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## Positive And Negative Sides Of The Imperialism

Did the imperialism was bad or good? Next I am going to tell you that but first we must define what imperialism is and some of his examples only to give us a clearer idea of what it is. It can be define as a practice of expanding territory and power by gaining political and economic control of other areas. Imperialism and colonialism are not the same because as we saw in the classes of World History the colonialism used more the violence and it was direct control over the colonies. In some places of Africa it can say that they were colonized but a greater part of Africa was imperialized. The book "Heart of the Darkness" shows the situation in which the habitants of the Belgian Congo were living and the mistreatments from the French soldiers. Also the book shows how the empire of France was gaining territory and obtaining ivory to commercialese with it back in France.

Most people say that "Heart of the Darkness" was an autobiographical book because Joseph Conrad, the author, was on the Congo and through an alter ego called Marlow he tried to explain the life on Africa and specifically to the people that did not know about that. Conrad once describe that experience as "an experience taken a little beyond the real facts" but as I searched Conrad tried so hard that the work did not seem to be autobiographical. In fact in the first scene of the book when they were on the boat those people who appeared were the friends of Conrad and also Conrad himself was there, the only "imaginary thing" on the book was the character Marlow that as I said he was like an alter ego of Joseph Conrad. In that time on Africa there were many places that were unknown so in the map they appear as blank spaces. It should be noted that the geographers named the rivers and lakes in the blank spaces of Africa's maps and where there was not cities they put elephants as a symbol. Conrad as a child was curious and every time that he saw a blank space in the map he wanted to go there when he grow up. That is why Conrad visited the Belgian Congo a quarter century later commanding a ship that trafficked ivory across the Congo River. In the book Conrad explain it exactly like that: Marlow pointed his finger on the center of Africa in a river that looked like a giant serpent and years later he moved all his contacts to make him the captain of a steam ship that trafficked ivory.

The tribes of Africa, as I could see in the book, were too aggressive and violent but maybe they were like that after the empires arrived to colonize his territory and his people. There was a story among the sailors about a captain called Johannes Fresleven, which by the way was the predecessor of Marlow (Conrad), who died in a dispute on January 22th, 1890 between local chiefs of a tribe about a purchase of chickens. The tribe acted so violent that the crew of the steam ship run away leaving behind the body of his captain, which is why Marlow was named the captain of the steam ship. Another event that happens in the book that proves the natives

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were violent occurred when Marlow and his crew were on their way to find Mr. Kurtz, the best trafficker of ivory in the Congo, a bunch of natives started to attack the steam ship shooting arrows and killing some people on the ship including slaves that were in charge of the maintenance of the ship. At the end of the book we found out the attack of the ship was ordered by Mr. Kurtz because he did not want to leave the settlement in which he interacted with the tribe and they gave him ivory.

A thing that caught my attention was that almost all the sailors saw the jungle and the rivers of Africa with fear but also with respect because to them those territories was unknown (the most part) and like I said before there were tribes who did not care about them and at the first opportunity they had, the sailors would be killed. In a part of the book when Marlow went to the place where he was going to be hired he said: "To me the yellow corresponded to me. Death in the center. There was the river, fascinating, deadly, like a snake." (Conrad, J., 16). While he said that he was watching a map which showed the territories that the empires had marked with a color, some of them were: red for the British Empire, blue for the French empire and yellow for the Belgian Empire, where Marlow wanted to go was marked with yellow because it was the Belgian Congo. So as I said Marlow referred to that river as deadly because he did not know that territory and he did not know what would happen when he arrived there.

The foreigners saw the natives and the tribes as enemies and also on the contrary. Mukunzo Kioko, an oral historian of the Pende tribe (an African tribe), said that when the conquerors arrived with a big ship covered with white sails all over it the natives saw white men who said words that nobody understood. The ancestors said that they were vumbi (spirits that return among the deaths) and because of that the natives shoot arrows in order to make them run away but the foreigners shoot his weapons killing a lot of natives. The ancestors run away and the wise said that those men were the old owners of the land and since then the white men only brought war and misery. I agree with the natives that the empires only brought misery because since them arrive to that unknown land the rest of the empires started to compete against each other for acquiring territory and the tribes resulted hurt because of the crossfire or for being slaves of the conquerors.

In conclusion to answer the question that the teacher ask us, I think that the violence and brutality with which these explorations were carried out were wrong because the land of Africa own to the natives and not the foreigners that arrived with lucrative purposes. The empires should have expanded his territory with other empires that could fight among them and not with tribes that were inoffensive. In general, I liked the book because it explained in detail how the imperialism was in that time and how the natives were mistreated by the soldiers of the empires. Also I liked it because all the things were real and they happened to Joseph Conrad. I recommend this book to all the people that like the history and want to learn more about imperialism and slavery. A last thing that I have to say is that we must think about this topic

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because the natives suffer a lot at the point that they die of hungry or because the soldiers think that some of them were useless and they kill them.

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