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**The Analysis of Id, Ego and Superego in the  
Character of Marlow in Conrad's *Heart of  
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**DEDICATION**

*In the name of ALLAH, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful, All the praise is due to  
ALLAH alone, the Cherisher and the Sustainer of the whole world*

*I would like to dedicate this modest work to:*

**MY PARENTS**

*for raising me to believe that anything is possible*

**TO MY BELOVED DEAD SOULS;**

**RELATIVES;**

**FRIENDS;**

**COLLEAGUES;**

**AND TEACHERS;**

*whose lives affect mine and added to the richness of my being;*

*for lessons learned*

*I am grateful*

*In the light of this dedication, I ask Allah to bless them with all those whom I came in contact  
with over my course of life.*

*Finally, as a sign of gratitude, to all those people who loved and helped me.*

***Hadjera***

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*for giving me power and patience to accomplish my work;*

*for making everything possible*

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### **Abstract**

This dissertation aims at exploring Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* with the help of Sigmund Freud's theories which are id, ego and superego. It provides an analysis of the main character Charlie Marlow from a Freudian psychoanalytic theory of personality revealing how this character's journey and personality have been affected by his id, ego and superego. Freud's forenamed notions have been used to describe Marlow's reactions toward the savage nature along his journey up the Congo River. This study has followed the qualitative analysis and has proved that text of the novel is very rich in terms of exploring various psychological theories such as id, ego and superego. It has revealed that the processes involved in Freud's concept have played an important role in the changes occurring within Marlow's character behaviour in both Europe and Africa. Marlow, who wants to discover the blankness in Africa, starts his journey as an impulse. He looks at the map of Africa where he always hankered to go. By the time, his passion is disturbed by the darkness Marlow has witnessed while journeying up the Congo. This darkness, Marlow was fascinated by, embodies the Freudian superego within him; totally switched again Marlow takes the id in the form of rejection or separation from society. He runs after one of the most famous ivory provider at the Company he works for; he is called Kurtz. However, unlike Kurtz Marlow balances his id and superego by ego.

**Key Words:** Psychoanalysis, id, ego, superego, self-restraint.

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## General Introduction

### 1. Background of the Study

The modernist literature is characterized chiefly by a rejection of 19th century traditions and of their consensus between author and reader (Baldick, 2008). By the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the English literature could not par-take the same conventions of British society, beliefs, culture and political status of the century. This rejection gave birth to a new literary intelligentsia whose works were covered of the most modern air associated with many experimental and avant-grade styles, with narrative techniques, with point of view, with time and space, with new visions in anthropology, psychology, philosophy, political theory and psychoanalysis that made up the movement called Modernism.

*Heart of Darkness* was a fateful event in the history of English (Watt, 1981). The early modern period has seen many books of travels and adventure, and one of the most famous in English is *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad, published in 1902 as one of three stories in the volume *Youth*; which is based on first hand experiences that Joseph Conrad witnessed while journeying up the Congo River, during King Leopold II of Belgium's atrocious rule in 1890 in which Conrad, himself, wrote in the “*Author's Note*” (1917), “*Heart of Darkness* is experience too; but it is experience pushed a little( and only very little) beyond the actual facts of the case”(Conrad, 1917).

It is more, however, than the story of one man's experiences; it is written in a very modernist concepts which includes reflections on inner qualities of human nature as well as portrayals of the darkness heart of European colonialism and imperialism in the non-Western world, revealing the dominated and exploitative essence of the Whites over the Africans and

African's wealth justified through a civilizing mission. As Roberts Young (Young, 1990) pointed out, the invention of Modern concepts of 'human nature', together, with ideas about the universal nature of humanity and the human mind, occurring during the centuries characterized in the West by colonialization, those particularly violent centuries in the history of the world now known as the era of Western colonialization.

Joseph Conrad was one of the most remarkable literary figures like James Joyce, T. S. Eliot, Ernest Hemingway, William Faulkner, Ezra Pound, D. H. Lawrence, and many others who launched themselves about the turn of the century and typified the aforementioned movement. Conrad is considered one of the best novelists of the time for he is a man of a different nation, specifically Poland; yet he learns another and writes works of fine arts in it. Thornley and Gwyneth, in their book *An outline of English literature* (1984), said, “[...]In his own fine style he wrote better than many Englishmen, though occasionally a sentence or a group of sentences is too complicated to be immediately clear” (p.129). This Pole also contributed so much to the British literature by adding a special narrative technique wherein he used a character named Marlow who could be as the author's mouthpiece. That's why Conrad acclaimed as an innovator in British literature and had a considerable influence in the modernist movement, referring to the speech of Batchelor (1994), saying“ with historical hindsight we can see Conrad as one of the founding fathers of modernism” (p.269).

Joseph Conrad knew little or nothing of England when he first visited in 1878; yet by 1884 he had qualified as a caption of British ships, and in 1895 he produced his first novel in English, *Almayer's Folly*. He was born in 1857 and died in 1924.

His novella *Heart of Darkness* is based on the theme of imperialism, colonialism, post colonialism, sex, money, savagery and human psyche. He has good command on description and his characters are real characters.

Krishner (1968) stated, "Recent criticism has insisted on the story's being about Marlow rather than Kurtz regarding it as a journey into Marlow's consciousness" (cited in Alvarez, 2003, pp.7-8). Marlow, who is the main character in Joseph Conrad's novella *Heart of Darkness*, indicates that "the mind of man is capable of anything-because everything is in it, all the past as well as all the future" (Conrad, p.58). Marlow travels to Africa where he encounters the jungle environment in which he begins to lose his understanding of the rules and ideals of the society. During this journey, his psyche is disturbed and his "psychological self" is forced to get adjusted to the rural environment of the Congo. Throughout the story, the capacity of the mind in accordance with Sigmund Freud's human psyche namely the id, ego and superego, is demonstrated by Marlow.

## **2. Motivation**

Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, one of the great sophisticated novella, was written in 1902, 116 years ago, but it is very relevant today. It is motivating to read since it deals with many issues such as cruelty, imperialism, greediness, colonialism, isolation, and how all can change a person and only bring us mental disaster under the cover of material development. It is deeply reflecting the real phenomenon of the nineteenth century.

Another reason for choosing such work; that is, being a major influence on the developments in the writing of the 20th century which led to a new golden age of English and American fiction.

Bigly deemed by many as it's one of the most enigmatic work of Conrad writing; it is masterly blend of adventure and psychological penetration. Simply, it's the kind of writing that is interested in the feeling and consciousness of their characters which opens up many curious ideas in the reader's mind.

### **3. Objectives of the Study**

The present study aims to achieve three basic objectives stated as follows:

1. To analyze Marlow's character through Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis theory.
2. To bring out the importance of psychoanalytical study of *Heart of Darkness* through the character of Marlow.
3. To show that psychoanalytic study is indispensable of *Heart of Darkness*.

### **4. Rationale**

The psyche is the center of all human behavior and actions, thus analysis of the nature of human psyche is crucial. In this regard, the theories of Sigmund Freud are very essential since they answer many basic questions about the human psyche which nobody had answered before. Human psyche has been analyzed in terms of id, ego and superego. Therefore, in order to better understand the novella and help readers getting into the character of Marlow, the researcher is going to conquer Marlow's unconscious mind and identify his three psychic zones forenamed using Freudian perspective.

## 5. Statement of the Problem

*Heart of Darkness* is treated as an inquiry into the psyche of Marlow. The psyche is here an analysis of Marlow's journey to heart of darkness which gets readers realize Marlow's reactions toward the wilderness. The research problem, this study attempts to investigate, is to what extent the three levels of psyche the id, ego and superego have the ability to control Marlow's journey into the dark of Africa.

## 6. Research Questions

With the help of Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory, many questions arise:

1. To what extent are Id, Ego and Super-ego present in Marlow?
2. How does Marlow demonstrate the capacity of human's mind through Id, Ego and Super-ego?
3. How does Marlow's psychological study help the readers to understand the novel comprehensibly?

## 7. Literature Review

In relation to the title of this dissertation as a study of psychoanalysis of Marlow's psyche the id, ego and superego. It is necessary to look up the link between the psych and literature.

Lapsley and Stey (2012) state that there are three provinces of the mental life. These provinces are id, ego and superego. In these provinces id motivates the mind to seek pleasure and is responsible for biological foundation of a person or his or her personality. The ego is influential by the external world. It is the balancing force for id. To satisfy the demands of id with

reality, it generates the libidinal energies. It works according to the principles of reality and is based on reason and commonsense. Superego is responsible for morality. It seeks perfection. Unlike ego, it represents ideal.

As a depth psychology, a theory of mental unconsciousness, it can become indispensable to all sciences which are concerned with the evolution of human civilization and its major institutions such as art, religion and social order( Freud, 1926). Apart from being a field of treatment of neuroses or psychotherapy, Freud in *The Question of Lay Analysis*, emphasized the value of using the method of psychoanalytic theory in analyzing art and social order. He generated the proper approach of analyzing the human psyche which we now call psychoanalysis. In this view of Freudian's concepts necessity of appreciating art, particular literature, we take the cue of the demand of approaching these concepts in analyzing works of art.

For Wright (1991), Freud's theories have started an approach in literature by the name of psychoanalytic approach. Those writers who depended only on symbols were of the interest to Sigmund Freud. According to Freud, these writers use ideas with mysteries and doubts which give meaning only when explained by an analyst thoroughly. The analysts work on the suppression which is released by the unconscious mind. Freudian theories try to give explanation that literature is the work of fantasy and dreams. Thus, fantasy and dreams help the writers to produce a literary piece. Psychoanalytical study helps to understand the childish wish that has been repressed in the unconscious of mind. It is also the purpose of literary work.

Guerin in his book "*A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature*" (1999) maintains that Freud explained human psyche with the help of a language which gives information about his model. He deals with the unconscious mind in one way or the other with



the help of his theories. Guerin says that according to Freud our actions are generated by psychological forces and we have very limited control over these forces.

Murfin(1989) calls the literary work as a dream story. According to him, all the critics work on the hidden thought of literary piece. He calls this kind of literary analysis psychoanalytic study. Murfin quotes the terms “condensation” and “displacement” of Sigmund Freud and said that these two processes produce fears and wishes in dreams and thoughts. Many anxieties and a lot of wishes are packed in an image due to condensation. There are some more images of a person and thought which can only be explained by an analyst and this is called displacement. Figures of speech like metaphors are just like dream condensations for psychoanalytic critics and they treat metonyms as dream displacement for figures of speech are based on weak connections according to them. Literary works plays, poetry, novels and prose are used by the writers to realize their suppressed thoughts and fantasies in order to protect themselves from anxieties. It is considered that the characters produced by the writers or the language used by them can be analyzed in terms of the hidden fantasies in the writer's mind. Therefore, all the writers write according to the psychology of the readers to match with the readers suppressed feelings. It makes the writers skilled creators too. There are three characteristics of psychoanalytic study of literary work. Firstly, it studies the traits of the writers psychologically. Secondly, it analyses a creative process. Thirdly, it explores the impact of a literary work on the readers.

Many previous studies of this novella are done, but they differ in some matters. The first is an essay by Edward Said entitled “Two Visions in *Heart of Darkness*”. In his essay, Edward (1993)has shown how a key feature of imperialist approach is carried on in the Congo Unite in *Heart of Darkness*. He emphasized that *Heart of Darkness* symbolizes Conrad's own political beliefs about imperialism. Second is an essay by Chinua Achebe entitled “An image of

Africa: Racism in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*". According to him (2016), European writers depicted Africa as the center of darkness and portrayed Africans as savages. They think the African people are inferior to them and deprived them of the right of expression. Achebe critically revealed that in Conrad's work and states that Conrad is a racist and *Heart of Darkness* is all about racism. The third is another critique by Maria Antonia Alvarez Calleja entitled "Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* Journey in Quest of The Self". For Alvarez (2003)," *Heart of Darkness* can be seen as a journey, Marlow's mythical journey, in search of the self, to bring back a new truth. The Fourth is a research done by Mega Afaf (University of Kasdi Merbah Ouragla, 2013), entitled "Nature in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*: A comparative study". This thesis aims to analyze the theme of nature through two points of view which are the literary interpretation and the linguistic function of simile through which nature is expressed. Descriptive quantitative research is used in this study.

## **8. Significance of the Study**

The researcher aspires to explain the id, ego and superego. She will show how these three elements of the human psyche help us to understand the personality; also how much the psychoanalytic study of the novel is crucial to comprehend the novel in a better way. Then, the researcher will apply this theory of Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis to better understand Marlow in the very particular novella.

## **9. Delimitation of the study**

Although the area of the research is vast where one can find many ways to explore new perspectives, the researcher has limited the study to Marlow who is the protagonist of the novella.

## 10. Methodology

This study belongs to qualitative method. In this method, there are two types of data source, namely primary and secondary data source. The primary data source is the novella "*Heart of Darkness*", meanwhile the secondary data are other materials related to the study.

The researcher will collect the data in word from books, library, and internet. These words will include Sigmund Freud's theory about id, ego and superego. Afterwards, she will apply Sigmund Freud's theory of behavior on the character of Marlow. The collected data will be transcribed and analyzed qualitatively to reach the concrete results.

References along with the publication of those works the researcher frequently visits and refers to in the course of the research paper are identified by the volume and page numbers of the edition and have been inserted within parentheses in the body of it.

## 11. Structure of the Dissertation

The present dissertation is divided into three chapters:

**First Chapter** displays a theoretical overview of the theory undertaken in this study. It mainly concerns with a brief survey about Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalysis. The chapter also examines Freud's psychoanalytic theory of personality structured of id, ego and superego.

While **Second Chapter** is devoted to the novel, *Heart of Darkness*. It presents general background about the novella, including plot, characters map, and themes. It will also deal with analysis of main characters of the short novel Charlie Marlow and Kurtz, plus the kind of relationship they both meet.

Finally, **Third Chapter** gives a consideration to the psychoanalysis of Marlow by adapting Freud's three components of personality: the id, the ego and the superego.

# Chapter One

## *The Theoretical Background*

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## CHAPTER ONE: *THE THEORETICAL BACKGROUND*

### Introduction

Early modern period has been spanned by emergence of a famous novelist of foreign birth whose name is Joseph Conrad. This period in history comes to have been known by the early twentieth century. It witnessed the end of the Queen Victoria's reign. That is to say; the Modern period makes a symbolic break from the conventions of the preceding century. The Pole Conrad was one of first to appear on the scene. His narratives resemble adventure stories in event and setting. However, his real concern is with issues of characters and morality. *Heart of Darkness* is one of his best collections. It narrates the journey of Marlow up the Congo River where he is forced to confront the darkness of its mysterious nature. The turn of the century also roughly synchronized with the workings and developments of Sigmund Freud's theories of human mind that provide keys to understanding human nature and behaviour. In the light of this background, this chapter is concerned with a brief survey about Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis. Moreover, we will focus on his psychoanalytic theory of personality and its three different types; id, ego, and superego.

### 1.1 Sigmund Freud 's Psychoanalysis

On the surface, the journey to the *Heart of Darkness* is the exploration of the African Congo where the explorers are trying to conquer the natives and make a profit in the ivory business. There is much more, however, to the short novel written by Joseph Conrad than just the surface; it is also the exploration into the human consciousness where the goal is to conquer the unknown and realize the pervasiveness of our unconscious psyches. At the same time when *Heart of Darkness* was surfacing in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century society, a psychologist called Sigmund Freud was publishing his research findings.

Freud's research of the unconscious and Conrad's journey into darkness are remarkably parallel. Of the parallelism, John Tessitore, a modern critic says, "it is enough simply to observe that two great minds found themselves arriving at identical conclusions and expressed those conclusions through the modes of their individual disciplines " (Tessitore, 1980, p.31).It is questionable that both Conrad's exploration of the mind and Freud's exploration of the Id, Ego, and Super-ego are specifically comparable.

Sigmund Freud was born on May 6, 1856 and died on September 23, 1939. He was a neurologist. He was also the founder of psychoanalysis. Freud grew up in Austria and studied medicine at Vienna University. He specialized in the nervous system and its diseases. Then, he moved to Paris and borrowed from hypnosis which he used as a method for treating hysterical cases such as feelings of fear, paralyses, and hallucinations (Smart, 2012).

Freud denied the importance of studying the conscience alone in psychology, but he claimed to what he called "sub- consciousness", or rather "unconsciousness". According to Freud, this area of the mind is considered the repository of one's powerful and primitive motives which the person is unaware. Freud compared the psyche as an iceberg which hides deep down more than on the surface. The small floating part of that ice is called the "consciousness" of the human being while the greatest non-floating part is the "sub-consciousness" where suppressed feelings, desires and lusts are found. Freud says that we cannot understand the human behaviour unless we understand these unconscious motives. He gave a model of human psyche which consists of id, ego and superego. The process of using these three psychic parts of one's personality to analyze the ways he/she acts is so called psychoanalysis (Smart, 2012).

Psychoanalysis is not only a practice theory for curing those who are considered mentally ill, but a criticism approached to the study of literature and that developed in the 20th Century, primarily through the work of the Austrian Sigmund Freud and, in other directions, by Alfred Adler and Carl Jung. It is based on analyzing the actions of the literary characters such dreams, feelings of guilt, anxieties, desires, and ambivalences using the three personality structures that Freud identified (Eagleton, 1996)

## **1.2 Freud's Psychoanalytic Theory of Personality**

According to Holland (1990), psychoanalysis goes through different chronological phases. The first is around the 1890s; Freud propounded the theory that differentiated between three different levels of consciousness: consciousness, preconsciousness and unconsciousness. Consciousness or rather conscious thoughts, he described as some of thoughts and perceptions characterized by awareness. As for preconsciousness or rather preconscious thoughts, were memories and stored knowledge not present in consciousness but capable of being retrieved without encountering any inner suppression. Regarding unconsciousness is the part of the psyche that a person is unaware of (Holland, 1990)

Then, later in 1923, Freud emerged with a more developed structural model explained in his new book entitled, "*The Ego and the Id*", wherein he describes a new, comprehensive theory of personality process of organizing. This new structural model of the human psyche or rather the Freudian personalities, Freud proposed, can be explained in terms of id, ego and superego (ibid).

### 1.2.1 The Id

The id, which is a kind of strong desire, always seeks pleasures and is child like. It is completely unconscious and impulsive. It seeks immediate pleasure and gratification. For instance, increase in hunger will produce an immediate attempt to eat. However, it is not always realistic or even possible to fulfill our needs immediately. In his book, *Holland's Guide to Psychoanalytic Psychology and Literature*, Holland (1990) describes the id by “the one would be defined today as the psychic representation of biological drives” (p.8). It is based on pleasure principle, seeking for satisfaction regardless of any other circumstances of the situation. Therefore, id is neither social nor acceptable in a society.

### 1.2.2 The Super-ego

Superego which Holland (1990) describes as “the incorporated commands of one's parents, both to do and not to do, violation of which leads to guilt or depression”(p.8), deals with morality. The superego operates on the idealistic principle. It makes the judgments about right and wrong. It aims for perfections. It punishes the misbehavior with the feelings of being guilty. It works unlike the id. It does not want to satisfy its desires only. Id wants the fulfillment of its desires on any cost, but superego only strives to fulfill its desires appropriately. It does not want instant self gratification. It always looks at what is right and what is wrong because it has the feeling of guilt. It facilitates us to act appropriately in the society in which we live so that we get no feelings of being guilty. For example, John could easily steal the meat from a butcher's shop and nobody would know about it, but he did not steal it, for he knew that stealing was an immoral act.



### 1.2.3 The Ego

The function of the ego is based on the principle of reality. It strives to control and please the desires of id realistically to make them socially acceptable. This is one of the most organised parts of a person's mind that has power over the activities of the human beings. It tries to control the thoughts of ours to make them sensible. For example, John wanted to steal some gold from the market, but he decided not to steal it, because it is considered immoral and it will bring him punishment if he steals the gold. For Holland (1990), "the ego is the synthesizer and executive that chooses strategies and tactics that best balance these competing needs "(p.8).

### Conclusion

Sigmund Freud is famously known with his foundation of psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis is the method of analyzing the psyche. According to Freud, human personality is complex and contains more than a single part. In his famous psychoanalytic theory of personality, personality is composed of three agencies. These three agencies Freud identified known as the id, the ego and the superego. They work together to create one's personality that makes a person different from other people. While the id is completely unconscious and only driven by needs and desires, the superego functions as a protector from doing certain things that one's id thinks to do. It is related to attitudes about what is right and wrong and to feeling of guilt. Between these two parts, the role of the ego comes. The ego is a realistic part. It serves as a mediator between the person's desires and reality or more specifically between one's id and one's superego.

# Chapter Two

## *Literary Analysis of Heart of Darkness*

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## CHAPTER TWO: *LITERARY ANALYSIS OF HEART OF DARKNESS*

### Introduction

This chapter displays a theoretical overview of the short novel '*Heart of Darkness*'. It includes general background, analysis of the main characters, characters map, plot, and number of themes related to our topic namely darkness, self- restraint vs. self- aggrandizement and nature. Finally, the chapter will be closed with underlying some kind of relationship that connects Marlow with Kurtz.

### 2.1 General Background

The novella, *Heart of Darkness*, is written by Joseph Conrad. Joseph Conrad was a great novelist of his time and still he is considered one of the best novelists. Conrad was best known in his day as a teller of sea stories; his technique and style have since come to be recognized as influential in the development of the modern novel. His novel is based on many themes such as imperialism, colonialism, post colonialism, sex, money, savagery, cruelty, human psyche, and how isolation can change a person. In his book, *Joseph Conrad's Heart of Darkness*, Bloom (2008) restated Cedric Watts's words about Conrad's novella, saying:

Conrad's '*Heart of Darkness*' is a rich, vivid, layered, paradoxical, and problematic novella or long tale; a mixture of oblique autobiography, traveller's yarn, adventure story, psychological odyssey, political satire, symbolic prose-poem, black comedy, spiritual melodrama, and sceptical meditation. It has proved to be 'ahead of its times': an exceptionally prophetic text. First appeared in 1899 as a serial in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*; it became extensively influential during subsequent decades, and reached a zenith of critical acclaim in the period 1950–75. What put it ahead of them was that it was intelligently of them: Conrad addressed issues of the day with such alert adroitness and

ambiguity that he anticipated many twentieth century preoccupations (Bloom, 2008, p. 19).

Part of the ambiguity of his work lies in the form Conrad's narrative takes; that is to say, in the way the story is told. It is not just a trip told by an omniscient character; but rather it is a story within a story. On the far side of the dullness of conventional narratives; Conrad breaks the conventions and develops relatively uncommon narrational techniques represented in the use of a narrator, in particular Marlow who is the source of Conrad's story and is also a participating character within. The story starts with his journey. It sets forth from Thames which itself is a dark place. After this it reaches to Congo. This technique is best known as a "*Frame Story*" (ibid).

However, this changed in 1977 when Chinua Achebe criticized the writer for being "a bloody racist" and *Heart of Darkness* is clearly written through a perspective of white man. He raises a question of how dare Conrad write about Africans and describe them as savages, barbaric, uncivilised, and inhuman among others. A people whose culture he might not understand, and whose journey Conrad may not know (Achebe, 2016).

As a response to Achebe's critique, Edward Said stood up for Conrad in his essay "Two Visions in *Heart of Darkness*" in 1993. He claims that we must not blame the Europeans for the misfortunes of the present. We should instead look at the events of imperialism "as a network of interdependent histories that would be inaccurate and senseless to repress, useful and interesting to understand." (Said, p.19). *Heart of Darkness* was based mainly on Conrad's own journey into the Congo in 1890. During this journey, he noted evidence of atrocities, exploitation, whites' domination over Africans and African's ivory. It fully convinced him of the difference between imperialism's rhetoric and the harsh reality of what he called 'the vilest scramble for loot that

ever disfigured the history of human conscience and geographical exploration.' Said states that yet the whole of what Kurtz and Marlow talk about is in fact imperial mastery, white European over black Africans, and their ivory, civilization over the primitive Dark Continent (Said, p. 27).

## 2.2 Main Characters' Analysis

**Charlie Marlow** is the most famed of Conrad's narrator character. He is considered as the protagonist and the main narrative voice of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* whose text is supposedly a faithful transcription of his words, yet it is transcribed by narrator of unknown name. He is described as a Buddha preaching in European clothes. Bloom (2009) mentioned, "He delivers his entire narrative on the *Nellie* sitting in a Buddha-like posture, implying enlightenment or perpetual meditation(p.18). Because of his mystified curiosity about discovering the parts of the world and his naive self-assured personality, Marlow gets a job with a Company that explores the Congo area in the continent of Africa, so he joins "the trading society" as a steamboat captain. *Heart of Darkness* presents a vivid description of Marlow's external and internal experiences in the Congo. Externally the sum of scenes and jungle environments surrounding him; internally the thoughts that reflects his views and personality upon everything he notes. Despite all challenges he passes by, he proves that he is a man of moral integrity. In this regard, Bloom (2009)described his journey as:

His journey into the interior of the jungle symbolizes the internal exploration of his own moral integrity. Kurtz, with whom Marlow almost immediately identifies and who is the supposed embodiment of his moral ideals, awaits him at the heart of darkness. Marlow's refusal to lie represents his own ethical integrity: "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 appalls me" (Conrad, p.42). Yet, as he proceeds from one

station to the next and continues up the river, gradually beginning to internalize the disenchanting corruption of his surroundings, he moves closer and closer to telling lies of his own. The confrontation with Kurtz marks Marlow's final debilitating recognition of the inadequacy of his personal morals to influence or command circumstances beyond his comprehension and control. Thereafter, it becomes easier and easier for him to lie (Bloom, 2009, p.18).

**Kurtz** is the most honored employee for his achievements in the Company because he is the one that most supplies it with ivory. Bloom (2009) said, "His presence in most of Heart of Darkness is primarily through the words of other people—a fitting characterization, as he turns out to be an individual barely more tangible than his disembodied voice" (p.18). The reason of being half English and half French provokes the defaming ideas about his character that the Manager, an Englishman, pictures. Kurtz works out of the Inner Station and is described as well-educated European. He first begins his work in the Congo as a "virtuous mission. However, while in the forest, he claims to be God over the Naive Africans. Perhaps his appearance seems to be a little disappointing and dissatisfying, but as a symbol he is a figure standing for meanings. Jericho (1993) states that:

Kurtz is a microcosm- a whole in miniature- of the man's failure in Africa: he goes equipped with the finest technology and the highest philanthropic ideals and ends up injuring (even killing) the Africans and stealing their ivory. He reduces technology to the guns he uses to plunder ivory. Kurtz also shows us the consequence of inadequate self-knowledge. He journeys to Africa eager to do good, and completely unaware of the dark side of his nature, the side that will respond to the call of the primitive. Kurtz points up one of the morals of Marlow's tale:

if you aren't aware of the darkness within you, you won't know how to fight it if you ever need to (Jericho, 1993, p.18)

Despite his childish selfishness, materialistic, deluded, and mentally unstable personality when Marlow meets him, Conrad makes out that,

He was once a principled man of substance, driven to the wilderness by his ambition to fulfill "immense plans" (Conrad, p.110). In the end, he seems to regain himself, dying in a "supreme moment of complete knowledge" and moral possession of his soul (Bloom, 2009, p.18).

### 2.3 Characters' Map

For more illustration, Daniel Moran (2000) in his book "*CliffsNotes on Conrad's Heart of Darkness and The Secret Sharer*" presents a map in which he clarifies characters relationship:

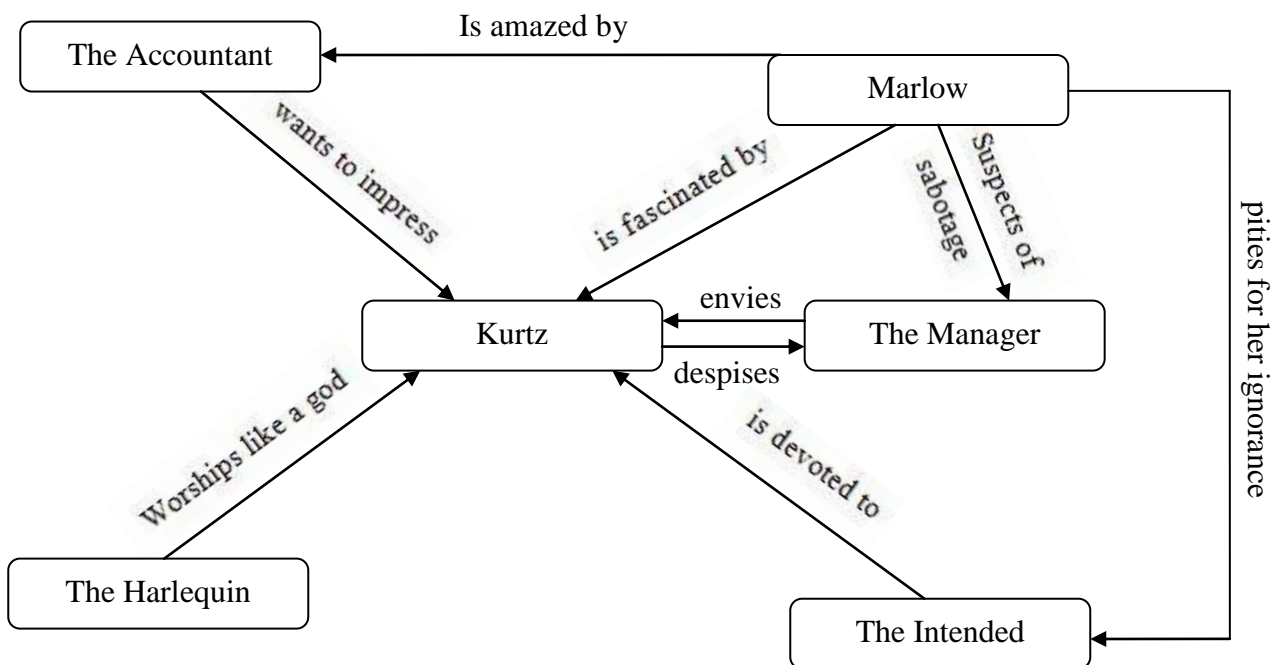


Figure 1.1: An Example of Characters' Map (Moran, 2000, p.15)

## 2.4 Plot

In *Heart of Darkness* Marlow is a sailor. He goes up the Congo River to meet Mr. Kurtz who is the manager of Inner Station. Marlow takes the job as a captain of a steamer in a company by the help of his Aunt. He travels to Congo where he encounters the brutality of the company. The native inhabitants of the region are cruelly treated by the hands of company men. Marlow comes to the Central Station. It is run by the general manager. There he comes to know that his boat is not properly sailing due to damage to some its parts. Therefore, he waits for the parts. During this time he learns about Kurtz and his interest in Kurtz grows. There is a rumour that Kurtz is ill which results the delay of the repair of steamboat. Finally, he gets the parts to repair the boat. He sets out on a voyage along with manager and a group of people whom Marlow calls pilgrims because of their strange habits of carrying many things with them (Jericho, 1993).

Marlow and pilgrims come across a hut which has a note saying approach cautiously. A dense fog covers the river. As soon as it is cleared, some natives who throw arrows at them from the forest, attack the boat. After they kill the helmsman, the natives are frightened by Marlow with a steamboat whistle. Soon after this, he arrives at Inner Station. He and the pilgrim are expecting Mr. Kurtz to be dead by now. However, they are assured by the Russian that it is fine now. Kurtz, who has treated the natives cruelly in order to get the ivory, has established himself as a god. Kurtz becomes ill. After this he is taken out by the pilgrims on a stretcher. Kurtz gives a speech to assembled people of the forest and then they go back to the jungle after listening to him (ibid).

Kurtz is brought on the steamer by manager. A woman stares at the boat. She seems to be Kurtz's wife. Marlow comes to know that they were attacked by Kurtz because he wanted to



send them back. Kurtz wanted to be left alone to his plans only. Kurtz goes somewhere without telling anybody and Marlow tries to find him. After he is found by Marlow, he is requested to come back to the ship (Jericho, 1993).

Kurtz at this stage is far from well. "The horror! The horror!" are the last words of Kurtz to Marlow and he dies. After being recovered from serious illness, Marlow goes to see Kurtz's intended to tell her that his last words were for her (ibid).

## **2.5 Themes**

In his book, *Heart of Darkness*, Conrad has discussed a multiplicity of themes. Of those various important themes, we choose darkness, self-restraint vs. self-aggrandizement, and nature in particular.

### **2.5.1 Darkness**

The major theme of the book lies in the darkness of the title, but Conrad's ambiguous way of identifying that darkness keeps the reader curiosity by leading us to inquiry to pinpoint a meaning in what *Heart of Darkness* is. Jericho (1993) has said,

On the whole it stands for the unknown and the unknowable; it represents the opposite of the progress and enlightenment that dominated the 19th century. Not many years before, it had been widely believed that science was eventually going to cure the ills of the world; but by the end of the century a deeper pessimism had taken hold, and the darkness is Conrad's image for everything he most dreaded. Science had turned out to be a sham, at least as a route to human happiness- the world wasn't getting any better. Was the darkness something that was simply a part of the universe, something that could never be defeated? Or did it come from

within human beings? The “*heart of darkness*” stands for many things- the interior of the jungle, the Inner Station, Kurtz’s own black heart, perhaps the heart of every human being (p.32).

The preponderance of Conrad's unpleasant words, of the darkness covers the book serves as a message for his pessimistic view of life. According to Jericho, this darkness may refer to the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century's chaotic world when the Africans were dehumanized under the cover of enlightenment. He blames science for the various pressures that can be imposed on the human spirit. He is wondering if the reason behind was just a universal part; how far can science be incompatible with one's principles. So that *Heart of Darkness* may symbolically refer to plenty of things; to the interior of the jungle, the Inner Station, Kurtz’s own black heart, to the heart of every human being. Jericho completed his description of the darkness vagueness saying,

Conrad leaves the meanings of this darkness hazy on purpose. As the narrator tells us,- for Marlow “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” (Chapter I). He also calls the story “inconclusive.” In other words, you can’t easily reduce the meaning to a couple of sentences. Conrad doesn’t declare-he hints and suggests. This quality sometimes makes it difficult to put your finger on exactly what it is about a passage that disturbs or moves or excites you, and it makes it difficult to explain the full meaning of certain symbols- especially the darkness. But it’s exactly this quality that makes the book so creepy and unsettling that it lingers in the mind (Jericho, 1993, pp.32-33).

### **2.5.2 Self-restraint Vs. Self- aggrandizement**

Thought not a major theme, self-restraint is an essential theme in *Heart of Darkness*. It unveils civilized men's mentality. Restraint is a device that controls one's thoughts, emotions, or

behaviours. This capability of restraining and suppressing oneself is an aptitude of controlling one's psyche. For the sake of fulfilling their desires, the white men deep within the undiscovered jungles how boundless greed, boundless self-aggrandizement; they were obsessively to collect ivory and seek for power and authority. The idea of collecting ivory was their obsession. It dominates their thoughts which swiftly lost their self-restraint. All the natives believe that the white men have been brought about to effectively develop the dark they live, but unexpectedly they were sadly opposite. An essayist wrote, "As Marlow travels on, he realizes that only the natives have restraint and respect. The white man takes what he wants with no respect"(Restraint as a Plot in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, n.d)

Noticeable prototypes of such a case are noticed in the two characters of the Manager of Company's Central Station, who accompanies Marlow on the steamboat to the Inner Station and Mr. Kurtz, the agent that works for the Company, beginning his calling in the Congo as a virtuous mission. The Manager envies Mr. Kurtz for the enormous amount of ivory this latter collects more than other agents. But unlike Kurtz, the Manager could exercise his restraint which Marlow figured out, saying "I looked at him, and had not the slightest doubt he was sincere. He was just the kind of man who would wish to preserve appearances. That was his restraint " (Conrad, p.69).He seems to give much care to his appearance as an upright manager than to the actual wrongs he commits.

Unlimitedly, Mrs. Kurtz has become a symbol of greed seeking for self-aggrandizement. He represents as an embodiment of the passion for finding ivory and acting as a God upon the natives. Throughout the story, Marlow has been told many facts about Kurtz concerning his sense of selfishness. Some fact says that Mr. Kurtz has been heard many times saying, "My ivory...My

intended, my ivory, my station, my river, my\_” everything belonged to him(Conrad, p.80) (*Heart of Darkness*: self-restraint, n.d).

Indeed, Mrs. Kurtz's passion to hunt ivory, get wealth and power over the natives knew no bounds. One day, he even declared to kill his friend, The Russian, due to a small lot of ivory he has got from the chief of the village near his house; the story said," He declared he would shout me unless I gave him the ivory and then cleared out of the country, because he could do so, and had a fancy for it, and there was nothing on earth to prevent him killing whom he jolly well pleased"(Conrad, p. 94). Because of some amount of ivory, he is ready to kill whosoever front of him (*Heart of Darkness*: self-restraint, n.d).

In his essay entitled “ *Heart of Darkness*: self-restraint ”, the anonymous writer, said,

[...]nor does Mr. Kurtz show any self-restraint in the satisfaction of his primitive instincts which have begun to dominate him. Mr. Kurtz has become an active sharer in the demonic practices of the savages. He presides over their midnight dances which always end with “unspeakable rites” including sex-orgies, sadistic and masochistic practices, human sacrifice and other obnoxious acts. He indulgence in all such proceedings has assumed vast scope and has begun enjoying “abominable satisfactions”. He now gives a free outlet to his “monstrous passions” in the company of the savages (*Heart of Darkness*: self-restraint, n.d).

Again the essayist described Kurtz saying,

Mr. Kurtz shows no self-restraint even in his desire for possessing things and for owning things. Indeed, his sense of ownership and proprietorship has assumed abnormal proportions. He has developed a feeling that everything belongs to him. And yet there is emptiness in his soul. His mind is by no means insane, but his soul has certainly gone mad. He is

“hollow at the core”, as Marlow puts it. And yet this man is able to stir feelings of friendship and respect in Marlow. Here we are faced with a paradox (*Heart of Darkness*: self-restraint, n.d).

The theme of restraint is also portrayed in the part describing the Cannibals. The cannibals are a crew of about 30 cannibals on Marlow's steamer. Marlow delineates the cannibals with dignity. They could exercise restraint even in their most desperate conditions. These cannibals were very hungry. After the pilgrims throw their provision of stinking hippo meat overboard, they left them starve out in the river. The cannibals could easily have killed some of those white men on board the steamer and sated themselves with flesh needed to end their hunger, but they didn't. They certainly won the regard of Marlow owing to the restraint he values so highly in civilized people; “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”, he narrated (Conrad, p.68). Marlow also praised them, “They were men one could work with, and I am grateful to them” (ibid, p.56). According to Jericho (1993), “work is one of Marlow’s highest values, and the pilgrims, we know, are terrible workers. In fact, the pilgrims are always behaving on a level beneath what you would expect of civilized men, while the cannibals keep acting on a level above what you would expect of savages” (p.27).

“An athletic black belonging to some coast tribe and educated by my poor predecessor, was the helmsman”, said Marlow (Conrad, p.72). The African helmsman is a native crewman steering Marlow's steamboat. He dies from a spear wound during the attack on the steamer. He’s a poor worker described being an arrogant and unreliable character. Marlow described him as a fool. He ought to keep him under his close observation, making sure that nothing bad or

unwanted to happen. Jericho (1993) said that his death is largely due to the failure of being restrained,

His death is largely his own fault, since he abandons his post to stand at the window and shoot wildly at the attacking tribe. "He had no restraint," Marlow comments, "no restraint- just like Kurtz" (Chapter II, p.84). Nevertheless, Marlow clearly values him. A subtle bond has grown between them through working together. Marlow is always thinking about the rewards of work, and he doesn't think getting to Kurtz was worth the death of his helmsman. (Jericho, 1993, p.28)

Conrad is a writer of value. Through *Heart of Darkness*, he presents plenty of values. Two of which, are the notion of work and restraint. In this regard, Jericho (1993) stated:

Whatever the darkness is, the best way to fend it off, and to stay sane, is by working. He doesn't pretend that work is enjoyable but it strengthens your character and makes you less likely to lose your grip in difficult situations. One reason most of the white characters in the novel are so unattractive is that they don't do their work. Another value he holds in esteem is restraint. Self-restraint takes determination, but it may save you from the grim consequences of thoughtless action. Conrad shows us two unsettling examples of individuals who lack restraint. One is the black helmsman on Marlow's boat; his inability to restrain himself leads to his death. The other example is Mr. Kurtz whose lack of restraint is to a large degree the subject of the plot (p.33).

### **2.5.3 Nature**

Description of landscape and nature appeared in literary works may refer to many different things to many different people. In common usage however, descriptions of landscape are strategies employed to create a certain mood or to underscore a certain emotion on the part of the reader

(Mega, 2013). Conrad in his representative work, *Heart of Darkness*, gives an entirely new significance to the description of environment. Through the description of nature, Conrad supported his story. He could explore the heart as well as the civilization through revealing the darkness of the human nature (ibid).

Again Mega (2013) stressed, through the description of nature, Conrad had the power to project the convergence between internal and external landscape. This was illustrated through the character of Marlow whose description to the nature surrounding him considered internally as a journey to his own mind or inner thoughts. As Allen (1954) stated, “ Nature itself can become a symbol of evil; or rather nature and the human being appear to exist almost as manifestations of each other ” (cited in Mega, 2013, p. 54).

As mentioned before, this confirms that a landscape or rather the use of nature in literature can imply various meanings; it can either express evil or state of the human being. Emerson emphasizes that describing nature refers to the mental condition of the human being. According to him, “Every appearance in nature corresponds to some state of the mind and that state of the mind can only be described by presenting that natural appearance as its picture ” (Mega, 2013, p.54).

According to Mega, two directions from romanticism can be observed in *Heart of Darkness* when nature is analyzed relation to the character of Marlow, that is, the stress on emotions and the interest in nature. She enlisted some of the most representative figures of this literary movement; they are William Blake (1757/ 1827)), Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772 /1834), Lord Byron (1788/ 1824) and Percy Shelly (1792/1822) whom they made the connection between the world of nature and the world of the spirit. In Conrad's novella, she said,

These two aspects are interrelated: the moods of Marlow are associated with the moods evoked from the description of nature and thus, one can deduce his feelings and state of mind. In this way, Marlow is leaving for his audience the opportunity to speculate about how he felt as far as his experience is concerned; when alluding to his own feelings, he usually managed to shift the focus of his speech towards the description of his natural surrounding. In the extracts which will come later, we shall see some examples about this idea (cited in Mega, 2013, pp.54-55)

The book discusses the journey of Marlow along the Congo River, where he goes through three stations; the Outer station, the Central station and the Inner station in order to recover a very important agent in the Belgian trade company called Kurtz (ibid).

During his journey across these stations, Marlow meets with some people like the accountant and the manager, the brick maker and the harlequin. They made his world full of chaos. Mega (2013) said,

All of them did not do exactly what they were supposed to do in these stations. There was no sign of real work. The pilgrims were backbiting and intriguing against each other, they also hated each other because of one thing; that of ivory. Marlow's confusion and bewilderment started especially when he met with the brick maker who had been in the station for more than a year without making bricks. For Marlow, the manager inspired "uneasiness", and the pilgrims were "faithless". Thus, Marlow denounced the white man's colonialism indirectly; instead of bringing civilization, they invaded the country (p.55)

Therefore, the following description of nature can be considered as enhancement to one of the very important themes in the novel which is appearance and reality.



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 paying 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. And outside, the silent wilderness surrounding this cleared speck on the earth struck me as something great and invincible, like evil or truth, waiting patiently for the passing away of this fantastic invasion (Conrad, pp.35-36) (cited in Mega, 2013, pp.55-56)

Marlow confronts all kinds of corruption. He sees how the white men dominated the Africans; how they acted savagely throughout the story. The white men imprisoned the natives, plundered from them, and murdered any one they came in contact with. All they sought about during their existence was grubbing for ivory or plotting against each other for power and status. Marlow viewed their activities as absurd and meaningless. In order to imply his personal feelings and thoughts, the narrator, in the above extract (Conrad, pp.35-36), moves from describing the white men to the description of nature because everything seemed to him as a dream. For this reason, *Heart of Darkness* was somewhat a sort of enigma that needed to be answered. For Mega (2013), Clay Lee Daniel(1980) stated that:

The last lines of the quotation that deal with the description of the wilderness express the question Marlow must answer. Is this "great and invincible" an evil or truth? Marlow must decide what it will be to him. He wanted to find the relation between the wilderness and the pilgrims' deeds. If he rejects this savage land as a truth, it will become an evil-Marlow's evil. If on the other hand Marlow accepts the primitive savagery of the jungle as an echo of his own soul, he will escape the merciless wratch of the primordial's asserting its dominion over him (cited in Mega, 2013, p.56).

Nature that was described by Foster (2000) as a natural appearance which captivates every spirit keen on beauty, movement and freedom was described by Marlow as an unpleasant dark world. In short, nature, for Marlow, was just a mean to express his own thoughts and feelings (ibid, p.57).

## **2.6 Marlow 's Relationship with Kurtz**

While journeying up the Congo, Marlow encounters many of the savage forces in nature and the primitive instincts in mankind that lie beneath their behaviors and values that supposedly constitute civilization (Paris, 2005, p.37). It is shown in the way Marlow begins to develop an impression towards the truth of things; an awareness of the dark realities that were hidden from him before. However, till he reaches at the Inner Station, he feels he has penetrated the very heart of darkness. As he reaches there, he witnesses a degeneracy which far exceeds that of the other Europeans and is much more distressing than the simple savagery of the natives, of Kurtz he meets (ibid). According to Paris (2005):

Much of the remainder of his story is given to an account of how appalled he is by Kurtz; but equally important, I think, is his exploration of his puzzling sense of connection to this man. Marlow's attitude toward the other Europeans seems unequivocal, but he feels an ambivalence toward Kurtz by which he is disturbed and that he is struggling to understand (ibid).

Marlow's relationship with Kurtz goes through several evolutions. When he first heard about, he has thought of him apathetically. He has never showed interest in him. Paris (2005, p.49) said,

Marlow is initially attracted to Kurtz as an antidote to the other Europeans, who are greedy, reckless, and cruel. Kurtz has come to the

Congo with moral ideas, and Marlow wonders how he will fare. The fact that Kurtz is despised by the other agents for contending that each station should be a center of progress makes Marlow sympathetic toward him. Kurtz seems to be the only white man out there with whom he can identify. Still, despite his identification and curiosity and the ample time he has for reflection while repairing the steamer, Marlow tells us he thought about Kurtz only “now and then” and that he “wasn’t very interested in him” (Conrad, p.49)

Throughout the time, the steamer became ready to start; Marlow hears lots of stories about this enigmatic man. By this time, he gets more and more excited for meeting him. An anonymous expert writer has said:

Kurtz was a mystery for Marlow; he based his initial assessment of Kurtz just through what he hears from others, including eavesdropped testimonies about Kurtz. There is an instance when Marlow “overhears” a conversation between the manager and his uncle. Despite the slanderous claims that the manager says, Marlow was deeply intrigued by Kurtz. “It was then rather excited on the prospect of meeting Kurtz very soon” (Conrad, p.73). His excitement in meeting Kurtz is brought about by the latter's success, especially in the pursuit of ivory. Marlow sees Kurtz like a hero because of all his adventures and success in ivory collecting (Relationship of Marlow and Kurtz in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, 2018).

When Marlow arrives at Kurtz's Inner Station, he encounters a young Russian trader whose work was devoted to Kurtz. Apparently, this man has spent some time with Kurtz and has become his associate. The Russian is so awed by Kurtz's ideas; he claims that Kurtz has enlarged his mind: “That man has enlarged my mind,” (Conrad, p.90), besides he shows some sort of admiration towards him, saying “Ah! I'll never, never meet such a man again. You ought to have

heard about him recite poetry-his own too it was, he told me. Poetry!” (p.106) (Relationship of Marlow and Kurtz in Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*, 2018). Probably, the reasons make him morally blind to the evil Kurtz does. In *Heart of Darkness*, The Russian serves as a plot device, providing us with details about Kurtz we need to know which Marlow initially based on, picturing a good image of Kurtz.

When Marlow finally meets Kurtz, his excitement turns into disappointment, his adoration into hatred. He begins to regard him as a helpless selfish man who chases dreams of getting powerful, authoritative, and rich. He even might think of him as savage for the dying heads that have been put on sticks under his windows. In this regard Paris (2005,p.37) has said,

Marlow’s view of Kurtz is shaped by his ideas about racial inheritance. Kurtz is of mixed nationality: “His mother was half-English, his father was half-French. All Europe contributed to the making of Kurtz” (Conrad, pp.81-82). Hillis Miller takes this to mean that Kurtz “is an example of civilized man at his highest point of development” (Miller 1965, p.30); but what Marlow is saying is that Kurtz is a half-breed, a mongrel, who lacks the inborn strength to resist his primitive impulses. The heads of “rebels” on the stakes at Kurtz’s compound show that he “lacked restraint in the gratification of his various lusts, that there was something wanting in him—some small matter which, when the pressing need arose, could not be found under his magnificent eloquence” (Conrad, p.96). If Kurtz had remained in Europe, his “deficiency” may have remained hidden; but the wilderness whispers “to him things about himself of which he had no conception till he took counsel with this great solitude—and the whisper had proved irresistibly fascinating. It echoed loudly within him because he was hollow at the core”(Conrad, p.97).

In *Heart of Darkness*, Marlow's view of Kurtz as an alter ego or rather a double is emphasized. Marlow feels a strong relationship toward Kurtz. He becomes aware of this similarity when he hears the praises of the Russian. The Russian sailor claims that Kurtz is a man whom people listens to. "'You don't talk with that man—you listen to him,' he exclaimed with evere exaltation" (Conrad, p.88). The essayist likens Kurtz's ability to capture his listeners' ears with Marlow's ability to captivate the audience through his narration. According to this writer (2018), "This could mean that Marlow may be interested in Kurtz's darkness because Marlow himself has some internal darkness within him" (Relationship of Marlow and Kurtz in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, 2018).

By the end of the story, Kurtz seems to have absolute power in Africa. As a result of Kurtz's realization to the truth of his evil, according to Marlow, led to his madness. On his death bed, Kurtz uttered some words: Marlow has described, "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!" (Conrad, p. 116). At this moment, Marlow comes to know that these words might be the result of recognizing himself; when Mr. Kurtz finally realised the horrible, barbaric, savage nature of his own, he fell a victim to. Regardless of his feelings for Kurtz, Charlie Marlow in an interview with Kurtz's Intended still declares that he knew Kurtz well: I said, "I knew him as well as it is possible for one man to know another"(Conrad, p.125).Marlow also realizes that Kurtz himself became conscious of this power. Therefore he associates this realization to himself. He relates Kurtz's wickedness to his own capacity for evil, providing yet another link between these two men. When Marlow was thinking of killing Kurtz, he stopped because he recognized it would be like killing himself since he views Kurtz as a second version of himself; it was written, "I did not want to have the throttling of him, you understand" (p. 110) (ibid).

For the sake of protecting his reputation, Marlow decides to be Kurtz's trustee. Kurtz lets all things by the hands of Marlow because he is the last one Kurtz meets and talks to. He had to deal with the relatives and friends that Kurtz left behind, specifically someone who claims to be his cousin, a journalist and more importantly his Intended. Marlow lied to her about the last words he uttered while whispering his last breath. Kurtz was hoping for Marlow to keep his spirit alive by giving him documents about his exploits. Kurtz was afraid that the Manager would debase the reputation that he would leave behind so he gave Marlow a packet of papers, along with his fiancée's portrait, so that Marlow could put it out for the public; "Keep this for me", he said. "This noxious fool (meaning The Manager) is capable of prying into my boxes when I am not looking" (Conrad, p.115). After giving a limited version of the papers that were entrusted to him by Kurtz to a man who claims to be Kurtz's cousin. A Reporter retrieved the papers, or whatever was left with it, for publication. With Kurtz's legacy now secured on the hands of a reporter, Kurtz's reputation is no longer in danger (Relationship of Marlow and Kurtz in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, 2018).

The last thing to be concluded was to visit The Intended that Kurtz was supposed to marry if he hadn't had died. He thought to go and give her back her portrait and those left slim packet of letters himself. Marlow visits her but he isn't really sure why he came in the first place. "I had no clear perception of what it was I really wanted. Perhaps it was an impulse of unconscious loyalty, or the fulfillment of one of these ironic necessities that lurk in the facts of human existence. I don't know. I can't tell. But I went" (Conrad, pp.122-123).

Marlow played the role of comforter to the poor Intended; Marlow listened to her patiently despite being annoyed at one point. In the end, he feels nothing but pity for her. When he was asked by The Intended what

the last words of Kurtz were, he could not bear to tell her the truth that it was “The horror! The horror!”. But instead, Marlow just said that Kurtz’s last words were her name just for the purpose of preserving her perfect image of Kurtz’s and Kurtz’s reputation as well (Relationship of Marlow and Kurtz in Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*, 2018).

To sum up, Marlow and Kurtz, although they've only been spent a little time together, but they both had a good relationship which was based on loyalty. The man who was once just a curious about Kurtz, he ends up being Kurtz's trustee. Marlow does not judge Kurtz's actions; but rather, he explains Kurtz’s condition that leads to his madness. The fact of Kurtz's being entrusted Marlow with essential and private bundle of papers makes their relationship appreciated. As the essay said, “This protection that Marlow has done is because he associates himself with Kurtz, he regards him as his alter ego” (ibid).

## **Conclusion**

As a conclusion of this chapter, let to say that *Heart of Darkness* is one of the greatest works of Joseph Conrad. The novella centers mainly around Marlow, the protagonist of the story, and his journey through the Congo River to meet Kurtz, the white man who came to civilize the African people, but power and greed affected him and increasingly started to collect pearls like ivory. Marlow narrates some of the experiences Africa has witnessed during European imperialistic purposes. The novella deals with many issues surrounding imperialism, yet there are also larger underling issues of self-restraint vs. self-aggrandizement, darkness, and nature. Based on the above analysis, White mans civilisation and expansion has both been good and bad for Africa. It has given and it has taken; however, it has taken more than it should. Development, education, welfare, agriculture, training and skills development are direly needed. Africa is a Paradise beset with tremendous problems.

# Chapter Three

## *A Freudian Psychoanalytic Analysis of the Main Character, Marlow, from Heart of Darkness*

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## **CHAPTER THREE: A FREUDIAN PSYCHOANALYTIC ANALYSIS OF THE MAIN CHARACTER, MARLOW, FROM HEART OF DARKNESS**

### **Introduction**

Marlow, who is sent to Central Africa as a member of a European Imperialist mission, is the main focus of the novel written by Joseph Conrad. Marlow's travel to "*heart of darkness*" represents his journey through psychic theories of Sigmund Freud. These theories are id, ego and superego where the id is purely human desire without any limitations as compared to the ego and superego. Marlow is the narrator and the main character of the novel. He thinks that "the mind of man is capable of anything, because everything is in it, all the past as well as all the future" (Conrad, p.58). His journey was a mental journey which affected him the most. He adapts the extreme conditions both physically and mentally and he gets removed from the society. In order to understand his mental journey better, it is necessary to investigate his mind first.

### **3.1 Corpus Analysis**

The journey to the center of Marlow's mind goes through stages as illustrated below.

#### **3.1.1 The Power of Id Driven Marlow to Heart of Africa**

Marlow is idealistic. Compared to his Aunt, he is wise and knowledgeable due to his extensive travelling and experience at sea. She has been described as being "the excellent woman, living right in the rush of all that humbug, got carried off her feet" (Conrad, p.17). She is fully surrounded and supports the colonization of the Congo. She sees Marlow as "something like an emissary of light, something like a lower sort of apostle" (ibid) for those emissaries of light can bring civilization to the "darkness" of Africa. Marlow is young. He has returned to London after "a regular dose of the East- six years or so" (Conrad, p.9); and, before he sets foot in the Congo,

he shares with his audience some of the attitudes he constantly thought much of. He wants to explore the life and except this he wants nothing. He starts his journey as an impulse, but let say an innocent impulse from an innocent naïve young, unaware of the realities of his wishes. He looks at the map of Africa, Congo where he desires to go. For Freud, the unconscious is child like. That to say, it is not inevitably evil, but it can be innocently good or bad based on circumstances.

At the beginning, he says that “Now when I was a little chap, I had a passion for map”(Conrad, p. 9), and “I would lose myself in all the glories of exploration” (ibid). When he looks at his favourite map, he would put his finger on one of the blank spaces and say, “When I grow up I will go there” (ibid, p.10). There is one yet –the biggest, the most blank that he had “a hankering after”. He wants to explore the blankness in Africa; although it has “ceased to be a blank space of delightful mystery—a white patch for a boy to dream gloriously over”(ibid), but it has become “a place of darkness”, Africa still fascinates him as “a snake would a bird—a silly little bird”(ibid). That snake has really charmed him; therefore, in order to satisfy his compulsion, he applies to a company where he gets the job as a captain of a steamboat by the help of his Aunt.

Marlow's self centeredness in exploring the blankness embodies the Freudian definition of Id which tries to satisfy and please its desire on any cost. According to Freud, the Id wants whatever feels good at the time, with no consideration for the other circumstances of the situation. He tells us,“I flew around like mad to get ready, and before forty-eight hours I was crossing the Channel to show myself to my employers, and sign the contract”(Conrad, p.13).

### 3.1.2 The Superego as a Moralizing Role

When Marlow goes to Brussels, he begins to see the harsh realities around him. He describes the city as a gloomy and a dead. By words of Moran (2000),

When Marlow visits Brussels to get his appointment, he describes the city as a “whited sepulchre”—a Biblical phrase referring to a hypocrite or person who employs a façade of goodness to mask his or her true malignancy. The Company, like its headquarters, is a similar “whited sepulchre,” proclaiming its duty to bring "civilization" and “light” to Africa in the name of Christian charity, but really raping the land and its people in the name of profit and the lust for power. Marlow’s aunt, who talks to him about “weaning those ignorant millions from their horrid ways” serves as an example of how deeply the Company’s propaganda has been ingrained into the minds of Europeans (p.21).

However, Marlow says, “I ventured to hint that the Company was run for profit”(Conrad, p. 17).Marlow feels like “an imposter” when he leaves the Company's headquarters, because he has joined the ranks of an outfit whose assumptions about Africa and European activity there sharply contrast with his own. Marlow has no imperialistic impulses and only seeks adventure, but he is beginning to see the Company for what it truly is. Thus, Marlow’s growing perception of the moral decay around him becomes one of the major issues of the novel (ibid). According to Freud, if one's true feeling is repressed into the unconsciousness and lives by rules that they do not stand by, it gets to adjust to the Superego which is apparent in how someone can view him/herself as a pathetic, guilty, and feel compelled to do certain things.

It seems like the darkness itself which fascinates Marlow. He tells us “I was going into the yellow. Dead in the centre. And the river was there—fascinating—deadly—like a snake”

(Conrad, p.14). This statement symbolizes the uneasiness and feeling of uncomfoting of the human nature. He refers to the river as a snake -a Biblical symbol of evil- which makes Eve disobey God and eat the forbidden fruit. That is, the nature of darkness in the novel embodies the superego and plays the critical and moralizing role. It prevents Marlow from telling his experience because he is well aware that the story he is about to tell will go against the norms and might not be well received by his friends described as their professions; the lawyer, the accountant, and the director.

Marlow stresses his inability to convey the truth of his experiences to his audiences saying,

[...]No, it is impossible; it is impossible to convey the life sensation of any given epoch of one's existence—that which makes its truth, its meaning... its subtle and penetrating essence. We live as we dream – alone (Conrad, p.43).

The quote above shows that Marlow's psychological experiences are connected to Freud's idea of a dream which emphasizes that the truth of human experiences and difficulties in communication appear in dreams. That is to say; Marlow is in challenge with the institutions in society that form our super-ego.

Superego functions to structure Marlow's desires. It tries hard to protect him from being overwhelmed by the jungle's dreadful meanings which he once sought after. Marlow's melancholic and unpleasant senses towards the inscrutable darkness of the jungles of the Congo are a direct result of his relationship to his environment. He shows such structured desires through developing some kind of excuses for his noncomprehension the jungle; this is shown when he evaded returning to the jungle's gaze. Marlow has said:

I had no time. I had to keep guessing at the channel; I had to discern, mostly by inspiration, the signs of hidden banks [...] I had to keep a look-out for some signs of dead wood we could cut up in the night for next day's steaming (Conrad, p.55).

Marlow needed to keep himself with the surface truths as the demands of seamanship and steam, thus he can vindicate himself from confronting the overwhelming danger of the nature.

### **3.1.3 Marlow's Transformation from Collapse of Mind to Ego**

As he comes to Congo, he gets to adapt to most recent cultures and societies as well as physical conditions. Camus (1960) has claimed:

His world cracks and tumbles as he encounters realities for which he is unprepared; and his conceptions of civilization, of human and physical nature, and of himself are overthrown. He experiences the anguish of alienation, incomprehension, and disenchantment as he "stands face to face with the irrational(cited in Paris, 2008, p.131).

During this time, his id, ego and superego are imbalanced. Marlow explains his existence in the Congo as,

Going up that river was like traveling 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, an impenetrable forest. The air was warm, thick, heavy, sluggish. There was no joy in the brilliance of sunshine. The long stretches of the waterway ran on, deserted into the gloom of overshadowed distances. On the silvery sandbanks hippos and alligators sunned themselves side by side the broadening waters flowed through a mob of wooded island; you lost your way on that river as you would in a desert (Conrad, p.48)

The quotation above depicts his desperate perception to reality and truth in light of his now shallow past; Marlow is trying to picture his travel through the Congo River as a portrayal of his discovery of the innate wickedness present in all mankind. The separation felt by Marlow shows the rejection of society and it also shows how superego is replaced by the id. Superego is not necessary without the presence of society. It sinks away just as his thoughts of right and wrong are no longer conscious of. As he journeys further on, the innate wickedness within him appears. His id becomes out of proportion with his ego and superego.

Again Marlow represents his Id saying, “I felt how big, how confoundedly big, was that thing that couldn't talk, and perhaps was deaf as well”(Conrad, p.42). This expresses how incomprehensible the size of Congo is to him. Everything used to be new to Marlow, he wants to explore its possibilities, particularly of a man with the name of Kurtz he had heard a lot of talks about, and there are no limitations to the Id. He declares, “I flung one shoe overboard, and became aware that that was exactly what I had been looking forward to—a talk with Kurtz” (Conrad, p.77). It little matters what, in terms of psychological symbolism, we call this double or say he represents: whether the Freudian ID or the Jungian shadow or more vaguely the outlaw (Guerard, 2009, p.43).

Marlow is now blind of the Kurtz character. That is, the latter is displayed as an inner embodiment of Marlow. He is an “apparition” or “shadow” which can be read as being a part of Marlow's psyche. Booker wrote, “Guerard's readings see the African jungle essentially as a metaphor for the unconscious mind and therefore Marlow's treacherous and nightmarish trip as a metaphor for his attempt to probe the depths of his own unconscious mind. He notes that Kurtz himself can be read as a dramatization of Marlow's unconscious desire, as the Freudian id” (*Heart of Darkness: Psychoanalytical Criticism*, n.d).

Marlow meets Mr. Kurtz. He is a very noteworthy person. He symbolizes id. Kurtz falls prey for his desires completely. He feels no shame for this: "You can't judge Mr. Kurtz as you would an ordinary man" (Conrad, p. 93). He is not understood by Marlow because he is far removed from the society and he falls victim of his id. His superego moves back deep into his mind. However, his ego controls his id and superego and that causes a kind of illness and madness in him. According to Freud, a person becomes ill when the different levels of consciousness are not integrated with each other. He meets his end and dies on going back to the river saying some horrible words: "The horror! The horror!" (Conrad, p.116). This shows that he is gaining back his control over his id and superego through the help of ego. His mental journey shapes what is happening to Marlow.

Marlow and Kurtz both have wickedness because Congo is not reasonable society. The id is responsible for man's survival, the motto of jungle for Marlow is: "kill or to be killed". The readers come to know about this disproportion and mental change in Marlow when he says to Kurtz: "If you try to shout I'll smash your head with [...] 'I will throttle you for good,'" (Conrad, p.110). This statement confirms the savage nature within himself. But his ego controls the desire by saying this, "Your success in Europe is assured in any case, I affirmed steadily. I did not want to have the throttling of him you understand" (ibid).

Unlike Kurtz, Marlow does not completely become the slave of id. He explains the death of Kurtz that he, "wrestled with death". Unlike Kurtz, he rejects the nightmare of id. He returns to the city as a wise man, though he lives through the desires of id. Marlow's ego brings him balance to take control over the desires of id.

The readers come to know about the balance in him when he goes and sees Mr. Kurtz's fiancée and he finds that she is still mourning and thinking that Kurtz is a good man. She thinks that Kurtz is an honourable man. But Marlow tells her a lie that Kurtz's last word is for her. Marlow tells that after he feels very bad, "It seemed to me that the house would collapse before I could escape" (Conrad,p.130). It means that he has a balanced personality. He is not controlled by the desires.

### **Conclusion**

By adopting Freud's theory of psychoanalysis, it becomes clear that Conrad's novella, *Heart of Darkness*, is filled in terms of exploring various psychological theories such as id, ego and superego. In other words, it focuses on the human psyche where we find Marlow's character struggling for finding the truth within himself.



# **General Conclusion**

### **General Conclusion**

By looking at *Heart of Darkness* from a Freudian perspective, we could see that Charlie Marlow's journey into Africa could also be seen as the journey into his unconscious mind. This appeared in the way of dramatizing the character of him. Marlow, who is the main character in of Joseph Conrad's novella, *Heart of Darkness* believes that "the mind of man is capable of anything-because everything is in it, all the past as well as all the future" (Conrad, p.58). The prostration of Marlow's mental and physical nature occurred along the novel. It began as soon as he landed on the coast of Africa and set up as his journey proceeded. He entered a world which became increasingly alien and inscrutable. He was forced to experience some challenges there, squarely in the jungles of the Congo, and consequently he developed various strategies to cope with, both while he was in the Congo and after his return. However, it was an allegory for the levels of the id, ego, and superego. Whereas Superego created some limits, id was the mind's powerful desire that was beyond any limits. The main role was played by ego. Ego played the role of a mediator in them. Ego tried hard to bring balance in both duelling forces in order to balance the psyche.

*Heart of Darkness* is mainly based on colonialism and post colonialism, but it also has the aspects of Freudian theories of id, ego and superego. The focus of the research was to find out id, ego and superego in the character of Marlow. The study proved that Marlow has the aspects of id then superego as he started his journey towards Congo where he encountered many corrupt people and the brutality of the company.

The separation that Marlow felt from society showed again his id. At this stage his id took the place of his superego. However, this rejection remained only for a short time. He took control

of the desires of his id. Kurtz only followed his impulses. He did everything to achieve power and ivory. He even killed the natives to threaten them.

Unlike Kurtz, Marlow did not follow the desires of his id. He did not accept the slavery of such forces. He returned as a wise man although he lived through the desires of his id. He found the light to his life in the novel.

Moreover, the present study aims to bring out the importance of psychoanalytical study of *Heart of Darkness* through the character of Marlow. The novel provides the information about the unconsciousness of the human minds. According to Freud, by understanding these different psychological traits of the human mind, we can appreciate literature on a new level. This information helps the reader to understand the whole novel psychologically with the help of Marlow and Sigmund Freud's theories of human psyche, and then we should acquaint ourselves with his insights.

Through literature, we, as readers, learn too much. It unveils lots of stories and experiences, our formers have challenged. The literary work adds to reality, as the novel *Heart of Darkness* does. It may teach us something either about ourselves, about our surrounding or about the world. It gives us the true picture of the human being. Through the novel *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad, the distress of Africans can be seen in which they are crying out of pains. Not any pains; but pains of circumstances ever getting exploited. By looking yesteryears, there certainly has been a general history of exploitation of looting and plundering of Africa which the writer Conrad attempts to convey through the journey of his main character, Marlow. He shows what challenges do the Africans face in their real life besides the selfish nature of their white masters; how can greed and lust change one's personality; how can it lead to madness or rather to death, what a man can do to increase his lust of getting powerful and rich; how confronting such

forces lead to self-awareness. Thus the psychoanalytic study is indispensable of Heart of Darkness. To put it in the nutshell, such novel is really recommended to be read since it deals with basic and existential life elements for instance power, love, lust, greediness, savagery, and most of all what man can do to man.

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### Résumé

Cette recherche vise à explorer *Heart of Darkness* de Joseph Conrad, parue en 1902, à l'aide des théories de Sigmund Freud qui sont le Moi, le Ça, et le Surmoi. Cette étude fournit une analyse du personnage principal Charlie Marlow dans ce roman. Il a appliqué l'analyse qualitative et a prouvé que le texte du roman est très riche en termes d'exploration de diverses théories psychologiques telles que le Moi, le Ça, et le Surmoi. Marlow, qui veut découvrir le blanc en Afrique, commence son voyage comme une impulsion. Il regarde la carte de l'Afrique où il a toujours rêvé d'aller. Au fil du temps, sa passion est perturbée par les ténèbres dont Marlow a été témoin pendant son voyage au Congo. Ces ténèbres, fascinées par Marlow, personnifient le surmoi freudien en lui; totalement changé à nouveau Marlow prend le ça sous forme de rejet ou de séparation de la société. Il suit l'un des fournisseurs d'ivoire les plus célèbres de la compagnie pour laquelle il travaille; il s'appelle Kurtz. Cependant, contrairement à Kurtz, Marlow équilibre son ça et son surmoi par moi.

**Mots clés:** Psychanalyse, ça, moi, surmoi, la retenue.

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### الملخص

تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى استكشاف رواية «*Heart of Darkness*» للروائي الانجليزي البولندي الأصل الشهير «جوزيف كونراد». تعتمد هذه الدراسة على نظرية العالم الشهير سيكموند فرويد للهو، الأنا والأنا الأعلى. هي الأقسام الثلاثة التي عرفها فرويد في نموذجه البنيوي للنفس؛ وهي ثلاثة بنيات من حيث نشاط وتفاعل الحياة العقلية. من أجل فهم والغوص بعمق قلب الظلام قمنا بتطبيق نظريه التحليل النفسي على بطل الرواية «تشارلي مارلو» مما يساعد على فهم شخصيته. وقد اتبعت هذه الدراسة التحليل النوعي وأثبتت أن نص الرواية غني جدا من حيث تقصي مختلف النظريات النفسية مثل الهو، الأنا والأنا الأعلى. «مارلو» الشاب الحالم منذ صغره كان يتوق الى السفر واكتشاف الغموض في إفريقيا. هذا الفتى يبدأ قصته بمشاركة بعض من رغباته. فهو ينظر إلى خريطة إفريقيا حيث كان دائما يتطلع للذهاب ومن اجل تحقيق رغبته يستعين بعمته التي تتوسط له لكي يتقدم الى احد الشركات التي تعمل على نقل العاج. ولكن سرعان ما تتحول هذه الرحلة ببداية سدول نوع من الظلام. تبدأ من ظلام التاييمز إلى ظلام الكونغو عبر ظلام النفس البشرية. شغفه هذا يتأثر بالظلام الذي شهده مارلو أثناء رحلته إلى الكونغو، قلب أفريقيا، هذا الظلام الذي فتن مارلو يجعله يعيش بروح معذبة وبدوره يجسد الأنا الأعلى الفرويدي بداخله. ولكن سرعان ما تحول مرة أخرى ومجددا أخذ مارلو الهو في شكل رفض و انفصال عن المجتمع. يقوم بإتباع أحد أشهر مزودي العاج في الشركة التي يعمل بها والمسمى «كورتز». كورتز ذهب بهدف أن يُمدِن المجتمع الأفريقي ولكن أغري بثرواتها وبدأ بجمعها ونهبها وبمرور الوقت إزداد فيه حب السلطة وجمع المزيد والمزيد من هذه الثروات حتى فقد السيطرة على نفسه وصولا الى النقطة المظلمة بداخله فخربت قلبه ووقف مارلو على اعتبارها لينجو. وفي الاخير وعلى عكس كورتز، مارلو يستطيع موازنة الهو والأنا الأعلى من قبل الأنا بينما كورتز يلقي حتفه قبل ان يدرك نفسه .

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** التحليل النفسي، الهو، الأنا، الأنا الأعلى، ضبط النفس.