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Forfatter: Natalie Grødeland

Veileder: Sonya Louise Lundblad

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Table of contents

Introduction.....	3
Summary	4
Marlow`s thoughts of women and how he portrays his aunt	4
The dialogues between Marlow and the characters of the novella	8
Closing statements	17
Bibliography	19

Introduction

In the spring of 1890, the author Joseph Conrad made a journey to Congo, in which the main part of the narrative of *Heart of darkness* is set. Much of the narrative's descriptions is from Conrad's own memory of his stay in Congo, it is therefore well known that the outline of the story is autobiographical (Guerard 299). The king of Belgium, King Leopold II, had taken ownership over Congo where he treated the people in Congo grotesquely (Norton the twentieth and twenty-first centuries 73). Conrad was a front seat spectator of Leopold II's horrid leadership in this colonialised landscape, which is meticulously illustrated in *Heart of darkness* who was published in 1899 in Blackwood Magazine (Armstrong ix). Most criticisms of this novella are about the colonialism of the narrative, which undoubtedly has a center focus in this novella; however, as much as this novella portrays the horror of colonialism it is, as Guerard states, important to remember that the narrative is about the narrator Marlow, whom this thesis will focus on (301).

A huge part of this era this novella is written in, is in a time where women's rights were evolving, thinking of for example married women who were allowed to own property independent from their husbands in 1882 (Marriage: Property and Children "par 2"); still, suppression was the norm for women as they were not allowed to either "vote or hold political office" (Norton Victorian age 18).

In several discussions, women in *Heart of darkness* have been questioned. Why do women characters have such small roles? Are women in this novella suppressed? Some say Marlow is a typical representation of the Victorian time's patriarch, but is he?

As I am curious on those little things in a narrative, as well as have a special interest in how men have behaved toward women in different eras of time, I decided to investigate Marlow's thoughts about women, especially European middleclass women, and why he tells the men on the *Nellie* these thoughts. To continue, I will investigate how Marlow treats

women, particularly through tone and mode in syntax and diction in his dialogue with Kurtz` intended; as well, it will also be useful to look at Marlow`s dialogues with men to see if it differs or not.

Summary

Before I begin my analyse, I will give you a short summary of this novella to make it easier to follow along. The *Heart of Darkness* begins with a narrator who frames the story like a Chinese box narrative. This unnamed narrator is on a boat called the Nellie who is on the river Thames in London. On the Nellie they are five men, among them the second narrator Marlow, who narrates most of *Heart of Darkness*. Marlow tells the men on the Nellie about his journey to Congo. With the help of his aunt, Marlow lands a job as a captain on a steamer in Congo. First, he must travel to Brussel to get the job secured. From Brussel, he travels on a steamer bound for Congo where he meets many men like the Swede, the companies` chief accountant, and the manager. Deep into Congo Marlow meets Kurtz who plays an important role because much of Marlow`s narrative revolves around Kurtz, for example men Marlow meets who talks of Kurtz as a legend, and the two women Kurtz has a relationship to, Kurtz` intended and the native woman in Congo. Kurtz dies and Marlow take back his belongings to Brussel. Here he visits Kurtz` intended whom he has a long dialogue with. The narrative ends with the frame narrator taking the readers of this novella back on the Nellie where all men sit motionless after listening to Marlow`s story.

Marlow`s thoughts of women and how he portrays his aunt

First, to explain how Marlow describes middleclass women, it seems important to look at how Marlow describes women in general. Hence, I want to look at the critic Jeremy Hawthorn who

has written the article “The Women of Heart of Darkness”. Hawthorn explains how Marlow “worship” the “perfect world inhabited of women”. In the scene with Marlow and Kurtz intended, Hawthorn explains that since women lives in this perfect world, Marlow feels he must lie to Kurtz` intended to keep their world untarnished (353). Hawthorn specifies how it is only the European middle class women Marlow worships. The native woman Marlow sees in Congo and the old working class woman at the Brussel office is not part of this perfect world; They belong in another race and culture; therefore, they can know about how the world function (Hawthorn 353). This is important for Hawthorn to explain since he states that for Marlow “the issues of gender are deeply intervned with culture and race”; as a result, Marlow sees women differently, all depended on which class or race they belong to (353).

To build on Hawthorn`s suggestion, I want to mention two of Marlow`s statements in his narrative. First, when Marlow comes to the office in Belgium to get his job as captain, he sees two women in the hall of the office, one of them being an old woman. Marlow informs his listeners how he perceived the old women. He says that she had “unconcerned wisdom” and that “she seemed to know all about them and about me, too” (11). Next, after Marlow got his job, he visits his aunt to say goodbye, as he leaves for Congo. At the visit, Marlow`s aunt talks about how the people of Congo needed to be taught to be like the Europeans, how it was the best for them. Marlow then tells the men on the Nellie the next statement: “It’s queer how out of touch with truth women are. They live in a world of their own, and there has never been anything like it, and never can be. It is too beautiful altogether, and if they were to set it up it would go to pieces before the first sunset” (13).

These two statements fight against each other and cannot work together. The old women have, according to Marlow, “wisdom” and knows everything about everyone, but a few paragraphs later Marlow explains that women do not see the “truth” (11-13). These conflicting ideas Marlow express can be explain by Hawthorn`s suggestion, that Marlow

looks at women differently, depending on which culture they belong to (353). These statements illustrate how Marlow objectifies women which can be looked at as patriarchal behaviour.

Moving on, the European middleclass women in *Heart of Darkness* are expressed through Marlow's aunt and Kurtz intended. Hawthorn's focus is on the intended, and how she is juxtaposed to the native woman. He looks at the descriptions of Kurtz's intended and interpret them as she is "static" and "passive", and that the environment which surrounds her has an "oppressive sterility" (Hawthorn 356). In contrast, Hawthorn utters that Marlow descriptions of the woman from Congo is "active" and "forceful" (356). He "divides" the two women "into spirit and body"; Thus, Hawthorn says, that the women can be looked at "as classic examples of female stereo types: passive virgin and knowing, active woman" (357 and 360). It appears like Marlow has an oppressive ideology of women. In the same way Marlow sees his aunt is ignorant of people in Africa, he himself seems ignorant to women, dividing them by class.

In the article "Gender, Race and Narrative Structure: A Reappraisal of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*" the authors Carole Stone and Fawzia Afzal-Khan suggest a tendentious view of the narrator Marlow. Stone and Afzal-Khan write that Marlow's circular composition, "open-endedness" and "the degree of self-consciousness of the narrative" is where we can search for another view of Marlow in *Heart of Darkness* (221).

First, they propose that Marlow's character has typical traditional feminine traits because of his, among others "reliance on others" (Stone and Afzal-Khan 222-223). To display an example of how Marlow is reliant of others, Stone and Afzal-Khan refers to when Marlow asked his aunt to help him to get a job: "Then—would you believe it? I tried the women. I, Charlie Marlow, set the women to work—to get a job. Heavens!" (8). The aunt is first used as an example of feminine dominance since Marvin must ask her to get a job;

outside the fictional world, it was women, at that time, who normally asked men for work (Stone and Afzal-Khan 223). To portray Marlow as a feminine character is an interesting idea. It is commonly known that some men are more feminine than others and women vice versa. Marlow had to ask his aunt to get a job, a definitive portrayal of the typical suppressed woman in the non-fictional world and time in which this novella was written (“The role of women” 18). The two critics also writes that Marlow obviously sees it as an indignity to ask his aunt for work and refers to the passage” I, Charlie Marlow, set the women to work—to get a job (Stone and Afzal-Khan 223); however, they do not elaborate this indignity Marlow feels, or why it can be an indignity. These blanks I would like to fill in.

Looking at this passage, Marlow addresses the men on the boat, “then would you believe it?”, were he expresses the absurdity of asking a women “I tried the women. I, Charlie Marlow, set the women to work” (8). His statement becomes more powerful because of his use of both the pronoun "I" and his full name "Charlie Marlow" (8). Also, just before this close reading, Marlow reveals for his listeners that he would do anything to get this job “by hock or by crook”, even women (8). Marlow continues by addressing the men on the boat with the rhetorical question “would you believe it?”, obviously Marlow does not want an answer, he just wants to express how shocking it is for him to ask a woman, this is not typical of him (8). Last, Marlow says “heavens!”, as we see, he uses an exclamation to further proclaim his astonishment of how he got his job. Marlow seems shameful to have to ask a woman for work; thus, he need to prove for his audience that this is a onetime event.

Outwardly, Marlow appear to have a need to look like a masculine patriarch toward the crew on the boat Nellie (8). To make his authority clear, he tells the crew that he orders his aunt to work “set the women to work”, as if she were a secretary who assists him (8). However, it is the aunt who has powerful connections (8). Marlow needs help from her and therefore in the mercy of his aunt who has the power to decline or accept his request. The aunt

is somewhat a maternal figure, who out of goodness helps Marlow as this childlike figure to stand on his own feet. Hence, it is somewhat ironical how Marlow proclaims that he is the decisionmaker, that his aunt works for him. To the men on the *Nellie*, Marlow illustrates his authority over his aunt; clearly, Marlow thinks that having to ask his aunt for job is an indignity (223).

Moving one, this indignity Marlow feels when having to ask his aunt, can be because he is afraid to unveil his feminine side to the masculine environment on the *Nellie*. I claim that the boat has a masculine environment because the narrator who frames the narrative gives revealing sentences about his opinions. This unnamed narrator on the *Nellie*, informs that his race, being the European people, who has dominated the world, has done “ages of good service” (4); thus, the unnamed narrator reveals that to conquer is positive, a typical traditional masculine trait.

The way Marlow presents himself towards his listeners contra what truly happens in the narration, makes me question his reliability. It seems that he wants to appear masculine, but that he in fact has a submissive role when he encounters women; that is, at least when he interacts with his aunt. Are his thoughts of women then patriarchal or is the way he displays women a way to hide his femininity from the men on the *Nellie*?

The dialogues between Marlow and the characters of the novella

After Marlow's traumatic journey to Congo, he returns to Brussels. Here, Marlow wishes to meet Kurtz intended to deliver a picture Kurtz had of her and some letters which belonged to the deceased Kurtz. Before Marlow's dialogue with the intended, Marlow sees and hears the ghost of Kurtz, whispering saying “the horror, the horror!” repeatedly (73). The way Marlow gives of himself in Brussels, is clearly of a man who has experienced something too horrific for his mind to process which gives him illusions who almost drives

him to madness. Even though he is mental knocked down, he knocks on the intended's door where they have the dialogue which has been interpreted in varied and polarized ways.

Stone and Afzal-Khan ask why “few critics have addressed Marlow's reasons for lying to the Intended” and give us an illustration of a critic who ignores Marlow's reason for lying, Michael Levenson (230-31). His central focus seems to be on the fact that Marlow lied, not why he lied (Stone and Afzal-Khan 230-31). Lying is for Levenson an absolute immoral demeanour, based on the passage Stone and Afzal-Khan provide us from Levenson's article “Modernism and the Fate of Individuality”: “He derides moral absolutes and willingly suspends universals in favor of concrete discrimination” (230-31).

Stone and Afzal-Khan then introduces the psychologist Carol Gilligan, who's idea is that women do not believe in the masculine black and white world where lying is wrong regardless of the reason (Stone and Afzal-Khan 231). If someone should lie or not depends on the situation; in other words, how much will this person suffer if one tells this person the truth? If the person will suffer a lot knowing the truth it is better to lie (Stone and Afzal-Khan 231). Kurtz had found a new women and did awful work to make money; therefore, Marlow's lie is more a feminine trait which reflects empathy (231). As a result, Marlow is not, according to Stone and Afzal-Khan, a masculine patriarch (231).

I am going to investigate this dialogue to see if Kurtz` intended or Marlow are dominating or submissive. Do Marlow reveal empathy towards Kurtz intended? I will look at both non-verbal and verbal language.

First, Kurtz` intended “motion” Marlow “to a chair” before starting the conversation (74). Then, Kurtz` intended says an assertive declaration “It was impossible to know him and not to admire him”, before making the assertive sentence into a question: “Was it? (74). Moreover, she makes facial expressions which insinuates that he should continue to talk “[...] the appealing fixity of her gaze [...]” (74); in addition, when the narrator says, “It was

impossible not to –” Kurtz` intended finishes his sentence saying: “Love him” (74). Last of all, Marlow frequently repeats what Kurtz` intended says and do, “I knew him best” which he repeats “You knew him best” and when she stands up, he does as well (74 and 75).

The first thing Kurtz` intended do when she meets Marlow is to “motion” him to a chair”, she does not ask if he wants to sit, she expects him to sit in a chair (74). With only the use of a gesture, giving a nod or point with her hand, Marlow complies (74). Thus, Kurtz` intended has taken control from the beginning of their meeting. Since Marlow obey, he has in a subtle way allowed Kurtz` intended to take the command. Whether it is unconsciously or consciously, Marlow reveal here that he can treat women well, considering that he gives Kurtz` intended liberty to be superior to him.

The intended is also the one who starts the dialogue when murmuring “You knew him well” (74). If we examine this sentence, we will find out that this is a declarative question which expect a yes; that is, this sentence has a regular build-up of a statement, SVO, but made into a question (Crystal 63). To say it more, the narrator says “she murmured” not: she asked, which implies that she has already decided what answer Marlow should give (74). Marlow answer the only possible answer if he is afraid to hurt Kurtz` intended, that he knew Kurtz well (74). Marlow would not feel compelled to affirm what the intended said If he did not care for her. He could have said the truth, that he did not know Kurtz well. To tell the truth in this setting would have reflected masculinity. As mentioned earlier, Gillian looks at it as masculine trait to belief that lying is wrong no matter what the consequence the truth would lead to (Stone and Afzal-Khan 231). Thus, Marlow displays that he finds it important that she thrives, which reveals that he can treat women well. Through Gillian`s view of lying, Marlow compliance can be looked at as a feminine trait, he obeys the rules the intended creates to not make her mental health worse.

Furthermore, the intended continues to control the dialogue when she declares that “It was impossible to know him and not to admire him”, before creating the assertive declaration into a tag question “Was it?” (74 and Crystal 60). She has already said the answer to the question giving Marlow few options but to agree if his intentions are to make her feel better.

The intended carry on her dialogue with Marlow by using a non-verbal gesture, her facial expression, to produce more likeable words from Marlow; immediately, when Marlow has stumbled out some words, she finishes the sentence for him (74). To finish someone else’s sentence can be looked at as emphatic. Let us say two persons know each other well, the person who finish of the other one’s sentence can be looked at as emphatic because it indicates understanding of what the other person says. However, Kurtz’s intended does not know Marlow and in most situations, it is considered impolite to finish of someone’s sentences. Nonetheless, she dares to be unpolite to get the answers she wants. Kurtz’s intended’s behaviour reinforces the theory that she is the dominant one and Marlow the submissive one in this dialogue. Hence, Marlow’s submissiveness reveals his empathy

Last, the narrator imitates what the intended does both verbally, saying the same as the intended “You knew him best”, and through gesture, when she stands up, he stands up (74 and 75). Imitation is a normal social skill which is important to be included in society since it portrays our empathy for others; however, it is only Marlow who mirror Kurtz’s intended. This can be more evidence of Kurtz’s intended as the dominant one and Marlow as the empathic one. Marlow on the surface may seem patriarchal, but through close reading of the monologue, it is revealed that Marlow can be read as an empathic character which breaks with the typical view of a patriarch.

However, is Marlow emphatic? Is it because he sincerely cares for the intended or is it because of a chauvinistic idea about what place women belongs to? Looking at the dialogue through Hawthorn’s proposition, that Marlow categorize women and the European

middleclass women should be kept in their world of ignorance, can give us another view (354). The empathic side of Marlow, which I have just argued for, can be looked at as a way of dehumanising Kurtz` intended. Allow me to explain, Marlow can play the empathic supressing role toward Kurtz` intended because he “worships” the world European middleclass women live in. As a result, Marlow wishes to keep on separating the men`s world from the European middleclass women`s world because the world of men is filled with darkness. Marlow`s actions toward Kurtz` intended is a way to keep her out of the men`s world. Looking at the dialogue through Hawthorn`s perspective, Marlow can be looked at as a man with patriarchal behaviour since he makes the intended the “classical passive virgin” (360).

However, Looking at other examples in the novella I do not look at Marlow as the typical dominant man. I am not saying Marlow does not have patriarchal tendencies, I just see him as more complex. Let me illustrate:

Going back to the beginning of Marlow`s narrative when he visited his aunt in Brussel. In this dialogue Marlow desire to tell his aunt the reality of the world “I ventured to hint that the company was run by profit” (12). This sentence suggests that at least some part of Marlow wishes that European middleclass women could see the reality of the world, that Europeans are not in Africa to give the Africans a better life, but to make money. However, Marlow`s aunt ignore Marlow and continues to talk her opinion (12-13). Marlow`s dialogue with his aunt is in many ways alike the dialogue he has with Kurtz` intended. Eighter his aunt or Kurtz` intended are interested in the truth; in other words, it seems that the European middleclass women themselves have a wish to stay in their world of ignorance. Also, let us not forget that Marlow has had a very traumatic journey, seeing, and hearing the ghost of Kurtz (73). Would he tell her and make her cope with his trauma as well as coping with the

death of Kurtz? This can be the femininity in Marlow who stops him from hurting her even more. As a result, Marlow's action towards women does not appear patriarchal.

Moving one, considering it is Marlow who narrates this dialogue it seems reasonable to look at how Marlow describes Kurtz's intended to the men on the Nellie. I will look at one of Hawthorn's citations of Kurtz's intended: "She came forward, all in black, with a pale head, floating towards me in the dusk [...] This fair hair, this pale visage, this pure brow, seemed surrounded by an ashy halo from which the dark eyes looked out at me." (73). Through this citation Hawthorn portrays how white and black is contrasted to each other to give an effect of how Kurtz's intended looks pure, but unknowingly has evil within herself (355). The white is presented through the intended's hair who is fair and her head which is pale; in contrast, the evil is presented through her eyes which is dark (355). I want to look further in to this citation, but with another perspective. I wonder why Marlow uses these descriptions about the intended.

First, Marlow describes Kurtz's intended's purity by using the concrete adjectives "fair" and "pale". Furthermore, the evil Hawthorn bring up is something Kurtz's intended is unconscious about, a theory I find strengthen when Marlow describes the intended's glance of her dark eyes which is "guileless, profound, confident, and trustful" (73). Guileless for example means innocent, and the innocent in her eyes Marlow describes, means that he portrays her as unaware of the evil. thus, it seems like Marlow wishes his listeners to see that the intended is a frail creature he must handle like porcelain. Marlow's descriptions of the intended as a frail being does in many ways contradict to Marlow's dialogue with her, where she seems to be in control of the conversation. This is to me a clue that Marlow desire to appear as if he is in control of women to the men on the Nellie. Marlow might be both emphatic and submissive toward women, but in front of the masculine audience on the Nellie

Marlow repeatably display himself as above women. Again, I wonder if he tries to hide his femininity and why?

Moving on, let us look at Marlow`s dialogues with men. First, when Marlow has reached Africa, he meets a captain, the Swede who “knowing” Marlow as “a seaman invites” him “on his bridge” (15). The Swede tells Marlow what he thinks of “the government chaps”: “fine lot ... are they not?”, and continue to say that he “wonder what becomes of that kind when it goes upcountry” mentioning that he “the other day ... took up a man who hanged himself”. Marlow reacts alarmed “why, in God`s name” whereas the Swede answers “who knows? The sun too much for him, or the country perhaps” (15).

To begin, Marlow is invited to the Swede`s bridge; the bridge is a place on the boat only meant for captains which signals that the Swede identify Marlow as an equal. Marlow see this invite as natural “knowing me for a seaman” (15). The term “knowing me” is when two persons feels familiarity to each other; in other words, the Swede and Marlow identify themselves with each other. To continue, the Swede acts like a mentor to Marlow when telling Marlow what he will encounter further into the deep of Congo. Mentors can be hierarchical over the one being mentored, but also equal to whom he mentor. Recalling that Marlow was invited to the bridge, it is natural to look at the Swede and Marlow as equal (15). The Swede naturally has more experience with Congo, but Marlow being a seamen and has travelled the world probably has more experience in other areas of the world; hence, they are equal. Marlow`s meeting with the swede reveals that Marlow can have a dialogue with a man as an equal, which contrasts to Marlow`s and the intended dialogue where she among other things orders Marlow “to a chair” (74).

As Marlow continues his journey, he meets the company`s chief accountant, a man who is non-important according to Marlow, except that it is from the company`s chief accountant he first hears the name Kurtz (18). However, Marlow reassure the men on the

Nellie that “he respected the fellow” because “he kept up his appearance” wearing “starched collars and got-up shirt-fronts” in a place of “demoralization” and “that’s backbone” (18).

Since the dialogue between Marlow and the chief accountant of the company is limited, I chose to focus on how Marlow describes him to the men on the Nellie.

First, Marlow states that the chief accountant is a person not worth mention; however, Marlow is fast to declare that the company’s chief accountant should be respected. Marlow is impressed over the chief accountant’s dress code because he has seen, in his little time being in this place, how Congo is a land where moral has derived (18). Even though Marlow say he respect the company’s chief accountant, he also says that he is not worth mention, apart from the fact that company’s chief accountant had something to say about Kurtz. It seems like the chief accountant has no value as an individual. Therefore, I see it as possible to interpret Marlow's descriptions of company’s chief accountant as a statement about how Marlow feels superior to him. Resultative, I find it possible to compare Marlow’s descriptions of Kurtz` intended and the company’s chief accountant. The intended is, as written before, described with “fair hair” a “pale visage” and “guileless” in her eyes, which can be looked at as Marlow’s need to display his superiority to women in front of the men on the Nellie (73). Marlow’s descriptions of the company’s chief accountant reveal that he can have oppressive undertones in his descriptions towards both genders, not just women.

In the deep of Congo, he meets a man called the manager. Marlow let the listeners know that “he was obeyed” by those who worked under him; also, the manager uses “an overfed negro” to treat the “white men” under him “with provoking insolence” (22). Clearly, the manager is a man who is used to have power. However, when Marlow have a dialogue with the manager, it seems like the manager loses control during their conversation. First, the manager takes the role as the man in charge by talking nonstop without listening to what Marlow has to say (22). Marlow gets tired of the manager’s endless monologue which repeats

itself frequently and resultative cuts of the manager's monologue by interrupting him (23). Marlow says that he "had heard of Mr. Kurtz on the coast" which unfortunately makes the manager chatter once again (23). Marlow interrupts the manager on more time, this time in the middle of a question the manager asks: "how long it would take to" (23). Marlow answers the manager's uncomplete question with the rhetorical question "how can I know?"; clearly, making a point about how ridiculous it is of the manager to ask this question; in this way, Marlow takes control over the monologue (23). Still, Marlow has manners enough to answer the manager and says it will take months, approximately three months, which astonishes the manager (23). Nevertheless, Marlow keeps a firm tone holding on to what he has said. At the end of the monologue, Marlow does not bother to listen anymore to the manager and walks out from the manager's hut without saying goodbye, this reinforces the control Marlow has gained over the manager (23). This monologue displays how Marlow can be a man in control, which traditionally expresses a man's masculinity.

When I look at Marlow's interaction with these men compared to his aunt and Kurtz's intended, he seems to have the ability to be dominating, but chooses to show a more feminine side towards women. Marlow seems to oppress his femininity towards the men on the Nellie because he tells his story in an era when the "doctrine" was that men and women should live in "different spheres" ("The role of women" 19). The King in the poem "The princess" by Alfred Lord Tennyson explains the ideal Victorian man and woman very well: "Man for the sword and for the needle she [...]" ("The role of women" 19). To me, Marlow's interactions with men and women portray Marlow as a multi-layered character with both feminine and masculine sides.

Furthermore, it seems important for Marlow to show that he resembles the men on the boat, and therefore displays European middleclass women as ignorant and himself as masculine. As earlier written, familiarity is a way for people to identify themselves with each

other, Marlow expresses his familiarity to the men on the boat when he communicates similar opinions about women as other European middleclass men have. Also, when he says that “it would have been too dark” for Kurtz intended to know the truth, he also says, without stating it, that the men on the *Nellie* are strong enough to know the truth; thus, complementing them (77).

In the last scene, the frame narrator takes over the narration and describes how “nobody” on the *Nellie* “moved for a time” (77). It seems like Marlow’s story affected them and made the crew reflect on the cruelty against the people of the Congo for which European empiricism was to blame. Also, the frame narrator’s description of the sea: “The offing was barred by a black bank of clouds, and the tranquil waterway leading to the uttermost ends of the earth flowed sombre under an overcast sky – seemed to lead into the heart of an immense darkness”, portray how he does not see the colonial places as spaces where the European empire has done “ages of good service” anymore, but as a horrible place where the worst of all evilness happens (4 and 77).

Closing statements

We get to know Marlow through his involvement with other characters as well as how he portrays his thoughts about them to the men on the *Nellie*. First, I looked at two of Marlow’s statements. In the first statement, he portrays a working class woman as all-knowing, and in the other statement he portrays women in general as un-knowing (source). Hawthorne suggests that the unknowing woman is meant to portray the European middleclass woman not women in general. Through these two statements I found it possible that Marlow divides women into categories, and by this objectifies them. Resultative, Marlow seems to be a man who displays patriarchal ideologies to the men on the *Nellie*.

Considering my focus is on the European middleclass women I first looked at how Marlow portray his aunt by looking the scene where Marlow tells the men on the boat how he got his job in Congo. Stone and Afzal-Khan writes that Marlow is embarrassed of having asked his aunt for work, but they do not argue for why he feels embarrassed. As I saw this scene, Marlow is embarrassed of having asked his aunt for job because he is with a very masculine crew on the Nellie, and therefore afraid to reveal his femininity. Marlow is not necessarily a patriarch, but for his story to be taken seriously it is important for him to prove that he is an equal to his audience on the Nellie; as a result, he portrays himself as an authoritarian towards women.

I also looked at Marlow`s dialogue with Kurtz` intended where I conclude that he is submissive in this dialogue. Furthermore, I look at why he is submissive and comes up with to perspectives. Through Hawthorn`s perspective Marlow wishes European middleclass women to continue to live in their own beautiful world; as a result, I argue that Marlow is submissive in his dialogue with the intended to protect this innocent world she belongs to. However, Marlow wishes to tell his aunt about the Europeans real intentions in Congo. Since Marlow`s aunt also belongs to the category of European middleclass women, the idea that Marlow wishes to keep Kurtz` intended in this perfect world is therefore not valid (12).

When I looked at how Marlow interacted with men, I found out that his interactions with them could be both equal and dominant; thus, Marlow do have masculine traits, but with women he displays feminine traits. Resultative, I see his personality as complex, but that he only dares to reveal his femininity when he is with women. In the company of a very masculine crew, he acts as if he has patriarchal thoughts of women for his narrative to be taken seriously.

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