

JOSEPH CONRAD'S "WILD STORY OF A JOURNALIST"

BY MATTHEW RUBERY

In great empires the people who live in the capital, and in the provinces remote from the scene of action, feel, many of them, scarce any inconveniency from the war; but enjoy, at their ease, the amusement of reading in the newspapers the exploits of their own fleets and armies.

—Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations* (1776)

We shudder at the brutality of the way a butcher uses the knife: ah, but this is nothing at all compared to the most dreadful recklessness and callousness with which a journalist, addressing himself to the whole country, if possible, uses untruth.

—Søren Kierkegaard, *Journals* (1849)

Henry Stanley traveled to Africa in January 1871 with the following assignment from the *New York Herald*: "Find out Livingstone, and get what news you can relating to his discoveries."¹ Month after month readers watched the newspapers for reports of the silent explorer. News of Dr. David Livingstone's discoveries—and his own discovery, in this case—reached London in May 1872 to the delight of international audiences.² One impressed reader was Joseph Conrad, who recalled hearing the accomplishments of explorers "whispered to me in my cradle" and reading as a boy Livingstone's *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa* (1857), a source of the sentimental daydreams that would one day make him a steamboat captain on the Congo.³ The newspaper itself read like an exploration narrative at such moments, never more so than in the journalism of Stanley, who introduced the press to territory formerly reserved for the explorer's lone voice. Stanley's dispatches gave audiences the impressions of a correspondent, the adventures of an explorer, and the plots of a novelist, all in a single column. Yet these dispatches also gave audiences a misleading perspective on events, as Conrad learned when his own African experiences failed to correspond with

press descriptions. He returned to England in 1891, disenchanted and resentful of events excluded from the London newspapers. Conrad did not forget Stanley's publicity lesson. In 1898, while writing a fictional work drawing from his experiences in Africa, he would make the novel's most compromised character a journalist.

Stanley and Livingstone's story, which first appeared in the newspapers, is a reminder of how influential print journalism was for late-Victorian authors. The newspaper made available to the novel, to adapt a phrase from Mikhail Bakhtin, "new worlds of verbal perception."⁴ Conrad's perception of the world was influenced as much by the daily press as by serious literature. He read with the skeptical perspective of a cosmopolitan émigré forced to rely on the newspaper's foreign correspondence for news of Poland, France, Africa, and, while at sea, of home. Foreign news at the time was a pastiche of accounts from British political figures, Reuters wire service, and the paper's own journalists. The foreign correspondence provided him with the latest intelligence in a commercial format often lacking perspective or thick cultural description. In Conrad's view, correspondents were responsible for public misperception of events experienced only through the pages of the daily newspaper. Letters and essays reveal his recurrent frustrations with international reportage as inadequate mediations of complex psychological and political situations. As Marlow says in *Chance* (1913), "Is it ever the business of any pressman to understand anything? I guess not."⁵

Conrad was reacting to recent developments in journalism which saw the foreign correspondent established as a legitimate profession by the end of the nineteenth century.⁶ Michael Schudson has argued that the professional reporter was an invention of the 1880s and 1890s, decades in which editors began employing experienced writers rather than informal sources (including their friends) as the paper's "own correspondent."⁷ According to Lucy Brown, foreign correspondence became increasingly prominent after the Franco-Prussian War, when public interest shifted from war reporting to foreign reporting on diplomatic relations.⁸ The generic term "correspondent" by Conrad's time had come to include recognizable names like Nellie Bly, William Howard Russell, and, of course, Henry Stanley. More than any previous journalist, Stanley made exploration of Africa a public spectacle through a sensational style that aimed to interest and excite audiences. Stanley spoke with the authority of the press, and his voice was an enduring problem for Conrad, who henceforth would criticize newspapers for shaping perception of

events—a phenomenon addressed in the eloquent journalism of Kurtz.

Conrad is often remembered alongside journalist-writers such as Roger Casement, George Washington Williams, Richard Harding Davis, Mark Twain, and Arthur Conan Doyle in their criticism of the Belgian Congo, but studies are just beginning to address the elements of journalism in his own writing.⁹ Conrad's novels show his interest to lie not with the reformers but with the unprecedented influence of sensational journalists. He is one of the earliest authors to challenge the press for its psychological authority—indeed, its emergence as a mass media—rather than its subliterate status as *panem et circenses* for the public. *Heart of Darkness* (1898) more than any other novel shows the influence of the newspapers on Conrad's fiction. News supplied factual sources and, more importantly, intellectual provocation for this novel. Discussions of Africa in the English and Belgian press made Conrad aware of journalism as a discourse influencing the way individuals see, talk about, and understand world events. Hence Conrad's novel is as concerned with the media through which Kurtz represents experience as with the experience itself, for it is the newspapers that bring Kurtz's voice out of Africa.

I. CONRAD AND THE PRESS

English newspapers gave Conrad his first language lessons. Letters describe him arriving in Lowestoft in May 1878 and reading the *Standard*.¹⁰ Reading the news not only introduced him to English speech and customs but also cultivated a sense of belonging to an “imagined community,” as Benedict Anderson defines the nation.¹¹ W. G. Sebald records the following news items appearing the week of Conrad's arrival: a mine explosion in Wigan; a Mohammedan uprising in Rumelia; Kaffir unrest in South Africa; the hazards of Bosnia; the status of Hong Kong; the departure of the *Largo Bay* steamship; the Duke of Cambridge's voyage to Malta; a Whitby housemaid's death; and a Silsden mother's stroke.¹² Sebald's miscellany makes sense only in the pages of the daily newspaper, where links among items are imagined, though reassuringly grounded, in everyday life. Conrad was participating in a national ritual along with other citizens reading the same reported events on the same day. Just as he experienced home through the newspaper's foreign intelligence, so he gradually became English through reading about world news.

Conrad's newspaper reading is a reminder of the distance that he felt between himself and most destinations. He traveled among ports as an outsider soon to cast off, always glimpsing local life from afar. One letter attributes this distance to the call of duty: "But indeed I knew very little of and about shore people. I was chief mate of the S. S. Vidar and very busy whenever in harbour." The very phrase "shore people" suggests the quasi-anthropological perspective of an outside-observer. Edward Garnett recalls Conrad's frustration at this detachment: "I have spent half my life knocking about in ships, only getting ashore between voyages. I know nothing, nothing! except from the outside. I have to guess at everything!" V. S. Naipaul, another writer used to cultural displacement, argues that Conrad's protest over a lack of material "is the complaint of a writer who is missing a society. . . . Conrad's experience was too scattered; he knew many societies by their externals, but he knew none in depth."¹³ From such a vantage point, the news offered compensatory insight into societies grasped only intermittently through experience. Newspapers offered the outsider a degree of cultural literacy difficult to acquire through the limited contact during stays in port.

Two of Conrad's political essays, however, ask whether audiences were in fact becoming accustomed to reading about distant atrocities through the newspapers. The impersonal voice of the newspaper was a particular problem for Conrad, who in "Poland Revisited" (1915) claims to have been so dissatisfied with the daily press that he was unaware of the assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand. He disapproved of the "necessarily atmosphereless, perspectiveless manner of the daily papers, which somehow, for a man possessed of some historic sense, robs them of all real interest." This impersonal, disembodied voice made events feel remote from one's life, a drawback too well understood by the son of patriot Apollo Korzienowski. "Autocracy and War" (1905) shows Conrad's concern for a mass audience unable to make the same fine discriminations as he, going so far as to distrust the very form of the newspaper in a series of peculiarly phenomenological criticisms. Opinions found in the press could not be tolerated except for "something subtly noxious to the human brain in the composition of newspaper ink" or "the large page, the columns of words, the leaded headings, [that] exalt the mind into a state of feverish credulity." Newspapers encourage misinformed and complacent readers according to this view, for the "printed page of the Press makes a sort of still uproar, taking from men both the power to reflect and the faculty of genuine feeling;

leaving them only the artificially created need of having something exciting to talk about.”¹⁴ The oxymoronic phrase “still uproar” expresses the deep frustration he felt as both Polish exile and British citizen in watching world events reduced to idle conversation. Conrad later expressed this frustration more clearly when he described the journalists as “rats” in the typescript’s margin.¹⁵

In the same essay, Conrad describes the experience of reading about the Russo-Japanese War, anticipating the sentiments of another novelist who wrote for the press, Ernest Hemingway: “Real war is never like paper war, nor do accounts of it read much the way it looks.”¹⁶ Conrad’s essay suggests that casualty reports from abroad quickly lose their emotional force in print, as one can see in the following intelligence telegraphed to the *Standard* from Tokyo in January 1905: “It is estimated that the casualties at Chen-chieh-pau and Hei-ku-tai were—Japanese, 5,000; Russian, 10,000.”¹⁷ The mind becomes “strangely impervious to information” after enough body counts. The visceral immediacy of combat contrasts markedly with the filtered security of news consumption:

We have seen these things, though we have seen them only in the cold, silent colourless print of books and newspapers. In stigmatising the printed word as cold, silent, and colourless, I have no intention of putting a slight upon the fidelity and the talents of men who have provided us with words to read about the battles in Manchuria. I only wished to suggest that in the nature of things, the war in the Far East has been made known to us, so far, in a grey reflection of its terrible and monotonous phases of pain, death, and sickness; a reflection seen in the perspective of thousands of miles, in the dim atmosphere of official reticence, through the veil of inadequate words.¹⁸

The descriptive passage regrets newsprint’s inability to convey distant realities with any feeling, for the impersonal prose is the only contact most readers will have with this part of the world. News reports inevitably lack the requisite intensity and come to us as shadows of the real thing: cold, silent, and colorless.

Conrad’s novels often take as a starting point this dissatisfaction with the impersonal voice of news narratives. *Chance* is a novel, after all, beginning with Mr. Powell’s disgust at how journalists “never by any chance gave a correct version of the simplest affair.” As with many of Conrad’s press episodes, a critical first-person perspective of an experience calls into question the accuracy of subsequent news coverage. The trial of Mr. de Barral ends with a wave of the

defendant's fist, a fatuous gesture lacking the gravitas expected in a capital case. Marlow comments,

The pressman disapproved of that manifestation. It was not his business to understand it. Is it ever the business of any pressman to understand anything? I guess not. It would lead him too far away from the actualities which are the daily bread of the public mind. He probably thought the display worth very little from a picturesque point of view; the weak voice, the colorless personality as incapable of an attitude as a bed-post, the very fatuity of the clenched hand so ineffectual at that time and place—no, it wasn't worth much. And then, for him, an accomplished craftsman in his trade, thinking was distinctly "bad business." His business was to write a readable account.¹⁹

This projected criticism, framed by the qualifier "probably," directs attention from the psychology of the defendant to the psychology of the reporter, reminding readers of the subjective decisions involved in a presumably impartial representation. The dismissal of the pressman's "readable account" in this passage echoes Marlow's contempt for the brickmaker's "readable report" in *Heart of Darkness*.²⁰ As Marlow knows, audiences will likely accept the anonymous account simply because it appears in newsprint.

Under Western Eyes (1911) brings the news even closer to personal experience through the sensation of reading not about strangers but about one's own circle. In the novel, Geneva-based characters read of Russian events in the columns of an English newspaper. The narrator remarks, "On returning home I opened the newspaper I receive from London, and glancing down the correspondence from Russia—not the telegrams but the correspondence—the first thing that caught my eye was the name of Haldin." The speaker discovers private significance within the public affair through the familiar name of Haldin, which appears in the correspondence columns because Haldin's forgotten story is no longer newsworthy enough for the telegraph. Nathalie Haldin has a strikingly different reaction to the story, however, as seen in the narrator's description of the physical shock she experiences when reading about her family as intelligence: "I pulled the paper out of my pocket. I did not imagine that a number of the *Standard* could have the effect of Medusa's head. Her face went stony in a moment—her eyes—her limbs." The story of Haldin's midnight arrest, likely to be picked up by the French and Swiss press, soon becomes available to the very people from

whom the narrator wants to protect this information. Mrs. Haldin reads the correspondence about her son and remarks: “The English press is wonderful. Nothing can be kept secret from it, and all the world must hear.”²¹ As the private suffering of these characters makes clear, however, the world sees the news story with indifferent eyes.

Yet it would be a mistake to underestimate the allure for audiences of even the most sensational newspaper, which spoke with an authority unavailable to many post-Romantic literary forms. After the murder of Mr. Verloc in *The Secret Agent* (1907), Winnie Verloc compulsively recalls executions reported in the press: “the murderer was brought out to be executed, with a horrible quietness and, as the reports in the newspapers always said, ‘in the presence of the authorities.’” The very impersonality of the language imparts a clinical aggression to the description while at the same time stressing the legitimacy of the act. The quietness, not the gallows, is “horrible,” and the standardized phrase conveys the chilling anonymity of state power. “Today everyone takes part in public executions through the newspapers,” claimed Elias Canetti, and only through details gleaned from news accounts is Winnie able to visualize the execution. She compresses all previous executions—closed to the public since 1868—into the memory of a single phrase:

The impossibility of imagining the details of such quiet execution added something maddening to her abstract terror. The newspapers never gave any details except one, but that one with some affectation was always there at the end of a meagre report. Mrs. Verloc remembered its nature. It came with a cruel burning pain into her head, as if the words “The drop given was fourteen feet” had been scratched on her brain with a hot needle. “The drop given was fourteen feet.”²²

In an attempt to convey the phrase’s force, Conrad can only resort to images of physical rather than mental suffering. The journalistic phrase crowds out all imagined details and resonates until her death.

Once haunted by reported deaths, Winnie eventually is reduced to such a headline: “Suicide of Lady Passenger from a Cross-Channel Boat.” Alexander Ossipon, whose abandonment hastened the suicide, reads the article afterward, again showing the peculiar way in which impersonal information can unexpectedly become the most intimate narrative. Just as the execution phrase consumed Winnie’s attention, Ossipon repeats to himself verbatim his own phrase from the newspaper: “An impenetrable mystery seems destined to hang for ever over this act of madness or despair.” It is repetition without

insight for these traumatized characters. The article's formulaic phrases show an inability to account for any but the most superficial details surrounding Winnie's death. In the end, the anonymous narrator's own words best express the press's influence over its readers as "the mystery of a human brain pulsating wrongfully to the rhythm of journalistic phrases."²³ Here, journalism's uncanny rhythm suggests the psychological force of print media over Conrad's characters and, one might add, over the writer himself.

II. STANLEY AND LIVINGSTONE

Stanley earned a reputation as one of the era's most sensational journalists for his correspondence from Africa.²⁴ These dispatches, appearing in newspapers from 1871 until the end of the century, gave Conrad enduring impressions with which to fill his childhood vision of a blank space on the African map. Critics as different as Gérard Jean-Aubry, Frederick Karl, Zdzislaw Najder, and Andrea White have all identified Stanley as an influence on Conrad's interest in Africa.²⁵ It is likely, then, that the journalist's discovery of his boyhood hero was not far from Conrad's thoughts at the outset of his voyage to the Congo. Hence Stanley and Livingstone's narrative is one lens through which to approach *Heart of Darkness* and its vehement, if obscure, references to journalism. Stanley was a more influential source upon Conrad than has been realized, but less as a historical figure than as a representative of his profession.²⁶ Conrad's cynicism toward the joint enterprises of exploration and journalism finds a human face in Stanley, who, in this sense, is the voice behind Kurtz's journalism, a voice, like the explorers of Conrad's childhood, whispered in his ear throughout the novel's composition.

Livingstone's story is well known.²⁷ He worked with the London Missionary Society in Africa during the 1850s and soon began to explore the continent on his own, undertaking several expeditions between 1852 and 1873 to study the geography and search for the watershed of central Africa. England welcomed him as a hero when he returned from his first expedition and published *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa*. He entered Africa for the last time in 1866 to locate the source of the Nile, but the expedition collapsed, stranding him in Ujiji with limited capital, supplies, and men. Rumors of his death reached Zanzibar, and Europe received its last letter from Livingstone on 30 May 1869. James Gordon Bennett, Jr., son of the proprietor of the *New York Herald*, recognized a story

in the legendary figure's silence and assigned Stanley the task of finding and interviewing the supposedly lost explorer. News of Stanley and Livingstone's meeting reached London on 2 May 1872, when "Dr. Livingstone, I presume?" became journalism's latest *phrase célèbre*.

Stanley's correspondence would fashion Livingstone's image for readers who had never seen the man. Livingstone had been out of sight for years and many readers knew him only through the press. Stanley's dispatches presented an unforgettable image: "Passing from the rear of [the expedition] to the front I saw a knot of Arabs, and, in the centre, in striking contrast to their sunburnt faces, was a pale-looking and gray-bearded white man, in a navy cap, with a faded gold band about it, and red woollen jacket. This white man was Dr. David Livingstone, the hero traveller, the object of the search."²⁸ The exclusive interview was one element of a familiar nineteenth-century plot: a journey to the center of Africa in search of the venerated white explorer.²⁹ Livingstone's portrait appeared daily in the *Illustrated London News*, and pages devoted exclusively to the famous meeting appeared in newspapers for several months. Stanley speaks of a desire to shake the hand of "the man with whose book on Africa I was first made acquainted when a boy," but audiences were more likely to recall the two men tipping their caps in Stanley's *How I Found Livingstone* (1872) than to recall Livingstone's own writing (*L*, 51).

Like Stanley, Conrad arrived in Africa full of expectations gathered from his reading. The Victorian myth of the Dark Continent, as Patrick Brantlinger and other critics have shown, made an impression on Conrad well before the voyage through adventure tales, travelogues, biographies, chronicles, and journalism.³⁰ Conrad, who despite a lifelong interest had never been to Africa, obtained many of his ideas through narrative representations of the continent. Stanley describes a similar experience upon arriving in Africa: "I imagined I had read Burton and Speke through, fairly well, and that consequently I had penetrated the meaning, the full importance and grandeur, of the work I was about to be engaged upon. But my estimates, for instance, based upon book information, were simply ridiculous,—fanciful images of African attractions were soon dissipated, anticipated pleasures vanished, and all crude ideas began to resolve themselves into shape" (*L*, 10). Conrad's expectations came from many sources, not least among them Stanley. As we will see, Conrad was equally surprised at the discrepancy between what was reported and what he would encounter in Africa.

The late essay “Geography and Some Explorers” (1924) revisits the African explorers of Conrad’s youth: Mungo Park, James Bruce, Richard Burton, John Hanning Speke, and Livingstone. Conrad refuses to include Stanley in the company of these explorers, alluding to him only through a critical reference to sensational journalism. He speaks in a very different tone of Livingstone as “the most venerated perhaps of all the objects of my early geographical enthusiasm.” Yet Conrad visualizes Livingstone in the decline of his last years:

The words “Central Africa” bring before my eyes an old man with a rugged, kind face and a clipped, gray moustache, pacing wearily at the head of a few black followers along the reed-fringed lakes towards the dark native hut on the Congo headwaters in which he died, clinging in his very last hour to his heart’s unappeased desire for the sources of the Nile.³¹

The image here is of Stanley’s Livingstone. Conrad is recalling Stanley’s popular description of the aged explorer rather than earlier images such as Henry Wyndham Phillips’s 1857 portrait for *Missionary Travels*, which depicts the explorer in relative youth, with fine clothes and neatly combed brown moustache.³² In Stanley’s account, by contrast, one member of the expedition says, “I see the Doctor, sir. Oh, what an old man! He has got a white beard,” and Stanley himself writes, “As I advanced slowly towards him I noticed he was pale, that he looked wearied and wan, that he had grey whiskers and moustache” (*L*, 329, 331). The figure in the image above has already received Stanley’s aid and, according to the passage, marches toward an anticipated death in the hut to which attendants would carry him. The tiny following, the dark native hut, and the Congo headwaters all point toward knowledge obtained from news coverage of the explorer’s death on 1 May 1873.³³ The press had described the *mise-en-scène* of Livingstone’s death in detail, including his picturesque order at Ilala, “Build me a hut to die in,” noted in the *Herald* telegram cited in Stanley’s “Memoir of Livingstone” (*L*, lviii). Conrad’s description even shares the tone of the newspapers, which uncritically celebrated Livingstone’s ambition (“his heart’s unappeased desire”) rather than his failure to discover the Nile’s source.

The essay’s most well-known passage again shows memories of Livingstone compromised by Stanley. Here Conrad describes his disappointment upon reaching Stanley Falls, formerly a blank spot on the map of Africa that he had made a “boyish boast” to visit someday:

A great melancholy descended on me. Yes, this was the very spot. But there was no shadowy friend to stand by my side in the night of the enormous wilderness, no great haunting memory, but only the unholy recollection of a prosaic newspaper “stunt” and the distasteful knowledge of the vilest scramble for loot that ever disfigured the history of human conscience and geographical exploration. What an end to the idealized realities of a boy’s daydreams!³⁴

Critics have long cited this passage as the moment of unambiguous disillusionment for Conrad—a moment explicitly linked to Stanley’s “prosaic newspaper ‘stunt,’” the completion of Livingstone’s explorations in Central Africa sponsored by the *New York Herald* and the London *Daily Telegraph*.³⁵ As in the earlier passage, Stanley’s specter presides over what should be a pristine memory of Livingstone, a point accentuated by the passage’s uncanny vocabulary. Daydreams give way to melancholy, for Conrad cannot disregard Stanley’s influence over the way he sees and remembers the Congo.

At the time of Livingstone’s death, Stanley had yet to achieve a reputation beyond journalism. Felix Driver argues that publicity generated by the Stanley-Livingstone expedition inaugurated a new relationship between exploration and sensational journalism. Over the next several years Stanley became emblematic of a new mode of “exploration by warfare”—or journalism by warfare, as the case may be—and he earned a reputation as one of the most ruthless explorers of the age during the 1887 Emin Pasha Relief Expedition.³⁶ Yet Stanley freely, if naïvely, had admitted the controversial actions in public dispatches, where his unrepentant hostility to native Africans appeared in stark contrast to Livingstone’s missionary work. General Gordon for one expressed surprise at the voluntary disclosure of Stanley’s methods: “He is to blame for *writing* what he did. . . . These things may be done, but not advertised.”³⁷ Stanley would be remembered by many critics only for the publicity given to his experiences in Africa.

Despite being criticized for single-handedly sensationalizing exploration, Stanley reveals the degree to which all explorers relied on print media to make their stories public.³⁸ As Conrad’s essay cited earlier demonstrates, Livingstone’s own image was in a sense created by Stanley’s journalism. However, no previous explorer had made use of publicity so audaciously. Stanley was aware of an audience with every step and blithely disregarded accuracy when it interfered with entertainment. He begins *How I Found Livingstone*, the volume edition of the revised *Herald* dispatches, with the following declaration: “One thing more; I have adopted the narrative form of relating

the story of the search, on account of the greater interest it appears to possess over the diary form" (*L*, 7). The volume thus surrenders its status as personal record by modeling itself after narrative fiction. Stanley's ambivalence as narrator of the ostensibly factual report can be detected in other revisions, as when he assures the volume's readers: "There was no need of exaggeration—of any penny-a-line news, or of any sensationalism" (*L*, 334). In the dispatches he describes himself "acting the part of a newspaper" when asked about world events by Livingstone, but the revised version substitutes "annual periodical" for "newspaper" (*L*, 334). This emendation subtly attempts to distance his voice from mere newspaper journalism by redefining the text as a more stable and respectable genre.³⁹ Stanley is positioning himself as interpreter rather than reporter of events—claiming status as a higher journalist, so to speak—by effacing the original medium of his narrative. He is claiming for the narrative a different status from that of the newspaper, leaving the revised version ambiguously between factual and fictional discourse. This dubious narrative voice would provide one model for Conrad's own journalist in Africa.

Stanley returned to Africa to develop the Congo Independent State between 1879 and 1884. This partnership with Leopold II of Belgium made him both a journalist and a colonial administrator—the unusual credentials of Kurtz himself. The work also kept Stanley's name visible in the news prior to Conrad's voyage to Africa. Ian Watt's discussion of possible models for Kurtz links Stanley to the corrupt "moral atmosphere" that produces the station manager, but Stanley raises other important questions about the news media's presence within developing states.⁴⁰ His journalism led Conrad to distrust the newspaper as a mode of discourse and to ask how accurately readers can know events when not present, like Marlow, as a witness. Stanley was not, as many critics would have it, the passing of an age of innocent exploration. He was the passing of that age's myth.

III. KURTZ'S JOURNALISM

A 1902 letter from Conrad to Henry-Durand Davray describes *Heart of Darkness* as a "wild story of a journalist who becomes manager of a station in the interior and makes himself worshipped by a tribe of savages."⁴¹ Studies have discussed the psychological, ethical, and cultural implications of Kurtz's "wild story" without pursuing the relevance of his journalism, perhaps because the very profession of

the journalist-cum-manager is so difficult to establish with any certainty outside this letter. Kurtz is spoken of as journalist, poet, painter, musician, political leader, station manager, and ivory merchant at different points in the novel. He is not limited to a specific area of expertise but rather, as a journalist, he speaks for all professions and no profession. This unplaceability brings about Marlow's fascination with Kurtz's voice. Even after returning to Brussels, Marlow concedes he had taken Kurtz "for a painter who wrote for the papers, or else for a journalist who could paint."⁴² The confusion arises from the visual expectations of journalistic narrative, which effectively creates its subject through graphic description in the absence of illustrations or photographic images, as Frederick Greenwood noted in referring to foreign correspondence as "word-photographs" in *Blackwood's Magazine* the year before the serialization of Conrad's fiction.⁴³ However, Marlow recognizes that the journalist, again like the painter, transforms experience in the process of representing it. Only incrementally does Marlow perceive the difference between Kurtz's lived and reported experience, for he does not see Kurtz's notorious exploits but he hears or reads about them. Kurtz speaks with authority so long as his identity remains separate from his journalism—so long as he remains, in Marlow's phrase, an "eloquent phantom" (*H*, 75).

Marlow's description of Kurtz as "little more than a voice" or "just a word" directs attention to the station manager's elusive presence within the novel. He is, in the words of one critic, a voice without a body.⁴⁴ Yet Kurtz's journalism challenges characterizations of him as disembodied speech, for many of his words are written specifically for print. Criticism's emphasis on Kurtz's orality neglects the very writing that qualifies him as a journalist—the "documents," as Kurtz's papers are called by the Company agent (*H*, 70). Journalism mystifies the relation between speaker and speech in new and unexpected ways, for even if the written words are often indistinguishable from the spoken words, print distorts speech through what journalists refer to as the "transcription effect," the newspaper's elimination of nonverbal accompaniment to words (for instance, charisma, expression, tone, gesture, and gaze).⁴⁵ The voice of journalism therefore has a disembodied quality all its own, an abstraction of which Marlow is suspicious throughout the novel and which Conrad criticized as the "atmosphereless, perspectiveless"—in short, disembodied—voice of journalism. Looked at in this way, Conrad's novel is as much about the reembodyment of speech, or the attribution of voice to a specific

individual. This is in many ways the primary goal of the interview, for the narrative continues largely because Marlow is not satisfied with allowing Kurtz to remain a voice. Marlow cautiously pursues the man behind the documents, creating parallel narratives between his story and Kurtz's story—a story that, if told in Kurtz's words alone, would be unrecognizable to Marlow.

In his essay "The Storyteller" (1936), Walter Benjamin describes a shift from lived experience toward the experience of reading about life in the newspaper as a fact of modernity. Lost is the storyteller's community of listeners, for the newsreader is an isolated individual reading other people's stories as told by the journalist *in absentia*. The newspaper's information confronts storytelling in a "menacing" way, interfering with people's ability to communicate: "Every morning brings us the news of the globe, and yet we are poor in noteworthy stories."⁴⁶ Studies have presented the essay's description of a decline in storytelling as one way of understanding Marlow's yarn aboard the *Nellie*.⁴⁷ Accordingly, Marlow epitomizes the difficulties of sharing experience within a culture of information, but it should be emphasized as well that the one character who communicates effortlessly is a journalist. In fact, Marlow initially regards Kurtz as the storyteller *par excellence* for being able to speak at all. "This is the reason why I affirm that Kurtz was a remarkable man. He had something to say. He said it," Marlow tells us after admitting that he himself might have nothing to say (*H*, 69). Marlow is said to discover the inadequacy of Kurtz's *ultima verba* when he is unable to repeat them to the Intended. Kurtz's words, looked to for wisdom by characters and critics alike, would have been better understood as the provisional words of a journalist than as those of a storyteller.

Initially it appears that Marlow is the journalist, not Kurtz. Peter Brooks has called *Heart of Darkness* a "detective story gone modernist," and Marlow does indeed confound expectations by performing in detective-like fashion the work appropriate for the novel's journalist.⁴⁸ Like Stanley's *How I Found Livingstone*, the entire narrative is organized around an anticipated interview with a famous man, though with Marlow in the role of pursuant journalist. Marlow even seems to be repeating Stanley's journey to deliver the great explorer to the public. He first hears of Kurtz as "a very remarkable person" (*H*, 22), describing him as the man "whom at the time I did not see—you understand. He was just a word for me. I did not see the man in the name any more than you do" (*H*, 29), or any more than Stanley saw Livingstone in the name: "He was only an object to me—a great

item for a daily newspaper, as much as other subjects in which the voracious news-loving public delight in" (*L*, 344). Stanley and Marlow both describe an earlier experience, enabling them to insert proleptic allusions to the impending interview which had been an uncertain conclusion at the time. The interview conventionally promised a climactic summation to an otherwise puzzling experience for both explorer and audience, evident when Marlow says of the interview, "It was the furthest point of navigation and the culminating point of my experience. It seemed somehow to throw a kind of light on everything about me—and into my thoughts" (*H*, 11). One might recall the Russian appearing in Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse Now* (1979) as an American photojournalist documenting the war for a distant public, but here the Russian is protective of Kurtz's image and even requires Marlow's assurance that "Mr. Kurtz's reputation is safe with me" (*H*, 62). In fact, Marlow is the one who accepts Kurtz's personal papers just before death and who gives Kurtz's Report for the International Society for the Suppression of Savage Customs to a journalist in Belgium for publication (without the postscript, of course).

Throughout the novel Marlow's perspective provides a broader context of contemporary news coverage in which to place Kurtz's journalism. Specific references, even to Africa itself as Christopher Miller has pointed out, are notably absent from *Heart of Darkness*.⁴⁹ The final text is deliberately allegorical, but, as excised references to "some third-rate king" and other topicalities suggest, during composition events remained close to Conrad's experience. Marlow's boyhood fascination with maps, for example, alludes to the recent European presence in Africa. He says of the map, "True, by this time it was not a blank space any more. It had got filled since my boyhood with rivers and lakes and names. It had ceased to be a blank space of delightful mystery—a white patch for a boy to dream gloriously over. It had become a place of darkness" (*H*, 11–12). The rivers, the lakes, and, above all, the names evoke explorers identified in the essay "Geography and Some Explorers," and only through deliberate oversight can one disregard the names Stanley Falls and Leopoldville along the very river Marlow is navigating. This river had in fact inspired the adventure: "Then I remembered there was a big concern, a Company for trade on that river. Dash it all, I thought to myself, they can't trade without using some kind of craft on that lot of fresh water—steamboats! Why shouldn't I try to get charge of one. I went on along Fleet Street, but could not shake off the idea" (*H*, 12). Where was Marlow more likely to have learned of the distant African

trading company than in news reports of Leopold and Stanley's *Société Anonyme Belge pour le Commerce du Haut-Congo*? The very idea occurs to him on Fleet Street, home of the press.

Another passage, included in the manuscript but omitted from the final text, describes the narrator's disillusionment after a visit to Boma: "We went up some twenty miles and anchored off the seat of the government. I had heard enough in Europe about its advanced state of civilization; the papers, nay the very paper vendors in the sepulchral city were boasting about the steam tramway and the hotel—especially the hotel. I beheld that wonder." That wonder turns out to be no more than a "greasy and dingy place" wrongfully credited as a sign of progress by the newspapers. Nor is it a specific political paper like the *Mouvement Géographique* but rather the collective press ("the papers") that is responsible here for the misrepresentations making their way into people's speech (*H*, 18). His aunt's fondness for terms like "emissary of light" and "apostle" has already incited Marlow to dismiss this talk as "a lot of such rot let loose in print and talk about that time" (*H*, 15–16).

Conrad's early story "An Outpost of Progress" (1897) shows how easily such "rot" in the press could influence people's speech. Kayerts and Carlier, two trading agents in Africa, read a dated home newspaper discussing "Our Colonial Expansion" while waiting for the steamer's return:

It spoke much of the rights and duties of civilisation, of the sacredness of the civilising work, and extolled the merits of those who went about bringing light, and faith, and commerce to the dark places of the earth. Carlier and Kayerts read, wondered, and began to think better of themselves. Carlier said one evening, waving his hand about, "In a hundred years, there will be perhaps a town here. Quays, and warehouses, and barracks, and—and—billiard-rooms. Civilisation, my boy, and virtue—and all. And then, chaps will read that two good fellows, Kayerts and Carlier, were the first civilised men to live in this very spot!" Kayerts nodded, "Yes, it is a consolation to think of that."

Consolation is found in the unnamed author's "high-flown language" that depicts the venture in terms of "light," "faith," and "commerce"—words anticipating the rhetoric Marlow encounters in his aunt, the pilgrims, and, above all, Kurtz.⁵⁰ The vacuous language, the expired date, and the unidentified speaker do little to support the paper's claims. Yet this unsubstantiated opinion nevertheless bears

the authority of print, for the two men unhesitatingly accept the arguments and reconceive their roles in accordance with the specious vocabulary. Carlier and Kayerts can now imagine themselves as light-bringers in future newspaper headlines that will confer public legitimacy upon their otherwise obscure and self-serving roles. This consolation is not altogether different from that which readers might find in Kurtz's Report.⁵¹

What *Heart of Darkness* does not mention is the increasingly critical press coverage of Leopold's methods. The absence is striking considering the widespread criticism of Congo atrocities after Conrad's return to England.⁵² Stanley's triumphant rhetoric may have commanded attention throughout the 1880s and early 1890s, but the press began to report the appalling conditions shortly afterward. In this regard, the decision to omit Roger Casement from a largely autobiographical narrative is especially puzzling. Like Kurtz, Casement was "writing for the papers" while in the Congo, and Casement's 1904 report on alleged atrocities for the British government as well as his founding of the Congo Reform Association eventually helped turn public opinion against the Belgians (*H*, 68). The two men first met in June 1890 at Matadi, and historians have observed that Casement seems to have been the only person there whom Conrad liked. Conrad notes the meeting in the "Congo Diary" but not in the novel, leading several critics to wonder why Casement does not appear as a contrast to other Europeans.⁵³ Despite a positive model in Casement and recent friendships with journalist-writers Stephen Crane and H. G. Wells, Conrad deliberately represents journalism as disreputable.⁵⁴

The omission of Casement from the narrative suggests that earlier reporting by unreliable correspondents still influenced Conrad's perception of the press, for Stanley had entered the Congo as a journalist and published his exploits as humanitarian achievements—reports Conrad bitterly recalled while convalescing in London. For years Conrad read foreign correspondence bearing little resemblance to the Congo of his own experience. The eventual disclosure of the brutal working conditions (namely the grove of death, chain gangs, and mounted skulls) by Casement was not yet imaginable as a public document, nor was any factual exposé in the newspaper press. Casement's disinterestedness would have offered an alternative to the novel's choice of nightmares, an alternative Conrad was unwilling to concede in the context of Stanley's widely read correspondence. Instead the novel's only journalism comes from the complicit voice of Kurtz. Just as Stanley's journalism led to employment with Leopold,

so Kurtz's writing on "moral ideas" led to his employment with the Company (*H*, 33). Both Stanley and Kurtz continued to write for the newspapers despite being employed by the very organizations that should have been the subjects of their journalism.

Use of the elastic term "journalist" makes one wonder precisely what Conrad means by the term. By the end of the century, "journalist" had come to indicate a person writing primarily for the newspapers, often with the negative connotation of mass appeal and sensationalism—literary authors anxious to preserve their own professional status were the quickest to use the term condescendingly.⁵⁵ Journalism could mean either description without interpretation or, on the contrary, description with outspokenly biased interpretation. Since Kurtz uses the newspapers as a forum for communicating his "moral ideas" in the manner of a special correspondent, it comes as little surprise that the reportorial values of disinterestedness, verifiability, and public relevance are altogether absent. His correspondence resembles the leading article or editorial, much like the sham column found in Conrad's "An Outpost of Progress." Readers, however, were known to make little distinction between news and correspondence. For this reason, Frederick Greenwood had objected in *Blackwood's Magazine* to placing the foreign correspondence under the heading of news:

So printed, they delude—not by intention of the writer, but through the imagination of the reader. We all know how unconsciously imagination can lead us astray. Because these screeds are *telegraphed*, and because they are printed with news as news, the writer's remarks are invested by most minds with the importance due to a statement of facts. Whatever may be his aim,—whether to persuade or dissuade, to appease or inflame, to allay mistrust or to alarm suspicion,—all is understood as if resting on a background of actual knowledge. To the fancy of the reader, the special correspondent in Paris, Berlin, Vienna, is always a news-writer.⁵⁶

Like other well-known correspondents Conrad would likely have read in the press such as Rudyard Kipling, G. A. Henty, and Robert Louis Stevenson, Kurtz was expected to interpret events, for these interpretations were themselves a form of news. Consequently, Kurtz's primary concern is with persuasion, explaining why he disregards surrounding living conditions while cultivating his rhetoric—and why Marlow has an interest in Kurtz's other forms of artistic expression like poetry, painting, and music.

Kurtz's journalism is described only in terms of verbal eloquence, never critical publicity. Marlow reads the seventeen-page Savage Customs Report and concludes, "It was eloquent, vibrating with eloquence . . . a beautiful piece of writing" (*H*, 50). The experience of reading is emphasized above all else: "From that point he soared and took me with him. The peroration was magnificent, though difficult to remember, you know. . . . It made me tingle with enthusiasm. This was the unbounded power of eloquence—of words—of burning noble words" (*H*, 50). Marlow's reaction anticipates the effect Kurtz's prose will have on European audiences when read in the newspapers. They too will be made to tingle with enthusiasm. The description of the Report as a "magic current of phrases" (*H*, 51) returns us to Conrad's initial letter about the "wild story of a journalist," for the adjective shows Marlow grasping for totemic explanations of journalism's appeal, likening Kurtz's "magic" over European audiences to the "worship" received from native audiences (*H*, 71).

A late episode showing Kurtz at work underscores the romantic basis of his journalism. Marlow wonders, "Was he rehearsing some speech in his sleep, or was it a fragment of a phrase from some newspaper article. He had been writing for the papers and meant to do so again, 'for the furthering of my ideas. It's a duty'" (*H*, 68). This solipsism conspicuously departs from, in fact parodies, the visual clarity expected of the correspondent. His eyes are shut when he says, "Live rightly, die, die . . ."—the closest we get to a verbatim excerpt from Kurtz's journalism (*H*, 68). The ellipses show the speaker searching for a well-phrased antithesis or perhaps inviting readers to finish the phrase with their own platitude (the manuscript continues: "die nobly"). Marlow is not even sure how to categorize the unconscious utterance, illustrating the effectiveness with which Kurtz transfers the rhetorical force of his speech over to his journalism. There is no reason for the phrase "Live rightly, die, die . . ." to have any less authority than the equally oracular phrase "The horror! The horror!" Kurtz's words up to this point—the moral ideas, the poetry, and the Report—have existed independently of the body, as here we find the purest example of dreamlike disembodied speech. But the embodied speaker stays behind as a crucial corrective to the otherwise seductive language. Phrases which might sound compelling when printed by the newspapers lose their authority when spoken by the dying journalist. This absurd image of hallucinatory speech is meant to linger within the reader's mind as an indictment of the voice of journalism—in this case, the nightmare from which Marlow is trying to awake.

All of which calls into question Marlow's decision to give the press a report he knows to be corrupt. Kurtz, little more than a voice by the time Marlow reaches him, is nonetheless responsible for opinions circulating far beyond the Congo: Marlow's words will reach no further than the *Nellie*, whereas Kurtz's words will potentially reach a mass readership. The media presence in the Belgian Congo is a reminder of the means by which foreign nations are represented to home audiences, many of whom will have no other source of information apart from the newspapers in which Kurtz appears as an authoritative voice. *Heart of Darkness* ends with a press all too eager to preserve for audiences the myth of the remarkable man. Only through Marlow's interview do we meet this "eloquent phantom," after which it is no longer possible to read Kurtz's journalism as the authoritative voice of news. In telling his tale, Marlow prevents Kurtz from disappearing from sight along with his last words, mere whispers in the wind.

Harvard University

NOTES

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¹ Quoted from Henry Stanley, "Dr. Livingstone," *New York Herald* (22 December 1871): 3a.

² James Gordon Bennett, Jr., gave the assignment to Stanley on 28 October 1869. The famous meeting took place on 10 November 1871, though the news did not reach Europe until 2 May 1872, the same year as the publication of Stanley's *How I Found Livingstone* in England and America. Conrad was thirteen years old and living in Cracow, Poland, at the time of Livingstone's discovery. See *Stanley's Despatches to the New York Herald, 1871–1872, 1874–1877*, ed. Norman R. Bennett (Boston: Boston Univ. Press, 1970), for a complete account of Stanley's correspondence from Africa.

³ Joseph Conrad, *Last Essays* (New York: Doubleday & Page, 1926), 14.

⁴ Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination* (Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 1981), 323.

⁵ Conrad, *Chance* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1988), 87.

⁶ See Michael Palmer's discussion of Reuters news agency: "The British Press and International News, 1851–1899: Of Agencies and Newspapers," in *Newspaper History from the Seventeenth Century to the Present Day*, ed. George Boyce, James Curran, and Pauline Wingate (London: Constable, 1978), 205–19.

⁷ Michael Schudson, *Discovering the News: A Social History of American Newspapers* (New York: Basic Books, 1978), 65. Mitchell Stephens argues that reporting begins earlier in the nineteenth century in *A History of News: From the Drum to the Satellite* (New York: Viking, 1988), a disagreement pursued in "Schudson and Stephens Debate: The 'Invention' of News, Other Sundry Matters," *Clio* 29.3 (1997): 7–9.

⁸ Lucy Brown, *Victorian News and Newspapers* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1985), 210–28.

⁹ Two recent examples are Stephen Donovan's "Prosaic Newspaper Stunts: Conrad, Modernity and the Press," in *Conrad at the Millennium: Modernism, Postmodernism, Postcolonialism*, ed. Gail Fincham (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 2002), 53–72; and Peter Nohrnberg's "'I Wish He'd Never Been to School': Stevie, Newspapers and the Reader in *The Secret Agent*," *Conradiana* 35 (2003): 49–61.

¹⁰ "My first English reading was the *Standard* newspaper," Conrad wrote to the Abbé Joseph de Smet on 23 January 1911 (*The Collected Letters of Joseph Conrad*, ed. Laurence Davies and Frederick R. Karl, 6 vols. [Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1988], 4:409).

¹¹ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983), 32–35.

¹² W. G. Sebald, *The Rings of Saturn*, trans. Michael Hulse (New York: New Directions, 1998), 114.

¹³ Conrad, quoted from Norman Sherry, *Conrad's Western World* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1971), 5. See Edward Garnett's introduction to *Letters from Conrad, 1895–1924*, ed. and intro. Garnett (London: The Nonesuch Press, 1928), 15. V. S. Naipaul, "Conrad's Darkness," in *The Return of Eva Peron, with The Killings in Trinidad* (New York: Penguin, 1981), 226.

¹⁴ Conrad, *Notes on Life and Letters* (New York: Doubleday & Page, 1923), 141 ("noxious"), 90 ("large page"; "still uproar").

¹⁵ I am grateful to John Stape for directing me to this phrase in the essay's pamphlet proofs, documented in his forthcoming edition of *Conrad's Notes on Life and Letters* published by Cambridge Univ. Press.

¹⁶ Ernest Hemingway, "Voyage to Victory," in *By-Line: Selected Articles and Dispatches of Four Decades*, ed. William White (London: Grafton Books, 1968), 363.

¹⁷ See the *Standard* (31 January 1905): 5b.

¹⁸ Conrad, *Notes*, 84.

¹⁹ Conrad, *Chance*, 4, 87.

²⁰ Peter Brooks has argued that the readable report disingenuously supplies narrative coherence to a situation characterized by contradiction and ambiguity. See Brooks's *Reading for the Plot: Design and Intention in Narrative* (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1984), 242.

²¹ Conrad, *Under Western Eyes* (London: David Campbell, 1991), 137, 138, 141–42.

²² Elias Canetti, *Crowds and Power*, trans. Carol Stewart (New York: Continuum, 1973), 59. See V. A. C. Gatrell's discussion of press coverage for executions in the nineteenth century: *The Hanging Tree: Execution and the English People 1770–1868* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1994). Conrad, *The Secret Agent* (London: David Campbell, 1992), 245.

²³ Conrad, *The Secret Agent*, 279 ("Suicide"; "impenetrable"), 283 ("brain").

²⁴ The following works discuss Stanley's life and accomplishments: Frank McLynn, *Stanley: The Making of an African Explorer* (London: Constable, 1989); McLynn, *Stanley: Sorcerer's Apprentice* (London: Constable, 1991); and John Bierman, *Dark Safari: The Life Behind the Legend of Henry Morton Stanley* (Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 1990).

²⁵ Karl attributes much of Conrad's interest in Africa to Stanley's "celebrity status" (*Joseph Conrad: The Three Lives—A Biography* [New York: Farrar, Straus, and

Giroux, 1979], 275); Andrea White identifies Conrad's stays in England between 1891 and 1895 as likely times for him to have read discussions of imperial expansion in the papers ("Conrad and Imperialism," *The Cambridge Companion to Joseph Conrad*, ed. Stape [Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1996], 179–202); Gérard Jean-Aubry (*The Sea Dreamer: A Definitive Biography of Joseph Conrad*, trans. Helen Sebba [Hamden, Conn: Archon Books, 1967], 154) and Zdzislaw Najder (*Joseph Conrad: A Chronicle*, trans. Halina Carroll-Najder [New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers Univ. Press, 1983], 117) propose that sensational news coverage of Stanley's Emin Pasha Relief Expedition renewed Conrad's interest in African travel.

²⁶ Stanley is a familiar name in Conrad scholarship. Albert Guérard (*Conrad the Novelist* [Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1958], 34), and Molly Mahood (*The Colonial Encounter: A Reading of Six Novels* [London: Rex Collings, 1977], 4–36), propose Stanley as one model for Kurtz, as does Ian Watt, who points to the founding of the Congo Free State by Leopold and Stanley as a historical model for Conrad's narrative (*Conrad in the Nineteenth Century* [Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1979], 145); Sherry sees Stanley as a model for the managing director in "An Outpost of Progress" (127); Eloise Knapp Hay suggests Stanley's search for Livingstone may have been the basis for the Russian's relationship with Kurtz (*The Political Novels of Joseph Conrad: A Critical Study* [Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1963], 112); Jacques Darras argues that Marlow's quest for Kurtz tells in reverse order the story of *How I Found Livingstone* (*Joseph Conrad and the West: Signs of Empire*, trans. Anne Luyat and Darras [Totowa, NJ: Barnes & Noble Books, 1982], 63–69); and Mary Golanka describes Marlow as a fictional version of Stanley ("Mr. Kurtz, I Presume? Livingstone and Stanley as Prototypes of Kurtz and Marlow," *Studies in the Novel* 17 [1985]: 194–202).

²⁷ For Livingstone's life and history, see Tim Jeal (*Livingstone* [London: Heinemann, 1973]), Meriel Buxton (*David Livingston* [Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001]), and Andrew C. Ross (*David Livingstone: Mission and Empire* [London: Hambledon and London, 2002]).

²⁸ Stanley, *How I Found Livingstone* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, & Rivington, 1890), 51. Hereafter cited parenthetically by page number and abbreviated *L*.

²⁹ See Peter Knox-Shaw, *The Explorer in English Fiction* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1987).

³⁰ Patrick Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism, 1830–1914* (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1988), 180–88.

³¹ Conrad, *Last Essays*, 16.

³² See the descriptions of Livingstone's visual images in *David Livingstone and the Victorian Encounter with Africa* (London: National Portrait Gallery Publications, 1996).

³³ After Livingstone's death followers carried the body to Zanzibar, wrapped in bark and sailcloth and lashed to a pole. The arrival of the body at Southampton, England, was memorialized by a full-page engraving in the *Illustrated London News*, and the famed explorer's death was given over three columns in the *Herald*. Stanley held an honored position as pallbearer at a commemorative ceremony in which Livingstone's remains were installed in Westminster Abbey. See N. R. Bennett, Jeal, and Ross on the press coverage of Livingstone's death.

³⁴ Conrad, *Last Essays*, 17.

³⁵ A press statement for the joint *Herald-Telegraph* expedition (1874–1877) announced Stanley as "the ambassador of two great powers, representing the

journalism of England and America, and in command of an expedition more numerous and better appointed than any that has ever entered Africa" (quoted from N. R. Bennett, xxviii).

³⁶ Felix Driver, *Geography Militant: Cultures of Exploration and Empire* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2001), 132. Guérard and other commentators have pointed out that Livingstone, Pasha, and Kurtz had no intention of being rescued from Africa. For the story of the Emin Pasha expedition, see Iain R. Smith, *The Emin Pasha Relief Expedition, 1886–1890* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), and Tim Youngs, *Travellers in Africa: British Travelogues, 1850–1900* (Manchester: Manchester Univ. Press, 1994).

³⁷ Quoted from N. R. Bennett, xxxvi.

³⁸ See Beau Riffenburgh's discussion of the role of newspapers in creating explorer reputations in *The Myth of the Explorer: The Press, Sensationalism, and Geographical Discovery* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1994), 5.

³⁹ Margaret Beetham discusses "the rescue" of ephemeral print genres like the newspaper. See "Towards a Theory of the Periodical as a Publishing Genre," in *Investigating Victorian Journalism*, ed. Laurel Brake, Aled Jones, and Lionel Madden (London: Macmillan Press, 1990), 25.

⁴⁰ Watt, 145.

⁴¹ See Conrad's letter of 10 April 1902 to Henry-Durand Davray: "*Histoire farouche d'un journaliste qui devient chef de station à l'intérieur et se fait adorer par une tribu de sauvages*" (in *The Collected Letters of Joseph Conrad*, vol. 2, ed. Davies and Karl [Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1988], 407).

⁴² Conrad, *Heart of Darkness: An Authoritative Text, Backgrounds and Sources, Criticism*, ed. Robert Kimbrough, 3rd edition (New York: Norton, 1988), 71. Hereafter cited parenthetically by page number and abbreviated *H*.

⁴³ Frederick Greenwood, "The Newspaper Press. Half a Century's Survey," *Blackwood's Magazine* 161 (1897): 719.

⁴⁴ The phrase belongs to Ivan Kreilkamp ("A Voice Without a Body: The Phonographic Logic of *Heart of Darkness*," *Victorian Studies* 40 [1997]: 211–43).

⁴⁵ See Pierre Bourdieu, *On Television and Journalism*, trans. Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson (London: Pluto Press, 1996), 1.

⁴⁶ Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), 88, 89.

⁴⁷ Discussions of Conrad in the context of Benjamin's essay can be found in Brooks, 238–63; Kreilkamp, 212–14; Edward Said, "Conrad: The Presentation of Narrative," *Novel* 7 (1974): 116–32; and Allon White, *The Uses of Obscurity: The Fiction of Early Modernism* (London: Routledge, 1981), 108–29. Brooks writes, "Kurtz is he who has already turned experience into Benjamin's 'wisdom,' turned story into well-formed narrative plot, matter into pure voice, and who stands ready to narrate life's story in significant form" (246–47).

⁴⁸ Brooks, 238.

⁴⁹ Christopher Miller, *Blank Darkness: Africanist Discourse in French* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1985), 169–83.

⁵⁰ Conrad, "An Outpost of Progress," in *Tales of Unrest*, ed. Anthony Fothergill (London: J. M. Dent, 2000), 73.

⁵¹ Like Kayerts and Carlier, Stanley and Livingstone received newspapers in Unyanyembe: "Our doors were crowded with curious natives, who looked with indescribable wonder at the enormous sheets. I heard them repeat the words,

'Khabari Kisungu'—white man's news—often, and heard them discussing the nature of such a quantity of news" (Stanley, 476). Explorers read about home events as well as about themselves in the newspapers. Livingstone originally became aware of his fame while recovering from illness in Angola, where he transcribed into his diary a *Times* article describing his journey as "one of the greatest geographical explorations of the age" (quoted from *Victorian Encounter*, 35).

⁵² More on the contemporary responses to Stanley's journalism can be found in Driver, who argues: "It was the campaign against Stanley's 'Congo atrocities' in 1890 which marked the turning point in liberal England's attitude towards Leopold's state" (143).

⁵³ The following sources discuss Conrad's relationship with Roger Casement: Jeffrey Meyers, "Conrad and Roger Casement," *Conradiana* 5 (1973): 64–69; Benjamin Reid, *The Lives of Roger Casement* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1976); Hunt Hawkins, "Joseph Conrad, Roger Casement, and the Congo Reform Movement," *Journal of Modern Literature* 9 (1981–1982): 65–80; and Jane Ford, "An African Encounter, A British Traitor and *Heart of Darkness*," *Conradiana* 27 (1995): 123–34. Conrad writes on 13 June 1890 in the "Congo Diary": "Made the acquaintance of Mr. Roger Casement, which I should consider as a great pleasure under any circumstances and now it becomes a positive piece of luck. Thinks, speaks well, most intelligent and very sympathetic" (in *Congo Diary and Other Uncollected Pieces*, ed. Najder [New York: Doubleday, 1978], 7).

⁵⁴ Conrad would write to Dent on 27 March 1917, "But journalists can't speak the truth,—not even see it as other men do. It's a *professional* inability, and that's why I hold journalism for the most demoralizing form of human activity, made up of catch phrases, of mere daily opportunities, of shifting feelings" (in Jean-Aubry, *Joseph Conrad Life and Letters*, vol. 2 [Garden City, NJ: Doubleday, Page, & Co., 1927], 186–87).

⁵⁵ Peter Keating, *The Haunted Study: A Social History of the English Novel, 1875–1914* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1989), 293.

⁵⁶ Greenwood, 714.