

ESSAY 1: *The Heart of Darkness*

LENGTH: ~Three pages, typed, double spaced (750 words, not including bibliography)

Many literary scholars and critics today see Joseph Conrad's novella, *The Heart of Darkness*, as incorporating aspects of both the imperial/colonial and the anti-imperial/anti-colonial, though it cannot be argued to be postcolonial, due (1) to the date of publication, (2) to the narrative style and content, and (3) to the person of the author himself.

Write a three-page position essay in which you argue for the essential imperialism/colonialism or anti-imperialism/anti-colonialism of the story. Organize your argument around the guiding principle of an image, theme, or motif in the tale. Make sure you take into account the time and place in which Conrad wrote the story, the tone, language, and lexicon of the story, and the possible moral of the story or lack thereof, as implied in Kurtz's last words.

Examples of acceptable images, themes, and motifs are (but are not limited to):

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|---|---|
| -darkness vs. light | -futility |
| -namelessness | -faustian imagery |
| -time vs. timelessness | -the natural world v. the civilized world |
| -rivers | -circularity |
| -maps, globes, and other abstracted geography | -'civilization' and 'savagery' |

In your essay, please underline your THESIS STATEMENT and your TOPIC SENTENCES. If you have questions about these two structural elements of your essay, please see me in my office hours.