



Joseph Conrad (1857-1924)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_Conrad

Modern Period

- Rise of other nations: Notably the United States
- Drama: emphasized sociological problems (George Bernard Shaw)
- Poetry: T. S. Eliot the representative
- Condemnation of modern life
- Autonomy of the poet and the poem
- Private symbol

- Purposefully difficult
- Myth
- Unceasing experiment in form and technique
- Novelists: James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, Joseph Conrad
- Social problems
- New forms and new techniques

“Heart of Darkness”

- Based on Conrad’s 1890 trip up the Congo
- An indictment of imperialism
- A comment on the complete loss of moral responsibility by a civilization devoted to selfish materialism

“Heart of Darkness”

- Impressionism
- symbolism

Question

- Why does *Heart of Darkness* have two competing heroes? Make the case for either Marlow or Kurtz as the true “hero” of the book.
-

Question

- Discuss the framing story that structures *Heart of Darkness*. Why is it important to narrate Marlow in the act of telling his story?
-

Question

- Interpret Kurtz's dying words (“The horror! The horror!”). What do they mean? What are the possible “horrors” to which he is referring? Why is Marlow the recipient of Kurtz's last words?



Question

- How would you describe Conrad's style of writing? Do you find it effective?

Question

- Contrast Kurtz's African mistress with his Intended. Are both negative portrayals of women? Describe how each functions in the narrative.