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DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH STUDIES

## **POSTCOLONIAL STUDIES**

Semester: 6 ; Group: C

Pr. GHOURDOU

### **HEART OF DARKNESS (2)** **by Joseph Conrad**

"I've seen the devil of violence, and the devil of greed, and the devil of hot desire; but, by all the stars! These were strong, lusty, red-eyed devils, that swayed and drove men—men, I tell you. But as I stood on this hillside, I foresaw that in the blinding sunshine of that land I would become acquainted with a flabby, pretending, weak-eyed devil of a rapacious and pitiless folly. How insidious he could be, too, I was only to find out several months later and a thousand miles farther". p. 18.

"They were not enemies, they were not criminals, they were nothing earthly now— nothing but black shadows of disease and starvation, lying confusedly in the greenish gloom. Brought from all the recesses of the coast in all the legality of time contracts, lost in uncongenial surroundings, fed on unfamiliar food, they sickened, became inefficient, and were then allowed to crawl away and rest. These moribund shapes were free as air—and nearly as thin ..." p. 19.

"Black figures strolled about listlessly, pouring water on the glow, whence proceeded a sound of hissing; steam ascended in the moonlight, the beaten nigger groaned somewhere. 'What a row the brute makes!' said the indefatigable man with the moustaches, appearing near us. 'Serve him right. Transgression—punishment— bang! Pitiless, pitiless. That's the only way. This will prevent all conflagrations for the future.'" p. 30

"Their headman, a young, broad-chestlike black, severely draped in dark-blue fringed cloths, with fierce nostrils and his hair all done up artfully in oily ringlets, stood near me. 'Aha!' I said, just for good fellowship's sake. 'Catch 'im,' he snapped, with a bloodshot widening of his eyes and a flash of sharp teeth—'catch 'im. Give 'im to us.' 'To you, eh?' I asked; 'what would you do with them?' 'Eat 'im!' he said curtly, and, leaning his elbow on the rail, looked out into the fog in a dignified and profoundly pensive attitude. I would no doubt have been properly horrified, had it not occurred to me that he and his chaps must be very hungry." p. 50.

I had a vision of him on the stretcher, opening his mouth voraciously, as if to devour all the earth with all its mankind. He lived then before me; he lived as much as he had ever lived—a shadow insatiable of splendid appearances, of frightful realities; a shadow darker than the shadow of the night, and draped nobly in the folds of a gorgeous eloquence". p. 95.

## **TEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF A TEXT:**

**Before** reading and analyzing your text (for the exam requirements), you should have already had an idea about the source text: **Heart of Darkness**, its storyline (plot), characters and setting (place and time). You should also bear in mind that **nothing** the author uses (vocabulary and style) **is innocent**.

**While** reading the passage, you should try to focus on a key idea and find (or underline) elements (words from the text) to support your point of view. In the context of our course, the general idea of any passage should reflect a colonial attitude of the writer, and the student's awareness of this attitude (postcolonial awareness). This approach has been dealt with throughout the course with names such as Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, Gayatri Spivak ... etc. and a more detailed rhetorical approach with David Spurr.

From this respect, your analysis should look something like the following:

### **Introduction:**

Contextualize the passage: author, novel storyline and characters.

**Thesis statement:** explain the main idea of the passage considering its relationship with the general text (Heart of Darkness).

Highlight the sub-ideas to be discussed in the body of your analysis.

### **Body:**

Paragraph 1: re-situate the sub-idea and its relationship with the whole passage and the whole novel.

Support your idea with key words from the passage: each key word should be fully explained and commented on.

Find more supports if existent in the passage.

Paragraph 2: situate sub-idea 2. Do the same as paragraph 1.

If the passage is a rich one, and you need more paragraphs to explain and comment on it, you should take as much space as you need to answer for the requirements of the exam; i.e. the number of paragraphs depends on your choice of sub-ideas and on the richness of the passage.

**Conclusion:** write a small concluding paragraph where you re-state your focal idea and how the author deals with it.