itself, a function that is wholly realistic, and is continually born anew; the use of language as a symbolic means of inducing cooperation in beings that by nature respond to symbols. (43)

Although Burke does not specifically suggest that rhetoric is the use of symbols to alter reality, he does claim that people are naturally inclined toward the use of symbols which confirms the implications of Bryant, Bitzer, and Bormann previously discussed.

In summary, rhetoric has been suggested as a means of replacing reality with discourse, or a symbolic reality, in order to promote cooperation or effect change in reality through the audience's interpretation of and reaction to that discourse in relation to the real, original event or topic that inspired the discourse. This definition is directly related to the classical view of rhetoric that reality is dependent on individual interpretation and shared perceptions that give rhetoric a potential for persuasion. It also allows us to apply rhetorical analysis to fictional works, since they depict real situations--or abstractions of reality that are meant to reflect the feelings, attitudes, opinions, and values inherent in real situations--in a fabricated context in order to express opinions about or effect changes in reality.

Using this working definition of contemporary rhetoric within a specific methodology for literary analysis is my next goal. The following chapter will provide such a methodology based on the theories of Ernest Bormann.

Chapter 2

Fantasy-Theme Analysis

Ernest Bormann's (1972) fantasy-theme analysis is a theory based on Robert Bales' rhetorical criticism of small group communication. Bormann's efforts modify Bales' notions to include the communication of extremely large groups. The theory explains how large groups create a symbolic reality from individual fantasy events or themes, and the basic component of the theory is the "fantasy theme," which is created when a member of the group dramatizes a real issue or event. In Bormann's words, the fantasy theme consists of "characters acting out a dramatic situation in a setting removed in time and space from the here-and-now transactions of the group" (397).

The readership of literary works is a large group that may be included in Bormann's consideration. In the case of fictional literature, the fiction depicts, implies, or suggests a real issue or event (topic) that serves as the basic, or primary, fantasy theme of the work. The fictional work is the removed setting for the transaction between writer and reader. That transaction, the writer's depiction of the real event to the audience, is placed into the context of the work, or created drama. That drama is a "mirror of the group's here-and-now situation and its

relationship to the external environment" (397).

The next component of fantasy-theme analysis is the process of "chaining out," which involves the acceptance and growth of the fantasy theme. New elements are added to the fantasy theme, new themes are created to include and increase the scope of the original topic of the fantasy, and additional group members, or readers, become involved in the fantasy. In terms of literary creations, the writer develops additional themes within the content of the work, the readership of the work increases, and individual readers create additional themes according to their own perceptions as they become involved in the work. As readers join into and accept the fantasies of the work, a created reality emerges. Those participating in a shared reality may "shape the drama [fantasy; shared reality] that excited them . . . into suitable form for a different public" (399). Although Bormann's theory is intended for the study of group communication, the literary critic may consider the "different public" to be the readers' own comprehension of reality to which they apply the created reality. The reader first views the drama as part of the work, then incorporates his or her interpretation of the drama into a personal view of reality.

As the created reality is accepted by more people and additional fantasy themes are added, what Bormann calls a

"rhetorical vision" is formed. He defines rhetorical visions as "composite dramas which catch up large groups of people in a symbolic reality" (398). At this point, the original fantasy theme has expanded, evolved, and been accepted on a large scale. Bormann further suggests that the rhetorical vision may be "propagated to a larger public until a rhetorical movement emerges" (399).

A brief example using Heart of Darkness will show how fantasy-theme analysis could be applied to a literary work. In his novel, Conrad begins with a primary fantasy theme of a fictional character (Marlow) embarking on a journey on the Congo River, a "real" event in the context of a fictional work. This fantasy theme is chained out by the additional events portrayed in the story as the journey progresses, and also by reader involvement. A rhetorical vision of sorts is created when the work is accepted as a complete story by large numbers of readers. Although all rhetorical visions do not result in a rhetorical movement, it can be said that Heart of Darkness does, primarily because it is continually included in literary anthologies, influences the study of English literature and of European imperialism, and provides an ongoing topic for study and research.

This is a brief example provides a general sense of how fantasy-theme analysis can be applied to the study of

literature. More precise applications need to be identified before a structured analysis can be undertaken. The above example also reveals key questions about fantasy themes: whom do they concern, where do they chain out to, and who is included in the resulting rhetorical vision? It occurs to me that in order to use fantasy-theme analysis in literary criticism, we must first observe that it is a process that operates on two separate yet interdependent levels. The first level is within the work itself--the fantasies presented by the author that affect the characters, plot, and subject matter of the work. The second level takes those fantasies out of the work in the form of reader interpretation and acceptance which, in itself, creates a new fantasy system.

In Bormann's words, fantasy-theme analysis proceeds by first "collecting evidence related to the manifest content of the communication" and then discovering and describing "the narrative and dramatic materials that have chained out for those who participate in the rhetorical vision" (401). Thus, we must first examine the work itself and identify its content in terms of fantasies, chaining out, and rhetorical visions. After this, we can examine how fantasies chain out from the work to its audience, how these fantasies are accepted, and what visions are created.

Although this second level of the fantasy-theme

analysis of literature is an integral part of the method, it will be considered secondary in this study for two main reasons. First, the purpose of this study is to examine the work, Heart of Darkness, itself. I am concerned with what the novel offers to the reader. As established in the preceding chapter, literature and rhetoric are linked because they both project messages to their audiences that are subject to individual interpretations, which, in turn, must be similar to each other and agreeable to the audience for the communication to be effective. I wish to identify the ideas that are agreeable and the visions that are the possible results of Conrad's novel, but to analyze its audience in addition is far beyond the scope of this study. Second, investigating too far into the thoughts and reactions of the work's audience would take the analysis, inappropriately, into the realm of reader-response criticism.

My aim is to use fantasy-theme analysis in a literary critique of Heart of Darkness to establish a new viewpoint about the work itself. Bormann continues to offer the means to accomplish this aim: he claims that after collecting evidence and identifying the chaining-out process(es), the critic can "look for patterns of characterizations . . . of dramatic situations and actions . . . and of setting" (401). Here, the literary critic

must also ask how these patterns depict, imply, or suggest a reality that the reader is likely to accept and incorporate into his/her own comprehension of reality.

Finally, Bormann instructs,

the critic must then creatively reconstruct the rhetorical vision from the representative fantasy chains Once the critic has constructed the manifest content of the rhetorical vision he can ask more specific questions relating to elements of the dramas.

(401)

My intention for the use of fantasy-theme analysis in this study is to first identify the mood, or what I call the "underlying fantasy" of popular adventure stories that, like Heart of Darkness, explore the European settlement of Africa. I will then show how the underlying fantasy of Conrad's work differs from the popular adventure fantasy. Having established a different rhetorical base, I will then follow the presentation of fantasies and their chaining out in the novel to show Heart of Darkness from a new perspective, using Bormann's rhetorical theory for a literary analysis.

I suspect viewing Heart of Darkness through the lens of fantasy-theme analysis will satisfy my purpose of establishing Bormann's communication theory as a method of

literary criticism while conducting a productive analysis. Before I begin this task, however, the following chapter concerning Conrad and his works is necessary for us to have a more focused view of Heart of Darkness particularly.

Chapter 3

Conrad and His Works

Joseph Conrad was born into "the landed gentry of Polish culture" in 1857 and christened Josef Konrad Nalecz Korzeniowski (Murfin, 3). The social strife in his native Poland, however, took away this early advantage and started him on a journey that lasted most his life. In 1863, his father, Apollo, led a revolutionary movement against Russia, of which Poland was a western province, and the family was consequently exiled to northern Russia. It was here, in Vologda, that Conrad's mother died in 1865 and his father in 1869 (Newhouse 10).

After the deaths of his parents, young Joseph came under the care of his uncle, Tadeusz Bobrowski, who, after sending Joseph to school in Geneva, allowed him to join the French merchant navy. In September, 1874, while still only 16, Joseph went to France, from where he sailed to Venezuela and the West Indies, spending the next four years at sea. In that time he "squandered a small fortune, lost in love, got involved in a gun-running venture . . . and attempted suicide in 1878" (Murfin 4). Also in 1878, when French authorities would no longer allow him to sail in the French merchant navy, he began to work on British ships where he learned English and continued to sail for sixteen

years (Murfin 4).

Conrad's own life contains the basis of a fantasy theme. Since a fantasy theme consists of "characters acting out a dramatic situation in a setting removed in time and space from . . . here-and-now transactions" (Bormann 397), it is interesting to note that "Polish, not English, was the language Joseph Conrad grew up speaking. English wasn't even his second language: French was." Conrad was a "troubled Pole without a clear-cut family, nationality, language, love, or even calling in life. . . ." (Murfin 3,5). In other words, much of Conrad's own background and experience were "removed" from a permanent setting and presented the writer with material and opportunity for creating fantasies.

Royal Roussel (1971) offers an account of Conrad's works that suggests a fantasy-theme analysis, particularly Conrad's fantasy of "darkness." In his book The Metaphysics of Darkness, Roussel claims that

Like many nineteenth-century writers Conrad was fascinated by theories of evolution and the picture they presented of a world of forms and men developing from undifferentiated matter. (3)

Conrad contemplated such a development of Great Britain.

1

In his novel Heart of Darkness (1921)¹, his character, Charlie Marlow, says of the Thames River "and this also . . . has been one of the dark places of the earth" (19). Marlow goes on to explain:

I was thinking of very old times, when the Romans first came here . . . --the other day Light came out of this river since But darkness was here yesterday Imagine him here--the very end of the world Here and there a military camp lost in a wilderness, like a needle in a bundle of hay--cold, fog, tempests, disease, exile, and death--death skulking in the air, in the water, in the bush They were men enough to face the darkness. (20)

Here, Marlow is describing Great Britain in terms of the African jungle he is to encounter later in the novel. Marlow claims that "Going up that river [Congo] was like travelling back to the earliest beginnings of the world" (48)

Roussel goes a step further with the idea of darkness

1
I have used the 1921 Heinemann edition (the last approved by Conrad) as used by Ross C. Murfin in his Heart of Darkness: A Case Study in Contemporary Criticism. Heart of Darkness was first published in 1899.

in Conrad representing creation and the development of civilization:

Although it is itself without weight or dimension, this darkness lies behind all the distinct forms of creation. In his personal myth, the evolution of the cosmos seems to have been marked for Conrad by a series of stages in which this matter inexplicably took on more and more complex characteristics. (4)

As my analysis of Heart of Darkness will show, Marlow discovers the existence and the origin of this darkness through a series of experiences (fantasies) and revelations during his journey from England to Africa and back.

Roussel also points out that "the emergence of each stage does not effect a complete transformation of the previous stage" (5). This point reflects Bormann's idea of "chaining-out," where new elements and new fantasies are added to the original fantasy to create a more complete, better understood representation of the event or topic at hand.

The relationship between Conrad's writing and a fantasy-theme analysis is further suggested by Roussel:

Like the levels of creation in the physical world, moreover, each stage of consciousness is not only born from a more primitive stage;

it must retain its relation to this stage in order to continue its existence. (9)

According to Bormann, fantasies are chained-out to form a rhetorical vision from all the interrelated fantasies pertaining to a particular subject.

Finally, Roussel suggests that Conrad's images (fantasies) capture

the sense of groundlessness and lack of support which comes over [his] characters when they discover that the darkness denies the very essence of their life This sense of groundlessness, and the annihilation which it promises, is a revelation of the infinitely precarious place of mind in the world. (15)

The rhetorical vision which Conrad presents through his character Marlow in Heart of Darkness is a sense of disillusionment with the European Colonialization of Africa. As we will see, Marlow discovers the "groundlessness" of the European presence in Africa and the "annihilation it promises."

Before we can directly examine Heart of Darkness to illustrate this claim, though, it is first important to examine some of Conrad's contemporary adventure writers. Whereas these writers presented involvement in foreign

cultures as "good" or "progressive," Conrad moves in the opposite direction, calling it an "invasion." The following chapter will show how Conrad veers from the course plotted by these writers and presents a new vision concerning European colonialization.

Chapter 4

Adventure Stories

European colonization in Africa was projected through the fiction of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to be a righteous, benevolent undertaking. The fictional adventure stories of this time often presented the colonists as the protectors, educators, and civilizers of indigenous African peoples. These stories suggested to an audience in Europe that the events occurring in Africa were good. According to Martin Green, author of Dreams of Adventure, Deeds of Empire (1979):

The adventure tales that formed the light reading of Englishmen . . . were, in fact, the energizing myth of English Imperialism
By empire I mean primarily a country possessing colonies" (3)

The African "frontier" was, in itself, a setting for adventure. It was a place where ambitious individuals could go to make a name for themselves and seek their fortune. For example, in H. Rider Haggard's King Solomon's Mines (1885), one character "started off for South Africa in the wild hope of making a fortune" (249). In Allan Quatermain (Haggard, 1887), Allan and his partners did not know

. . . what we shall find there [central Africa]; we go to hunt and seek adventures, and new places, being tired of sitting still, with the same old things around us. (430)

In studying the quest for adventure in fictional literature, we should first establish what is meant by adventure. Green suggests:

In general, adventure seems to mean a series of events, partly but not wholly accidental, in settings remote from the domestic and probably from the civilized. . . . [T]he adventurer defeats the challenges he meets by means of the tools and techniques of the modern world system. By tools I mean guns or compasses, and scientific knowledge, such as when an eclipse is due, and so on. By techniques I mean things like keeping a diary and keeping accounts and the Puritan examination of conscience and the conviction of righteousness. . . . (23)

Haggard follows Green's definition in that his stories are usually the journal entries of his narrator Allan Quatermain. Examples of tools abound in the works of Haggard, such as chain-mail shirts, firearms, and an almanac (from which an eclipse is predicted in King Solomon's Mines). Edgar Rice Burroughs provides perhaps

the best example in Tarzan of the Apes (1914). Burroughs refers to Tarzan's knife as "the wonderful little weapon which had transformed him from a hopelessly outclassed weakling to the superior of the mighty terror of the Jungle" (47).

Green's definition of adventure can be applied to adventure stories consistently, but there is also an underlying theme, or fantasy, that the European visitor to Africa is mentally and morally superior to the African natives. Indeed, Green includes knowledge as a tool of the adventurer, and Haggard's protagonist uses his common European knowledge of champagne to teach the "ignorant natives" a lesson:

I saw one case containing four dozen of champagne fizzing and boiling about in the bottom of the dirty cargo-boat. It was a wicked waste, and so evidently the Kaffirs in the boat thought, for they found a couple of unbroken bottles, and knocking the tops off drank the contents. But they had not allowed for the expansion caused by the fizz in the wine, and feeling themselves swelling, rolled about in the bottom of the boat, calling out that the good liquor was 'tagati' (bewitched). I spoke to them from the vessel, and told them that it was

the white man's strongest medicine, and that they were as good as dead men. They went on to the shore in a very great fright, and I do not think that they will touch champagne again.

(1885, p.258)

The self-righteousness of fictional adventurers exhibited here progresses to an absolute prejudice against the natives. These people are thought of in terms of their usefulness to their white visitors and as possessions.

It [Quatermain's garden] is looked after by an old hunter of mine named Jack, whose thigh was so badly broken by a buffalo cow in Sikukuni's country that he will never hunt again. But he can potter about and garden, being a Griqua by birth. You can never get your Zulu to take much interest in gardening. It is a peaceful art, and peaceful arts are not in his line.

(1885, p.261)

The European colonists, possessed by a strong ethnocentrism, looked down on the African natives. John Clayton, Lord Greystoke, proclaims, after being set ashore on the African coast alone with his wife:

Hundreds of thousands of years ago our ancestors of the dim and distant past faced the same problems which we must face, possibly in these

same primeval forests What they did may we not do? And even better, for are we not armed with ages of superior knowledge, and have we not the means of protection, defense, and sustenance which science has given us, but of which they were totally ignorant? (Burroughs 16-17)

It seems the possession of scientific knowledge and European values are equated with civilization. Even though the natives described in adventure stories have their own cultures and organized social structures, they are almost without exception referred to as "uncivilized" and "savages." It would seem in these stories that any culture that is non-European is automatically non-civilized. Allan Quatermain's, narrator says of Africa, "it is . . . glorious country, and only wants the hand of civilized man to make it a most productive one" (456).

Allan Quatermain, in King Solomon's Mines, describes what would appear to be an industrious, civilized people (the Kukuanas) in which a regiment of three thousand six hundred men, divided into twelve disciplined companies, were "the most magnificent set of men [he had] ever seen" (309). Quatermain continues:

. . . we came to the wide fosse surrounding the kraal [village], which was at least a mile round and fenced with a strong palisade of piles

formed of the trunks of trees. At the gateway this fosse was spanned by a primitive drawbridge which was let down by the guard to allow us to pass in. The kraal was exceedingly well laid out. (310)

Once taken in as guests and shown to their quarters, Quatermain's party

saw a line of damsels bearing milk and roasted mealies and honey in a pot. Behind these were some youths driving a fat young ox. We received the gifts. . . . (311)

Quatermain has just described all the basics of civilization --a built city, a division of labor, and a food surplus. However, before going to meet Twala, King of the Kukuanas, Quatermain assures us that it "is always well, when dealing with uncivilized people, not to be in too great a hurry" (316).

This ethnocentrism is not only a belief of the white adventurer, but is projected onto the natives in the stories. In King Solomon's Mines, Quatermain tells Ignosi, his Zulu servant-turned-king of the Kukuanas, that he will "put out the sun" (predict an eclipse with the help of an almanac). "It is strange," says Ignosi, "and had ye not been Englishmen I would not have believed it; but English 'gentlemen' tell no lies" (336).

The European visitors in Africa were not only the bearers of civilization and new knowledge, they also brought strength and protection to the "good" natives who adopted European ways. In Allan Quatermain, the adventurers make a brief stay at a Scottish mission, deep in Masai country, that is composed of one white family and a few dozen native converts.

. . . at the very first sign of a Masai the entire population of the Mission Station had sought refuge inside the stone wall [of the mission], and were now to be seen . . . all talking at once in awed tones of the awfulness of Masai manners and customs, and of the fate that they had to expect if those bloodthirsty savages succeeded in getting over the stone wall. (466)

Quatermain and company, along with a dozen or so natives given firearms for the occasion and the help of their "bewitched" chain-mail shirts, go on to massacre over two hundred Masai with minimal losses. Quatermain comments:

It is hard upon a man of peace and kindly heart to be called upon to join in such gruesome business. But there, fate puts us sometimes into very ironical positions! (484)

And he was thanked by one of his Scottish hosts, "God bless

you all, Mr. Quatermain . . .," (485).

Perhaps most importantly, besides offering civilization and protection to the African natives, The European adventurers brought with them their own sense of moral righteousness and made a "gift" of it. In King Solomon's Mines, Quatermain and company return the rightful king of the Kukuana nation to the throne in the form of Ignosi, a Zulu servant of mysterious origin. It turns out Ignosi was of royal birth in Kukuanaland, but cast out by imposters as an infant. The deeds of directing a bloody revolution and returning Ignosi to the throne were not enough though. Quatermain must leave the new king with proper instruction:

Behold, Ignosi . . . with us thou camest a servant, and now we leave thee a mighty king. If thou art grateful to us, remember to do even as thou didst promiseSo shalt thou prosper. (407)

In Tarzan of the Apes, the European idea of justice is also paramount. It seems that the spread of European ideals is a basic function of the adventurer. Tarzan's father, John Clayton, Lord Greystoke, was a "strong, virile man--mentally, morally, and physically" (2). Even though Clayton died when Tarzan was an infant and his son was subsequently raised by a tribe of apes, heredity allowed

that Tarzan would possess well-bred European ideals and the faculties to promote them. In time, Tarzan becomes chief of his tribe of apes. However, he has also become aware of his humanness and tells the others of his tribe:

Tarzan . . . is not an ape. He is not like his people. His ways are not their ways, and so Tarzan is going back to . . . his own kind. . . . You must choose another to rule you, for Tarzan will not return. (94-95)

Tarzan, even though a product of the jungle, possessed a sense of justice and an idea of the rights of civilization where no one should be ruled unfairly and where the subjects work together for a better community. He left the tribe with these parting instructions:

If you have a chief who is cruel, do not do as the other apes do, and attempt, any one of you, to pit yourself against him alone. But, instead, let two or three or four of you attack him together. Then, if you will do this, no chief will dare to be other than he should be. . . .

(152)

Eventually, following this instruction, the tribe accordingly ousts a cruel chief, thus eliminating a savage jungle custom from the tribe.

Both King Solomon's Mines and Tarzan of the Apes

illustrate how characters in British adventure tales introduce European ideas of justice and civilization into Africa, but Allan Quatermain takes this process a step further. In this story, Sir Henry Curtis, friend and partner of Quatermain, becomes King-Consort of the Zu-Vendis nation by marriage. (The people of Zu-Vendis, though "uncivilized," are a white race.) Of his position, Curtis claims:

I intend to devote myself to two great ends . . . to the consolidation of the various clans which together make up the Zu-Vendis people, under one strong central government, and . . . pave the road for the introduction of true religion in the place of this senseless Sun worship. I yet hope to see the shadow of the Cross of Christ lying on the golden dome of the Flower Temple. . . . (634)

Here we see not only the introduction of European political ideals once again, a microcosm of imperialism, but also the introduction of European religion and the implied need for spiritual guidance of African peoples.

This brief investigation of adventure stories has uncovered an underlying theme, or vision. European visitors in Africa commonly seek adventure and fortune for themselves and, in doing so, deliver what are believed to

be good ideals in the process. They take with them knowledge, the European concept of civilization, and religion that, once secured within the population of Africa, are thought to be beneficial and righteous. Conrad, however, as we will see in the following chapters, creates a different vision and offers a new, more intimate, and more critical, perspective of European involvement in Africa.

Chapter 5

Conrad's Underlying Fantasy

The underlying fantasy of several of Conrad's works, Heart of Darkness in particular, comes through the vehicle of protagonist Charlie Marlow. No doubt much of Conrad's fiction, especially that involving sea adventure, reflects elements of the author's own personal experience, and Marlow serves as the instrument for this reflection. It is through Marlow that Conrad projects his views of adventure and colonization in such works as Heart of Darkness, "Youth," and Lord Jim. In Chance an older, wiser Marlow who has retired from life at sea comments on the experience of others. This development in Marlow as Conrad's character, as I will show, may be considered to represent the changing, or breaking-away, of Conrad's vision of European involvement in Africa from that of the contemporaneous adventure writers, especially Haggard and Burroughs.

By advancing his own ideas of a here-and-now situation (at the time of publication) through a created character in settings removed in space and time from actual experience, Conrad has created a fantasy. In this chapter I will discuss how this basic fantasy, the Marlow character, is chained-out to form the underlying fantasy from which

Conrad's rhetorical vision is manufactured in his works.

I think it is important at this point to note that even though the Charlie Marlow in Heart of Darkness exhibits many similarities to Conrad himself, the story is not autobiographical, but fictional. Conrad actually made a journey on the Congo River, but as Murfin (1989) explains

Some of the parallels between Heart of Darkness and Conrad's Congo adventure are so obvious that it may be tempting to think of the novel as thinly veiled autobiography. . . . but it may also be treacherous. (13)

Murfin claims that a work such as Heart of Darkness "is not undigested experience." It is characterized by form, or "the patterns and relationships that exist within the work itself, not the connections that may seem to exist between the work and its author's life story" (13).

As Conrad himself explains, fiction is an appeal to the "temperaments whose subtle and resistless power endows passing events with their true meaning. . . ." It is through "the perfect blending of form and substance . . . that the light of magic suggestiveness may be brought to play . . . over the commonplace surface of words" (1924, p.xiii). Obviously, Conrad's purpose is to convey conceptual ideas rather than an account of any specific experience. If the substance of his writing stems from his

own experience, then that experience is delivered in an intellectual and imaginative form beyond physical events. It is in this form that Conrad "endows passing events" with what he implies as their "true meaning." By studying Marlow in the works he appears in, we can determine Conrad's ideas concerning adventure and European activity in Africa.

Conrad's three works, "Youth," Heart of Darkness, and Lord Jim exhibit a progression of growth and change in Marlow that lead to Conrad's rhetorical vision. In "Youth," the seafaring life, travel, and adventure are presented as an obsession. Young Marlow describes his first adventure at sea and equates his obsession with it to "the romance of illusions" (40). Marlow is in his prime in Heart of Darkness, having just returned to London from "a regular dose of the East--six years or so" (22) before embarking on his journey on the Congo River. In Lord Jim, he is an older, experienced seafarer who reflects on his enthusiasm for travel and adventure through the experiences of the younger man, Jim: ". . . [L]ater on, many times, in distant parts of the world, Marlow showed himself willing to remember Jim, to remember him at length, in detail, and audibly" (33).

Marlow's progression from youth to mature adult to reflective elder shows a similar development of attitude that embodies the underlying adventure fantasy of Conrad's

rhetorical vision concerning colonization and European intervention in foreign cultures. In "Youth" Marlow becomes obsessed with travel to foreign places and the opportunity for such travel provided by colonialization. In Heart of Darkness, Marlow begins to question the purpose of European intervention in Africa after realizing the effects that Mr. Kurtz had on himself (Marlow) and the natives along the Congo. It is in this novel that Conrad first suggests that colonization is less than benevolent and where he calls the story "one of Marlow's inconclusive experiences" (21). They are inconclusive, I presume, because readers have to discern the "magic suggestiveness" brought into play by the form and substance of Conrad's fiction. By the end of Lord Jim, Marlow is outright saddened by the effects of European intervention in foreign lands. It is interesting to note here also that in Chance Marlow is retired from life at sea and satisfies himself by spinning a yarn that doesn't even include travel to foreign lands.

This development of the Marlow character includes a progression of fantasies that both leads to and subsequently supports the rhetorical vision that is first evident in Heart of Darkness. Conrad's vision is that colonization and intervention in foreign cultures are detrimental to those cultures as well as to the particular

individuals who intervene. This rhetorical vision can be observed in the development of Marlow's adventure fantasy.

In "Youth," Conrad establishes a sense of nostalgia in Marlow about the sea and travel: "Yes, I have seen a little of the Eastern seas; but what I remember best is my first voyage there" (1). This nostalgic enthusiasm sets the stage for the chaining-out of the Marlow fantasy. By the end of the story, Marlow's youthful enthusiasm has progressed, or chained-out through additional fantasies, to an obsession with the sea, travel, and adventure.

"Youth" is Marlow's narrative about his first voyage at sea, during which he faces numerous hardships without losing his enthusiasm or becoming discouraged. In the story, he is on a ship named Judea that is taking a load of coal to Bangkok. In the course of the journey, the ship is damaged by storms and drydocked, catches fire at sea, explodes, and finally sinks. The crew escapes on three different lifeboats, one of which Marlow is in charge of-- his first command.

Marlow never reaches Bangkok on this journey, but his enthusiasm is not dampened. He sights a far-away ship from his lifeboat but chooses not to contact it:

You see I was afraid she might be homeward bound, and I had no mind to turn back from the portals of the East. I was steering for Java--

another blessed name--like Bangkok, you know.

(34)

Marlow's enthusiasm becomes a permanent "fascination," even obsession, by the end of the story. "I have known its fascination since," says Marlow, "I have seen the mysterious shores, the still water, the lands of brown nations, where a stealthy Nemesis lies in wait, pursues, overtakes so many of the conquering race, who are proud of their wisdom, of their knowledge, of their strength" (39-40). Marlow is talking about the same sense of adventure that inspires Allan Quatermain. But Conrad introduces a new idea: he suggests that adventure can "overtake" the adventurer; that colonization is a "Nemesis," where the desire for control over colonies may become the controlling force of the colonists themselves. This opinion of Marlow's is chained-out further in Heart of Darkness.

This novel allows us to observe Marlow become disenchanted with colonialization through his dealings with Mr. Kurtz. As I will show in the next chapter, Marlow's Kurtz-inspired thoughts are Conrad's instrument for disclosing an anti-colonial rhetorical vision. However, here I wish to discuss only the changes in the adventure fantasy that informs this vision. In "Youth," Marlow describes foreign lands as a Nemesis to their European visitors. He goes a step further in Heart of Darkness in

which he now possesses the view of an experienced seaman in the prime of his life. His uneasiness about colonialization is revealed through his sarcasm toward colonial intent, particularly that of Belgium and King Leopold II, of whom the Congo was "personal property" (Murfin 5-6).

Marlow repeatedly undercuts the stated purpose of colonization--the enlightenment of deprived people--through sarcastic remarks about the "great" and "noble cause" and its "philanthropy." Marlow's appointment in the Congo includes finding the remains of a captain killed by natives in a confrontation concerning two black hens and who:

thought himself wronged somehow in the bargain, so he went ashore and started to hammer the chief of the village with a stick. Oh, it didn't surprise me in the least to hear this, and at the same time to be told that [the captain] was the gentlest, quietest creature that ever walked on two legs. No doubt he was; but he had been a couple of years already out there engaged in the noble cause, you know, and he probably felt the need at last of asserting his self-respect in some way. Therefore he whacked the old nigger mercilessly. . . . (23)

Marlow had received his appointment on the Belgian

steamer in the Congo through the political influence of an aunt who was very enthusiastic about operations in the territory. Marlow exclaims:

Good Heavens! and I was going to take charge of two-penny-halfpenny river-steamboat with a penny whistle attached! It appeared, however, I was also one of the Workers, with a capital--you know. Something like an emissary of light, something like a lower sort of apostle. There had been a lot of such rot let loose in print and talk just about that time, and the excellent woman, living right in the rush of all that humbug, got carried off her feet. She talked about 'weaning those ignorant millions from their horrid ways,' till, upon my word, she made me quite uncomfortable. I ventured to hint that the Company was run for profit. (27)

Marlow's sarcastic view of colonial purpose accompanies him to Africa.

Upon his arrival in the Congo, Marlow observes a chain-gang of black prisoners who wore iron collars and were in poor condition. "They were called criminals, and the outraged law, like the bursting shells, had come to them, an insoluble mystery from the sea." As Marlow approaches, their guard seems alarmed. "He was speedily

reassured, and with a large, white, rascally grin, and a glance at his charge, seemed to take me into partnership in his exalted trust. After all, I also was a part of the great cause of these high and just proceedings" (30). Marlow also notices a large hole that had been dug for no purpose. "It was just a hole. It might have been connected with the philanthropic desire of giving the criminals something to do" (31). Marlow seems to be questioning the virtue of the Belgian colony through sarcastic remarks.

Marlow's journey to the interior of the Congo begins with two-hundred miles of travel on foot. On the way he meets a white man who is in charge of the upkeep of the "road." "Can't say that I saw any road or any upkeep," says Marlow, "unless the body of a middle-aged negro, with a bullet-hole in the forehead . . . may be considered a permanent improvement" (34). Later, Marlow has to deal with an overweight, sickly, white companion whose bearers have deserted him, and the episode reminds him of a doctor who examined and interviewed him before departing Europe. His companion

was very anxious for me to kill somebody, but there wasn't the shadow of a carrier near. I remembered the old doctor--'It would be interesting for science to watch the mental

changes of individuals, on the spot [the Congo]. I felt I was becoming scientifically interesting. (35)

Marlow certainly does go through some interesting mental changes in Heart of Darkness. Most importantly, his sarcasm about colonial purpose turns into dissociation. However, the effects of the change that occurs in Heart of Darkness are evident in Lord Jim, a fact that reinforces Conrad's rhetorical vision of colonialization in Heart of Darkness in two ways: (1) by continuing the chaining-out of Marlow as an underlying fantasy, and (2) by demonstrating how the changes occurring in Marlow in Heart of Darkness were lasting and significant.

In Lord Jim, Jim is a mate on the ship, Patna, which is carrying 800 Eastern pilgrim/refugees when the ship collides with an unseen object and begins taking on water. The crew fears the ship is sinking, and with them, Jim unthinkingly abandons the ship and its passengers. The Patna does not sink, however, and thus Jim and the crew have committed the ultimate in cowardly, dishonorable sea-crimes. Although the rest of the crew escapes punishment, Jim's personal code of honor will not allow him to forgive himself, and he wanders aimlessly from job to job until Marlow and Stein, Marlow's colleague, lead Jim to the village of Patusan to start a new life and serve as Stein's

agent in trade.

Jim is accepted into Patusan society by the chieftain, Doramin, and his people. Doramin's village is constantly threatened by Sherif Ali, who has "incited the tribes in the interior . . . to rise, and had established himself in a fortified camp on the summit of the twin hills" in Patusan (257). With the help of Dain Waris, Doramin's son, Jim manages to place cannons on the top of the adjacent hill with which he attacks and defeats Sherif Ali.

Marlow observes that ". . . the legend had gifted him [Jim] with supernatural powers," (266) but ". . . all his conquests, the trusts, the fame, the friendships, the love --all these things had made him captive, too" (247). Jim gains influence and power with the natives, and the people of Patusan come to rely on him for his wisdom and strength. It is Jim who appoints the headmen in Doramin's village (273), and it is Jim who single-handedly defeats Sherif Ali's emissaries who are sent to kill him (301-302). Even Doramin develops "an unbounded confidence in Tuan Jim's wisdom" (274). Jim becomes comfortable in his new environment, taking a wife, Jewel, and enjoying the freedom and respect given him by the people of Patusan. Unlike the heroes of the previously discussed adventure stories, however, Jim is a typical mortal, and his strength and wisdom are limited.

It is important to realize here that, as narrator, Marlow is now more experienced and wiser than in the previous stories. He is relating the story of another, applying the knowledge he has gained, rather than presenting his own experiences for evaluation. His own disenchantment with European involvement in foreign cultures has already been established. The application of Marlow's personal revelations to an external subject represents not only a chaining-out of the Marlow's modified adventure fantasy, but also the chaining-out of Conrad's colonial vision. Marlow is growing, becoming a more credible source of information, while Conrad's rhetorical vision is also growing by including additional fantasy chains and, perhaps, a larger audience.

Jim goes through "interesting mental changes"-- as Marlow did in Heart of Darkness--when a pirate named Brown and his crew find Patusan while "running away from the spectre of a Spanish prison" and decide they will extort goods and money from Patusan (356-357). Brown and his men are met with resistance and held at bay by the villagers. However, Jim convinces the Patusans to let the pirates leave with their lives, a decision that turns out to be a tragic mistake. Out of spite, Brown attacks the unsuspecting villagers as he is leaving, and Dain Waris, the chieftain's son, is killed.

Then Jim understood. He had retreated from one world, for a small matter of an impulsive jump [abandoning the Patna], and now the other, the work of his own hands, had fallen in ruins upon his head. (408)

Subsequently, Jim admits his errors by delivering himself to the chieftan, Doramin, who shoots and kills Jim (416).

Marlow's narrative in Lord Jim ends on a sad note as Marlow reflects on Jim's life:

And that's the end. He passes away under a cloud inscrutable at heart, forgotten, unforgiven, and excessively romantic. (416)

Jim entered a foreign culture with moral ideas and "romantic illusions" reminiscent of the young, enthusiastic Marlow in "Youth," but unlike Marlow who lived to tell, Jim met a tragic end. Marlow continues:

Now he [Jim] is no more, there are days when the reality of his existence comes to me with an immense, with an overwhelming force; and yet upon my honour there are moments, too, when he passes from my eyes like a disembodied spirit astray amongst the passions of this earth, ready to surrender himself faithfully to the claim of his own world of shades. (416)

Marlow is accepting partial blame for Jim's death because

of his own inability to pass on the wisdom of his experience to Jim. Marlow knows of youthful illusions and that they are, in fact, illusions. He witnessed the death of Kurtz in the interior of the Congo that allowed him to conclude that life is "that mysterious arrangement of merciless logic for a futile purpose. The most you can hope from it is some knowledge of yourself--that comes too late--a crop of unextinguishable regrets" (Heart, 86). And now he has seen Jim go also, "overtaken" by the "Nemesis," and although Marlow understands Jim's demise, it is too late to help Jim, lost among the passions that Marlow has fit into a system of "merciless logic."

At the time of Jim's death, the Patusan society is in a state of chaos--it has lost Dain Waris, a future leader, and Jim, whose wisdom and strength it depended on. Marlow concludes sadly:

He is gone . . . and the poor girl [Jim's wife, Jewel] is leading a sort of soundless, inert life in Stein's house. Stein has aged greatly as of late. He feels it himself, and says often that he is 'preparing to leave all this; preparing to leave. . . . ' (417)

Marlow sees it all clearly now. He knows that European involvement in foreign cultures leads to hardship for the native peoples as well as for the individuals who go and

take part. He recognizes the need for personal awareness within the colonial system; that the ideology of colonization is dependent upon the needs and attitudes of the individuals involved, both European and indigenous. It is because of this realization that Marlow finally removes himself from the colonial system.

The book Chance reveals Marlow as an older, reflective individual who has retired from life at sea and occupies himself with "domestic adventure." In Chance, Marlow, "who in his time had followed the sea" (4), tells the story of Flora de Barral. Ms. de Barral's father was a financier who was sent to prison for the misuse of entrusted funds. Out of desperation, Flora marries Captain Anthony and lives with him on Anthony's ship, the Ferndale. Mr. Powell is a mate on the ship and gradually falls in love with Flora. In the meantime, de Barral is released from prison and comes to live with his daughter, now Mrs. Anthony. Mr. de Barral does not approve of his daughter's marriage and makes the fact known while Powell sits back repressing his feelings and witnessing some difficult domestic problems in the Anthony family. As it turns out, Mr. de Barral passes away and Captain Anthony eventually goes down with his ship, survived by his wife. Finally, after many years of pining, Mr. Powell has his chance to express his true feelings to Flora.

For this study, the actual events within the novel are not altogether important, but it is important to recognize that Marlow is not involved in the action, and the action takes place either in England or on board the ship. There is no travel to a foreign land. Rather than a Nemesis that overtakes the adventurer in strange lands, as in "Youth," there is now a "Nemesis which overtakes generosity too" as shown by Captain Anthony taking in Flora's inappreciative father in order to please Flora (252). Marlow is expressing his wisdom in personal affairs now rather than in adventure settings.

Marlow now seems to have a valid, informed opinion and is presented by Conrad as a contemplative individual removed from the colonial system rather than a working part of that system as we saw before. In Chance we learn that Marlow "retired from the sea in a sort of half-hearted fashion some years ago" (25). Marlow

knows something of every ship. He seems to have gone about the seas prying into things considerably Marlow here appears to know something of every soul that ever went afloat in a sailor's body. (26-27)

Marlow expresses wisdom reminiscent of Kurtz and Jim in Chance. He is not "astonished by [Powell's] statements about himself. Taking into consideration his youth they

were by no means incredible" (307). Marlow remembers his own youth and understands Powell's words. He is also comfortable with the fact that Powell's illusions concern love, a safer adventure than those undertaken by Kurtz and Jim.

Marlow's recurrent adventure fantasy is developed and chained-out in the works of Joseph Conrad. As Martin Green (1979) suggests:

That is the curve of Conrad's engagement with the idea of adventure, from boyhood enthusiasm to mature disillusionment. (303)

Marlow's enthusiasm for adventure in "Youth" also includes a subtle suggestion that travel to foreign places may also be an overtaking Nemesis. In Heart of Darkness, Marlow is sarcastic about the purpose of colonialization and, through interaction with Kurtz, discovers that involvement in foreign cultures leads to hardship. Lord Jim reinforces Marlow's misgivings about colonialization by offering a specific account of involvement in a foreign culture going bad. Finally, in Chance Marlow appears as a changed individual. He no longer relates distant travels and adventures but, rather, deals with the personal events of specific individuals with the outlook of a wise and experienced commentator.

In the next chapter, I intend to demonstrate how

the modifications in Marlow's adventure fantasy lead to a rhetorical vision created by Conrad to make a negative judgement of adventure in a colonial system. As Green suggests, Conrad's

critical reputation and literary interpretation have been inseparable from the anti-imperialist ideas general after 1918. . . . Conrad seemed to bring the adventure tradition to an end by transvaluing it. (297-298)

This transvaluing of the adventure tradition becomes evident in Heart of Darkness when Marlow discovers that the enlightenment of native peoples in colonies is oppressive and that fair commerce is nonexistent. Conrad places a new value on the adventure tradition by attempting to promote an awareness of the abominations that exist in colonial territories through his character, Marlow. Conrad's ideas can first be recognized as a rhetorical vision in Heart of Darkness, as the following fantasy-theme analysis of this novel will show.

Chapter 6

Heart of Darkness:
Conrad's Vision of Colonialism

Conrad creates a rhetorical vision in Heart of Darkness by chaining out five basic fantasies within the work. Each fantasy is the re-presentation of an idea or object in a new setting apart from that of its original introduction in the work. The previous chapter discussed Charlie Marlow's adventure fantasy as the underlying fantasy of Conrad's rhetorical vision. The other four basic fantasies to examine are: 1) the idea that darkness represents the unknown aspects of the African interior as well as the human state of mind in discovery of that unknown; 2) the use of maps which allows Conrad to replace physical boundaries with ideological concepts; 3) the character, Kurtz, whose feats represent the problems of European involvement in Africa, and the idea of "voice" which Marlow eventually uses to replace Kurtz as a physical being; and 4) the Company which becomes representative of Marlow's (Conrad's) misgivings of the colonial system. Finally, Marlow's denouncement of lies early in the work contrasted with his rationalization for telling a lie by the end of the work discloses his (and Conrad's) disenchantment with the colonial system. This change in

Marlow's attitude is severe and lasting, as can be observed in Conrad's following works that include Marlow as a character.

As this list suggests, the fantasies listed above that the fantasies in Heart of Darkness are not mutually exclusive; ideas in one combine with ideas in others. In this chapter, I will conduct a fantasy theme analysis of Heart of Darkness and show how these fantasies are chained-out and merge to produce a rhetorical vision concerning European involvement in foreign cultures.

Although the events Marlow recounts in Heart of Darkness take place in the Belgian Congo, the story is told on a boat on the Thames River outside of London. Before Marlow takes over the narrative to tell his tale, the setting is described by another narrator who offers insight into the Thames and into Marlow:

What greatness had not floated on the ebb of
that river into the mystery of an unknown earth
. . . The dreams of men, the seed of
commonwealths, the germs of empires. (19)

It is important to note that Conrad here allows his narrator to use a metaphor implying that colonialism is an infectious disease while the same narrator goes on to describe Marlow as

not typical, and to him the meaning of an

episode was not inside like a kernel but outside, enveloping the tale which brought it out only as a glow brings out a haze, in the likeness of one of these misty halos that sometimes are made visible by the spectral illumination of moonshine. (19-20)

Finally, the narrator informs us that we are about to hear "one of Marlow's inconclusive experiences" (21). In the previous chapter we discussed Marlow's adventure fantasy as the underlying fantasy of Conrad's rhetorical vision, and here Conrad introduces Marlow as harbinger of the enveloping "meaning" around an infectious colonial system. Marlow's tale is also inconclusive in that we, as readers, are invited to listen in as Marlow tells his tale to a small group of friends and draw our own conclusions. So, through Marlow, we will hear Conrad's views, or his rhetorical vision, that we are to accept or reject as part of the chaining-out process.

Early in the work Conrad creates a negative tone through Marlow while letting us know that Marlow's experiences are significant and meaningful. Marlow says of his journey on the Congo:

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. . . . 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. (21)

Although Marlow sees his journey in a negative light, he still feels what he learned there is worth sharing. As Marlow shares his tale, Conrad is at work formulating a rhetorical vision. Heart of Darkness is divided into three sections, and, in the first, all of the five basic fantasies are introduced.

(1) Marlow first mentions darkness as an analogy to what the first Roman colonialists in England would have had to face. As the Romans moved up the Thames to form a new society, so Marlow was also part of a similar movement up the Congo. However, to Marlow, the civilizing of a new frontier includes "savagery" and "abomination." "Imagine the growing regrets," requests Marlow, "the longing to escape, the powerless disgust, the surrender, the hate" (20). Marlow later suggests that a darkness is more than an unexplored place of mystery by claiming:

Now when I was a little chap I had a passion for maps. . . . At that time there were many blank spaces on the earth, and when I saw one that looked particularly inviting on a map . . . I

would put my finger on it and say, When I grow up I will go there. . . . But there was one yet--the biggest, the most blank, so to speak--that I had a hankering after. . . . True, by this time it was not a blank space anymore. It had got filled since my boyhood with rivers and lakes and names. It had ceased to be a blank space of delightful mystery--a white patch [on the map] for a boy to dream gloriously over. It had become a place of darkness. (22)

It is by taking an idea out of one context and placing it into a new one that fantasy themes are created. Conrad does this by removing darkness from the context of an unknown territory for explorers and placing it into a context of a charted area filled with man-made symbols that is alluring to adventurers such as Marlow.

Here, early in the work, we already see fantasies combining and chaining-out. Marlow, the embodiment of the underlying adventure fantasy, is intrigued by maps and what he terms darkness and sets out on a journey which is itself a fantasy since Conrad is depicting the real exploration and colonization of Africa in a fictional account.

(2) Conrad's use of maps, first mentioned in the description of darkness, also becomes a fantasy of its own as Marlow describes "a large shining map, marked with all

the colours of a rainbow":

There was a vast amount of red--good to see at any time, because one knows that some real work is done there, a deuce of a lot of blue, a little green, smears of orange, and, on the East Coast, a purple patch, to show where the jolly pioneers drink the jolly lager-beer. However, I wasn't going to any of these. I was going to the yellow. Dead in the centre. And the river was there--fascinating--deadly--like a snake. (24)

Here we see how the different colors on the map denote the holdings of the different European countries in Africa, but Marlow transcends these political boundaries. He is not so much concerned with the Belgian yellow he will be in or the British red, where the work gets done, but with his fascination with the Congo river and the dangers and adventures it holds.

(3) Later in the first section, when Marlow is actually in Africa rather than just pondering maps, we are introduced to Marlow's view of Mr. Kurtz. It is important to note that Conrad uses his narrator, Marlow, as a filter through which we perceive Kurtz. Thus we see him in the context of Marlow's experience rather than as a distinct character. By the time we see Kurtz for ourselves, he is no longer just another character, manager of the inner

station; he is the creation of Marlow's fantasies and judgments.

Marlow first hears of Kurtz on the coast of Africa through the Company's chief accountant who tells Marlow that Kurtz is "a first-class agent." Marlow is not impressed, but the accountant goes on to inform him that Kurtz is a "very remarkable person" who "sends in as much ivory as all the others put together" (33). The chief accountant continues about Kurtz:

Oh, he will go far, very far. . . . He will be a somebody in the Administration before long.

They, above--the Council in Europe, you know--mean him to be. (34)

So, without actually meeting Kurtz, Marlow sees him as someone bigger than life, something of a local legend within the Company.

Further into the first section, Marlow discovers that he is akin to Kurtz in the eyes of the Company, and his interest in Kurtz heightens. Marlow relates a conversation with the Company brickmaker at the Central Station, two hundred miles from the coast:

'He [Kurtz] is a prodigy,' [the brickmaker] said at last. 'He is an emissary of pity, and science, and progress, and Devil knows what else. We want,' he began to declaim suddenly, 'for the

guidance of the cause entrusted to us by Europe, so to speak, higher intelligence, wide sympathies, a singleness of purpose. . . . and so he [Kurtz] comes here, a special being, as you ought to know. . . . Yes. Today he is chief of the best station, next year he will be assistant-manager, two years more and . . . but I daresay you know what he will be in two years' time. You are of the new gang--the gang of virtue. The same people who sent him specially also recommended you.' (40)

So, Marlow learns that, due to his Aunt's influence in Europe, he is seen as part of an elite group in Africa. He learns that Kurtz is more than just a man to the Company; he is a symbol of power and leadership, and thus the fantasy chains out to include Marlow's view of Kurtz.

(4) Besides furthering his fascination with Kurtz, Marlow also gains insight into the Company in this episode. He learns that typical hierarchy of power, involving a Council in Europe, managers, agents, and accountants is regarded here in a new setting that involves special "emissaries" and a "gang of virtue." Marlow also begins to see the purpose of the Company in a different light. Marlow's perception of the claimed purpose is no longer profitable commerce, but something that involves "pity, and

science, and progress." While at the Central Station, where he had his conversation with the brickmaker, Marlow observes:

Still, one must look about sometimes; and then I saw this station, these men strolling aimlessly about in the sunshine of the yard. I asked myself sometimes what it all meant. They wandered here and there with their absurd long staves in their hands, like a lot of faithless pilgrims bewitched inside a rotten fence. The word 'ivory' rang in the air, was whispered, was sighed. You would think they were praying to it. A taint of imbecile rapacity blew through it all, like a whiff from some corpse. By Jove! I've never seen anything so unreal in my life. (37)

To Marlow, the quest for ivory was unreal and imbecile. There is another reason for involvement in Africa, and although Marlow offers no alternative at this point, he lets us know what that purpose is not:

There was an air of plotting about that station, but nothing came of it, of course. It was as unreal as everything else--as the philanthropic pretence of the whole concern, as their talk, as their government, as their show of work. (39)

By the end of the first section of Heart of Darkness,

we see that Marlow is a changing person, and that he, in telling his tale, begins to remove his experience from the context of an actual journey and to place it into a new context of philosophical relationships.

Finally, I wish to address the idea of lies, which Marlow introduces while at the same time transforming his tale from an account of his personal experiences to a chain of fantasies in a new context of conceptual knowledge:

What was in there? I could see a little ivory coming out from there, and I had heard Mr. Kurtz was in there. I had heard enough about it too-- God knows! Yet somehow it didn't bring any image with it--no more than if I had been told an angel or a fiend was in there. . . . I would not have gone so far as to fight for Kurtz, but I went for him near enough to a lie. You know I hate, detest, and can't bear a lie, not because I am straighter than the rest of us, but simply because it appals me. There is a taint of death, a flavour of mortality in lies--which is exactly what I hate and detest in the world--what I want to forget. . . . Well, I went near enough to it by letting the young fool [brickmaker] there believe anything he liked to imagine as to my influence in Europe. I became in an instant as

much of a pretence as the rest of the bewitched pilgrims. (41-42)

Marlow is leading us to think that there is a deeper meaning or truth within Europe's involvement in Africa beyond surface appearances--that the Company, its purpose, and its employees are merely a pretense. The audience is then reliant upon Marlow's account of the situation for information that may reveal this truth. In this manner, Conrad is creating fantasies by placing Marlow's experiences in new contexts through which readers may develop a clearer understanding of or attitude toward the colonial system. Marlow allows himself to become as much a "pretence" as the rest of the system

simply because I had a notion it somehow would be of help to that Kurtz whom at the time I did not see--you understand. He was just a word for me. I did not see the man in the name any more than you do. Do you see him? Do you see the story? Do you see anything? It seems to me I am trying to tell you a dream--making a vain attempt, because no relation of a dream can convey the dream-sensation, that commingling of absurdity, surprise, and bewilderment in a tremor of struggling revolt, that notion of being captured by the incredible which is of the

very essence of dreams. . . . (42)

Marlow's transition from telling a tale of concrete images and experiences to creating a dream-like fantasy adventure continues into the second section of Heart of Darkness. It is here, early in Section II, that the fantasy themes become strongly established, and we as readers lose touch with the original context of the story. Darkness, maps, the Company, and Mr. Kurtz, as fantasies, are chained-out so that we no longer identify them as unexplored lands, geographical charts, a trading company, and a station chief. They have been placed into new contexts which invest Marlow's story with new meaning.

By the very end of Section I, Marlow concedes:

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 ideas of some sort, would climb to the top after all, and how he would set about his work when there. (46)

Marlow is not the only one wondering about Kurtz. Section II begins with Marlow overhearing a conversation between the central station manager and the manager's uncle. In this way Marlow discovers that the ill Kurtz is at the inner station alone. A year earlier Kurtz had sent back

his assistant with a message stating that he "would rather be alone than have the kind of men [the Company] can dispose of with me" (46). Marlow also learns that Kurtz, having great influence, had "asked the Administration to be sent there." As the central station manager puts it:

And the pestiferous absurdity of his [Kurtz's] talk. . .bothered me enough when he was here. 'Each station should be like a beacon on the road towards better things, a centre for trade of course, but also for humanising, improving, instructing.' Conceive you--that ass! And he wants to be manager! (47)

It is Kurtz's adherence to moral obligations in the colonization of Africa that attracts Marlow to him. On discovering that Kurtz had once come three hundred miles back toward the central station but suddenly decided to go back alone, Marlow adds a visual image to his growing fantasy of Kurtz and Kurtz's mission:

As for me, I seemed to see Kurtz for the first time. It was a distinct glimpse: the dugout, four paddling savages, and the lone white man turning his back suddenly on the headquarters, on relief, on thoughts of home--perhaps; setting his face towards the depths of the wilderness, towards his empty and desolate

station. I did not know the motive. Perhaps he was just simply a fine fellow who stuck to his work for its own sake. (47)

Marlow is becoming obsessed with the prospect of meeting such a man as Kurtz and also by his surroundings. After listening in on the station manager's conversation, Marlow notes that the manager's uncle made a

gesture that took in the forest, the creek, the mud, the river--seemed to beckon with a dishonouring flourish before the sunlit face of the land a treacherous appeal to the lurking death, to the hidden evil, to the profound darkness of its heart. . . . I had expected an answer of some sort to that black display of confidence. (48)

Here, we see the darkness become an entity rather than a physical condition--something that can strike back against a threat. Also, we can see the Company being placed in a new context. It is a collection of varying attitudes and opinions. Kurtz has moral ideas for the development of Africa while other members of the Company are only concerned with wealth, ivory, and favour in the eyes of those still in Europe. At this point, Marlow seems to be a neutral bystander trying to balance the two opposing views but leaning towards Kurtz's side, his fascination with

Kurtz becoming ever stronger. By the time Marlow's steamer is ready for the journey to the inner station, Marlow is "very excited at the prospect of meeting Kurtz very soon" (48).

The Kurtz fantasy chains-out considerably in section II. To Marlow, Kurtz changes from an obsession to a "voice," and finally, a lunatic. Once on the river, Marlow comments on the crawling motion of the steamer, and to him, "it crawled towards Kurtz--exclusively" (50). "Sometimes [Marlow] would pick out a tree a little way ahead to measure [the steamer's] progress towards Kurtz by" (53). Marlow is no longer on his way to pick up an ill station chief; all he cares about is meeting Kurtz, who has now become a bigger than life character with special powers.

Marlow begins to sense the charisma and power possessed by Kurtz in the reaction of the natives near Kurtz's station toward the steamer's approach. The natives exhibit

an irresistible impression of sorrow. The glimpse of the steamboat had for some reason filled those savages with unrestrained grief What we afterwards alluded to as an attack. . . was undertaken under the stress of desperation, and its essence was purely protective. (58)

"They don't want him [Kurtz] to go," Marlow is told upon asking why the natives attacked (70).

After the attack on the steamer, Marlow fears that a similar attack has been made on the inner station and that Mr. Kurtz is dead. For this idea Marlow feels "extreme disappointment, as though I had found out I had been striving after something altogether without substance" (62). Thus, Kurtz has become a fantasy, chained-out even further in no longer being regarded as human. To Marlow, Kurtz

presented himself as a voice. Not of course that I did not connect him with some sort of action. Hadn't I been told in all the tones of jealousy and admiration that he had collected, bartered, swindled, or stolen more ivory than all the other agents together? That was not the point. The point was in his being a gifted creature, and that of all his gifts the one that stood out preeminently, that carried with it a sense of real presence, was his ability to talk, his words--the gift of expression, the bewildering, the illuminating, the most exalted and the most contemptible, the pulsating stream of light, or the deceitful flow from the heart of an impenetrable darkness.

(62)

Here, not only do we see the character Kurtz engulfed in a fantasy, but we also see the gift Kurtz possesses to be sometimes "illuminating" or a "pulsating stream of light" from the darkness. The stream of light is Kurtz's knowledge and his ability to share it. Kurtz's knowledge is not a "surface-truth" that merely engages our senses (51), but the "mysterious stillness" of the inner truth that is hidden within our experience (49).

Not only has Kurtz become a bigger-than-life entity, but his ties with the Company, colonialization, and the Darkness help bring the various fantasy themes in the book together to form a common idea or vision.

When Marlow leaves the central station on his steamboat headed for Kurtz's station, he claims:

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, and impenetrable forest. (48)

Whereas at the beginning of the book, Marlow describes the Thames River as having once been one of the dark places, here he includes the Congo River as a contemporary darkness. As Marlow travels further up the river he claims, "We penetrated deeper and deeper into the heart of

darkness" (50). The darkness is no longer the uncivilized part of the African interior in general, but this particular section Marlow is in--Kurtz' section. It is a primordial world in which Kurtz, Marlow, and their fellow Company employees are the first colonists. The inner station could be the next Brussels or London, and the actions of these people will determine its future.

As it is, Kurtz knows the darkness best, and his gift of expression is what Marlow calls a stream of light from the darkness. However, as the fantasy grows, we learn that Kurtz's views are questionable, and since he is an influential member of the Company, the purpose of colonization is also called into question. To show this chain of influence from Kurtz to Company representatives and to Europe, Conrad uses his "harlequin" character, a Russian seaman who has appointed himself Kurtz's assistant.

On the way to the inner station, Marlow stops at an abandoned camp, finds a book lost by the harlequin, An Inquiry into Some Points of Seamanship, and comments revealingly:

Not a very enthralling book; but at the first glance you could see there a singleness of intention, an honest concern for the right way of going to work, which made these humble pages, thought out so many years ago, luminous with

another than a professional light. . . . I assure you to leave off reading was like tearing away from the shelter of an old and solid friendship. (53)

Marlow's feelings toward this book are similar to his feelings toward Kurtz when he overheard the brickmaker's conversation and learned that Kurtz thought "each station should be like a beacon on the road towards better things . . ." (47). It seems Kurtz also has a singleness of intention much as colonialism and the Company have--namely, that European involvement in Africa should improve the way of life of the natives as well as provide a center of trade for Europe. Although the singleness of intention remains constant in the case of the book, we see later that intention differs from practice in the cases of Kurtz and colonialism.

Upon meeting the owner of the book at the inner station, Marlow describes him as

a harlequin. His clothes had been made of some stuff that was brown holland probably, but it was covered with patches all over, with bright patches, blue, red, and yellow--patches on the back, patches on the front, patches on elbows, on knees; coloured binding round his jacket, scarlet edging at the bottom of his trousers;

and the sunshine made him look extremely gay and wonderfully neat withal, because you could see how beautifully all this patching had been done.

(68)

Not only does the book of sailing principles suggest the settlement of Africa, with its "singleness of intention" lost in the jungle when it should be used at sea, but the book's owner is the human manifestation of the territorial map of Africa described earlier by Marlow. The map was divided into colored sections representing the various territories in Africa controlled by European countries, but this map, hanging on a wall in Europe, is as meaningless as the Russian sailor's clothes at Kurtz's station. A singleness of intention, written principles, maps and boundaries--they all lose their meaning in the darkness. As Marlow says of the harlequin:

It appears he had persuaded a Dutch trading-house on the coast to fit him out with stores and goods, and had started for the interior with a light heart, and no more idea of what would happen to him than a baby. (69)

Thus, the harlequin can also represent the fantasy of the Company and colonization--an enterprise entering the darkness with a worn-out set of principles (book) that, although well-meant, do not work well. As discussed in

Chapter Five of this study, Marlow expressed strong sarcasm toward the colonial purpose, and Conrad is now inserting his own irony in that "singleness of intention" and "principles" commonly take the form of "lust for ivory" and "lack of method or restraint." In this manner, colonization wanders through the wilderness unorganized and unfulfilled:

One of his [harlequin's] pockets (bright red) was bulging with cartridges, from the other (dark blue) peeped "Towson's Inquiry," etc. etc. He seemed to think himself excellently well equipped for a renewed encounter with the wilderness. . . . He shook hands and vanished in the night. Sometimes I ask myself whether I had ever really seen him--whether it was possible to meet such a phenomenon! (79)

By having Marlow describe the Harlequin, Conrad is developing a fantasy theme to describe colonialization and how it has gotten out of the control of its mother nations:

His very existence was improbable, inexplicable, and altogether bewildering. He was an insoluble problem. It was inconceivable how he had existed, how he had succeeded in getting so far, how he had managed to remain--why he did not instantly disappear. . . . If the absolutely

pure, uncalculating, unpractical spirit of adventure had ever ruled a human being, it ruled this be-patched youth. (70)

By contrast, Kurtz as part of the fantasy representing the Company and the intentions of colonization, has become an "atrocious phantom" (75). The natives near his station "adored him" (71). "He had taken a high seat amongst the devils of the land. . . ." (64). "He came to them with thunder and lightning, you know--and they had never seen anything like it--and very terrible. He could be very terrible. . . and there was nothing on earth to prevent him killing whom he jolly well pleased" (71-72).

Marlow blamed Kurtz's indiscretions on a lack of restraint. Lack of restraint was not necessarily a personal flaw in Kurtz, but characteristic of all the peoples involved in the "fantastic invasion" or colonization of Africa (48, 73).

Whereas Marlow attributes Kurtz with a lack of restraint, he is in awe of the great restraint of the half-starving crew of cannibals for not attacking and killing himself and his crew:

Restraint! What possible restraint? . . .

Restraint! I would just as soon have expected restraint from a hyena prowling amongst the corpses of a battlefield. But there was the fact

facing me--the fact dazzling, to be seen. . . .

(57)

Kurtz, however, does not even know he is "being assaulted by the powers of darkness" (64). "Mr. Kurtz lacked restraint in the gratification of his various lusts. . . there was something wanting in him" (73). It is for this reason Kurtz has human heads ornamenting the fence outside his shelter. His report to the International Society for the Suppression of Savage Customs gave Marlow

the notion of an exotic Immensity ruled by an august Benevolence. It made me tingle with enthusiasm. This was the unbounded power of eloquence--of words--of burning noble words. There were no practical hints to interrupt the magic current of phrases. . . . (65)

However,

at the end of that moving appeal to every altruistic sentiment it blazed at you, luminous and terrifying, like a flash of lightning in a serene sky: "Exterminate all the brutes!"

(65-66)

As mentioned earlier Kurtz's once good intentions were becoming questionable, and now here, whereas the Company manager saw Kurtz as exercising "unsound methods," Marlow sees "no method at all" (78). Although Kurtz is the most

efficient agent in terms of collecting ivory, he is less effective in terms of colonizing and civilizing Africa. Here is where we can observe the various fantasy themes in Heart of Darkness merging to form Conrad's rhetorical vision of colonialism. We have seen the "darkness" become an opposing force that preys on the settlers of a new frontier who do not have the restraint or singleness of purpose to remain civilized and carry out organized, goodly intentions. We have seen the Company, or what Marlow refers to as "that imbecile crowd" (84) destroyed by individual greed for wealth and power. As represented by Kurtz, and more generally, the harlequin, colonization becomes a lost child wandering through the wilderness, and the Company is a phantom in charge of "unspeakable rites" (65). No one is immune from the powers of darkness. While following Kurtz into the jungle to prevent him from calling his native followers to action against Marlow and his "pilgrim" passengers, Marlow remarks:

I remember I confounded the beat of the drum
with the beating of my heart, and was pleased
at its calm regularity. (81)

If these fantasies are considered collectively, we can discern a rhetorical vision suggesting that involvement in foreign lands is dangerous and harmful to those involved. Conrad presents colonialization as purposeless. With the

removal of Kurtz, the inner station is now defunct, and the planning and work invested in its creation are wasted. The benevolent ideas of civilizing and improving the lives of the natives are abandoned for a boatload of ivory. In the meantime, the harlequin is still wandering aimlessly in the jungle, Kurtz dies, and Marlow returns with a bitter story regarding his involvement with the colonial system. As Marlow describes it:

I saw the inconceivable mystery of a soul that knew no restraint, no faith, and no fear, yet struggling blindly with itself. (82)

This idea becomes manifest in the form of Kurtz the last day before his death. "I had immense plans. . ." says Kurtz,

"I was on the threshold of great things" (81-82). "'Oh, but I will wring your heart yet!' he cried at the invisible wilderness. . . . 'The Horror! The Horror!'" (85). Kurtz dies soon afterwards, and, according to Marlow, "The voice was gone. What else had been there?" (86). Kurtz, a man of great promise in European society, went into the darkness with limitless potential and came out with nothing much while the wealthy, powerful nations of Europe created empires that exchanged disorder for ivory in the disguise of philanthropic intentions.

Marlow lays his misgivings with the colonial system to

rest with a lie. As discussed earlier, Marlow despises lies and normally would not lie, but his dealings with Kurtz cause him to make a rare exception. Marlow delivers Kurtz's "report on the 'Suppression of Savage Customs'. . . with the postscriptum [exterminate the brutes] torn off" (88). Marlow deems it necessary to protect Kurtz's image, but in Marlow's lie, Conrad is suggesting, in part, that the people in Europe don't fully understand the atrocities involved in colonization.

Marlow also admits, "I laid the ghost of his [Kurtz's] gifts with a lie" (63). The lie he refers to regards his meeting with Kurtz' intended bride after Kurtz's death. Marlow considers Kurtz' request, "I want no more than justice" concerning Kurtz' achievements at the inner station, but cannot provide it. When asked by Kurtz's intended what Kurtz's final words were, Marlow could not own up to "the horror, the horror," that sums up both Kurtz's and Marlow's opinion of their involvement in Africa. Instead, Marlow softens the moment with a lie and tells her "the last word he pronounced was--your name" (93). Marlow knows that with this lie he has made a mockery of all that Kurtz stood for and all that he himself had learned:

It seemed to me that the house would collapse
before I could escape, that the heavens would

fall upon my head. But nothing happened. The heavens do not fall for such a trifle. Would they have fallen, I wonder, if I had rendered Kurtz that justice which was his due? Hadn't he said he wanted only justice? But I couldn't. I could not tell her. It would have been too dark--too dark altogether. . . . (94)

To Marlow, the darkness belongs in Africa, where intruders of a "fantastic invasion" go to find it. He and Kurtz had been there, and Kurtz did not return. Now that Marlow is back in Europe, he will leave the darkness where it belongs and protect the homeland from the horror of its colonies by lying to those who don't know any better. By lying and thus going against his own nature, Marlow exhibits a personal change affected by his dealings with Kurtz and colonialism that is permanent. In the final two books he appears in, Lord Jim and Chance, Marlow no longer spins yarns about his own adventures. Instead, he is content to relate the experiences of others, detaching himself from the colonial system.

Moreover, this final event in the story, this lie, epitomizes a rhetorical vision that suggests to the reader that colonialism is tricky business, and the way it is run thus far is harmful. By having Marlow reveal his lie to his friends in this narrative (and subsequently to

readers), Conrad is also suggesting that it is time to face the truth about colonialism and keep the darkness, the ignorance of our actions, out of Europe by means other than lies. Through the chaining-out of various fantasies into a rhetorical vision, Conrad is showing how European involvement in foreign lands is harmful not only to the natives who are oppressed and disillusioned by the system, but also to the individual agents and representatives of the system.

This vision is quite different from the attitudes expressed by other adventure writers in Conrad's time. Burroughs and Haggard presented colonialism as a means for European civilization to share its greatness while providing brilliant opportunities for the individual colonists. As we have seen, Conrad allows this view to be engulfed by the African darkness. In this way Conrad is warning Europe that greed overtaking justice and the oppression of "deprived" people could occur just as easily at home as in colonies.

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