CAPITOLO

6

The Heart of Empire: Kipling and Conrad

"The mind of man is capable of anything—because everything is in it, all the past as well as all the future." — Joseph Conrad, Heart of Darkness (1899), part II

OBIETTIVI

1. I can describe the British Empire at its height, from the Indian Rebellion of 1857 to the Scramble for Africa, the Congo Free State and the Boer War, and explain the idea of the "civilising mission" critically.
2. I can present Kipling and Conrad, define literary impressionism and the colonial novel, and explain the structure of *Heart of Darkness*.
3. I can read "The White Man's Burden" and two passages of *Heart of Darkness* critically, and compare Marlow's Romans with Tacitus's Calgacus and with Pascoli's speech of 1911.
4. I can report and cite sources: choose a reporting verb that shows my stance, fit a quotation into my sentence, shorten it with [...] and [ ], and paraphrase without plagiarising.
5. I can discuss a sensitive topic diplomatically, write a museum panel and object labels, and evaluate a source I find online.

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In 1897, for Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, soldiers from India, Canada, Australia, Africa and the Caribbean marched through London. The British Empire was the largest the world had ever seen, and most people in Britain were proud of it. Two writers of the time looked at that empire from very close: Rudyard Kipling, born in India, who sang its duties, and Joseph Conrad, a Polish sailor who had seen the Congo and wrote one of the darkest stories in English about it.

This chapter reads them side by side, and critically. It asks what "civilisation" meant to the people who conquered and to the people who were conquered, and it takes you back to a question you can also ask in Latin: what does an empire look like to those on the other side? On the way you learn how to report and cite what others have written — the basic skill of every essay, every CLIL lesson and every university seminar.

6.1 History and Society: the Empire at its Height

Between the Indian Rebellion of 1857 and the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 the British Empire was at the height of its power (it grew larger still after 1918). It was not one system but many: colonies of white settlers that governed themselves (Canada, Australia, New Zealand), territories ruled directly from London, and states whose local rulers kept their thrones under British "advice". It was held together by the Royal Navy, trade, the City of London — and the idea that Britain had a right, even a duty, to rule. The timeline in Figura 6.1 sets the main events beside the lives and books of Kipling and Conrad.

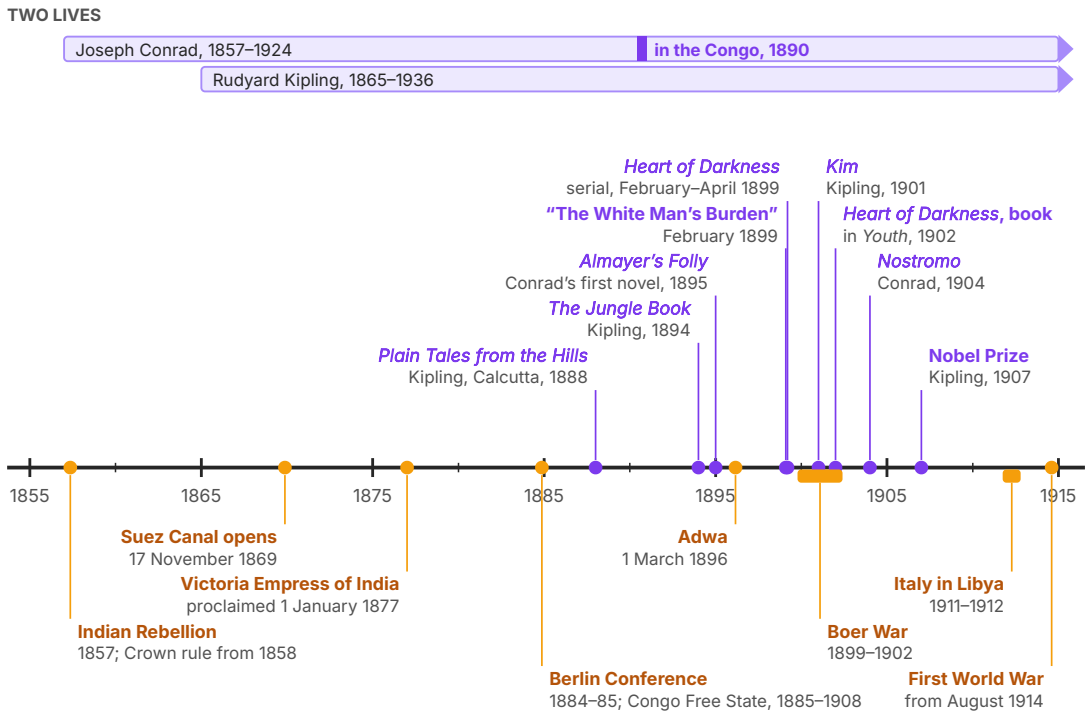


Figura 6.1 The Empire and its writers, 1855–1915, on a proportional axis (ticks every 5 years, labels every 10). Above the axis, violet: books and the writers' lives; below, amber: historical events (bars show periods). Conrad spent about six months of 1890 in the Congo Free State.

6.1.1 India: from the Company to the Crown

Until 1857 most of India was governed not by the British state but by a trading company, the East India Company, with its own army of Indian soldiers, the *sepoys*. In May 1857 sepoys at Meerut, near Delhi, mutinied: among other grievances, a rumour said that the cartridges of their new rifles were greased with cow and pig fat, offensive to both Hindus and Muslims. The rising spread across northern India and was crushed in 1858, with massacres on both sides. The British called it "the Indian Mutiny", many Indian historians the first war of independence; we use the neutral **Indian Rebellion**.

The British government then abolished the Company's rule. From 1858 India was governed by the Crown through a viceroy, the period called the **Raj** (from the Hindi word for "rule"). In 1876 Parliament gave Victoria the title of Empress of India, and she was proclaimed at a great ceremony in Delhi on 1 January 1877. Yet in 1885 educated Indians founded the Indian National Congress: the movement that would end the Raj in 1947 (chapter 12) was born at the very height of empire.

6.1.2 Suez and the Scramble for Africa

The Suez Canal, built by a French company and opened on 17 November 1869, cut the sea route from Britain to India by thousands of kilometres. In 1875 the prime minister Benjamin Disraeli bought the Egyptian ruler's shares in it, and in 1882 British troops occupied Egypt. Egypt remained formally a part of the Ottoman Empire, but Britain controlled it; in December 1914 it became a British **protectorate**, a territory that keeps its own ruler while a foreign power controls its defence and foreign policy.

In 1880 most of Africa was still governed by Africans. By 1914 only Ethiopia and Liberia were independent. This rapid division of a continent by European powers is called the **Scramble for Africa**. To keep it from becoming a European war, the German chancellor Bismarck hosted the **Berlin Conference** (15 November 1884 – 26 February 1885), where fourteen states, Germany included, were represented. No African was present. The conference agreed that a power could claim a coast only if it occupied it "effectively", and that trade and navigation on the Congo and the Niger would be free. The map in Figura 6.2 shows the result.

6.1.3 The Congo Free State

The strangest colony of all belonged to one man. King Leopold II of Belgium had employed the explorer Henry Morton Stanley (1879–1884) to make treaties with Congolese chiefs, and in 1885 the powers recognised the **Congo Free State**, a territory about seventy-five times the size of Belgium, as his personal possession. Leopold promised to end the Arab-Swahili slave trade and to bring "civilisation". In practice the State took most of the land and its products. First the profit came from ivory; then, after John Boyd Dunlop's pneumatic tyre (1888) created a world market for bicycles and later cars, from wild rubber.

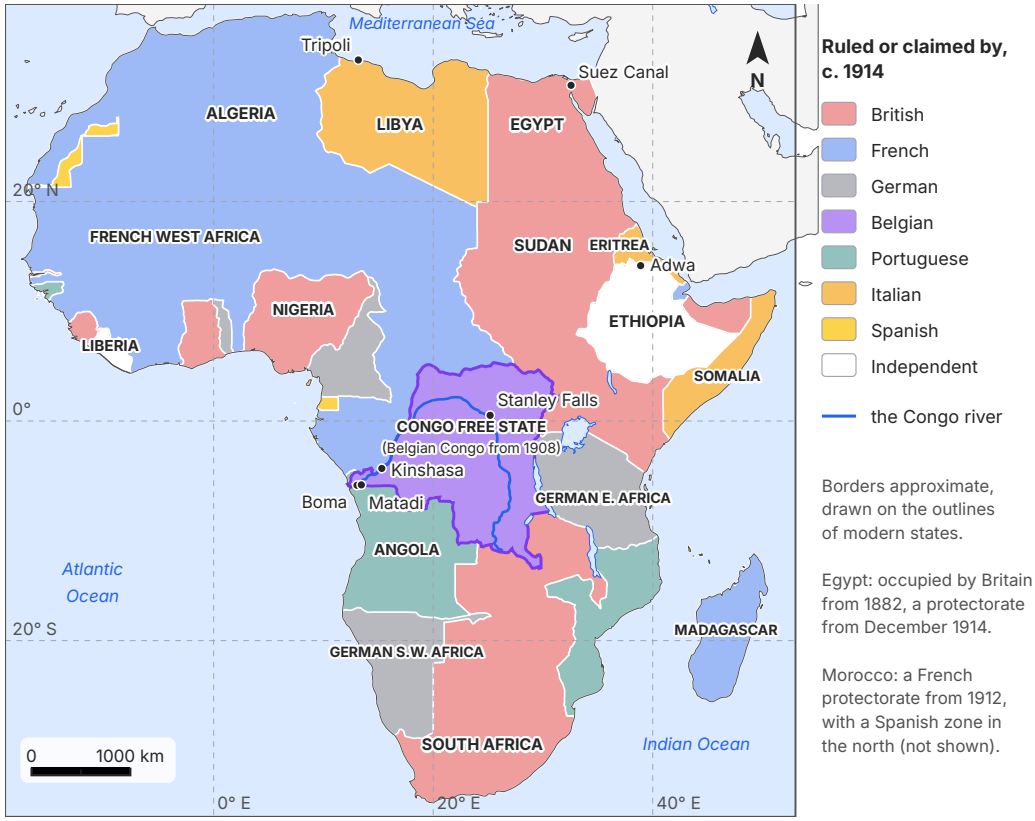


Figura 6.2 Africa c. 1914: the territories ruled or claimed by the European powers, with the Congo river and the places mentioned in this chapter. Colonial borders are approximate and are drawn on the outlines of modern states (Natural Earth data, 1:50 million); Equirectangular projection.

Rubber was collected by **forced labour**: villages had to deliver fixed quantities, and the State's army, the Force Publique, enforced them by taking women as hostages, burning villages and killing. Soldiers had to account for their cartridges, and some cut off the hands of the dead — and sometimes of the living — as proof. These **atrocities** (acts of extreme, deliberate cruelty, especially against civilians) caused a great fall in the population; there was no census, and historians' estimates differ widely. After an international campaign, Belgium took the colony from its king in 1908: the Congo Free State became the **Belgian Congo**.

APPROFONDIMENTO

The first human-rights campaign. In the late 1890s Edmund Dene Morel, a clerk for a Liverpool shipping company, noticed that ships came from the Congo full of rubber and ivory but went back carrying almost nothing except guns and ammunition: the goods were not being bought, but taken. Roger Casement, a British consul who had met Conrad in the Congo in 1890, travelled up the river and wrote a report on the abuses, published in 1904. That year Morel and Casement founded the Congo Reform Association, which used photographs, public meetings and the press. Writers joined them: Mark Twain wrote *King Leopold's Soliloquy* (1905) and Arthur Conan Doyle *The Crime of the Congo* (1909). Historians often see the campaign as a model for modern human-rights movements.

6.1.4 The Boer War (1899–1902)

In southern Africa the British fought white settlers. The Boers (or Afrikaners), farmers mainly of Dutch origin, governed two republics, the Transvaal and the Orange Free State; after gold was found near Johannesburg in 1886, thousands of British miners arrived and Britain pressed for control. The war began in October 1899. The British won the battles, but the Boers went on fighting as guerrillas, and the British army burned farms and moved civilians into camps, which the British themselves called *concentration camps*. Tens of thousands of civilians, Boer and black African, died of disease in them; the reformer Emily Hobhouse made the conditions known in Britain in 1901. Peace came on 31 May 1902, and in 1910 the Union of South Africa was created as a self-governing dominion, ruled by its white minority.

6.1.5 The idea of empire and its critics

Imperialism is the policy of extending a country's power over other peoples and territories, by conquest, settlement or economic control. Its supporters spoke of a **civilising mission**: Europeans, they said, had a duty to bring Christianity, trade, law and "progress" to peoples they considered backward. The idea was sincerely held by many missionaries and officials, but it rested on a belief in racial hierarchy that was presented as science, and it justified taking land, labour and resources. In Britain an aggressive, boastful patriotism was nicknamed *jingoism*, after a music-hall song of 1878.

Empire had critics from the start. Liberals in Parliament attacked its costs and its wars; the economist John A. Hobson argued in *Imperialism: A Study* (1902) that it served a small class of investors rather than the nation; and, above all, the colonised resisted — in India, in Ethiopia at Adwa (1896, Connections), in the Congo and elsewhere.

DA RICORDARE

The Empire at a glance. 1857 Indian Rebellion → 1858 Crown rule (the Raj) → 1869 Suez Canal → 1877 Victoria Empress of India → 1884–85 Berlin Conference → 1885–1908 Congo Free State → 1899–1902 Boer War → 1908 Belgian Congo → 1914 First World War.

ERRORE FREQUENTE

✗ *Conrad visitò il Congo belga nel 1890.* → ✓ *Conrad visitò lo Stato Libero del Congo nel 1890.* Il **Congo belga** nasce solo nel **1908**, quando il Belgio toglie la colonia al suo re. Inoltre *Heart of Darkness* non nomina mai né il Congo né il Belgio: il «fiume» e la «città sepolcrale» restano senza nome, anche se i lettori li riconoscono.

6.2 Literature: Writing the Empire

6.2.1 The colonial novel

As the Empire grew, so did a literature set in it. A **colonial novel** (*romanzo coloniale*) is a novel set in the colonies that reflects — or questions — the colonial point of view: the European is usually the hero or the narrator, and the colonised land is the setting of his adventure or his test. Henry Rider Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines* (1885), a treasure hunt in an imaginary southern Africa, sold in huge numbers; boys' magazines were full of explorers and soldiers. Kipling and Conrad both wrote colonial fiction, but in opposite keys: Kipling from inside the Raj, with love for India and faith in British rule; Conrad as an outsider who saw the colonial enterprise as a moral test that most Europeans failed.

6.2.2 Rudyard Kipling (1865–1936)

Kipling was born in Bombay (today Mumbai), where his father taught at an art school. At five he was sent to England, to a foster home in Southsea that he later remembered as a house of misery; at sixteen he returned to India as a journalist in Lahore. His short stories of British India, *Plain Tales from the Hills* (1888), and his soldiers' poems in Cockney English, *Barrack-Room Ballads* (1892), made him famous. While living in Vermont, in the United States, he wrote *The Jungle Book* (1894), the stories of Mowgli; his finest novel, *Kim* (1901), follows an Irish orphan in Lahore who becomes both the disciple of a Tibetan lama and a spy for the British. In 1907 he became the first writer in English to receive the Nobel Prize in Literature. You met his poem "If —" in English 2 (Unit 4).

Kipling's reputation has always been divided. He knew India's languages and landscapes better than almost any English writer, and he gave a voice to ordinary soldiers. But he also believed in the Empire as a duty of the white "race", and his poems could be openly racist. In 1942

George Orwell, who had served in the Burmese police, called him “a jingo imperialist” — and then asked why, in spite of that, so many of his lines had survived.

> **ERRORE FREQUENTE**
> ✗ *In “The White Man’s Burden” Kipling invita gli inglesi a conquistare l’Africa.* → ✓ *La poesia (febbraio 1899) è rivolta agli **Stati Uniti**, che avevano appena tolto le Filippine alla Spagna: il sottotitolo nella rivista americana era «The United States and the Philippine Islands».* Kipling invita un nuovo impero a prendere su di sé il «fardello» dei vecchi.

6.2.3 Joseph Conrad (1857–1924)

Józef Teodor Konrad Korzeniowski was born in 1857 in Berdychiv, then in the Russian Empire and today in Ukraine, to Polish parents. His father, a poet and translator, was exiled to northern Russia for his part in the Polish national movement; Conrad was an orphan at eleven. At sixteen he left for Marseille and the sea, served on French ships, and at twenty joined the British merchant navy. He became a British subject and a master mariner in 1886. **English was his third language**, after Polish and French, and he learnt it as a young man, among sailors.

In 1890 Conrad went to the Congo Free State to command a river steamer for a Belgian trading company. What he saw there — forced labour, disease, cruelty and greed hidden behind the language of progress — and a serious illness ended his stay after about six months. He left the sea a few years later and settled in England as a writer, from 1898 in Kent: *Almayer’s Folly* (1895), *Lord Jim* (1900), *Nostromo* (1904), *The Secret Agent* (1907). His subjects are the sea, empire and the lonely individual under moral pressure.

6.2.4 *Heart of Darkness* (1899)

Heart of Darkness first appeared in three monthly instalments in *Blackwood’s Magazine* (February–April 1899) and in a book, *Youth*, in 1902. It is a short novel built as a **frame narrative** (English 3): on the yawl *Nellie*, anchored in the Thames at sunset, an unnamed narrator listens with three friends to the sailor Marlow, who tells how he once went up “a mighty big river” in Africa for a trading Company. On the way he hears again and again of Mr Kurtz, the Company’s most successful agent, who collects more ivory than anyone else. When Marlow finally reaches Kurtz’s station, he finds a dying man who has made himself a god among the local people and whose report on the “suppression of savage customs” ends with a scrawled note: “Exterminate all the brutes!” Kurtz dies on the steamer with the words “The horror! The horror!”. Back in Europe, Marlow lies to the woman Kurtz was to marry. Figura 6.3 follows the journey stage by stage.

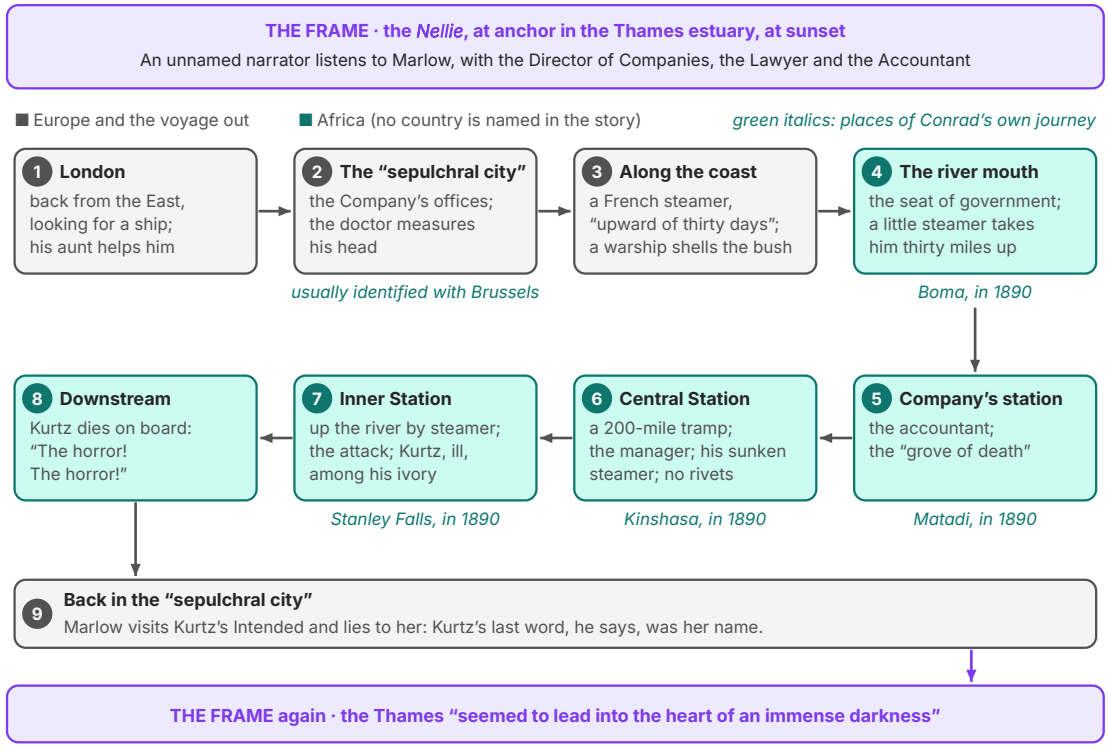


Figura 6.3 The structure of *Heart of Darkness*: Marlow's tale (1–9) inside the frame on the Thames. Names and events as in the story, which names no country; in green italics, the places of Conrad's own journey of 1890 with which the stations are usually identified.

The frame matters. The story begins and ends on the Thames, in the capital of the greatest empire on earth, and Marlow's first words are that this place too "has been one of the dark places of the earth" (Texts, T2). The "darkness" of the title, then, is not simply Africa: it is what Europeans find in themselves when nothing restrains them, and the greed that the word "civilisation" covers.

6.2.5 Literary impressionism

In a preface of 1897 Conrad wrote that his task was, above all, "to make you see". In *Heart of Darkness* events reach us as Marlow perceived them, before he understood them. When his steamer is attacked, he first notices that the man sounding the depth with a pole lies down flat on the deck, then this: "Sticks, little sticks, were flying about"; only after several sentences does he realise: "Arrows, by Jove! We were being shot at!" The critic Ian Watt called this technique **delayed decoding**: an impression is given first, its meaning later. More generally, **literary impressionism** (*impressionismo letterario*) presents events as they are perceived by a mind — fragments

of sight and sound, uncertain and partial — so that meaning comes late and through the senses. The name comes from painting; Conrad's friend and collaborator Ford Madox Ford used it for the method they shared.

Impressionism suits a story about not understanding. Marlow is a narrator who constantly doubts his own words; for him, says the frame narrator, the meaning of a story is not inside it "like a kernel" but outside, "enveloping the tale". Readers must therefore interpret actively — and this is one reason why the book has been read in such different ways.

> **DA RICORDARE**
>
> **Literary impressionism**: perception first, meaning later (delayed decoding), through a narrator who is unsure. **Colonial novel**: a novel set in the colonies that reflects or questions the colonial view. *Heart of Darkness* is both — and questions the view it comes from.

6.2.6 Reading Conrad today

For decades critics read *Heart of Darkness* as a great attack on imperialism. In 1975 the Nigerian novelist Chinua Achebe gave a lecture that changed the debate: he argued that the book, whatever it says about Belgian greed, uses Africa only as a dark background for a European's crisis and denies its African characters a voice and a full humanity. You will read his argument in chapter 12. Many critics now hold both ideas at once: the novella exposes the crimes of empire and also shares some of its prejudices — and the word it uses for Africans would be unacceptable today.

6.3 Texts: the Burden, the River and the Idea

Three views of empire: a poet who urges a nation to rule, a sailor who remembers that his own country was once a conquered province, and the same sailor judging what conquest really is. Read each text twice: for what it says, then for what it takes for granted.

6.3.1 T1 · Rudyard Kipling, "The White Man's Burden" (1899), stanza 1

Context. Kipling wrote the poem after the Spanish–American War of 1898, when the United States took the Philippines from Spain and had to decide whether to rule them. It appeared in February 1899 in Britain and in the American *McClure's Magazine*, while the US Senate was debating the peace treaty; a war between the United States and Filipino independence fighters began that same month. The poem has seven stanzas, all opening with the same line. It was praised by imperialists and parodied at once by their opponents.

Tabella 6.1 T1 — Kipling, "The White Man's Burden", stanza 1. Text of *The Five Nations* (1903), as transcribed by Wikisource, checked against the Internet Modern History Sourcebook (Fordham University).

Take up the White Man's burden—	
Send forth the best ye breed—	
Go bind your sons to exile	
To serve your captives' need;	
To wait in heavy harness,	5
On fluttered folk and wild—	
Your new-caught, sullen peoples,	
Half-devil and half-child.	

Glosses. *ye*: you (plural, archaic) · *breed*: produce and bring up (used of animals) · *bind … to exile*: tie to a life far from home · *captives*: prisoners · *wait on*: serve · *harness*: the straps of a horse that pulls a cart · *fluttered*: nervous, agitated · *new-caught*: just captured · *sullen*: silently resentful.

Analysis

Form. The stanza is a string of commands — *Take up, Send forth, Go bind* — in short lines of three stresses, with rhymes on the even lines only (*breed / need*, *wild / child*): the rhythm of a hymn, and an opening line that returns in every stanza like a slogan.

Language and ideas. The poem turns conquest into service. The colonisers are the ones who suffer: they send their best sons into "exile", they "wait" like servants and wear "heavy harness" like animals of burden. The colonised, meanwhile, appear only as objects of that sacrifice — "captives", "new-caught", "sullen", and finally "Half-devil and half-child": wicked and childish at once, so that they need both discipline and guidance. Notice that the words *captives* and *new-caught* admit what the poem is about: people taken by force. Who, a critical reader asks, really carried the burden?

1. Who is the speaker addressing, and how do you know from the grammar?
2. Find three words or phrases that present ruling as a sacrifice for the rulers.
3. Find two words that admit that the colonised were taken by force. Why are they surprising in this poem?
4. Explain "Half-devil and half-child". What does each half justify?
5. Kipling's title has become an ironic phrase. Write one sentence using it ironically about a modern situation, and one explaining the irony.

6.3.2 T2 · Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* (1899), part I: the Romans on the Thames

Context. The story opens at sunset on the yawl *Nellie*, anchored in the Thames estuary. The frame narrator has just praised the river's glorious history — the ships of Drake and Franklin, the "knights-errant of the sea". Then Marlow speaks for the first time.

Tabella 6.2 T2 — *Heart of Darkness*, part I. Text of Project Gutenberg eBook #219, checked against eBook #526; the four dots after "the other day" are Conrad's, the [...] are ours.

"And this also," said Marlow suddenly, "has been one of the dark places of the earth."
[...]
"I was thinking of very old times, when the Romans first came here, nineteen hundred years ago—the other day .... Light came out of this river since—you say Knights? Yes; but it is like a running blaze on a plain, like a flash of lightning in the clouds. We live in the flicker—may it last as long as the old earth keeps rolling! But darkness was here yesterday. Imagine the feelings of a commander of a fine—what d'ye call 'em?—trireme in the Mediterranean, ordered suddenly to the north; run overland across the Gauls in a hurry; put in charge of one of these craft the legionaries [...] used to build, apparently by the hundred, in a month or two, if we may believe what we read. Imagine him here—the very end of the world, a sea the colour of lead, a sky the colour of smoke, a kind of ship about as rigid as a concertina—and going up this river with stores, or orders, or what you like. Sand-banks, marshes, forests, savages,—precious little to eat fit for a civilized man, nothing but Thames water to drink.

Glosses. *Knights*: the frame narrator has just called English seamen "knights-errant" · *trireme*: an ancient warship with three banks of oars · *the Gauls*: Gaul, roughly modern France · *craft*: boats (the plural is *craft*) · *concertina*: a small accordion, i.e. a boat that bends · *stores*: supplies · *precious little*: very little.

Analysis

A reversal of places. Marlow's first sentence turns the world map upside down. London, "the biggest, and the greatest, town on earth", was once "one of the dark places", and the Roman who came up the Thames saw what a European now sees in Africa: "the very end of the world", a sky "the colour of smoke", marshes, "savages", nothing "fit for a civilized man". The Britons of the first century are the natives here. Civilisation, then, is not a quality of a race but a moment in history: "the other day", "yesterday".

Light and dark. Light comes in flashes — "a running blaze", "a flash of lightning", "the flicker" — while darkness is permanent: for a Victorian audience, an unsettling idea of progress.

Voice. Marlow thinks aloud: dashes, a forgotten word ("what d'ye call 'em?"), doubt ("if we may believe what we read"). We receive a mind at work, not a lecture.

1. Where are the speakers, and what time of day is it? Why might the time of day matter?
2. List the words of light and the words of darkness. Which are more permanent?

3. How does the Roman commander see Britain? Find four details.
4. Why does Marlow say “nineteen hundred years ago—the other day”?
5. The word “savages” appears here about the ancient Britons. How does that change the way you read it in the rest of the story?

6.3.3 T3 · Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*, part I: the idea; part III: the last words

Context. A few lines after T2, Marlow sums up the Romans. Just before this passage he has told his friends “What saves us is efficiency”, implying that the British are different. The second extract comes from part III: Kurtz, dying on Marlow’s steamer on the way downriver, sees something at the very end.

Tabella 6.3 T3 — *Heart of Darkness*, part I and part III. Text of Project Gutenberg eBook #219, checked against eBook #526. Marlow’s whole tale is in quotation marks, so each new paragraph of it opens with ".

Part I
They were no colonists; their administration was merely a squeeze, and nothing more, I suspect. They were conquerors, and for that you want only brute force—nothing to boast of, when you have it, since your strength is just an accident arising from the weakness of others. They grabbed what they could get for the sake of what was to be got. It was just robbery with violence, aggravated murder on a great scale, and men going at it blind —as is very proper for those who tackle a darkness. The conquest of the earth, which mostly means the taking it away from those who have a different complexion or slightly flatter noses than ourselves, is not a pretty thing when you look into it too much. What redeems it is the idea only. An idea at the back of it; not a sentimental pretence but an idea; and an unselfish belief in the idea—something you can set up, and bow down before, and offer a sacrifice to...."
Part III
He cried in a whisper at some image, at some vision—he cried out twice, a cry that was no more than a breath:
"'The horror! The horror!'

Glosses. *colonists*: here, people who settle and develop a land · *squeeze*: extortion, taking money by pressure · *brute force*: pure physical violence · *aggravated*: made worse (a legal word: *aggravated murder*) · *complexion*: skin colour · *redeem*: save, make acceptable · *pretence*: a false show.

Analysis

From the Romans to “us”. Marlow begins by judging the Romans — “robbery with violence, aggravated murder on a great scale” — in the language of an English court. Then the subject widens: “The conquest of the earth” means every empire, including his listeners’. The long subordinate clause defines conquest with brutal plainness: taking the earth from people with “a different complexion or slightly flatter noses than ourselves”. Race is named as the real criterion, and the understatement “not a pretty thing” makes it more shocking, not less.

The idea as an idol. What can "redeem" conquest? Only "the idea" — the civilising mission. But the verbs that follow belong to religion, and to false religion: something you "set up", "bow down before", "offer a sacrifice to". Marlow breaks off; the rest of the story answers him, for Kurtz is the man of the idea, and he ends by worshipping himself.

The last words. "The horror! The horror!" is one of the most discussed phrases in English fiction. Marlow later calls it "a judgment upon the adventures of his soul", but he never says what the horror is: Kurtz's own crimes, the darkness he has found in himself, the whole enterprise, or death. We see the face and hear the whisper; the meaning, in the impressionist way, is left to us.

1. What is the difference, for Marlow, between "colonists" and "conquerors"?
2. Which legal expressions does Marlow use, and why are they effective?
3. Paraphrase the sentence beginning "The conquest of the earth" in your own words.
4. Find the religious language at the end of the first extract. What does it suggest about "the idea"?
5. Give two possible meanings of "The horror! The horror!" and support each with something in T2 or T3.

ESEMPIO SVOLTO

Building a critical paragraph on T1 (Point – Evidence – Explanation), with a source. Task: *How does Kipling present the colonised peoples?*

- **Point.** State your claim in one sentence: *Kipling presents the colonised peoples not as partners but as objects of the colonisers' sacrifice.*
- **Evidence.** Fit a short quotation into your own sentence: *They appear only at the end of the stanza, as "new-caught, sullen peoples, / Half-devil and half-child".* (The slash marks a line break.)
- **Explanation.** Analyse the words: *"New-caught" treats them like animals, and the double label "half-devil and half-child" justifies both punishment and paternal control.*
- **Link to a source.** Report a critic with a verb that shows your stance: *As Orwell pointed out in 1942, Kipling was "a jingo imperialist"; yet the poem also admits, perhaps unintentionally, that these people are "captives".*

Notice the tenses: the present for what the poem does (*presents, appear*), the past for a dated event (*Orwell pointed out in 1942*). The Language section explains why.

LEARNING TO LEARN

Evaluating sources online. For a CLIL project or a colloquio *percorso* you will search the web. Before you use a page, ask five questions:

1. **Who** wrote it? A named historian, a university, a museum, a national archive — or nobody you can identify?
2. **When**? Is the date given, and is the information still current?
3. **For whom**, and **why**? To inform, to sell, to persuade, to entertain? A site run by an interested party (a company, a political group) needs a second source.
4. **With what evidence**? Does it quote documents, give references and say how it knows? Can you check them?
5. **Does a second, independent source agree?** Two sites copying the same mistake are one source, not two.

The same questions apply in Latin and Greek: a text found online may be a school adaptation, or an edition nobody names — check a passage you quote against a printed edition. **Colloquio link:** empire seen from both sides — Conrad's Thames (English), Tacitus's Calgacus (Latin), the Scramble for Africa (history).

6.4 Language: Reporting and Citing Sources

In Sam's seminar essays in Manchester, half the sentences report someone else; so do yours at the colloquio and in a CLIL module. Reporting well means three things: choosing a verb that says **how far you agree**, **fitting the quotation** into your own sentence, and changing nothing without showing it. The grammar of the verbs themselves — *admit* + *-ing*, *urge* + *object* + *to*, *claim* + *that* — you learnt in English 3 (chapter 6); here we add the stance and the punctuation of academic English.

6.4.1 Reporting verbs and stance

A reporting verb is never neutral for long. Compare *Kipling's poem* ***says*** *that empire is a duty*, … ***claims*** *that empire is a duty* and … ***shows*** *that empire was felt as a duty*. The first reports; the second makes you, the writer, distance yourself; the third accepts the content as true. Figura 6.4 arranges the most useful verbs on a scale, and Tabella 6.4 gives their typical patterns.

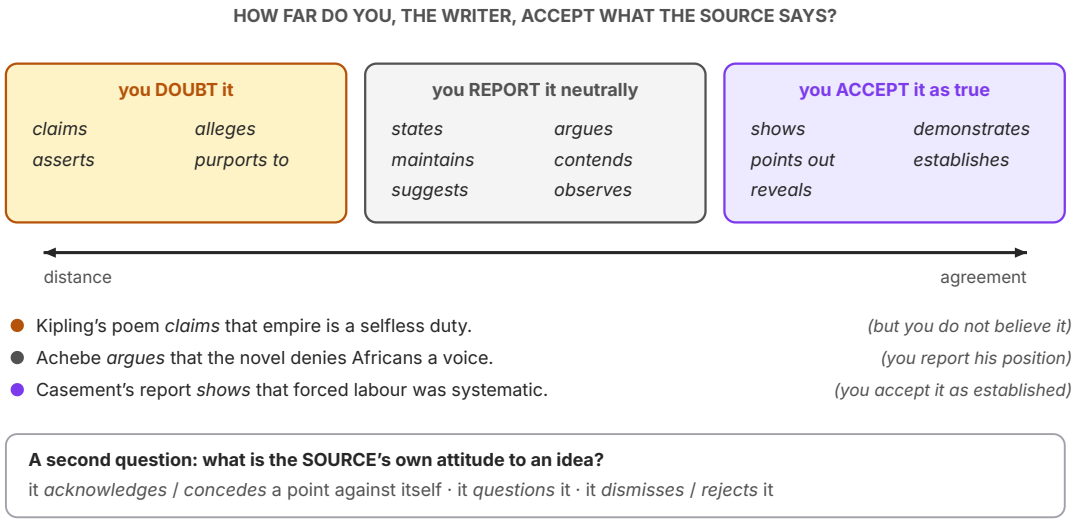


Figura 6.4 Reporting verbs on a scale of the writer's stance, from distance (amber) to agreement (violet), with three examples from this chapter. A second set of verbs reports the stance of the source itself. The groups are typical uses: context can shift a verb.

Tabella 6.4 Reporting verbs: stance and pattern

Verb	What it signals	Example
state, note, observe + *that*	neutral report of a fact or a remark	*Marlow observes that London was once one of the dark places of the earth.*
argue, maintain, contend + *that*	neutral report of a position defended with reasons (*contend*: often against opposition)	*Achebe argues that the novel uses Africa as a backdrop.*
suggest + *that*	a tentative claim (by a person or by evidence)	*The final scene suggests that Marlow cannot tell the truth.*
claim + *that* / + *to*-infinitive; *allege*	the writer keeps a distance or doubts	*Leopold claimed to be fighting the slave trade.*
show, demonstrate, establish, reveal + *that*; *point out that*	the writer accepts the point as true	*Casement's report showed that forced labour was systematic.*
acknowledge, concede + *that*	the source admits a point against its own view	*Even Orwell conceded that Kipling's lines had survived.*
question + noun / *whether*; *dismiss, reject* + noun (*as* …)	the source doubts or refuses an idea	*Achebe dismisses the idea that the novel is simply anti-imperialist.*

Tense. Use the **present** for what a text, an author or a critic says or does (the literary present of chapter 1): *Achebe **argues**..., Marlow **tells**..., the poem **presents**...*. Use the **past** for a dated act: *In 1975 Achebe **gave** a lecture...; In 1942 Orwell **called** Kipling...*. Use the **present perfect** for the history of a debate up to now: *Critics **have** long **admired** Conrad's irony.* And keep author and narrator apart: *Marlow* says that "[t]he conquest of the earth [...] is not a pretty thing"; whether *Conrad* agrees is a question of interpretation.

6.4.2 Fitting a quotation into your sentence

Never drop a quotation into your text without a frame. There are three good ways to integrate it:

1. **A full sentence + colon**, when your sentence is complete without the quotation: *Marlow ends with an image of worship: the idea is "something you can set up, and bow down before".*
2. **Run-in**, when the quotation completes your grammar: *For Marlow the Roman conquest was "robbery with violence".*
3. **A short phrase** inside your own analysis: *The "flicker" of civilisation can go out.*

Short quotations go inside your paragraph between quotation marks; British writers often use single marks ('...'), Americans double ("..."): choose one style and keep it. A quotation of more than about four lines of prose or three of verse is set apart, indented, without quotation marks (a **block quotation**). In verse quoted inside a sentence, a slash marks the end of a line: *"Your new-caught, sullen peoples, / Half-devil and half-child"*.

6.4.3 Changing a quotation honestly: [...], [ ] and [sic]

You may shorten or adapt a quotation, but the reader must see every change. **An ellipsis in square brackets** [...] shows that you have left words out; the square brackets distinguish your cut from the writer's own dots — and Conrad uses many ("the other day ...."). **Square brackets** [ ] also mark words that you add or change to make the quotation clear or grammatical: *"They [the Romans] were no colonists"*; *Marlow insists that "[t]he conquest of the earth [...] is not a pretty thing"*. Finally, ***sic*** (Latin, "thus"), in square brackets after a word, tells the reader that a mistake is in the original, not yours: *"Conrad's novel was published in 1889 [sic]"*. Do not use *[sic]* for old spellings or forms that were correct in their time, such as Kipling's *An hundred*.

IN SINTESI

- **Choose the verb** for your stance: *claims* (distance) · *argues* (neutral) · *shows* (agreement).
- **Choose the tense**: present for texts and critics; past for dated acts; present perfect for the debate so far.
- **Frame every quotation**: colon, run-in, or short phrase. Long quotations go in a block.
- **Show every change**: [...] for a cut, [ ] for an addition, *[sic]* for an error in the source.
- **Give the reference**: author, work and chapter, part or line — and, in a written essay, the edition or the web address with the date you read it.

GRAMMAR IN ITALIANO

Citare le fonti. Il verbo introduttivo dice quanto il parlante è d'accordo: *sostiene / argomenta* = *argues*; *afferma / pretende* (con dubbio) = *claims*; *dimostra / mette in luce* = *shows / points out*; *ammette* = *acknowledges / concedes*; *respinge* = *dismisses / rejects*. In inglese accademico si usa il **presente** per ciò che dice un testo o un critico, anche se è morto da tempo (*Achebe argues*; il *present perfect* per la storia di un dibattito: *critics have argued*); il passato per un fatto datato (*In 1975 Achebe gave a lecture*).

Segni. Le parentesi quadre con i puntini [...] segnalano un taglio come in italiano; le quadre [ ] segnalano un'aggiunta. L'italiano usa spesso le virgolette basse «...», l'inglese le alte "..." o '...'. *Sic* è in corsivo e tra quadre, dopo l'errore citato.

6.4.4 Paraphrase, summary and plagiarism

When you do not need the exact words, you **paraphrase** (English 2): you give the same idea in your own words and structure, and still name the source. **Plagiarism** (*plagio*) is presenting someone else's words or ideas as your own — by copying without quotation marks, or by changing a few words of a source and keeping its structure (sometimes called *patchwriting*). Universities treat it as a serious offence, even when it is accidental. Tabella 6.5 shows the difference on one sentence of T3.

Tabella 6.5 Quotation, patchwriting and paraphrase

	Version
Original	"The conquest of the earth, which mostly means the taking it away from those who have a different complexion or slightly flatter noses than ourselves, is not a pretty thing when you look into it too much." (Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*, part I)
✗ Patchwriting	The conquest of the world, which mainly means taking it from people with a different skin colour or flatter noses than us, is not nice if you look into it too much.
✓ Paraphrase	Marlow admits that empire, examined closely, is an ugly business: it usually consists in seizing land from people simply because they look different from the conquerors (Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*, part I).
✓ Quotation + analysis	Marlow calls conquest "not a pretty thing", an understatement that makes the racial motive he has just named even more disturbing.

ERRORE FREQUENTE

✗ *As Conrad says, "the conquest of the earth is not a pretty thing".* Due errori: la frase è di **Marlow**, il narratore, non necessariamente di Conrad; e la citazione è stata tagliata senza segnalarlo. ✓ *As Marlow says, "[t]he conquest of the earth […] is not a pretty thing".*

✗ *In T2 Marlow imagined a Roman commander who sails up the Thames.* → ✓ *Marlow* ***imagines*** *a Roman commander who* ***sails…***: per ciò che accade nel testo, presente in tutta la frase.

✗ *Leopold claimed fighting the slave trade.* → ✓ *Leopold claimed* ***to be fighting*** */ claimed* ***that he was fighting*** *the slave trade. Claim* regge l'infinito o *that*, mai la forma in *-ing* (in italiano: «sosteneva di combattere»).

6.5 Skills: Objects, Museums and Sensitive Topics

6.5.1 Vocabulary: empire and exploitation

Words for the history of empire and for the museums that still hold its objects.

Tabella 6.6 Empire and exploitation: key words

Word	Meaning	Example
colony; colonial; colonise	a territory ruled by another country; related to it; take control of it	*Eritrea became an Italian colony in 1890.*
empire; imperial	a group of territories ruled by one state or ruler	*The imperial government in London ruled India from 1858.*

conquest; conquer	taking a land or people by force	*Marlow calls conquest "not a pretty thing".*
exploit (v.); exploitation	use people or resources unfairly for profit	*The Free State exploited the labour of whole villages.*
trade (n., v.); trader	buying and selling goods	*Kurtz is the Company's best ivory trader.*
ivory	the hard white material of elephants' tusks	*The Congo trade began with ivory.*
rubber	an elastic material made from the sap (latex) of certain plants	*Wild rubber came from vines in the forest.*
resist; resistance	fight against something; the act of doing so	*Resistance to the rubber tax was punished brutally.*
provenance	the history of an object's owners, from its making to now	*The label admits that the provenance is incomplete.*
restitution	giving back something to its owner, especially by a state or museum	*Several countries have asked for the restitution of objects.*

Word formation: loanwords from the languages of the Empire

Empire brought words into English as well as goods. You met the idea of the **loanword** in English 3 (chapter 2), with Latin and Norse; from the seventeenth century onwards, and above all under British rule in India, hundreds of words came from the languages of Asia and Africa. Some are now so common that no one thinks of their origin.

Tabella 6.7 Loanwords from the languages of the Empire

Word	From	Original meaning
bungalow	Gujarati / Hindi	"(a house) in the Bengal style"
pyjamas	Hindi / Urdu, from Persian	"leg garment": loose trousers
shampoo	Hindi	"press! knead!" — a massage
jungle	Hindi / Urdu, from Sanskrit	"dry, uncultivated land"
thug	Hindi / Urdu	"swindler, robber"
loot	Hindi	"plunder, things taken in war"
khaki	Hindi / Urdu, from Persian	"dust-coloured", the colour of army uniforms
safari	Swahili, from Arabic	"journey"

Meanings change on the way: *jungle* once meant dry land, and *shampoo* was a massage before it was a soap.

6.5.2 Reading: what do you write on a label?

Giulia's PCTO this year is at a museum in Turin. Read her post for the Link Reading Club, then answer the questions below.

Tabella 6.8 Reading text — Giulia's post for the Link Reading Club

What do you write on a label? — Giulia's post for the Link Reading Club
Hi everyone, and especially Sam, who asked me to tell you about my PCTO. This autumn I have spent my Tuesday afternoons at a museum in Turin — I won't name it, because the project isn't public yet — helping the education team prepare a small exhibition in Italian and English. It is called *Objects and Journeys*, and it shows about thirty things that arrived in the museum from Africa and Asia between 1880 and 1914.
On my first day the curator, Dr Bianchi, gave me a wooden box full of index cards. "This is the old catalogue," she said. "Read a few and tell me what's missing." The cards were handwritten in Italian, and they were very short. One said: *Feticcio. Congo. Dono del cav. R., 1903.* That was all. No maker, no village, no date of making, and nothing about how a gentleman from Piedmont had come to own it.
What was missing, I said, was everybody except the donor. Dr Bianchi smiled: that was exactly the point of the project. The object is a carved wooden figure with iron nails driven into its body, made by a Kongo artist. Today museums call such figures by their Kikongo name, *nkisi* (plural *minkisi*), and not "fetish", a word that comes from Portuguese and that Europeans used to make African religion look like superstition.
My job is to draft the English labels, and it is much harder than it sounds. A label has about forty words, and every word is a choice. Should I write that the figure "was collected", "was acquired" or "was taken"? "Collected" sounds like picking flowers. "Taken" may be true, but we don't know: the archive tells us that Mr R. was an officer in the service of the Congo Free State, and nothing more. In the end we wrote: *Brought to Italy in 1903 by an Italian officer of the Congo Free State. How he obtained it is not recorded.* Dr Bianchi says that being honest about what we don't know is part of the label.
The research is the part I like most. It is called provenance research: following an object's history from owner to owner, as far back as the documents go. Last Tuesday I spent two hours with the donor's letters, which the museum keeps in its archive. In one of them he describes the figure to his brother and calls it "a trophy". Dr Bianchi wants to put that word on the panel, in quotation marks, with the date of the letter. "Let the documents speak," she says, "and always say who is speaking."
Some visitors will ask whether these objects should still be in Turin. The museum isn't avoiding the question: in the last room there will be a wall where people can leave their answer on a card. I haven't decided what I'll write yet. Sam says that reading *Heart of Darkness* changed the way he looks at every museum in Manchester; I think thirty labels have done the same for me.
The exhibition opens in March. If any of you are in Turin, I'll be your guide — in English!

1. Why were the old catalogue cards not enough, according to Giulia?
2. Why does the museum avoid the word "fetish"?
3. Why did Giulia reject both "collected" and "taken"? What did the final label do instead?
4. Explain provenance research in your own words, with the example of the letter.

5. **Exchange.** Reply to Giulia's post (80–100 words): suggest one question for the visitors' wall and say why it matters.

6.5.3 Speaking: discussing a sensitive topic diplomatically

Some topics touch people's identity and history. Discussing them well means disagreeing with respect, giving evidence, and showing that you have understood the other view before you answer it — with the hedges of English 4 (chapter 4).

Tabella 6.9 Useful language — discussing a sensitive topic

Function	Phrases
Acknowledging the other view	*I can see why you feel that… · That's a fair point, and… · You're right that…*
Disagreeing politely	*I take a slightly different view. · With respect, I'm not sure that… · I see it rather differently.*
Checking you have understood	*So, if I understand you correctly, you're saying… · Do you mean that…?*
Bringing in evidence	*It's worth bearing in mind that… · As far as I know, … · According to…*
Softening a strong claim	*It could be argued that… · Perhaps we should also consider… · I'd suggest that…*
Finding common ground	*We both seem to agree that… · Where we differ is… · Perhaps the answer lies somewhere between…*

Task 1 (groups of four). Discuss: *Should museums return objects taken in colonial times?* Use these facts, and look for at least one more from a reliable source (Learning to learn): British forces looted thousands of objects, the "Benin Bronzes", from Benin City in present-day Nigeria in 1897; in 2021 France returned twenty-six royal treasures taken from Abomey in 1892 to the Republic of Benin; in 2022 Germany began to transfer ownership of its Benin Bronzes to Nigeria; a law of 1963 limits the British Museum's power to give away objects from its collections; in 2005 Italy returned to Ethiopia the obelisk of Axum, taken to Rome in 1937. Two of you argue for return, two for keeping, then try to agree on one principle.

Task 2 (pairs). Your partner states a view on the question in one minute. Before you answer, summarise it fairly (*So, if I understand you correctly…*) and ask whether you have got it right. Then give your view. Swap roles.

6.5.4 Writing: a museum exhibition text

Visitors read museum texts standing up, in less than a minute. An exhibition has **panels** (an introduction to a room, 100–200 words) and **object labels** (30–50 words). Here is a model for a

room in Giulia's exhibition.

Tabella 6.10 Model text — an exhibition panel and three object labels

FROM THE CONGO TO TURIN
Between 1885 and 1908 the lands around the Congo river were the personal property of King Leopold II of Belgium: the so-called Congo Free State. Officials and traders from many European countries, Italy included, worked there. The State's wealth came first from ivory and then from wild rubber, collected by forced labour and enforced with violence. In these years thousands of objects from the region reached European museums: some were bought, some were given as gifts, many were taken. The objects in this room arrived in Turin between 1898 and 1910. For several of them we do not know how they were obtained, and the labels say so. This room asks two questions: whose stories do these objects tell, and where should they be today?
Power figure (*nkisi*) · Kongo peoples, lower Congo, 19th century · wood, iron nails, glass Used by a ritual specialist to protect, to heal and to seal agreements. Brought to Italy in 1903 by an Italian officer of the Congo Free State. How he obtained it is not recorded.
Carved elephant tusk · Loango coast, about 1890 · ivory A spiral of figures — traders, porters, soldiers — climbs the tusk. Carvers made such tusks to sell to Europeans; this one shows the very trade that was emptying the region of elephants. Bought in 1898 by a Turin merchant.
Page from a trading company's ledger · 1899 · ink on paper Each line records a delivery of rubber, in kilograms, with the name of a village and the "payment": salt, cloth or brass wire. The company, not the collectors, set the prices.

How it works. The **panel** moves from context (who, where, when) to the objects and ends with a question that involves the visitor. Each **label** has a fixed "tombstone" line — name, culture or place, date, material — and then two or three sentences: what the object is or did, and how it reached the museum. The language is neutral and exact: facts are stated plainly, gaps are admitted (*not recorded*), and loaded words are marked (*so-called*, "payment").

- Is every fact checkable, and is every gap admitted?
- Does the panel give context before detail, and end by involving the visitor?
- Does each label start with name, origin, date and material?
- Have you chosen your verbs carefully (*bought, given, taken, brought*)?
- Are quotations attributed and judgements left to the visitor?
- Is the panel 100–200 words and each label 30–50?

Task. Choose a museum or collection you know (in your town, or online) and one object from it with a colonial history, or invent one inside the exhibition above. Write a panel of 150 words and three labels of about 40 words each.

6.6 Connections: Empire in Latin and in Italian

Nineteenth-century empires looked back to Rome. This section reads an Italian poet who saw Italy's conquest as a return of Rome, and a Roman who, like Marlow, told the story from the other side.

6.6.1 Italy in Africa, and Pascoli's "great proletarian"

Italy, united only in 1861, joined the Scramble late. It established the colony of Eritrea on the Red Sea in 1890 and a protectorate in Somalia; then it tried to extend its control over Ethiopia. On 1 March 1896, at **Adwa**, the Ethiopian army of the emperor Menelik II defeated the Italian expeditionary force: it was the most serious defeat of a European army in the colonial wars of the period, and Ethiopia kept its independence. Fifteen years later, on 29 September 1911, Italy declared war on the Ottoman Empire to take Libya; the war ended with the Treaty of Ouchy (18 October 1912), and it saw the first bombs ever dropped from an aeroplane (1 November 1911).

Many Italian writers supported the war. The most surprising voice was that of **Giovanni Pascoli** (1855–1912), the gentle poet of *Myricae* and of "little things", who in his youth had been a socialist and had spent months in prison for it (1879). On 26 November 1911, in the Teatro dei Differenti at Barga, he gave a speech for the dead and wounded of the war. It opens like this:

> *La grande Proletaria si è mossa.*
>
> *[...] Ora l'Italia, la grande martire delle nazioni, dopo soli cinquant'anni ch'ella rivive, si è presentata al suo dovere di contribuire per la sua parte all'umanamento e incivilimento dei popoli [...].*
>
> — Giovanni Pascoli, *La grande proletaria si è mossa* (1911; text of the second edition, Bologna, Zanichelli, as transcribed and proofread by it.wikisource against the scan of that edition). "The great Proletarian has moved. [...] Now Italy, the great martyr among nations, only fifty years after her rebirth, has come forward to her duty to contribute, for her part, to making the peoples more human and more civilised" (translation by the editors).

The two key ideas of Kipling's poem are here: **duty** and the **civilising mission** (*incivilimento*). But Pascoli's nation is not a rich master: it is a "proletarian", a poor nation whose sons had to emigrate to work for others, and who will now find land and work in Africa. The language of socialism is turned into the language of conquest. Pascoli adds the claim that Libya had been Roman — "Anche là è Roma" ("There too is Rome") — the same appeal to the ancient empire that Mussolini's regime would repeat in the 1930s. Kipling speaks for the strongest empire of his time, Pascoli for one of the weakest; both present the taking of other peoples' land as a gift to them.

COLLEGAMENTI

Classico · Tacitus: empire seen from the other side. In the *Agricola* (AD 98), the life of his father-in-law, the governor of Britain, Tacitus gives a speech to Calgacus, a chief of Caledonia (northern Scotland), before the battle of Mons Graupius — a speech you read in Latin this year. You met its most famous words in English 3 (chapter 1); here is more of it:

> *Raptores orbis, postquam cuncta vastantibus defuere terrae, mare scrutantur [...]. Auferre trucidare rapere falsis nominibus imperium, atque ubi solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant.*
>
> — Tacitus, *Agricola* 30 (text of the Latin Library, checked against the Latin Wikisource). "Plunderers of the world, now that the lands have run out for them as they lay everything waste, they search the sea [...]. To steal, to slaughter and to plunder they give the false name of empire; and where they make a desert, they call it peace" (translation by the editors).

Compare Marlow: the Romans "grabbed what they could get"; their conquest was "robbery with violence, aggravated murder on a great scale" (T3). Calgacus speaks from "the very end of the world", the phrase Marlow uses for the Roman commander's Britain (T2); Calgacus himself calls his people the last of lands and of freedom (*terrarum ac libertatis extremos*). In both texts a member of the conquering people lends his voice to an indictment of conquest: Tacitus, a Roman senator, puts it in the mouth of an enemy; Conrad, a Pole who chose Britain, puts it in the mouth of an English sailor who remembers that Britain too was once conquered. Whether Conrad had the *Agricola* in mind is not documented: this is a comparison, not a source.

COLLEGAMENTI

Chemistry · rubber, the polymer behind the Congo terror. Natural rubber is made from *latex*, a milky sap that flows from certain plants when their bark is cut: the Brazilian rubber tree, *Hevea brasiliensis*, and, in the Congo, wild vines that grew in the forest. Chemically it is a **polymer**, a very long molecule made of thousands of repeated small units: here the unit is **isoprene** (C_5H_8), a hydrocarbon with two double bonds, and the polymer is called **polyisoprene**.

Raw rubber's chains are not linked and slide past each other: it is sticky in the heat and brittle in the cold. In 1839 the American Charles Goodyear discovered that heating it with **sulfur** changed it completely (he patented the process in 1844). The process, called **vulcanisation**, forms bridges of sulfur atoms between the chains, as Figura 6.5 shows: the chains can still uncoil when the rubber is stretched, but the cross-links pull them back. Vulcanised rubber is elastic, strong and stable over a wide range of temperatures — perfect for hoses, belts and, after 1888, the pneumatic tyres of bicycles and cars.

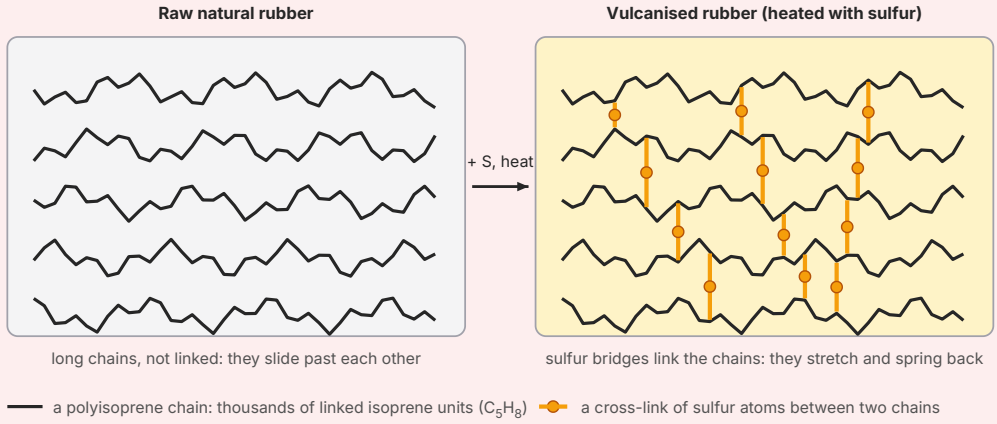


Figura 6.5 Vulcanisation, simplified: polyisoprene chains before (left) and after (right) heating with sulfur, which links them with sulfur bridges (amber). Real chains are much longer, tangled and three-dimensional; the number of cross-links is schematic.

So a discovery in chemistry became a demand for labour in the Congo, until plantations of *Hevea* in Asia produced more cheaply in the 1910s. **Colloquio link:** a material (a tyre, a rubber ball) → chemistry (polymers) → history (the Congo Free State) → English (*Heart of Darkness*).

SINTESI

- Between 1857 and 1914 the British Empire reached its height: after the Indian Rebellion (1857) India passed from the East India Company to the Crown (the Raj, 1858), and Victoria was proclaimed Empress of India on 1 January 1877.
- The Suez Canal (1869) shortened the route to India; Britain bought shares in it (1875) and occupied Egypt (1882).
- In the Scramble for Africa the European powers divided the continent; the Berlin Conference (1884–85) set the rules, with no African present. By 1914 only Ethiopia and Liberia were independent.
- The Congo Free State (1885–1908) was Leopold II's personal possession: ivory and then rubber were extracted by forced labour and atrocities, exposed by Casement and Morel; Belgium annexed it in 1908.
- The Boer War (1899–1902) set Britain against settlers of Dutch origin; tens of thousands of civilians died in British concentration camps.
- Imperialism was justified by the "civilising mission", which rested on a belief in racial hierarchy; critics included Hobson (1902) and, above all, the colonised peoples who resisted.
- A colonial novel is set in the colonies and reflects or questions the colonial view. Kipling (1865–1936), born in Bombay, wrote *The Jungle Book*, *Kim* and "The White Man's Burden" (1899), a poem addressed to the United States.
- Joseph Conrad (1857–1924), a Pole for whom English was a third language, went to the Congo in 1890. *Heart of Darkness* (serial 1899, book 1902) is a frame narrative: Marlow tells his friends on the Thames about his journey to Kurtz.
- Literary impressionism presents events as perceived, so that meaning comes late (delayed decoding); Marlow is an uncertain narrator and the meaning of his tale is left open.
- Texts: Kipling turns conquest into sacrifice; Marlow reminds London that it was once "one of the dark places of the earth" and calls conquest "not a pretty thing", redeemed only by an "idea" described as an idol; Kurtz dies saying "The horror! The horror!".
- Language: choose reporting verbs for stance (*claims* / *argues* / *shows*), use the present for texts and critics, integrate quotations, mark every change with [...], [ ] or *[sic]*, and paraphrase without plagiarising.
- Connections: Pascoli's speech of 1911 speaks the language of duty and *incivilimento* for Italy's war in Libya; Tacitus's Calgacus, like Marlow, judges empire from the conquered side: "where they make a desert, they call it peace".

ESERCIZI

History and Literature

1. ● When did the British Crown take over the government of India from the East India Company?
   - **A.** 1857
   - **B.** 1858
   - **C.** 1869
   - **D.** 1877

2. ● "The White Man's Burden" (1899) was addressed to…
   - **A.** the British soldiers in South Africa
   - **B.** Queen Victoria, for her Diamond Jubilee
   - **C.** the readers of *Blackwood's Magazine*
   - **D.** the United States, which had just taken the Philippines

3. ● Which statement about Joseph Conrad is true?
   - **A.** English was his third language, after Polish and French.
   - **B.** He was born in London to Polish parents.
   - **C.** He worked in the Congo as a trader for ten years.
   - **D.** He wrote *Heart of Darkness* in Polish and then translated it.

4. ● Which of these is NOT true of the Berlin Conference (1884–1885)?
   - **A.** It was called by the German chancellor Bismarck.
   - **B.** No African was present.
   - **C.** It gave Libya to Italy.
   - **D.** It declared trade on the Congo free.

5. ●● True or false? Correct the false statements. a The Indian Rebellion began in 1857 at Meerut. b Victoria was proclaimed Empress of India at the opening of the Suez Canal. c From 1885 the Congo Free State belonged to the Belgian state. d In the Boer War Britain fought settlers of Dutch origin. e Kipling was the first writer in English to receive the Nobel Prize in Literature. f *Heart of Darkness* was first published as a book in 1899. g *Heart of Darkness* names the Congo several times.

6. ●● Match each work with its author and its date. Works: *King Solomon's Mines* · *The Jungle Book* · *Almayer's Folly* · *Heart of Darkness* (book) · *Kim* · *Imperialism: A Study*. Authors: Conrad (×2) · Haggard · Hobson · Kipling (×2). Dates: 1885 · 1894 · 1895 · 1901 · 1902 · 1902.

7. ●● In 50–80 words each, explain: a what literary impressionism is, using the example of the arrows in *Heart of Darkness*; b what a colonial novel is, and why *Heart of Darkness* both is one and questions the genre.

Text Analysis

8. ● In T1, the colonisers are presented above all as…

   A. masters who enjoy their power

   B. servants who sacrifice themselves

   C. merchants who make a profit

   D. explorers in search of adventure

9. ●● T1. Name the device and explain its effect: a “Take up … / Send forth … / Go bind …” b “Half-devil and half-child” c “To serve your captives’ need” d “To wait in heavy harness”.

10. ● T2. a Who speaks the first sentence, and where is he? b Which period of history is he thinking of? c List three hardships of the Roman commander. d Which word does Marlow use for the inhabitants of Britain, and from whose point of view?

11. ●● T3. Paraphrase in your own words: a “their administration was merely a squeeze” b “your strength is just an accident arising from the weakness of others” c “What redeems it is the idea only.”

12. ●● Write a PEE paragraph (100–120 words): how do T1 and T3 present the purpose of empire? Use one short quotation from each and at least one reporting verb that shows your stance.

13. ●●● “The horror! The horror!” In about 80 words, give two possible readings of Kurtz’s last words and say which you find more convincing, with evidence from the chapter.

14. ●● **Colloquio link.** In 60–80 words, connect T2 with a Latin text you read this year.

Language

15. ● Complete with *acknowledge, argue, claim, dismiss, point out, show*, each once, in the correct form. a Casement’s report _____ that villages were punished for missing their rubber quotas. b In the 1880s Leopold _____ that his State was fighting the slave trade, but the evidence says otherwise. c Achebe _____ that the novel denies its African characters a voice. d Orwell _____ the charge that Kipling was a Fascist. e Even Kipling’s admirers _____ that some of his poems are openly racist. f The frame narrator _____ that for Marlow the meaning of a story lies outside it.

16. ● Correct the tense where necessary (one sentence is correct). a In *Heart of Darkness* Marlow travelled up a great river. b Achebe gives his famous lecture in 1975. c Critics debate the novel ever since 1975. d Kipling wrote the poem in 1899. e In T3 Marlow called conquest “not a pretty thing”.

17. ●● Integrate each quotation into a sentence of your own, using a different method each time (full sentence + colon, run-in, short phrase). a T2: “a sea the colour of lead, a sky the colour of smoke” b T1: “Your new-caught, sullen peoples” c T3: “an unselfish belief in the idea”.

18. ●● Adapt the quotations with [...] and [ ]. a Quote only the subject and the main verb phrase of: "The conquest of the earth, which mostly means the taking it away from those who have a different complexion or slightly flatter noses than ourselves, is not a pretty thing when you look into it too much." b Make clear who "they" are in: "They grabbed what they could get for the sake of what was to be got." c Begin your own sentence with *Marlow notes that* and quote "What redeems it is the idea only."

19. ●● Correct the mistakes. a ✗ Leopold claimed fighting the slave trade. b ✗ Achebe argues the novel that it is racist. c ✗ As Conrad says in T3, "conquerors want only brute force". d ✗ The critic suggested us to reread the ending. e ✗ Kipling writes "An hundred [sic] times made plain". f ✗ The report points that forced labour was systematic.

20. ●● Read the source sentence and the three versions. Which is plagiarism, which is a correct paraphrase and which is a correct quotation? Explain. *Source (a historian):* "Between 1885 and 1908 the Congo Free State extracted ivory and rubber through a system of forced labour enforced by violence." A From 1885 to 1908 the Congo Free State took out ivory and rubber by a system of forced work enforced by violence. B Leopold's colony made its profits by compelling Congolese villagers to gather rubber and ivory, and punished them brutally when they failed (historian's name, page). C As one historian puts it, the State "extracted ivory and rubber through a system of forced labour" (name, page).

21. ●● Write one sentence for each prompt, using the verb and pattern given. a *claim* + *to*-infinitive: the Company / bring civilisation to the river b *concede that*: Orwell / many of Kipling's lines have survived c *question whether*: many readers / the novel / be truly anti-imperialist d *point out that*: Marlow / the Thames / once one of the dark places of the earth.

22. ●●● Translate into English. a Achebe sostiene che il romanzo usa l'Africa come semplice sfondo. b Nel 1904 il rapporto di Casement dimostrò che il lavoro forzato era sistematico. c Marlow ammette che la conquista della terra «non è una bella cosa»; resta da capire se Conrad sia d'accordo.

23. ●●● Rewrite this weak paragraph in 80–100 words, with precise reporting verbs, integrated quotations and references: *Kipling says empire is good. "Take up the White Man's burden." He says the colonised are bad. Conrad says the opposite. "Not a pretty thing."*

Vocabulary

24. ● Complete with words from Tabella 6.6, in the correct form. a The Free State _____ the labour of whole villages. b Before rubber, the Company's wealth came from _____ . c Museums are researching the _____ of objects acquired in colonial times. d Ethiopia's _____ at Adwa kept the country independent. e Several African states have asked for the _____ of objects taken by European armies. f The Roman _____ of Britain began in AD 43.

25. ●● Loanwords. Match each word with its original meaning, then write three sentences about the Empire using three of the words. Words: *bungalow, jungle, khaki, loot, safari, shampoo*. Meanings: a "journey" b "dust-coloured" c "dry, uncultivated land" d "press! knead!" e "in the Bengal style" f "plunder".

26. ●● Collocations. Match the verbs with the nouns, then use four pairs in sentences about this chapter. Verbs: *abolish, exploit, grant, impose, resist, seize*. Nouns: *independence, land, occupation, resources, a tax, the slave trade*.

Writing and Speaking

27. ●● **Writing.** Your school is preparing a small exhibition, *Empire in Words*, with first editions of Kipling and Conrad borrowed from a library. Write the introductory panel (150 words) and labels (about 40 words each) for three items: *The Jungle Book* (1894), *Blackwood's Magazine* of February 1899, and a newspaper page printing "The White Man's Burden". Follow the checklist in the Skills section.

28. ●● **Speaking.** In two minutes, answer the question *Should museums return objects taken in colonial times?* Acknowledge the other view, give at least two pieces of evidence and propose a principle. Use at least four phrases from Tabella 6.9.

Towards the Exam

A shortcut through the desert. Before 1869, a ship sailing from London to Bombay had to go all the way round Africa, past the Cape of Good Hope. The Suez Canal, cut through the narrow strip of desert between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, saved thousands of kilometres and several weeks. It was the dream of a French diplomat, Ferdinand de Lesseps, and it was dug by a French company with French and Egyptian money. In the early years most of the digging was done by tens of thousands of Egyptian peasants, forced to work in turns; later, steam dredgers and paid workers took their place. The canal opened on 17 November 1869 with fireworks, banquets and a procession of ships led by the yacht of the French empress. A popular story says that Verdi wrote *Aida* for the opening; in fact the opera was commissioned for Cairo's new opera house and first performed there two years later, in December 1871. Britain had at first opposed the project, fearing French influence on the route to India. But in 1875, when the Egyptian ruler needed money, the British government bought his shares, and seven years later British troops occupied Egypt. A French dream had become a British highway.

29. ●● **Reading (multiple choice, inspired by INVALSI formats).** Read the text above and choose A, B, C or D. 1 The canal was important because it… A shortened the route between Britain and India. B was the first canal in Africa. C was built by the British government. D allowed ships to avoid the Mediterranean. 2 In the early years the digging was done mostly by… A steam dredgers. B British engineers. C Egyptian peasants forced to work. D French soldiers. 3 According to the text, *Aida*… A was performed at the opening of the canal. B was written by de Lesseps. C was never performed in Egypt. D was first performed in Cairo in 1871. 4 Britain's attitude to the canal… A was enthusiastic from the start. B changed from opposition to control. C did not matter to the project. D remained hostile until 1882. 5 The last sentence suggests that… A France lost control of a route it had created. B Britain built a highway in Egypt. C de Lesseps's dream failed. D the canal was closed to French ships.

30. ●● **Open cloze.** Write one word in each gap. Conrad was born in 1857 (1) _____ Polish parents in a town that was then part of the Russian Empire. He lost both his parents (2) _____ he was a child, and at sixteen he left for Marseille, (3) _____ he joined French ships. Later he served on British ships and became a British subject in 1886. In 1890 he went to Africa to command a river steamer, an experience (4) _____ inspired *Heart of Darkness*. He had (5) _____ leave after about six months because of illness. Although English was not his first language, he became one (6) _____ the greatest novelists who have ever written in it. Critics have argued about his view of Africa (7) _____ since Chinua Achebe's lecture of 1975, and the debate is far (8) _____ over.

31. ●● **Key-word transformations.** Complete the second sentence so that it means the same as the first, using the word in capitals and two to five words. a People say that Leopold's agents cut off hands. SAID — Leopold's agents _____ off hands. b Achebe's view is that the novel is racist. ARGUES — Achebe _____ racist. c "All right, the poem is racist," the critic admitted. CONCEDED — The critic _____ racist. d Leopold said that he was fighting the slave trade. CLAIMED — Leopold _____ the slave trade. e The report made it clear that forced labour was systematic. POINTED — The report _____ forced labour was systematic.

32. ●●● **Colloquio prompt.** The commission gives you this material: *"ubi solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant"* (Tacitus, *Agricola* 30). In two to three minutes: a translate and explain it; b link it to an English text of this chapter; c link it to one historical event between 1857 and 1914; d link it to a third subject (Italian, philosophy or history of art).

PER APPROFONDIRE

- [NOR] S. Greenblatt (ed.), *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, vol. E: the introduction to the Victorian age and the selections from Kipling; vol. F: *Heart of Darkness*.
- [SAN] A. Sanders, *The Short Oxford History of English Literature*: the pages on Kipling and on Conrad.
- [ASH] B. Ashcroft, G. Griffiths, H. Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back*: the introduction, for the questions you will meet again in chapter 12.
- [ABR] M. H. Abrams, G. G. Harpham, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*: the entries on point of view, the narrator and postcolonial studies.
- [SWA] M. Swan, *Practical English Usage*: the entries on indirect speech and on punctuation (quotation marks, brackets, dots).
- [CRY] D. Crystal, *English as a Global Language*: the chapter on the historical spread of English, including the colonial period.

Glossario del capitolo

Atrocity
atrocità — an act of extreme, deliberate cruelty, especially against civilians.

Block quotation
citazione in blocco — a long quotation set apart from the text, indented, without quotation marks.

Civilising mission
missione civilizzatrice — the claim that colonisers had a duty to bring their religion, law and "progress" to peoples they considered backward.

Colonial novel
romanzo coloniale — a novel set in the colonies that reflects or questions the colonial point of view.

Delayed decoding
decodifica ritardata — Ian Watt's term for Conrad's technique of giving an impression first and its meaning later.

Forced labour
lavoro forzato — work that people are compelled to do under threat of punishment.

Imperialism
imperialismo — the policy of extending a country's power over other peoples and territories, by conquest, settlement or economic control.

Literary impressionism
impressionismo letterario — the presentation of events as they are perceived by a mind, so that meaning comes late and through the senses.

Plagiarism
plagio — presenting someone else's words or ideas as your own.

Protectorate
protettorato — a territory that keeps its own ruler while a foreign power controls its defence and foreign policy.

Provenance
provenienza (storia della proprietà) — the history of an object's owners, from its making to now.

Restitution
restituzione — giving something back to its owner, especially an object returned by a museum or a state.

Scramble for Africa
corsa all'Africa (spartizione dell'Africa) — the rapid division of Africa among European powers, c. 1880–1914.

Sic
sic (così) — Latin "thus": placed in square brackets after a word to show that a mistake is in the original.

Square brackets
parentesi quadre — the signs [ ], used in a quotation to mark words added or changed by the writer who quotes.

The Raj
il Raj (dominio britannico in India) — British rule over India, from 1858 to 1947.

Vulcanisation
vulcanizzazione — heating rubber with sulfur, which links its chains and makes it elastic and stable.

Soluzioni

1. B (Government of India Act, 1858; the Rebellion began in 1857).

2. D (its American subtitle was "The United States and the Philippine Islands").

3. A.

4. C (Italy took Libya from the Ottoman Empire in 1911–1912).

5. a T. b F: he was proclaimed in Delhi on 1 January 1877 (the canal opened in 1869). c F: it was Leopold II's personal possession; Belgium annexed it in 1908. d T. e T (1907). f F: it was a serial in *Blackwood's Magazine* in 1899 and a book (in *Youth*) in 1902. g F: the story names no country; the river and the city have no names.

6. *King Solomon's Mines* — Haggard, 1885; *The Jungle Book* — Kipling, 1894; *Almayer's Folly* — Conrad, 1895; *Kim* — Kipling, 1901; *Heart of Darkness* (book) — Conrad, 1902; *Imperialism: A Study* — Hobson, 1902.

7. Traccia. a Literary impressionism presents events as a mind perceives them, so that meaning arrives later. When Marlow's steamer is attacked he first sees his poleman lie down and "little sticks" flying; only afterwards does he understand that they are arrows. Watt called this "delayed decoding": the reader shares the confusion of the moment. b A colonial novel is set in the colonies and reflects or questions the colonial view. *Heart of Darkness* has the typical journey of a European into Africa, but it shows the Company's greed and the hypocrisy of the "idea", and its frame makes London itself "one of the dark places"; critics after Achebe add that it still sees Africa only from outside.

8. B.

9. a Parallel imperatives (a series of commands; the opening line itself returns in every stanza, as anaphora): a call to action, like a slogan or a hymn. b Antithesis (a two-part label): the colonised need both punishment (devil) and guidance (child), which justifies rule. c Paradox: the rulers "serve" their prisoners; conquest is presented as service. d Metaphor: the colonisers are like draught animals pulling a cart — ruling is hard, humble work.

10. a Marlow, on the yawl *Nellie*, anchored in the Thames estuary at sunset. b The Roman conquest of Britain, "nineteen hundred years ago". c Any three: a sudden posting to the north; a hurried journey overland across Gaul; a fragile boat; a sea "the colour of lead" and a sky "the colour of smoke"; sandbanks, marshes and forests; "savages"; very little to eat; only Thames water to drink. d "savages", from the point of view of the Roman commander — the same word Europeans used for Africans.

11. Model answers. a The Romans did not build or govern; they simply forced money and goods out of the people. b Conquerors are not superior: they win only because the people they attack happen to be weaker. c The only thing that can justify conquest is the ideal that lies behind it.

12. Model answer. *Both texts claim that empire has a higher purpose, but they judge that purpose very differently. Kipling presents empire as selfless service: the coloniser must "serve your captives' need", and the poem asks the reader to accept the sacrifice as noble. Marlow, by contrast, calls the Roman conquest "robbery with violence" and admits that only "the idea" can redeem conquest. Yet the religious verbs he uses — the idea is something to "bow down before" — suggest that the idea itself is an idol. Where Kipling believes, Conrad's narrator exposes the belief.*

13. Traccia. Reading 1: a moral judgement on himself — Kurtz sees the crimes he has committed and the darkness he found in his own heart (Marlow calls it "a judgment upon the adventures of his soul"). Reading 2: a vision of the whole colonial en-

terprise, or of the emptiness behind the "idea", which Marlow's T3 already describes as an idol. Other readings (fear of death) are possible; the text keeps the meaning open, as the impressionist method requires. Any reading supported by evidence is acceptable.

14. Model answer. *In T2 Marlow imagines Roman Britain from the conquerors' side: a land at "the very end of the world", inhabited by "savages". In the* Agricola *Tacitus does the opposite: he lets the Caledonian chief Calgacus speak from the other side and call the Romans "raptores orbis" who make a desert and call it peace. Both texts use the Roman conquest of Britain to question empire, and in both a member of the conquering people lends his voice to the conquered.*

15. a showed (or shows) b claimed c argues d dismissed (or dismisses) e acknowledge f points out. (In a and f, *pointed out* / *shows* could also be swapped in.)

16. a travels b gave c have debated (or have been debating) d correct e calls.

17. Model answers. a (colon) *The Roman commander finds a grey, hostile world: "a sea the colour of lead, a sky the colour of smoke".* b (run-in) *Kipling calls the Filipinos "Your new-caught, sullen peoples", as if they were animals just captured.* c (short phrase) *Marlow's "unselfish belief in the idea" sounds noble until it becomes worship.*

18. a "The conquest of the earth [...] is not a pretty thing". b "They [the Romans] grabbed what they could get for the sake of what was to be got." c Marlow notes that "[w]hat redeems it is the idea only." (or: Marlow notes that only "the idea" redeems it).

19. a Leopold claimed to be fighting / claimed that he was fighting the slave trade. b Achebe argues that the novel is racist. c As Marlow says in T3, conquerors need "only brute force" (the words are the narrator's, and the quotation must be exact: "for that you want only brute force"). d The critic suggested that we (should) reread the ending / suggested rereading the ending. e Kipling writes "An hundred times made plain" — no *[sic]*: *an hundred* is an old form, not a mistake. f The report points out that forced labour was systematic.

20. A is plagiarism (patchwriting): it keeps the structure and most of the words, changes a few, and gives no source. B is a correct paraphrase: new words, new structure, source named. C is a correct quotation: exact words in quotation marks, with the source.

21. Model answers. a The Company claimed to be bringing civilisation to the river. b Orwell conceded that many of Kipling's lines have survived. c Many readers question whether the novel is truly anti-imperialist. d Marlow points out that the Thames was once one of the dark places of the earth.

22. a Achebe argues that the novel uses Africa as a mere background. b In 1904 Casement's report showed that forced labour was systematic. c Marlow admits that the conquest of the earth "is not a pretty thing"; whether Conrad agrees remains to be seen / is still an open question.

23. Model answer. *Kipling and Conrad give opposite pictures of empire. In "The White Man's Burden" (1899) Kipling presents rule over others as a selfless duty and urges the reader to "Take up the White Man's burden", while he describes the colonised as "Half-devil and half-child" (T1, l. 8). Conrad's narrator Marlow, by contrast, calls the Roman conquest "robbery with violence" and admits that it "is not a pretty thing when you look into it too much" (*Heart of Darkness*, part I). Where Kipling asserts, Marlow exposes.*

24. a exploited b ivory c provenance d resistance e restitution f conquest.

25. bungalow e; jungle c; khaki b; loot f; safari a; shampoo d. Sentences: free answers (e.g. *British troops wore khaki uniforms in the Boer War.*).

26. abolish the slave trade; exploit resources; grant independence; impose a tax; resist occupation; seize land (other pairs, e.g. *exploit land*, *resist a tax*, are acceptable if the sentence makes sense). Sentences: free answers (e.g. *The Free State imposed a rubber tax on every village.*).

27. Traccia. Panel: context (Kipling and Conrad, the Empire 1880–1910), the items, a closing question for the visitor (e.g. *Can a book be both great and wrong?*). Labels: tombstone line (title, author, place and date

of publication, material) + two or three neutral sentences (what it is, why it matters, how it reached the library). Check the facts (dates: 1894; February 1899; the poem in February 1899) and the word count.

28. Model answer (outline). *I can see why many people feel that museums should keep their collections: they are open to everyone and protect fragile objects. With respect, though, I take a slightly different view. It's worth bearing in mind that many objects were taken by force — the Benin Bronzes in 1897, for example. And returns are possible: France returned twenty-six treasures to Benin in 2021, and Italy returned the obelisk of Axum to Ethiopia in 2005. Perhaps the answer lies in a principle: where an object was taken by force and its community asks for it, it should go back; other cases can be shared through loans.*

29. 1 A 2 C 3 D 4 B 5 A.

30. 1 to 2 when / while 3 where 4 which / that 5 to 6 of 7 ever 8 from.

31. a are said to have cut b argues (that) the novel is c conceded (that) the poem was (is) d claimed to be fighting / claimed (that) he was fighting e pointed out that.

32. Model answer (outline). a "Where they make a desert, they call it peace": words that Tacitus gives to Calgacus, a Caledonian chief, before Mons Graupius; a Roman senator criticises Roman conquest through an enemy's voice. b Marlow in *Heart of Darkness* (T2–T3): Roman Britain as "one of the dark places of the earth"; conquest as "robbery with violence", justified by an "idea". c The Congo Free State (1885–1908): the language of civilisation hid forced labour and depopulation. d Italian: Pascoli's speech of 1911 and its appeal to Rome; or philosophy: the critique of ideology (an idea that hides interests); or art: the objects taken to European museums.