Heart Of Darkness: Literary Analysis

Joseph Conrad utilizes an assortment of methods to propel his account and to pervade it, similar to an illustration, with a nature of all-inclusiveness in his story, Heart of Darkness. The system of the story lies in an instrument that permits the storyteller to be a far-off onlooker of occasions he had seen. Heart of Darkness is connected by an unknown storyteller who bonds so unequivocally with Marlow that the two characters' personalities merge. Conrad's charged and emotive, beautiful imagery, joined with his utilization of light and obscurity through symbolism and a continuous extended flashback, allows the reader to personally identify and see themselves in Marlow’s shoes and make the novel have a timeless message which is still relevant today accompanied with subsequent meanings one can make of the text.

Before Marlow’s story even beginning, light is vividly described using imagery of the Thames river, taling away the darkness and setting the tone for the novel. The Thames river, to Marlow, Is the definition of light personified in this book. He describes it as ‘The water shone pacifically; the sky, without a speck, was a benign immensity of unstained light; the very mist on the Essex marshes was like a gauzy and radiant fabric, hung from the wooded rises inland, and draping the low shores in diaphanous folds.’ Which in the mind of the reader and Marlow symbolise all that is good In the world. With the water being ‘unstained’, and with a halo of sorts made from the ‘diaphanous folds’. By portraying the stillness of the water, and the beauty of the sky, through words like pacifically, radiant, and gauzy, he creates subsequent meaning such as creating a peaceful tone which is quickly shattered. ‘Only the gloom to the west, brooding over the upper reaches, became more somber every minute, as if angered by the approach of the sun.’ The connotations of gloom would be despair, sadness and misery. Additonally the meanings of brooding are threatening, menacing and dark. By using these features it allowing the reader to ponder on the repeated connotations and the subsequent meanings that follows, after light darkness follows which adds to the aura of darkness around the plot of the novel.

The congo river acts as symbolism through the novel as Marlow and the others go deeper into the ‘darkness’ of the congo river. Above all else, the stream symbolizes development toward an objective. Where people like Kurtz go in an effort to make others civilised but succumb to the ‘darkness’ of the ‘uncivilised’ themselves It's the main way have of finding a good area where the most ivory is, so it steers them towards profit . It additionally leads Marlow toward his objective of coming to Kurtz. The stream additionally symbolizes the separateness of the untouchables, the colonizers. Marlow and the others on the steamboat infrequently go ashore as the waterway genuinely keeps them isolated. Another symbolism is the decapitated heads on Kurtzs garden displayed like decorative doorknobs stuck on poles. These heads and the posts on which they are impaled imply that Kurtz has lost his sanity and has gone into a state of depravity. ‘These round knobs were not ornamental but symbolic; they were puzzling, striking and disturbing.’ Kurtz, then, symbolizes the darkness of the colonizers' lost moral, but there is also a instance in which Kurtz is the victim of the darkness of the jungle. Kurtz symbolizes the far end of where greed can take you. Kurtz also represents the love of power the white colonizers have as well as the influence they have over the natives. By using this symbolism, the subsequent meanings of these symbolisms are pondered upon, and act as ‘food for thought’ for the reader by further explaining the descent into darkness.

By using flashbacks, Conrad allows their readers to gain insight into a character's motivations, such as Marlow’s in joining The Company and Kurtz’s in his loss of stable mental state. It is minful to remember that Marlow has not prepared this story in advance. He tells his tale informally and haphazardly. The narrative is broken by flashbacks and flash-forwards, and it is laden with randomly interjected musings, thoughts, and reminisces in a way that mimics how real stories are told and thus is raw and thematic. All of these features of Conrad’s narrative technique draw attention to the peculiar uses of time and space that are utilised in Heart of Darkness in an attempt to hold together two or more moments of time to create meaning, without which the story would be merely a series of particular events with no pressuring of the reader towards constructing a more universal significance which is still vague in the ending of the poem, Marlow’s flashbacks and flashforwards through the novel, provide a basis for our own reading, urging us towards certain meanings. Conrad wrote Heart of Darkness in a style which attempts to replicate the experience of a The narrator of Conrad’s novella was mystified by parts of Marlow’s narrative himself and was burdened with importance with its constant flashbacks and careful threading of time.

Overall it may be said, Conrad intentionally made Heart of Darkness hard to read. He wanted the language of his novella to make the reader feel like they were fighting through the jungle, just like Marlow fought through congo in search of Kurtz. He uses imagery, symbolism and flashbacks to create subsequent meanings in the novel which let the audience reflect on the detailed, insightable and informed reading of the novel.