

CONTEXT/EXIGENCE

- European imperialism
- Congo Free State abuses
- "civilizing mission" myth
- economic exploitation
- Conrad's colonial experience

QUESTIONS to ASK WHILE READING

- Who has power here?
- Who is silenced?
- What is hidden or unclear?
- What contrasts are emphasized?
- What feels morally unstable?

HEART of DARKNESS Pre-Notes

NOTABLE FEATURES

- unreliable narration
- delayed meaning / ambiguity
- repetition for emphasis
- juxtaposition (odd matches)
- symbolic imagery
- light vs darkness imagery
- civilization vs. wilderness contrast
- abstract → concrete diction shifts
- long, winding sentences
- strategic sentence fragments
- irony (verbal & situational)
- characters as symbols

THEMATIC MOTIFS

- darkness within humanity
- illusion of civilization
- power without morality
- dehumanization
- greed and exploitation
- moral emptiness
- silence vs. voice
- complicity and denial
- sadness vs. clarity
- truth vs. comfort