

Source: [KBENG201HoDLitAnalysisEssay](#)

1 | Heart of Darkness Essay

General Information

Due Date	Topic	Important Documents
Oct 13th, 1pm	Choose a recurring word, motif, pattern, or character	Well, what do you think?

Prompt

Choose a word, motif, pattern, or character that you've noticed throughout the book, and construct an analytical, argumentative essay around it

Evidence bin

- *"The African continent had ceased to be a blank space of delightful mystery ... it had become a place of darkness. ... But there was in it one river especially ... resembling an immense snake uncoiled It fascinated me as a snake would a bird — a silly little bird. ... The snake had charmed me."* (9) => River charm Marlow EA
- *"The man seemed young ... He had tied a bit of white worsted around his neck — Why? Where did he get it? Was it a badge — an ornament — a charm — a propitiatory act? was there any idea at all connected with it? It looked startling around his black neck, this bit of white thread from beyond the seas."* (20) => Native wear charm EB
- *"The approach to this Kurtz grubbing for ivory in the wretched bush was beset by as many dangers as though he had been an enchanted princess sleeping in a fabulous castle."* (52) => Kurts' image of being charmed ?? EC
- *"The thing was to know what Kurts himself belonged to, how many powers of darkness claimed him for their own. ... He had taken a high seat amongst the devils of the sand — I mean literally. You can't understand"* (60) => Kurts as both charm and charmer ED
- *"Kurtz began his work with the argument that we whites, from the point of development we had arrived at, 'must necessarily appear to them savages in the nature of supernatural beings — we approach them with the might as of a deity' ... From that point he soared and took me wit him ... it made me tingle with enthusiasm. This was the unbounded power of eloquence — of words — of burning noble words."* (61) => Charming others to charm EF
- *"Kurtz had the power to charm or frighten rudimentary souls into an aggravated witch-dance in his honor; he could also fill the small souls of the pilgrims with bitter misgivings."* (62) => Kurts can charm EG
- *"Instantly, ... a cry arose whose shrillness pierced the still air like a sharp arrow flying straight to the heart of the land; and, as if by enchantment, stream of human beings — of naked human beings — with spears in their hands, with bows, with shields, with wild glances and savage movement, were poured into the clearing by the dark-faced and pensive forest."* (74) => Natives are charmed EH
- *"He cried in a whisper at some image, at some vision — he cried out twice, a cry that was no more than a breath — 'The horror! The horror!'"* (86) => Kurts claimed by charm EI
- *"'Kurtz had faith — don't you see? — he had the faith. He could get himself to believe any thing — anything. He would have been a splendid leader of an extreme party'"* (90) => Postmortum: Kurts can self-charm EJ

Claim Synthesis

- p: Establish idea of charm charm => venture into the center of charm
 - River/land charm Marlow EA
 - Natives wear charm EB
 - Marlow thinks Kurtz is charming/charmed? EC
- p: finds Kurtz as both the charming and charmer => Kurtz propergating this too!
 - Kurtz could self-charm EJ
 - Kurtz is both charm and charmer ED
 - Kurtz actively charming others to charm EF
- p: Kurtz' propergating works! => Kurtz falls to his own charm
 - Natives are charmed by Kurtz EH
 - Kurtz claimed by charm EI

Loose thoughts

- Charm is an energy source
- Its up to the enchanter — "Kurtz" — to channel it

The Claim

Through tracking the motif of Kurtz's — and, to a lesser extent, Marlow's — interaction with enchantment and its subsequent effect to the characters in the Heart of Darkness, the Conrad warns of the potentially crippling and reciprocal effect of the misguided exploitation of the "charm" that exists within the African lands by Europeans.

- Africa has inherent, not necessarily negative charm
 - EA: it attracted Marlow there
 - EB: Marlow does not understand the spellbound natives' own ways
 - EC: getting to Kurtz was pictured as a fairytale, less as a very sinister act
- Kurtz, the charmed and charmer, tries to channel the charm of the sand
 - EJ: Kurtz is a self-charmable person
 - ED (reverse the quote): He began acting on the charm, and Marlow wonders what the charm will do to him
 - EF: The naïve Kurtz uses his charm to charm others to charm

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