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**The Operation of Discourse as a Motive for Critical
Practice: A Bakhtinian Perspective**

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SUMMARY

This thesis offers a Bakhtinian perspective on the operation of discourse in critical practice. Bakhtin's account of the individual's relation to language provides the basis for an examination of the ways in which discourse operates as a constraint upon and motive for acts of interpretation. In this my thesis breaks with the dominant use of Bakhtinian theory in which it is deployed as a means of analysing the operation of discourse in literary texts.

In what follows I begin with an account of Bakhtin's sociolinguistics. Having established the theoretical framework for my analysis I move on to characterise the discourses of the heteroglossia in Britain in the period 1900 to 1930. For ease of analysis my account is divided into two sections. In the first of these the discourses operating at the societal level are discussed whilst the second section is concerned with the discourses which operated in literary critical circles at this time.

In the third section of this work I offer an intermediate synthesis via an analysis of the operation of the discourses identified in preceding section in the practice of leading literary critics from this era. This section also enables me to offer a fuller account of the various discourses informing critical practice at this time.

In the fourth section I examine the criticism generated by Joseph Conrad's Heart of Darkness in the period 1899 to 1930 and offer a detailed account of the ways in which the discourses identified in previous sections operate as constraints upon the act of criticism. More general works on Conrad from this period are also analysed.

In my Conclusion I step back from the minutiae of critical practice and offer an account of some of the problems associated with adopting a Bakhtinian perspective on the processes of criticism. I end with a brief statement of the value of Bakhtinian theory as a basis for critical practice.

INTRODUCTION: MIKHAIL BAKHTIN AND THE ANALYSIS OF DISCOURSE

In this work I offer an account of the implications of Mikhail Bakhtin's socio-linguistics for literary critical practice. My concerns here derive from an interest in the concept of intertextuality, as presented in the work of Bakhtin, Roland Barthes, Julia Kristeva and Michael Riffaterre, and in part the present work is an attempt to develop a theory of and a practice for an intertextual criticism. 1 In the course of my research I have worked most closely with concepts drawn from Bakhtin's socio-linguistics but have found it useful to supplement this material with ideas derived from Voloshinov and from the work of linguists like Halliday.2 In assessing the interrelation between cultural artefacts and the society which produces them I have found the work of Michel Foucault, and Raymond Williams particularly stimulating. 3

In what follows I begin with a discussion of the ways in which Bakhtin's theoretical work facilitates discussion of the operation of discourse as a motive for critical practice. Having presented my understanding of Bakhtinian theory I move on to explain how his work, and that of associated theorists, can provide the basis for the intertextual mode of criticism which this thesis attempts to practice. This section falls into two

parts, in the first I establish a broad overview on the nature of this mode and then move on to suggest the ways in which my theory is supported by the work of Bakhtin. I conclude with a brief account of the motivation of my own practice in this piece of writing.

i. BAKHTIN'S PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE

For the purposes of the present work I intend to restrict myself to Bakhtin's articulation of the individual's complex relations with the discourses - qua ideological belief systems - of society. It is in his work on this topic that Bakhtin provides a theoretical basis for an analysis of the ways in which an individual's beliefs and values can come to act as constraints on the act of interpretation and as motives for particular actualizations. Bakhtin's published writings, coupled with those works produced by his associates, represent a major intellectual achievement; as Michael Holquist notes, 'his writings encompass linguistics, psychoanalysis, theology, social theory, historical poetics, axiology and philosophy of the person' (Mikhail Bakhtin, Preface, pp.vii-xi (p.vii)).⁴ Following Holquist, Todorov and Kristeva, I want to argue that it is Bakhtin's philosophy of language which links all these areas of concern and that any practice

which claims to be Bakhtinian must fully embrace his version of the individual's relation to and location in language. 5

Bakhtin breaks down the national language of a particular society into a complex of diverse communication systems each of which enables the articulation of a particular ideology. It is important to note that in Russian "ideology" refers to an 'idea system' (Holquist, The Dialogic Imagination, Glossary, p.429). 6 These systems can be individual or social: materialism would be a belief system of mid 1980s Britain whereas a desire for a BMW would be the product of an individual's particular perspective on that social ideology: this individual frame of reference on a socially widespread belief system is referred to by Bakhtin as a conceptual horizon (p.425).

In Bakhtin and Voloshinov's work ideology is conceived as being semiotically "visible":

in the sense that it involves the concrete exchange of signs in society and in history...[Therefore] every word/discourse betrays the ideology of its speaker...Every speaker is an ideologue and every utterance an ideologeme.
(Holquist, The Dialogic Imagination, Glossary, p.429)

Here we encounter another of the problems of translation which beset critics attempting to transpose Bakhtin's

concepts into English. The Russian 'slovo' means both 'word' and 'a method of using words which presumes a type of authority' (p.427). Todorov, in his Mikhail Bakhtin: The Dialogic Principle, argues that the dominant sense of the term in Bakhtin's work is one which stresses 'language as utterance' (Chapter 2, pp.14-28 (p.25)). 7

This places an emphasis on discourse at the expense of an individual's use of it; in Bakhtin's view to speak is to reveal one's ideological bearings; to demonstrate one's allegiance to a particular discourse by using its norms and values to orientate oneself in relation to a topic. Holquist argues that 'slovo' meaning 'discourse' is simply a 'more diffuse way of insisting on the primacy of speech' (ibid) and therefore plays down the sense in which 'discourse' refers to a distinctive ideological orientation.

A more subtle and, for me, persuasive explanation of this crux is offered by Julia Kristeva when she argues that Bakhtin's 'slovo' covers both:

the concept of a language which a speaker carries with him and/or of a speaker becoming himself within the language...This word/discourse is, as it were, distributed over the various instances of discourse that a multiple 'I' can occupy simultaneously. Appearing first in dialogue-form, for we can hear it in the voice of the 'other', the person

addressed, it then becomes profoundly polyphonic for in the end several instances of discourse become audible.

('The Ruin of a Poetics', pp.108-109) 8

This is a compelling explanation of the double focus of the concept word/discourse as it is deployed in Bakhtin's writings. The dual nature of language, in which it is both the medium of an individual's speech and simultaneously the vehicle for his beliefs, makes the individual a carrier of a unique yet ideologically constructed perspective on the national language of society: a language which is saturated with competing ideological positions. As Bakhtin argues:

The word is not a thing but rather the eternally mobile, eternally changing medium of dialogical intercourse. It never coincides with a single consciousness or a single voice. The life of the word is in its transferral from one mouth to another, one context to another, one social collective to another, and one generation to another. In the process the word does not forget where it has been and can never wholly free itself from the domain of the contexts of which it has been a part...it is not a neutral word of language, free from aspirations and values of others, uninhabited by foreign voices...The word arrives in [the individual's] context from another context which is saturated with other people's interpretations. His own thought finds the word already inhabited.

(Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics, Chapter 5, pp.150-227 (p.167))9

Language is therefore the means by which an individual represents a point of view but also an object of representation in that a given perspective enables others to determine the discourses which make up the conceptual horizon of a particular individual on a

context overlain by diverse discursive activity: thus, to use the more familiar terminology of semiotics, individual utterances are idiolect versions of sociolect codes.

The diversity of ideological positions at a given moment in history is conceptualized by Bakhtin as heteroglossia - a 'diversity of languages' (Todorov, Chapter 4, pp.41-59 (p.56)). As Holquist argues, heteroglossia is 'the base condition governing the operation of meaning in any utterance' (Holquist, Glossary, p.428): meaning is the result of selection from the ideological diversity contained in the heteroglossia and it is this selection process which provides the parameters from which the individual consciousness is constructed. To utilise one "language" from the heteroglossia is to make a choice from amongst competing explanations; a choice which is ultimately a product an individual's socially constructed belief system and therefore not actually a choice at all.¹⁰

Dialogism is the key concept in Bakhtin's account of language interaction: in heteroglossia the presence of competing accounts of the same phenomena has a relativising and de-privileging effect because with heteroglossia comes polyphony. The dialogism engendered by the interaction of multiple independent points of

view enables the ongoing subversion of all claims to a unitary conception of value put forward by ideologies, qua discourses, in heteroglossia.

The dialogic interrelation of discourses in the heteroglossia is to be understood as an 'extra-linguistic phenomena' (Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics, Chapter 5, p.151) and therefore in studying dialogism one is studying the socio-cultural factors informing language interaction:

Language is only alive in the dialogical intercourse of those who make use of it...Language's entire life, in whatever area it is used (in everyday life,, in business, science, art, etc.) is permeated by dialogical relationships.
(Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics, ibid)

For Bakhtin dialogism represents a 'struggle among socio-linguistic points of view' ('Discourse in the Novel', p.273). 11

As Susan Stewart has argued, the thrust of Bakhtin's theory suggests that:

The semiotic character of culture is the result of concrete and dynamic historical processes, processes of tension and conflict inseparable from the basis of social and economic life.
('Shouts on the Street', p.271) 12

Thus the dominance of certain discourses within heteroglossia can be seen as a duplication and an actualization of the socio-economic divisions within the society that produces them: the dominance of particular

class, ethnic or gender positions is articulated by the discourses of heteroglossia. Hegemonic discursive positions seek to suppress opposition because more is at stake than a communication system: a group's socio-economic dominance is maintained by the wide acceptance of the validity of its ideology's - qua discourse - characterisation of society.

However, discourses derive their components from the storehouse of a society's national language; components used by other discourses for different purposes. A given utterance is a selection from heteroglossia but the individual ideologemes of that utterance are "soiled" from use in other contexts: thus even the most monologic discourse is continually being torn apart by the forces of destabilising dialogism; 'Between the word and the speaking subject there exists an elastic environment of other, alien words about the...same theme.' ('Discourse in the Novel', p.276). This 'social dialogue among languages' (p.263) means that whilst discourses strive to operate as forces of 'verbal and ideological centralization' (p.272) the inherent dialogism of language causes such attempts at unification to be undermined.

A given discourse, however authoritative it appears to its adherents, can only represent truth or value from a

perspective located within its parameters. From Bakhtin's intertextual perspective unity is always disunity taken out of context. The object of which a discourse speaks is:

overlain with qualifications, open to dispute, charged with value, already enveloped in an obscuring mist - or, on the contrary, [only perceived] by the "light" of alien words that have already been spoken about it.
(*'Discourse in the Novel'*, p.276)

A discourse of the heteroglossia cannot completely exclude another; even in suppressing a discourse the suppressor must speak of the alien discourse and for Bakhtin this alone is sufficient to destabilise the attempted policing. The shared origin of all discourse, the society's national language, means that a unique utterance is actually mediated and constituted by its relationships with all other utterances that have made use of its component ideologemes. 13 An utterance cannot be a neutral vehicle for communication because it contains 'contextual overtones' (*'Discourse in the Novel'*, p.293):

All words have the "taste" of a profession, a genre, a tendency...Each word tastes of the context and contexts in which it has lived its socially charged life; all words and forms are populated by intentions.
(*'Discourse in the Novel'*, *ibid*)

Language is thus not a system for generating context-bound meanings but rather a dynamic which not only facilitates the articulation of present perceptions but is also marked by the historical traces of once active

discursive positions. Furthermore, at any given time the heteroglossia contains a range of potential discourses which may be developed into dominant positions at a later date.

An utterance is provided with content as the result of the individual's selection from the heteroglossia. It is shaped by its dialogic interaction with the potential, new-born, living, ossifying and dead discourses which make up the heteroglossia of a society at a given historical moment ('Discourse in the Novel', p.365). Individuals perceive themselves to be offering unified and complete accounts of phenomena because of their awareness of the discursive traditions from which their perceptions derive, deviate from or simply seek to modify. Such perceptions of unity are chimerical because the language they use to encode it is constituted by the 'contradictory, multi-speaked and heterogeneous' (ibid) business of dialogic interaction.

An individual within society is therefore the product of the discourses he encounters. For Bakhtin the individual enters into a language whose discourses speak him and do not let him speak himself but the individual's awareness of this process is curtailed by his construction of a conceptual horizon on a discourse's articulation of its ideology. Voloshinov

explains this process when he argues that:

The...[individual] receives words and learns to give them intonation **throughout his life** in the process of his **many-sided** interaction with his milieu. [He] begins to use these words and intonations in the **internal speech**, through which he speaks and is aware of himself. ('Discourse in Life and Discourse in Poetry', pp.26-27 [Voloshinov's emphasis]) 14

Voloshinov's notion of 'inner speech' is similar to Bakhtin's 'conceptual horizon' and some time must now be spent elaborating this crucial concept. Bakhtin's philosophy of language provides a theoretical basis from which to claim that the motivation for a particular actualization derives from the promptings of the individual's perspective on discursive positions elaborated in the heteroglossia. Therefore the ways in which discourse comes to shape consciousness and so to dictate the parameters of perception are of central importance to my investigation of the operation of discourse in critical practice.

ii. DISCOURSE AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF CONSCIOUSNESS: IDEOLOGY AS PSYCHE

To do justice to Bakhtin's complex theorising on this topic would require a thesis in its own right: here I can only sketch in the parameters and emphasise those features of his work, and that of his associate Voloshinov, which facilitate an understanding of the

operation of discourse as a source for critical practice. Therefore I shall be concentrating upon the ideas advanced in Marxism and the Philosophy of Language since this text represents the clearest articulation of the Bakhtin School's position on this topic. 15

As has already been stated, language is saturated by ideological positions and any single utterance therefore articulates and represents a version of a system of belief available to an individual from the wider society. For the individual, adherence to a particular set of values facilitates a distinctive perception of phenomena; this is internalised to form one's "unique" point of view. The result of this internalisation is that the ideological - in the sense of a system of ideas - may be said to function as the vehicle for understanding since it provides the parameters of an individual's conceptual horizon from which ascriptions of value or meaning can be made. 16 For Voloshinov, the 'individual consciousness is a social-ideological fact' (Marxism and the Philosophy of Language, Chapter 1, pp.9-15 (p.12)) because:

A thought that as yet exists only in the context of my consciousness, without embodiment in the context of a discipline constituting some unified ideological system, remains a dim, unprocessed creation.
(Marxism and the Philosophy of Language, Chapter 3, pp.25-41 (p.33))

For Bakhtin, meaning is the product of a dialogue with

the other; a dialogue generated by the individual drawing upon the diversity of ideologies within heteroglossia in order to articulate his point of view. Having to express oneself in another's "language" is fundamental to Bakhtin's notion that we find our selfhood through our assimilation of the discourses - qua belief systems - of others. 17 As Voloshinov argued:

Any motivation of one's behaviour, any instance of self-awareness (for self-awareness is always verbal, always a matter of finding some specifically suitable verbal complex) is an act of gauging oneself against some social norm, social evaluation is, so to speak, the socialization of oneself and one's behaviour. In becoming aware of myself, I attempt to look at my self, as it were, from the eyes of another person, another representative of my social group...

(Freudianism: A Marxist Critique, Chapter 9, pp.85-91 (p.87)) 18

Therefore in articulating a point of view an individual is re-defining an ideological position from the heteroglossia to suit the needs of the context of his utterance. Communication occurs in a social setting outside of which there can be no meaning; thus 'each person's inner world and thought has its stabilized social audience that comprises the environment in which reasons, motives, values...are fashioned' (Marxism and the Philosophy of Language, Part II, Chapter 3, pp.83-98 (p.86)). Again it is the dual nature of language which must be stressed: given heteroglossia, language becomes both a means of individual expression and a repository of societal belief systems:

The authentic environment of an utterance, the environment in which it lives and takes shape, is dialogized heteroglossia, anonymous and social as language, but simultaneously concrete, filled with specific content and accented as an individual utterance. ('Discourse in the Novel', p.272)

It is this duality of language which enables Voloshinov to argue that individuals do not construct ideology - the values which dictate their way of seeing an issue or shape their articulation of an idea - for themselves but rather are to be seen as 'a tenant lodging in the social edifice of ideological signs' (Marxism and the Philosophy of Language, Chapter 1, pp.9-15 (p.13)):

The individual, isolated person does not create ideologies...ideological creation and its comprehension only take place in the process of social intercourse...social intercourse is the medium in which the ideological phenomenon first acquires its specific existence, its ideological meaning, its semiotic nature. (P.N.Medvedev, The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship, Chapter 1, pp.3-15 (p.8)) 19

Because ideology is a social construct it is also subject to the continual destabilisation and re-orientation generated by dialogism in heteroglossia. The ongoing dominance of an inter-related set of discourses in heteroglossia is dependent upon their ability to explain social phenomena in the contexts of a given historical era; as contexts alter so discourses are modified by the processes of dialogism. As Bakhtin puts it:

at any given moment in its historical existence, language is heteroglot from top to bottom: it represents the co-existence of socio-ideological contradictions between the

present and the past, between differing epochs of the past, between different socio-ideological groups in the present, between tendencies; schools, circles and so forth, all given a bodily form [in the diverse discourses of heteroglossia]. **These "languages" of heteroglossia intersect each other in a variety of ways, forming new, socially typifying, "languages".**

('Discourse in the Novel', p.291 [My emphasis])

Therefore the language deployed by individuals in a given context provides a register of socio-ideological change; these changes may be read as evidence of the death throes, birth pangs or ongoing mutation of discourses within heteroglossia. 20 As an individual encounters competing explanations of phenomena he selects amongst them for those which tie in with or even re-orientate his existing set of inter-discursive values according to the needs of the context in which he operates. Thereby, as noted earlier, the individual maintains a conceptual horizon which represents a "unique" perspective on the heteroglossia of an era.

Voloshinov implies that this process of selection is similar to shifting between different speech registers: the individual encounters a value or concept "accented" in generalised social terms which may not fit his particular situation and so converts it into his own "accent" by relating the notions it contains to his particular context (Marxism and the Philosophy of Language, Chapter 2, pp.17-24 (p.22)). Given dialogism,

this conversion is only complete from the limited perspective of one's conceptual horizon; others will be able to re-locate the transposed ideological value back into its societal context:

The processes that basically define the content of the psyche occur not inside but outside the individual organism, although they involve its participation...[:] the subjective psyche is an object for ideological understanding and for socio-ideological interpretation.
(Marxism and the Philosophy of Language, Chapter 3, pp.25-41 (p.25))

The individual consciousness is the site in which discourses struggle for domination via the process of dialogic interaction: dialogic because 'the discourse belongs doubly to an 'I' and to the other, that **Spaltung** of the speaker which psychoanalysis was to establish with scientific caution, that topology of the speaker in relation to the "treasure house of meaning-signs" (Lacan) outside himself' (Kristeva, 'The Ruin of a Poetics', p.109) is, in Bakhtin, occasioned by the dual role of language - qua discourse - as means and object of representation.

Voloshinov explanation of the relationship between ideology and psyche in the construction of consciousness suggests the complexity of the dynamic interaction of the individual and his culture:

my thought from the very start belongs to an ideological system and is governed by its set of laws. But, at the same time, it belongs to another system that is just as much a unity and just as much in possession of its own set of

laws - the system of my psyche. The unity of this second system is determined not only by the unity of my biological organism but also by the whole aggregate of conditions of life and society in which that organism has been set. (Marxism and the Philosophy of Language, p.35)

The psyche is the site of our sense of self, but in Bakhtin the awareness of "I-for-myself" can only be experienced in relation to others. Therefore 'the ideological...is made viable by its psychic implementation just as psychic implementation is made viable by its ideological impletion' (p.39). For Bakhtin, meaning only arises in contexts generated by the dialogics of heteroglossia: communication is not about the exchange of signs but rather is concerned with the expression of values and beliefs.

Ideology can only function as a system of beliefs in the context of its implementation in the dialogic interaction of conflicting conceptual horizons:

In actuality, we never say or hear words, we say and hear what is true or false, good or bad, important or unimportant, pleasant or unpleasant, and so on. Words are always filled with content and meaning drawn from behaviour or ideology. That is the way we understand words, and we can respond only to words that engage us behaviourally or ideologically. (Marxism and the Philosophy of Language, Part II, Chapter 2, pp.65-82 (p.70))

The dialogic nature of language means that even as an individual expresses a particular ideological perspective which has been internalised as part of a personalised belief system he is taking up a position on

a societal value or belief. The interaction of societal belief and value systems and the individual's contextualized assimilation of them tends to be dialectical; the individual's beliefs are effaced as they are drawn back into the societal ideology from which they originated whilst the broader societal contexts of an ideology become obliterated when they are assimilated into the localized context of an individual's conceptual horizon.

The practical upshot of this is that individuals tend to treat their beliefs as their own - psyche effacing societal ideology - rather than as articulations of positions with wider social ramifications - in which ideology would be seen to efface psyche. It is this interplay which informs individuals' reluctance to accept the fact that their "commonsense" assumptions are shaped by ideology.

From a Bakhtinian perspective one can claim that in deploying language the individual deploys ideology: the belief and value systems derived from the heteroglossia and made to appear to be his own. The context in which an utterance occurs is mediated by the interplay of the conceptual horizons of the speaker and the addressee: each represents a particular perspective on the discourses of heteroglossia. This selection

process is what constitutes our individuality but, as noted earlier, the reality of the situation is that we are defined through the discourses of others:

The tendency to assimilate other's discourse takes on even deeper and more basic significance in the an individual's ideological becoming, in the most fundamental sense. **Another's discourse performs here no longer as information, directions, rules, models and so forth, but strives rather to determine the very basis of our ideological interrelatedness with the world, the very basis of our behaviour.** ('Discourse in the Novel', p.342 [Emphasis added])

For Bakhtin the language we make use of simultaneously uses us to foster the ideological positions which the discourses we deploy from the heteroglossia seek to promote; 'any utterance - the finished, written utterance not excepted - makes response to something and is calculated to be responded to in turn' Marxism and the Philosophy of Language, Chapter 2, p.67). Thus an individual's speech or writing may be said to reveal his conceptual horizon on the heteroglossia of the era. The Bakhtinian 'utterance' is 'that phenomena in which a speech-act of answering and a speech act of anticipation-provocation historically coincide' (Graham Pechey, 'On the borders of Bakhtin', p.48). 21 Given the theoretical frame offered by this Bakhtinian perspective one is able to examine a text and trace the operation of discourse in its formation by relocating the ideologemes which make up the writer's conceptual horizon into the wider context of an era's

heteroglossia. It is now necessary to sketch in the parameters of this claim and examine how a Bakhtinian intertextual reading of critical practice would proceed.

iii. TOWARDS AN INTERTEXTUAL CRITICISM

An intertextual criticism proceeds from the following assumptions about an individual's encounter with a text. Firstly, it posits the text as a composite made up of a range of other texts or text fragments which existed at the time of its production or prior to its production as part of the culture's history. Intertextual criticism cannot treat a text as a closed, unified object:

The term **inter-textuality** denotes the transposition of one (or several) sign system(s) into another...it specifies that the passage from one signifying system to another demands a new articulation...of enunciative and denotative positionality.
(Kristeva, Revolution in Poetic Language, Chapter 8, pp.57-61 (pp.59-60)) 22

A text will also cite non-literary discourses, and fragments of those discourses, from its era and from proceeding eras to a lesser or greater degree. As Roland Barthes puts it:

the one text is an (inductive) access to a Model, but [also an] entrance into a network with a thousand entrances.
(S/Z, VI, p.12) 23

Here, Barthes suggests the interrelatedness of text-systems but in an intertextual criticism the reader also

brings his own models of textual practice and his own set of beliefs and values and thus the critic:text encounter can be conceptualized as a dialogue between two conceptual horizons.

This dialogue is an encounter between two interested parties because the reader deploys a range of belief systems concerning textual practice in order to actualize the text whilst the writer deploys a similar repertoire of convictions; a repertoire which which may challenge or contradict conceptions held by the reader. When establishing a text's relationships to a range of intertexts the critic is limited by the breadth of his own knowledge and, more crucially, by the hierarchies of value through which he habitually operates when processing phenomena. In order to establish the criteria of his own writing the intertextual critic must establish the intertexts - qua patterns of belief and value - which lead him to presuppose that some intertexts of a given text are more significant, for him, than others. It is crucial that an intertextual criticism proceeds from a dissolution of the pejorative associations of subjectivity because it must operate by first establishing the grounds for a reader's attribution of meaning by deploying intertexts suggested by the critic:text dialogue and cannot limit itself to those implied by the text alone.

The variable represented by the reader's knowledge of the range of potential intertexts applicable to a given text, so often labelled as problematic in accounts of the reader:text encounter cannot be classified as a problem for intertextual criticism because there a text is treated as providing only half of the material for an interpretation. ²⁴ The deployment of intertextuality on itself as a meta-critical device with which to locate the discourse of the intertextual critic is essential since the critic must be seen to accept the limits imposed upon his analysis by his belief systems if he is to avoid an overly static interpretation of a text's intertextual relationships. What is being suggested here is not a practice in which the critic traces arcane concepts in a text and then re-interprets them in the light of his intellectual allegiances but rather an analytic mode in which the critic isolates his own parameters of conviction and then traces their interaction with those articulated within the text.

Intertexts shape critics' understanding of literature by leading them to create the text which their intertexts tell them they should find; in S/Z, for example, Barthes reads Balzac's 'Sarrasine' as an account of the castration complex because of the intertext of Freudian psychoanalysis and not because Balzac's text posits it as its dominant concern. From a Bakhtinian perspective

Barthes' redeployment of psychoanalytic discourse in a literary critical context is the product of the centrality of that discourse to his conceptual horizon. Ironically it is Barthes who best sums up the factors informing this state of affairs:

The language that a critic chooses to speak is not a gift from heaven; it is one of the range of languages offered by his situation in time and, objectively, it is the latest stage of a certain historical development of knowledge, ideas, and intellectual passions.
(*'Criticism as Language'*, p.651) 25

This might appear to imply that at a practical level intertextual criticism is simply a fusion of currently available modes of analysis; a coalition which threatens to fall apart because the critic will inevitably stress one mode as being the most fruitful basis for an assessment of textual practice. The notion that intertextual criticism can only be practised in a partisan and therefore non-intertextual fashion because critical perception is inevitable skewed by a critic's location in a particular discursive nexus is only problematic in the context of neo-Aristotelian conceptions of the theory of reading which promote objectivity, systematic thought and single, fixed meanings. 26

Such conceptions may be said to promote a dialectic mode of cognition; an either/or logic which fosters centralization by excluding ambivalence from an

individual's account of phenomena. Such a mode is fundamentally opposed to the dialogic process which is at the heart of intertextual criticism. Bakhtin's musings on this subject illuminate the problematic of dialectical thinking for an intertextual criticism:

Dialogue and dialectics. Take a dialogue and remove the voices (the partitioning of voices), remove the intonations (emotional and individualizing ones), carve out abstract concepts and judgements from living words and responses, cram everything into one abstract consciousness - and that's how you get dialectics.

('Notes made in 1970-71', p.147) 27

Following Julia Kristeva I want to suggest that the theories advanced by Mikhail Bakhtin provide the framework for a new mode of analysis which can perceive the ideological basis of social and cultural interaction and thus provide a theoretical position from which a critic can dismiss the pejorative associations of subjectivity by claiming that all discourse is inevitably subjective because it is concerned with fostering the status of a particular belief system. 28

As Bakhtin puts it in his jottings on the inter-relation of culture and literature:

Literature is an inseparable part of the totality of culture and cannot be studied outside of the total cultural context. It cannot be severed from the rest of culture and related directly (bypassing culture) to socio-economic or other factors. These factors influence culture as a whole and only through it and in conjunction with it do they affect literature...The world of culture and literature is essentially as boundless as the universe...The infinite diversity of interpretations, images, figurative semantic

combinations, materials and their interpretations...We have narrowed it terribly by selecting and modernizing what has been selected...We are suffering in the captivity of narrow and homogeneous interpretations.
('Notes Made in 1970-71', p.140)

The centrality of the heterogenous to Bakhtin's thought is revealed in the assertion that his theory accepts its status as ideology and that its practitioners must attempt to make a 'profound artistic and ideological penetration into the text' ('Discourse in the Novel', p.410). It is only through ideology that we can know ideology; only in recognizing the hierarchies of discourses in society and our location in relation to them that we can make the jump from the 'zero one' logic of neo-Aristotelianism to a 'zero two' order of thought which:

affirms and denies at the same time. Thus none of the complements is invested with the supplementary ethical quality of being or truth which is inherent in the system 'zero one'...
(Zepp, 'The Criticism of Julia Kristeva', p.82)29

This system of thought fosters a perspective in which:

every signifying practice is a field of transpositions of various signifying systems (an intertextuality),...its "place" of enunciation and its denoted "object" are never single, complete, and identical to themselves, but always plural, shattered, capable of being tabulated. In this way polysemy can also be seen as the result of a semiotic polyvalence - an adherence to different sign systems.
(Kristeva, Revolution in Poetic Language, Chapter 8, pp.57-61 (p.60))

It is in the theories of Bakhtin that one can find a framework which enables one to assess the significance

of the operation of semiotic polyvalence in critical practice.

iv. MOTIVATION AND CRITICAL PRACTICE: A BAKHTINIAN PERSPECTIVE

For Bakhtin the fundamental fact of an individual's relation to language is that all utterances occur in the context of the dialogism of discourse interaction in heteroglossia. Therefore in order to examine the operation of discourse as a motivation for particular actualizations one must first establish the range of discourses available to individuals for the construction of conceptual horizons.

In attempting to characterize the heteroglossia of an era one must be wary of the influence of one's own belief and value systems: in this work I offer a Bakhtinian perspective on the subject of the motivation of critical practice and it is his theory of the individual's relation to language which provides me with the conceptual horizon from which I analyse critical practice. The extent to which this framework predetermines my analysis will be addressed in the conclusion to this work. For the present it must suffice to argue that whilst a Bakhtinian critic cannot bemoan subjectivity he must ensure that his analysis of

heteroglossia does not seek to invest particular discourses with a greater epistemological value than they possessed in their own era. Thus my account of the ongoing domination of belle-lettrist critical practice and its associated "theories" about the textual practice to be found in good literature in the period 1890 - 1930 can incorporate my criticism of the logic of those theories but cannot allow that critique to diminish the importance of the discourse in critical practice during that period. 30

As noted earlier, the Bakhtinian analyst must make a 'profound artistic and ideological penetration into the text' ('Discourse in the Novel', p.410); must assess the interplay of literary and non-literary systems of value and belief at work in the critical construction of a text's meaning and importance. A Bakhtinian account of critical practice requires a concrete historical setting and approaches the critical history of an era with a view to re-inscribing literary values into the broader context of the heteroglossia. Thus it utilises a perspective which treats the heteroglossia as the ur-text from which all critical commentary draws its component ideologemes. As John Frow has argued:

A fully "objective" history is an activist, interventionist history. It understands that histories are fictions of power which can be rewritten, that the canon can be retrospectively changed or displaced..., or that the opposition of the canonical to the

non-canonical, which is constructed and maintained by the force of cultural and educational institutions, can be radically transformed or can be taken itself as a text for analysis.

(Marxism and Literary History, Chapter 5, pp.103-124 (p.122))

It is the work of Bakhtin which provides the critic with the theoretical basis for reading the text constructed by the cultural and educational institutions of an era; it is Bakhtin's theory of the interaction of discourse which provides the vehicle for the kind of interventionist history of criticism suggested by Frow.

Two main modes of approach suggest themselves as viable means of carrying out a Bakhtinian analysis of the role of discourse in criticism. Firstly, one could construct a biography of an individual critic, tracing the mutations of his conceptual horizon over time and relocating the values and beliefs which make up that perspective into the heteroglossia of his era. This would enable a clear assessment of an individual's relation to the diversity of ideological positions concerning textual and critical practice and so illuminate the subtle dialogism at work in the act of criticism.

This approach is not adopted here, partly from considerations of the space available to me but also because in order to stake the claim of Bakhtinian theory

to be a powerful means for assessing critical practice I felt a more schematic and wide ranging approach was necessary.

In what follows I begin by offering a brief characterisation of the heteroglossia of British society in the period 1890 to 1930. I chose this period because I had some familiarity with its events and also because it is commonly regarded as being a key period in the literary history of Britain. I begin with an account of the discourses of what, for ease of analysis, I have termed the social heteroglossia; by which I refer to the diversity of discourses which seek to account for the individual's role in society and for the state of the nation. I move on to describe the changing nature of what I have termed the literary heteroglossia; by this I refer to the diversity of discourses which sought to account for and to validate modes of textual and critical practice during the era under investigation. Such a separation is an analytic device for in reality the two aspects intermingle; in later sections I recombine these aspects of discursive activity and I return to the problem of how a Bakhtinian analysis can deploy the complexity of the heteroglossia in a clear and yet accurate way in my conclusion.

Having described the major social and literary discourses of the heteroglossia I intensify the focus of my analysis through an assessment of the ways in which the work of influential critics can be seen to incorporate discourses classified in the previous section. Here I suggest the parameters of the conceptual horizons of critics like Arthur Symons, I.A.Richards and T.S.Eliot and thereby provide a more detailed account of the versions of critical practice which were available for incorporation into the conceptual horizons' of less major critics.

My fourth section marks a final intensification of focus as I move on to examine in detail the operation of discourse in the criticism generated by the work of Joseph Conrad. My choice of this body of critical work was motivated by several, interrelated, factors. Firstly it was expedient to use material with which I was already familiar. Secondly, Conrad is a canonical author whose work is widely regarded as occupying a pivotal position in the development of a Modernist textual practice and therefore criticism of his work could be seen grappling with a new literary mode. Thirdly, Conrad's politics and those beliefs and values he incorporated into his texts stand in what promised to be a fruitful relation to some of the key social issues

of the era whose heteroglossia I wanted to deploy in my investigations.

Finally, for an amalgam of these reasons, I chose to focus my analysis on the criticism generated by Heart of Darkness - although other texts are covered. The novella seemed a particularly useful text for my purposes because it deals with issues like imperialism, colonialism and capitalism in what its contemporary critics regarded as an innovative prose style; thus it was likely to generate commentaries which would facilitate my discussion of the ways in which a critic's discursive allegiances motivate his critical practice.

A by-product of my analysis is an account of the processes at work in the formation of Conrad as an author of "classic" texts but it must be stressed that it is not my intention to produce a contextualized history of Conrad criticism or to trace the incorporation of Conrad into the canon in the present work. 31

In my discussion of the criticism of Conrad's fiction I provide a detailed account of how the discourses identified in preceding sections can be seen operating as constraints on critical practice. The slightly stilted approach I have adopted is compensated for by

the freedom and breadth of analysis it permits me when I eventually come to assess the operation of discourse in the criticism generated by Heart of Darkness: I trust my reader will come to agree.

In conclusion I assess the extent to which the criticism of Conrad's fiction illuminates the problematic operation of discourse in critical practice and then move on to reflect more generally on the wider implications for criticism of the theories of Mikhail Bakhtin. The section incorporates a meta-critical commentary on the motivation of my own critical practice in this work as well as addressing some of the problems associated with adopting a Bakhtinian perspective.

PART 1: THE DISCOURSES OF SOCIAL HISTORY: 1900 to 1930

The social history of England from the late Nineteenth Century to the end of the 1920s is a vast field of investigation. Here I will be concerned with the general trends of inter-discursive affirmation and dissent which streak the broad canvass of the period; the mutations of discourse which occur as individuals and the society which they constitute struggle to assess, explain and classify the events of the years 1900 to 1930. In fact it is not the events but rather their inter-discursive interpretation and deployment which concerns me. In this section I will identify those discourses which vexed British society in the period before intensifying the focus of my study in a discussion of the era's literary history in Part 2.

Any starting point is also a point of exclusion: the discursive parameters of British society in the year 1900 were taken from events and beliefs which were shaped and defined in the past. Therefore, in an attempt to balance the account I offer here, I have found it necessary to widen my discussion to include the last thirty years of the Nineteenth Century.

At the very broad level of discursive analysis which has to operate in this section I shall be concentrating upon four areas which seem to me to be significantly active

sites of discursive activity in the heteroglossia of Britain at this time: the changing nature of imperialist activity, the slow decline in the authority of liberal values; the impact of the First World War and the growth of an organised working class. As the events associated with these phenomena were taken into account in the ongoing discursive interaction of individuals, the hierarchy of discourses which constituted the society's social heteroglossia changed. 1

1. THE DOMINANCE OF IMPERIALISM 2

The 1880s saw the development of anxieties which continued to vex the middle-class up until the First World war. These fears and the responses to them may be characterised as follows: English identity was to be purged of debilitating foreign influences; the nation should be purified and made ready to face the demands of the inevitable struggle for survival; present defects would be ameliorated if the lessons of the nation's "glorious" past were re-learned. The shift in dominant liberalism's values from laissez-faire to state centeredness can be seen as a response to the growing threat from foreign competition, an acknowledgement of the increasing administrative burden of imperial

territory and a perceived need to control the nation's destiny in increasingly turbulent times. 3

This combination of factors produced the increasingly defensive dialogism which informs the change in attitude towards the Empire. Britain's imperial territories took on a dual significance in the late Nineteenth century because they simultaneously enabled industry to solve some of its problems whilst also going some way towards bolstering the crippled self-certainty of the socially dominant middle class by providing evidence of the racial and cultural superiority of the British. Between 1880 and 1905 Britain extended its Empire, partly to open up new markets for its industries, partly to protect existing ones from foreign competition and partly to secure the routes between them from foreign powers.⁴ That Britain was involved in the lives of some three hundred and forty five million people was a source of nationalistic pride; that this involvement could be and indeed was sanctioned by the norms of social Darwinism gave imperialism an added dimension in which British military might was treated as signifying a right to possess another's territory.

Imperialism was an all pervading ideology in the discursive interactions of pre-war British heteroglossia because, like the liberalism it came to dominate and

displace, it was a loose and baggy monster of an ideology and so could, almost, be all things to all men. 5 As Patrick Brantlinger argues:

even the most reluctant imperialists were still imperialists, reluctantly opting to annex new territories because they believed that expansion was the best or at least the most expedient way to defend the Empire that already existed.

(Rule of Darkness, Introduction, pp.3-16 (p.7))6

The success of imperialism as a discourse was based upon its capacity to subsume a variety of other discursive positions: to create a conceptual horizon, as it were, on other discourses of the heteroglossia which were in competition with it.

The expansion of the Empire made Liberalism's hegemonic position become increasingly untenable because its values sat uneasily with the reality of the colonial situation. The laissez-faire approach to trade was failing; Darwinism had debunked the liberal myth of a benevolent deity and with its stress upon the 'impersonality of evolutionary development' (Biddiss, The Age of the Masses, Chapter 2, pp.46-75 (p.50)) had created the discursive space for more pragmatic and utilitarian accounts of an individual's relation to society.7 Given the destabilising power of the popular understanding of Darwinism it was inevitable that its notions would be incorporated into other discursive

formations.

Amidst the uncertainties of rapid social change theorists of national and racial fulfilment shared a quest for organic belonging and for objectifying their essentially subjective group identifications.

(Biddiss, The Age of the Masses, Chapter 4, pp.107-143 (p.113))

As an account of life in an increasingly complex, rapidly changing and seemingly ever more uncertain world Darwinism broke the inter-discursive allegiance of liberalism and nationalism; replacing it with a discursive nexus in which nationalism was validated by the "objective" discourse of Darwinism thus justifying pride in the fact of Empire: 8

Evidence of the dominance of imperialistic nationalism in discourse interaction is to be found in the "gung-ho" nationalism which informed the celebration of Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897 and also in the widespread anti-German propaganda deployed by the Press in the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth centuries as well as in its sabre-rattling during the immediate pre-war years. These examples are registers of the extent to which imperialist sentiments were presented as articles of faith for the loyal British citizen to dispute at his peril. The popular press was particularly adept at converting facts into symbolic edifices; hence the increasingly belligerent edge given to the notion that

the British possessed an Empire on which the sun "did not set".⁹

The dominance of imperialist and nationalist discourse did not go unchallenged but the dialogic antagonisms which it generated lacked a vehicle for their popular expression and support and so had little real impact on the hierarchy of discourse in society at large. In the literary critical circles which concern me here it was, ironically, it was the Darwinist inspired "science" of anthropology which posed a major challenge to the dominance of imperialism. Whilst it was often deployed as a guide in the management of colonies anthropology also contributed to 'the development of relativistic ethical theories and to the questioning of established moral and social values characteristic of the fin de siècle' (Joll, Europe since 1870, Chapter 4, pp.78-112 (p.79)).¹⁰ Other sciences also had a destabilising effect upon the confident sense of racial mission which imperialism inspired. These took time to percolate through society in general but did have an early impact on the literary circles I will be discussing in the next section of this work.

The notion of relativity derived from Einstein, when linked with Freud's unveiling of the dark and irrational impulses which drive civilised and savage

alike, provided the basis for new ways of perceiving Man and his relation to the world. 11 In some European intellectual circles these new discourses came to form the basis of what can be seen as a cult of the irrational and in society at large they eventually came to operate as correctives for the overly uncritical assumptions of imperialism regarding the nature of cultural difference. 12

The question of cultural difference was an essential feature of imperialist discourse; through the agency of social Darwinism the facts of economic and military power were transposed into an alternate register of signification in which they became natural consequences of a race's superiority - of its "fitness" to survive. Yet because imperialism turned about the idea of races in a struggle for dominance it began to engender doubts about its own norms through the very logic it promoted. Imperialism fostered a high degree of xenophobia; the British feared an attack by another imperial power and became acutely sensitive to the territorial ambitions of other nations. During the late 1890s and early 1900s, for example, a growing threat was perceived in the Chinese and Japanese dominance of the Far East's trade markets: there was talk of a "yellow peril" and great anxiety after Japan defeated Russia in the 1904 - 1905 war: 13

What is significant is that the very ideological assumptions which gave the imperialist movement its strength...could also lead people to question their own position, to have grave doubts about their own future and even to predict 'The Decline of the West' (Joll, Europe Since 1870, Chapter 4, pp.78-112 (p.105))

This xenophobic uncertainty was at the very heart of imperialism's nexus of discursive formations. Whilst conflicts like that between Japan and Russia were interpreted as validating the doubts of imperialists it was the Boer War - 1899 to 1902 - which dramatically accelerated the destabilising dialogism that informed the interaction of imperialism with other discourses of the heteroglossia in the early Twentieth Century.

The Boer War can be seen as a dramatic realisation of the creeping uncertainties of imperialism. Given that the British were notionally the "fittest" race in the world the fact that its army took so long to defeat what was perceived to be an insignificant rabble of farmers was hard for nationalistic imperialists to accept. The revelations about the methods of imperial domination used by the army during the war intensified the doubts of many intellectuals and, to a lesser extent, those of the general public about imperialism: it became difficult to accept that the British had a cultural duty to bring civilization to the "inferior" races of the world when the methods of imperialism included the

internment of women and children in concentration camps.¹⁴

Despite the growing doubts about imperialism the discourse remained dominant. The Edwardian and early Georgian periods saw imperialism move from a position of effectively unquestioned dominance to one in which its continued authority was fought for through an increasingly antagonistic process of dialogic interaction. During the years prior to the First World war imperialism was a burning issue which, like all centres of dialogically polemic interaction, was increasingly dealt with by falling back into stock ideological responses. ¹⁵

The onset of the First World war occasioned a major shift in the conceptual horizon's of many individuals. For some, the war exemplified the aptness of the xenophobic uncertainty at the heart of imperialist logic: here was the dread conflict of imperial powers; the ultimate struggle for survival in what was popularly perceived as the war to end all War.

The war gave a new strength to the nationalistic sense of racial mission which informed the era's encoding of the discourse of imperialism: "saving poor little Belgium from the Hun" was part of the burden which the

civilized and morally advanced British had to bear. 16 The unrelenting demands of dealing with the war left little space for any kind of rational observation about its meaning.

ii. THE WAR & AFTER 17

Imperialism and nationalism are key "societal" discourses throughout the period 1880 - 1930. Ultimately the war did little to topple the value systems associated with these discourses but reaction to it did contribute to their on-going destabilisation. The war years saw the continued erosion of the myth of an Empire united by the civilising influence of British culture. Irish unrest during the period 1914 - 1916 and on into the post war era and domestic industrial disputes were two factors at the heart of Empire which suggested that imperial Britain was fatally flawed. 18

The war was a massive drain on British society, in both social and economic terms; requiring a huge deployment of resources and manpower which the nation was barely able to supply. 19 Twenty two percent of the male population of the country were recruited during the war yet until 1916 Britain relied upon volunteers and ultimately only a third of the total force mobilized

would be conscripts. This willingness to serve can be interpreted as a measure of the power of discursive norms to motivate activity. In fighting for "King and Country" the volunteers were waging war for the values of imperialistic nationalism; the bloody facts of war are redeemed by 'an unselfish belief in the idea - something you can set up, and bow down before, and offer a sacrifice to' (Heart of Darkness, Part 1, p.10), or so the patriotic Press of war time Britain would have had its readers believe. 20

The end of the war saw an exhausted nation clinging to the values of a supposed Golden Age of pre war stability; 'hopes for the future were cast very much in the mould of the past' (Thomson, England in the Twentieth Century, Chapter 1, pp.15-35 (p.16)). The division of history into "pre" and "post" war periods by contemporary commentators registered the necessary shifts in value systems occasioned by the impact of such a devastating conflict upon the discourses used by individuals to mediate and construct social reality. However, these changes were not of any great magnitude:

there had begun already a richly diverse revolution against established patterns of thought and expression. The war made its principal contribution through greatly accelerating their disintegration. It was the means of making some extensive confrontation with doubt and disorientation unavoidable for all.

(Biddiss, The Age of the Masses, Chapter 6, pp.183-201 (p.186))

The most significant social expression of this sense of alienation from the values which fuelled the war are to be found in the militant protests of the organised working class. Throughout the war the doughty Tommy was a figure of national pride but when Tommy came home to the prospect of unemployment, poor housing and the erosion of living standards the government's war time promises rang very hollow indeed. 21 Demobbed troops were involved in disturbances throughout the country in 1919; race riots occurred in many ports, where West Indian's had been employed during the war and returning soldiers feared for their old jobs; in 1918 and 1919 the police went on strike, in Liverpool they were quelled by troops; in Scotland "Red Clydeside" was at the height of its notoriety when the Forty Hours strike was broken up by the arrest of its leaders and the deployment of 12,000 troops and six tanks. In 1919 Britain teetered on the brink of revolution. 22

It is the action of trade unionists which most disturbs the British government and British society in the 1920s. The alarums and excursions of industrial unrest in the immediate post war years were readily interpreted by a wary government and a predominantly conservative Press as evidence of domestic bolshevism and anarchism. The "Hands off Russia" campaign which united the labour movement and Labour Party in its - successful - attempt

to prevent munitions leaving Britain for the enemies of Bolshevik Russia and the spectre of the re-birth of the Triple Alliance (miners, railwaymen and transport workers) in support of a miners' strike provoked the government into passing an Emergency Powers Act which gave it draconian powers against trades union activity.²³

This reaction illustrates the defensive dialogism of discursive relations in this sphere: the Government was striving to present a "business as usual" message but this was profoundly at odds with the experience of the majority of working people. The strength of the existing social order can be gauged by the Government's success in curbing the unions' ability to express and build upon the discontent of their membership; its underlying weakness is revealed in the drastic measures taken to achieve its ends:

the government remained firmly in control. Plans for post war reconstruction were pushed ahead, partly at least with a view to undermining labour militancy.
(Stevenson, British Society 1914-1945, Chapter 3, pp.78-102 (p.101))

The domestic unrest of the immediate post war period may be understood as a British version of the more radical working class protests experienced by most European countries in these years. British syndicalism and British socialism lacked the leadership and appropriate

domestic conditions needed to generate a revolutionary working class movement. European alternatives to bourgeois liberal imperialism never really took root in Britain; perhaps because of the paternalistic quietism of the ruling elite and the individualism of the working class. Trade unionism was an essentially democratic means of giving the working man power but it was also one which directed protest through sanctioned channels: its discursive framework was limited to questions of pay and conditions and not available for the support of any radical reorganisation of the social order. 24

However, the spectacle of organised labour, particularly in view of the Press' account of the upheavals associated with continental communism, socialism and fascism, remained deeply troubling to Government and its middle class supporters alike:

the conflict with the industrial movement of labour could not be avoided. The syndicalist ideas that flourished before and during the war, their disappointment with the failure of the 'Triple Alliance', and the defeat of the Labour Government, all encouraged the growth of militancy in the trade unions.

(H.Pelling, Modern Britain 1885-1955, Chapter 5, pp.94-118 (p.109))25

The conflict came with the General Strike of 1926.

The official strike lasted for nine days from May 4th to May 12th. It involved workers from the mines, railways, transport, printing, steel, chemical, construction,

electrical and gas industries; it received solid support and effectively disrupted the day-to-day life of the nation. 26 It was also a complete failure because the TUC coordinators were unwilling to capitalise on the solid support for the strike amongst working people and also because the Government had made effective preparations to lessen the disruption. Many TUC leaders seemed as concerned about the potential they had unleashed as the Government were and they were quick to interpret the slightest hint of a concession as a sign of victory. 27

Whilst the official strike ended on May 12th the numbers taking action actually increased in the next few days as outrage at the betrayal of the strikers' hopes by the TUC leadership was converted into action. 28 Without national direction this sense of outrage fizzled out in a slow drift back to work. The Daily Mail of May 13th 1926 felt able to proclaim the 'Surrender of the Revolutionaries' but most men did not return to work until the 15th. 29 Union membership and affiliation to the TUC declined dramatically. Moderate trade unionists turned to the Labour Party to pursue their hopes for change and for the majority of union members the authority of the national leadership to direct their actions was diminished and, indeed, was often rejected outright. The power of the unions was severely

curtailed by legislation and 'the myth of the syndicalist revolution as the road to better times' (Thomson, Chapter 4, pp.91-126 (p.116)) was laid to rest.

The defeat of organised labour in the General Strike marks the effective silencing of the working class in this period: the discourse of class against class and fraternal solidarity reached the height of its authority in the General Strike and declined rapidly after that defeat. What survived from the discursive nexus of unionism was a sense of international solidarity which the Left was to consolidate upon during the 1930s: this tended to cause a polarisation of opinion in which the political Right adopted a fiercely nationalist insularity reminiscent of the Little Englanders of the late Nineteenth Century. 30 The tensions here were not to be worked out until the economic slump of the 1930s for 'in 1928 and 1929 economic conditions and social life took a turn for the better...[and] British life went on in a minor key' (Thomson, p.118).

In this section I have offered a snapshot of the discourses which were at work in Britain's heteroglossia in a period ranging from the 1880s to the late 1920s. In isolating major sites of discursive activity I have inevitably excluded and condensed what in reality was

diverse and complex. This is a regrettable necessity. What is at issue in the present work is the influence of discursive formations on the practice of literary criticism; in this section I have identified what I take to be the most important sites of discursive interaction in society at large. The presence or absence of the distinctive orientations of opinion which those sites generated will be borne in mind as I move on to discuss the history of literary ideas and critical practice in the period.

PART 2: LITERARY HISTORY 1900 - 1930: AN OVERVIEW

In order to locate the criticism of Heart of Darkness in particular and of Conrad's fiction in general in its original dialogic context it is necessary to establish the changing norms which informed critical and textual practice in the period. Here I will examine the discursive origins of those norms and thereby establish a context in which to set my examination of the distinctive orientations given to them by the period's major practitioners of criticism in Part 3 of the present work. As was the case with the discourses which animated the social history of the period, the ideas about literature and criticism whose interaction forms what I have termed the literary heteroglossia of these years have their origins in discursive formations which had been in operation since at least the mid-Nineteenth century: therefore some sense of their history will also be provided. 1

In what follows I divide the period's literary history into three areas of investigation. I begin with an account of the dominance of literary journalism and move on to examine the growth of academic criticism as a motivation for changes in the aims, techniques and language of criticism. The section concludes with an analysis of the changes in "theories" of textual

practice. In offering a broad overview of the general changes in the contexts for critical and textual practice I hope to concisely convey a sense of the major sites of discursive activity in heteroglossia; a sense which will be deepened in subsequent chapters as I move on to discuss the work of the period's major critics and then fully brought to bear in my account of their operation as motivating factors in critical reaction to Heart of Darkness and other texts by Conrad.

i. "CHATTER ABOUT SHELLEY": CRITICAL PRACTICE 1900-1919 2

The critical history of this period is characterized by the increasingly antagonistic dialogism associated with the slow ossification of Nineteenth century critical values and the equally slow rise of critical positions which were more able to accommodate the new modes of textual practice which emerged during these years. The period sees the decline of the Victorian "man of letters" and the rise of the professional, academically based literary critic but also includes a brief phase in which novelists and, in particular, the poets whose new styles were perplexing traditional criticism worked as critics.

Literary journalism was the backbone of criticism in the period: this mode of critical practice covered a diverse range of activities which might include lecturing on university extension and Mechanic's Institute courses and writing articles and reviews in the vast array of little magazines and light periodicals to the production of longer pieces for more serious literary magazines or the writing of books. 3 The term 'literary journalist' may appear vague or, as John Gross argues, cumbersome but seems to me to be a more appropriate classification than the alternative 'man of letters' which is more definitely pejorative today than when Gross was writing ('Foreword' to The Rise and Fall of the Man of Letters, pp.9-10 (p.9)).

Individuals could make a living by writing about literature without being academics because of the growth in the market for literature and for commentary upon it. The expansion of the reading public from the 1850s onwards was caused by the general improvement in education and the increase in leisure time for women in the prosperous middle class. Whilst many practitioners of literary journalism were university educated in general criticism was the leisure pursuit of middle class men with jobs in professions like Law or banking or those of independent means 4 - 'the amateur spirit in England was still too strong for purely academic

journals of the continental type to find much support' (Gross, Chapter 3, pp.75-112 (p.79). More importantly, the fact that the study of English Literature did not have an academic base meant that the market for such journals was small. The role of the well informed amateur in literary criticism during the 1880s, 1890s and early 1900s was fostered by the Oxbridge universities; where it was a widely held belief that English Literature was something which any gentleman would "naturally" be appreciating in his leisure time; being a gentleman it was assumed that his "intuitive" judgements about it would be correct. 5

The majority of criticism produced in the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth centuries was unanalytic and largely guided by quasi-Arnoldian principles of disinterestedness in its informed application of cultural criteria in the appreciation of the Truth and aesthetic Beauty of a given text. 6 At best the belle-lettrist criticism produced was languidly learned and occasionally witty; at worst it dressed up banality in a lush and tortured rhetoric. The main mode of critical commentary employed was damning with faint praise, seasoned by comparisons with great writers from the past and elegant sniping at the opinions' of other critics. This criticism sought to locate a text in a discursive nexus which revealed it to be constituted by norms and

values about textual practice which, through sleight of rhetoric, could be shown to be shared by critic and author alike. This sense of a community of feeling was validated by the dominant, Arnoldian, belief in which it was claimed that whilst literary value could be pointed out to the uninitiated the higher, intuitive, access to a work's essential significance was limited to male middle class "intellectuals".

In order to locate these generalities in their dialogic context it is helpful to briefly comment upon the critical practice of an exemplary figure from the literary history of the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth centuries. George Saintsbury is typical of many late Nineteenth Century critics who worked in academia in that he took up university teaching after a successful career as a literary journalist. 7

Sainstsbury was a formidable man of letters and his mode of critical practice was rapidly accepted as setting the standard of literary-critical discourse for academia; he became 'the doyen of academic critics, the nearest thing to a Critic Laureate' (Gross, p.159). As a journalist he did not limit himself to literary matters and frequently wrote the political leader in the Saturday Review; producing conservative diatribes on Government policy in Ireland and India. 8 Saintsbury

was elitist in his approach to literature; writing only for 'the general congregation of decently educated and intelligent people' (Gross, p.161); his definition of decently educated was dauntingly broad:

Undoubtedly Saintsbury was often guilty of using his learning as a bludgeon, of implying that until you have mastered everything you are incapable of passing an authoritative judgement on anything...Even odder is the sight of the most diehard of Tories advocating, as far as literature went, an extreme form of liberalism...one is half inclined to see politics at the bottom of it: isolate 'form' and you can concentrate on Shelley's rhythms...without being unsettled by [his] heterodox opinions
(Gross, The Rise and Fall of the Man of Letters, Chapter 5, pp.131-166 (pp.161-162))

Saintsbury's mode of criticism was subjective appreciation which drew upon an uncomplicated sense of writing for an audience which shared, or which at least ought to share, his cultural values. He was an unrelenting critic of theoretical approaches to literature, mainly because such formulated modes of literary study implied that criticism called for something more than his exercising of an informed sensibility. 9

To be fair, Saintsbury at his best is still impressive; his monumental literary history, A Short History of English Literature, covers the subject from early Anglo-Saxon poetry to the late Nineteenth Century in almost eight hundred densely packed pages and is a classic of

the genre. 10 His Preface reveals the massive confidence of judgement which is characteristic of the work as a whole. The claim that 'birds-eye views' (p.v) and 'generalisations' (ibid) have 'been very sedulously avoided' (ibid [Emphasis added]) in favour of 'direct reading of the literature itself' (ibid) is an awesome statement of critical authority in the anxious context of current debates about the possibility of literary history.

The experience of reading Saintsbury's A Short History today is akin to listening to a slightly acerbic, avuncular individual recommending his favourite works: this partly arises from Saintsbury's assumption of one's agreement with his judgements but is also the result of his success in carrying out the aim stated in his Preface in the argument that the critical opinions put forward in the course of his account are intended to supply:

something approaching that solid platform...of critical learning without which all critical opinion is worthless...Reading of the books themselves is the only justification precedent in such a case on the part of the writer; and his only object should be to provoke and facilitate reading of the books themselves on the part of his readers.

(Saintsbury, A Short History, Preface, p.vi).

What the general reader is being offered is not just a history but a critical history: the implication is that having gone away and read the texts the reader will have

not only the facts but also, thanks to Saintsbury, an appropriate critical framework through which to comprehend their significance.

Throughout the work the characteristic circumlocutions of belle-lettrist criticism can be identified. The technique of damning with faint praise and sniping at other accounts are well illustrated in the following passage on Thackeray:

Both in prose and in verse (for in a certain humorous-pathetic variety of the latter he displayed gifts which very nearly, if they do not quite, give him positive and high rank as a poet) Thackeray's characteristics, both of conception and expression, are wonderfully distinct and extremely original. During his lifetime some foolish persons called him cynical; since his death, others not more wise have called him a sentimentalist. Both judgements were complimentary exaggerations of the fact just glanced at, that his is the extremest known development of that mixture of the pathetic and the humorous which is latent in all humour, which Shakespeare had brought out occasionally - as he brought out everything...

(A Short History, Book XI, 'Victorian Literature', Chapter 2, pp.740-757 (pp.745-746))

Without the parentheses the opening sentence constitutes high praise and it is characteristic of this mode of critical practice that the qualification of an opinion occurs as an almost casual aside.

Herein lies the Arnoldian disinterestedness of belle-lettrist criticism; critical opinion arises from "facts

just glanced at" because this poetics relies upon an intuitive grasp of what is True. Judgements have to be founded upon glances and given out in asides because their systematization would mean the establishment of pronounced rules for criticism and 'The Rule in Criticism brings Hell and Death'. 11 Other belle-lettrist techniques which can be identified here are the tortured syntax resorted to in order to convey a simple point - that Thackeray's 'humorous pathetic' verse is acceptable second rate poetry - and the polite rubbishing of other opinions; thus the 'foolish persons' who have called Thackeray cynical and sentimental are said to have made 'complimentary exaggerations' rather than errors of judgement.

It is typical of this mode that Saintsbury manages to criticise other commentators for their errors merely by the implications of his own interpretation of Thackeray's 'humorous-pathetic' vein. Linking the textual practice of the author under discussion to that of an authoritative writer from the past, as Saintsbury does here by suggesting that Thackeray does something which Shakespeare - the belle-lettrist's literary God - does only occasionally, enables one to reveal the limitations of other opinions because by establishing connections between authors one makes it difficult for

others to attack your claims without appearing to question the status of the canonical author.

The methods of critics like Saintsbury provided the parameters of criticism well into the Twentieth century. A major factor in this continuation is the relatively stable nature of textual practice; with the notable exceptions of Joseph Conrad, Henry James and, to a lesser extent, Ford Madox Ford there were no major innovations in literary prose style until the few years of the 1910s immediately prior to the First World War: a recent study of the fiction of the Edwardian period concludes that 'in matters of form and occasionally in matters of substance much of the fiction was continuous with the writing of the past' (Jefferson Hunter, Edwardian Fiction, Chapter 2, pp.12-20 (p.13). 12

Jefferson Hunter's argument , in Edwardian Fiction, that the majority of prose fictions were acutely starved of ideas because they continued to re-work formal devices and structural techniques which were outmoded overstates the problem but does suggest the extent to which prose was a rather staid field of endeavour when set against the work going on in poetry at this time; for Hunter, the typical Edwardian novel:

alternates in a regular way between description and dialogue. It is interested in telling the story effectively and intelligently, not in presenting variously misleading or revealing

points of view...Why should the methods of fiction change, any number of Edwardian novelists might have asked, when fiction was so conspicuously successful in its aim of interpreting real life? Why change the narrative devices used by admired novelists of the recent past...Why import a foreign liking for theory into an act as simple and natural as telling a story
(Hunter, Edwardian Fiction, Chapter 3, pp.21-34 (pp.21-22))

Through a complex interaction of factors, discussed in detail below, novelists came to realise that 'the tools of one generation are useless for the next' (Virginia Woolf, 'Mr Bennett and Mrs Brown'). 13

Given this highly regularised background of textual practice it is inevitable that the new was perceived by critics as irregular and abnormal; it was open to attack precisely because of its violation of convention. Amongst reviewers there existed 'a sort of gentleman's agreement as to what the form of the novel should be' (Hunter, Chapter 4, pp.35-44 (p.35)). Despite the presence of new modes of novelistic textual practice critical standards in this period remained virtually identical to those of the late Nineteenth Century; in this period 'literary criticism was still primarily a journalistic activity' (Keating, The Haunted Study, Chapter 1, pp.9-87 (p.77)).¹⁴ Those changes which were occurring and which were consolidated and advanced upon after the War are the product of the new demands placed

on critical practice by its incorporation into an academic context.

ii. CRITICISM & THE ACADEMY: CRITICAL PRACTICE TO 1930

Here I will attempt to isolate the differences between academic and journalistic criticism by reference to the discourses which facilitated the entry of English into academia. Whilst there was little to distinguish the writings of a scholarly journalist from those of an academic critic the fact that English was not perceived as a suitable subject for university level study meant that those who were involved in agitating for its incorporation into courses of study had to turn their attention to considerations of the purpose of criticism and how it might be taught. The problem of turning what, in those provincial universities which actually had courses with a literature component, was little more than "chatter about Shelley" into a viable subject meant that the function and value of English studies was a subject of intense debate. 15

The dominance of nationalistic imperialism in heteroglossia meant that one way of making English an acceptable subject was by treating Literature as a token of Britain's pre-eminence in the field of culture.

Attempts to create a conceptual horizon on the value of English studies which stressed this nationalistic interpretation met with resistance from liberal-humanist accounts in which the deployment of such social criteria in the "purely" aesthetic act of critical understanding was felt to be untenable. The dominance of nationalistic imperialism throughout the period coupled with the accepted authority of a liberal-humanist inspired belle-lettrist aesthetic in critical practice meant that whilst nationalism dominated the arguments for the incorporation of English into the Oxbridge universities the newly established subject rapidly adopted a concern for the "purely" formal matters of textual strategy. Often it appears that the use of nationalistic notions to secure a place for English in higher education was wholly expedient.

In most accounts of the developments of English studies it is argued that the new subject becomes accepted because it was felt to carry a weaker and more readily assimilated set of the cultural values which were supposedly provided for the upper classes through the study of Classics. 16 When this factor was coupled with the wide-spread belief in the subject's "inherent" patriotism it was argued that English would operate as a social cement by providing a common value system in an increasingly stratified society. Once made acceptably

rigorous through the addition of a philological component its entry into the academy was assured. This traditional account is based on over-simplifications which tend to evade the very real discursive antagonisms which informed the development of university level English studies.

In the Nineteenth century the study of English was informed by nationalism but as the century neared its close a new perception arose which emphasised the beneficial moral value of the study of great writers 17; this was derived from Arnoldian notions of culture which by the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth centuries were so dominant that English was incontrovertibly the "civilising subject". 18

Nineteenth Century English study was an odd mixture of Gradgrindian fact learning and belle-lettrist rhetoric in all its incarnations from board school to lecture theatre. 19 For students it meant 'committing to memory the components of a historical map of the literature and language' (Brian Doyle, 'The Hidden History of English Studies', p.25). For teachers of English in the universities the field was divided between textual and philological criticism based on German models of practice and a more ephemeral belle-lettrist approach in

which a text's beauty or an author's genius were the central concerns. 20

It was the notion of English as a civilising subject which came to be the major site from which arguments for its entry into the university curriculum were made. 21 Herein lay an essential contradiction for whilst English was intended to be a means of inculcating moral values those values were unformulated and therefore not readily available for deployment in a pedagogic context:

until the work of I. A. Richards in the late 1920s...early teachers of English literature at universities had to sustain what was for many of their critics a barely legitimate subject on makeshift analogies with the Classics, or on enthusiasm alone.

(Baldick, The Social Mission of English Criticism, Chapter 3, pp.59-85 (p.75))

Furthermore the very context in which teaching took place tended to ensure the re-enforcement of the cultural differences between the teacher and the taught which the subject was notionally going to eradicate.

As the 1870 Education Act began to be implemented there was a growth in the demand for university educated teachers and a parallel growth in the educational opportunities available to middle class women and working and lower middle class men. 22 English became the leading non-technical subject in the Mechanic's Institutes and a core component of the university

extension lectures given in the provinces under the auspices of Oxford and Cambridge. English was established:

as the only academic discipline which embodied not only the high culture of 'polite society' but also the 'national character', the discipline...[was] promoted as uniquely suited to the mission of national cultivation.
(Brian Doyle, English & Englishness, 'Introduction', pp.1-16 (p.12)) 23

The implications of this are significant. English was promoted as a poor man's classics, as the means of conveying an equivalent but necessarily restricted range of sensibilities into the minds of those whose aspirations may otherwise have differed from the dominant social group. Thus the values which informed the promotion of English studies enabled both an evasion of and a reaction to the increasing divergence between popular and 'polite' culture.

The nationalist strain in English studies was bolstered when the Indian Civil Service placed the subject at the core of its entrance examinations. 24 A knowledge of one's cultural heritage was part and parcel of the imperialist conception of the value of all things British. The stress on the value of English made by the Indian Civil Service can be seen as 'officially validating the study of English literature for the good of the Empire' (Baldick, Chapter 3, p.70). As Thomas Babington Macaulay, a prominent member of the committee

which advised the Indian Civil Service about the subjects which its examinations should cover, put it , 'wherever British literature spreads may it be attended by British virtue, British freedom'. (cited in Baldick, p.71). Indeed, by the end of the Nineteenth Century:

the English Subjects [English literature, language, geography and history] were already well established as minimal testing devices for entry into state, semi-state and autonomous professional organizations.
(Doyle, English & Englishness, Chapter 1, pp.17-40 (p.26))

The final ratification of this nationalist sense of the importance of the study of English came with the publication of the findings of the Government committee set up to investigate The Teaching of English in England.²⁵ Whilst the aims for English established in the Newbolt Report were, as Brian Doyle and others have argued, resisted by many academics it is precisely because of the dialogic antagonism it was met with that it represents an important document in my account of the era's critical history.²⁶ The Newbolt Report is important for my concerns for two main reasons. Firstly, as an official statement it operated as both a guide to and goad for the development of academic English and as such establishes one set of the opinions and values which were at stake in that development. Secondly, the Report is an Establishment statement of the social value which is to be accrued from literary experience and therefore a detailed discussion of its

premises will enable me to offer a clearer account of the extent to which the period's non-academic critics diverge from or converge with the Establishment's position when I move on to a discussion of their work in Part 3.

iii. THE NEWBOLT REPORT

The Newbolt Report can be read as an encoding of the general trend of increased antagonistic interaction between the embattled discourse of liberalism and the more dominant nationalist imperialism which occurred in post war Britain. 27 The committee investigating The Teaching of English in England was dominated by members of the English Association, a body set up in 1906 to promote English Literature and Language as vital components of Education. 28 The Newbolt Report promoted values which, whilst modified and perhaps made more urgent in the light of the war, had been generated in the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Century and so the Report may be read as a very detailed statement of the liberal aesthetic discussed above in my brief account of belle lettrist critical practice.

Liberal-humanism was not a very tenable position in the context generated by popular interpretations of the

lessons of war and the entrenchment of domestic politics in the vitriol of industrial disputes which tended to fracture its myth of the commonwealth of Man. Its embattled position informs many of the Newbolt Report's contradictory moments.

As one progresses through the opening section of the Report the arguments used to account for literary value modulate almost from paragraph to paragraph. Early on we are informed that literature:

must be handled from the first as the most direct and lasting communication of experience by man to man. It must never be thought of or represented as an ornament, an excrescence, a mere pastime or an accomplishment: above all it must never be treated as a field of mental exercise remote from ordinary life.

(The Teaching of English in England, p.9)

This normative assessment of literary value promotes realism and is a reaction to criticisms of literary study as a discipline by philologists and classicists like A.S. Napier, Merton Professor of English Language and Literature and E.A. Freeman, Regius Professor of History at Oxford who coined the memorable dismissal of English as being merely 'chatter about Shelley'. It was Freeman's critique of John Churton Collins' agitation for an English school at Oxford which effectively blocked any significant re-organisation of the curriculum. 29

What emerges from the Newbolt Report is a sense that the capacity to understand literary value is dependent upon an individual's social and educational position. For the educator there is direct access to the 'record of human experience' (p.11) offered by the text whilst for the student a literary education is promoted as a means of entry into the field of Culture. The Report is calling for an expansion of English and one of the reasons it does so underscores this distinction between teacher and taught. Giving the lower middle and working classes access to literary experience 'would have important social as well as personal results, it would have a unifying tendency' (p.21). For the committee Literature, via the supposedly unified corpus of values which the canon contains, was felt to be able to operate as a means of fostering social unity, rather as Classics were assumed to have unified the elite.

It would achieve this by engendering nationalistic pride in English literary achievement since it was felt that:

more than any mere symbol it is actually a part of England: to maltreat it or deliberately debase it would be an outrage; to become sensible of its significance and splendour would be to step up to a higher level.
(The Teaching of English in England, p.22)

These feelings for English 'would beget the right kind of national pride' (ibid). It is clear that the committee's intention is to smuggle in its liberal-

humanist aesthetic through an unholy alliance with imperialistic nationalism: the literature is significant because it is English but the begetting of the right kind of national pride from it can only be achieved when liberal pieties are allowed to inform one's understanding; thus liberalism stands as an essential component of the national character and the values of the committee are vindicated. This informs the Report's call for an increase in the provision for English studies in Secondary schools and universities; such an expansion is shaped by the need to produce teachers who are able to inculcate the correct attitude towards English culture and thus English society as well.

The Report presents the teaching of English as a means of re-enforcing social coherence in the fragmented waste land of post war Britain. The committee's emphasis on the social function of literary study and the destabilisation of this notion caused by its dialogic encounter with their underlying belief in the purely aesthetic value of literary experience generates the fault lines of contradiction which riddle the Report. This destabilising dialogism is at its most apparent when one compares the Report's chapters on the teaching of literature in universities and that which takes place in adult education. 30

English at the university is presented as a vehicle by which the student is drawn to the point at which he can understand the civilising humanism which is assumed to inform classical literature (Chapter 7, p.201). This devalues the work of English teachers, the intellectual capabilities of their students and the literary worth of English texts: not for the student of English the classicist's easy access to the eternal verities, rather they have to be led up the primrose path of English letters and only then are they deemed capable of coming to terms with the truly great literatures of classical civilizations.

Having conceded a vast amount of ground to the subject's philological and classicist opponents the committee changes tack when it addresses the idea that because 'a boy should more easily get hold of what a poet is aiming at' (ibid) if he can read texts in his own language the study of English literature is something of a 'soft option' (p.202). Whilst conceding that 'English for an Englishman cannot possess one element of hardness' (p.203) - that of coming to terms with a new language - experienced in the study of the classics, the committee argues that knowing English for the purposes of everyday life is not a knowledge of the same order as that required in studying the literary usage of the English language. Here one can identify a move towards a

position, which I. A. Richards was to exhaustively develop, in which a distinction is to be made between literary language and that of everyday life. 31 The idea that literature is not to be seen as remote from ordinary life, stressed in the opening section of the Report, is noticeably absent from the committee's argument at this point.

For university students English literature was felt to be a means of access to high culture; those who received their literary instruction in the context of secondary or adult education were felt to need literature not simply in order to raise their cultural standards to a level more suited to the fact of their British nationality: literature in these less exalted contexts was seen as a way of ensuring that high culture did not crumble before the onslaught of the philistine values of mass democracy:

Literature, in fact, seems to be classed by a large number of thinking working class men with anti-macassars, fish knives and other unintelligible and futile trivialities of 'middle class culture', and as a subject of instruction is suspect as an attempt 'to sidetrack the working class movement' (The Teaching of English in England, Chapter 8, p.252)

In this attempt to paraphrase the 'thinking working class' view of literature the committee assumes it is giving a knowing parody which is intended to appeal to the unified sense of culture it pre-supposes to exist

amongst its target readership. The paraphrase relies upon a belief in what the committee might have termed the "shockingly misguided cultural Bolshevism" of the working class. Given the social context of the immediate post war years the smug sub-text of this comment represents an evasion: even if there had been general middle and upper class agreement about cultural value, the working class in post-war Britain had little reason to treat anything emanating from those class positions as other than futile, trivial and irrelevant.

Working class leaders, accused of plotting a Bolshevik revolution, of crippling the process of re-establishing the social order through "their" industrial disputes and thus of being unpatriotic to boot, were inevitably suspicious and often downright dismissive of the middle class values which underpinned such accusations. The idea that an encounter with the "eternal Beauty" and "civilised Truth" of a Shakespeare or a Keats would diminish protests over the lack of adequate housing, poor wages, bad working conditions or unemployment and promote a blissful acceptance of one's place in the order of things was wholly naive. 32

The committee's argument changes tack when it goes on to promote a view of literature as a kind of social cement readily available to fill the gaping holes in what, from

their perspective, was a once unified and untroubled cultural sphere: this is clearly an attempt to persuade a Government wary of an educated working class that English literature was a key to the dissolution of the underlying problems which generated class conflict and social unrest. Thus the committee strike a note which is designed to alarm when it claims that the lack of working class interest in literature signifies 'a morbid condition in the body politic which if not taken in hand may be followed by lamentable consequences' (ibid). In order to illustrate how the loss of general literary awareness has weakened social cohesion, the committee offers a brief "historical" account of the supposed Golden Age of the medieval past and of what it characterises as the unified culture of the late Seventeenth and early Eighteenth Centuries (pp.254-255).

In a very superficial way this prefigures similar ascriptions of cultural unity to a Golden Past by Eliot and F.R.Leavis. 33 The most direct influence on the committee's argument here would seem to be C.H.Herford's pamphlet, 'The Bearing of English Studies Upon the National Life'. 34 Herford argues that up until the end of the time of Shakespeare, literature was intimately in touch with the lives of English people. Whilst the committee allow this relation to continue to a later period the deployment of distant and notionally

great ages of civilisation as yardsticks is typical of the historically uncritical nostalgia which overcomes much of the literary criticism in this period when it attempts to deal with the obvious fact that literature and its criticism was something which only appealed to the few. Tied up with this gesture to a glorious past were nationalistic-imperialist notions about the essential qualities of the British people being rooted in the Elizabethan Age of expansion and also Arnoldian conceptions of a liberal-humanist critical aesthetic in which one can fix the 'essential character of a people in its literature, and "read off" the national character' from that literature (Phillip Dodd, 'Englishness and the National Culture', p.11). 35

The committee argues that in the late Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries writers 'dealt mainly with subjects which were of collective interest to the race at large' (p.254). Whilst one could make a case for the broad readership enjoyed by Bunyan or Defoe the idea that Cornish tin-miners and the rakes of Mayfair shared a passion for the social satire of Pope's 'Rape of the Lock' because it tapped a vein of 'collective interest' is patently ridiculous. The committee evades the fact that at the time the percentage of the population who could read was tiny because it desires to construct an ideal past from which to criticise the present. 36 This

vague claim for cultural unity is an example of the Arnoldian 'touchstone'; a subjective attribution of value which those who share the discursive norms of the committee will agree with and which those who are outside the parameters of those discourses must either accept at face value or reject and so be labelled as deviant or, in the committee's terms, "uncivilized". Again one can perceive the operation of the belle-lettrist aesthetic which relies upon a shared culture in its ascriptions of value.

The lack of reasoned analytic argument is a product of the aesthetic available to the committee and evidence of their perspective on its embattled conceptions. On the one hand there is the assumption of coherence which is demanded by the norms of this liberal aesthetic and on the other the awareness that the claims of that discourse are being questioned in the dialogism of heteroglossia. The greater the antagonistic dialogism faced by a discourse in the heteroglossia, the more hermetically monologic that discourse becomes. In ascribing a cultural role to literature the committee have to generate a version of history which validates its assessment of literature's cultural value. This does not allow for the heterogeneity of historical change: the huge evasion of historical fact represented by the committee's claims about the homogeneity of the

reading public is a register of the extent to which their values are embattled in the heteroglossia and it is this which informs the antagonism which met the Report in higher education and not simply the jealous protection of autonomy and authority by the universities. 37

Against the Golden Age of the past the committee sets the grim present in which alienated workers no longer find literature springing from their lives (p.255). In one of its notable changes of tack, the committee goes on to argue that literature has become increasingly the domain of the middle and upper classes and that therefore 'working men felt that any attempt to teach them literature or art was the attempt to impose upon them the culture of another class' (ibid). This situation is unacceptable to the committee, primarily because it fears that a large percentage of the population will turn into cultural hollow men:

we claim that no personality can be complete, can see life steadily and see it whole, without that unifying influence, that purifying of the emotions which art and literature can alone bestow.

(The Teaching of English in England, p.257)

That middle class literature, say one of the texts from Galsworthy's Forsyte Saga, represents seeing life steadily and whole is dubious in itself; that the possibility of "working class literature" is

surreptitiously dismissed as being outside "true" culture is patently ridiculous. The condescension of the committee towards the "unfulfilled" and "incomplete" personalities of the "lower orders" is a product of its desire to use 'the working class as an object, a thing, an instrument for reform' of the education system (Harold Perkin, The Structured Crowd, Chapter 10, pp.169-186 (p.172)). 38

Here the Utilitarian authoritarianism of the committee's liberal-humanist discourse is evident: the working class must become whole persons by taking their literary medicine because they and society will ultimately benefit. It is important to recall that the running and expansion of the British Empire was informed by a similar utilitarian liberalism: 'weaning the ignorant millions from their horrid ways' (Heart of Darkness, Part I, p.10) was a task which was felt to be just as pressing in the domestic context as it was in the colonial: 39

Stepney or Africa, pigmy Pigmies or pigmy Cockneys, the State would have to discharge its responsibilities to both or be dragged down by both.

(Robert Colls, 'Englishness and the Political Culture', p.47)

The denial of the value of native civilizations implicit in colonialism is at work in the committee's cultural colonialism towards the working class.

This colonising impetus is to the fore when the committee argues that the Professor of Literature in the university must shoulder the educated Englishman's burden and become:

a missionary in a more real and active sense than any of his colleagues. He has obligations not merely to the students who come to him to read for a degree, but still more towards the teeming population outside the university walls.

(The Teaching of English in England, p.259)

The archaism of the metaphor and the suggestion of the university as an outpost of progress reveals the very real fear shared by the committee and Government alike that the glories of civilization, English literature included, would be swamped by the philistinism of mass democracy. The Professor of literature going off to lecture at the Mechanic's Institute and the colonialist heading into the dark interior are seen to be carrying out the same function.

The committee's now laughable conflation of roles was intended in all seriousness as a validation of the vital mission of criticism. As Chris Baldick notes, this rhetoric also owes a debt to the Arnoldian conception of literary study functioning as a secular religion but the committee go beyond Arnold to promote a culture for all (The Teaching of English in England, pp.259-60). Baldick is correct to ascribe the committee's concern with the lack of working class interest in literature to the

social factor of greatly increased working class unrest as compared to Arnold's time but he fails to pick up on the obvious links between the justifications for colonialist activity offered by utilitarian liberalism and the justifications for the the characterisation of the working class as lacking culture which I have outlined above. 40

Both the imperialist colonialism of the wider society and the cultural colonialism of the committee share the proselyting rhetoric which Baldick identifies in Arnold but to treat the Report's moral stance as somehow removed from the authoritarian impulse of colonialism is to miss the very dangerous role of the reductionist perspective which the committee deploy. Essentially, liberal colonialism sought to eradicate native consciousness and to replace it with a set of values more suited to the needs of the ruling elite. In the Newbolt Report one can identify a desire to eradicate working class consciousness - to exterminate brutishness - and a wish to replace it with a sense of cultural value which is wholly informed and dictated by the middle class.

Throughout the Report one version of literary experience; one notion of literary value and one version of literary history is promoted. It is hardly

remarkable, given the make up of the committee, that this view is founded upon the liberal aesthetic which first rose to dominance in the late Nineteenth Century. Indeed, it is particularly striking to notice, as will become apparent in the discussion of individual critics in a later section, the extent to which the views represented in the Report remain the most authoritative account of the socio-cultural value of literary experience available in the period 1900 to 1930 as a whole.

The dominance of the literary aesthetic which underpins the Newbolt Report did not go unchallenged. In the universities the versions of the Report's arguments for the cultural value of literary study were only really useful in forcing the issue of its incorporation. The venerable liberal aesthetic it contained was not adequate for pedagogic purposes and throughout this period one witnesses the development of critical apparatus for the study of literature. Initially this concentrated upon the mapping out of fields of investigation in literary histories and the shift to analysis of textual form remained informed by the liberal belief that texts were repositories of timeless values and were to be shielded from "purely" social considerations at all costs.

These generalities are best illuminated in my discussion of the period's critical history as it is revealed in the work of individual critics: for the present it must suffice to say that the key discourses in the critical sphere were a belle-lettrist impressionism which was fuelled by a liberal aesthetic and shaped by a reactionary imperialistic nationalism which understood literature and its history to be part of the cultural authority of the British. Those versions of critical practice which were in opposition to this dominant account took their authority from what, for contemporaries, were perceived as foreign "revolutions" in textual practice.

In order to complete my overview of the critical practice of the period 1900 to 1930 it is necessary to spend some time examining the changing "theories" of textual practice available to writers for it is through its encounter with the products of those theories that the period's critical practice comes to change.

iv. VERSIONS OF TEXTUAL PRACTICE: 1880 - 1930

In this vast and vexed period in the history of literary ideas I can only force instances of trembling order and insubstantial labels on the discursive positions which

for a time rise to dominate as the avant garde account of textual practice. 41

Broadly speaking the versions of textual practice available in the period can be said to succeed each other in a dialogic process in which a new mode challenged and displaced, but did not eradicate, the mode which had previously been at the cutting edge of the avant garde. These phases overlap and the fact that the avant garde had moved on did not mean that its discarded account of textual practice became the dominant mode against which development could be assessed. However, one may argue that the phases fall in the following order.

Realism overthrew Romanticism in the wake of the failure of the revolutions of 1848 to bring about a radically new cultural order; it remained dominant until a combination of economic uncertainty, the growing materialism of the middle class, the alienation of many writers and the interdiscursive dominance of the positivist and rationalist modes of science interacted to create the site of Naturalism. Naturalism enabled the disenchanted writer to rebel against the values of the middle class because it promoted the depiction of society and of individual interaction in a way which questioned the validity of notions of an harmonious

social order. Naturalism was only a stop-gap and in the late Nineteenth Century, and on into the Twentieth, impressionist and symbolist modes informed the turn to the subjective psychological concerns of early modernism and the establishment of textual strategies which enabled the individual consciousness to be rendered. 42

In turn this early modernism was being replaced by the:

self-conscious and self-advertising schools. Futurists, Imagists, Surrealists, Cubists, Vorticists, Formalists and Constructivists... [who] announced their arrival with a passionate and scornful vision of the new, and as quickly became fissiparous, friendships breaking across the heresies required in order to prevent innovations becoming fixed orthodoxies. (R. Williams, 'When was Modernism?', p.32) 43

In many ways the newness of a discourse was in actuality constituted by the distinctive orientation which it gave to the potentialities contained in the discourse it sought to displace. Thus Realism took Romanticism's stress on the individual as the centre of textual practice but denied the latter's concern with the imaginative; replacing it with a concern for the individual interactions which go to make up everyday life. Realist textual practice, in its concern for social interaction opened the way for Naturalism to bring to bear an "objective" point of view or even a philosophical system in its accounts of society: rather than "just" presenting social behaviour texts produced in mode sought to analyse it. Naturalism's focus on the often grim lives of the very ordinary informed middle

class resistance to it. The reaction to Naturalism, like the response to the realist novel, galvanised writers in their distrust of the values of the middle class:

Hostile or indifferent or merely vulgar, the bourgeois was the mass which the creative artist must either ignore and circumvent, or now increasingly shock, deride and attack' (R.Williams, 'The Politics of the Avant-Garde', p.53)⁴⁴

This led to a situation in which many writers who operated in a Naturalist mode were denounced as 'the leading enemies of society' (Stromberg, Realism, Naturalism & Symbolism, 'Introduction', pp.ix-xxxvi (p.xiii)). As the Nineteenth Century drew to a close many writers turned from verisimilitude and developed the formal side of their work, taking the notion of "Art for Art's Sake" to its logical extreme in the withdrawal from bourgeois values which informed the Decadence of the 1890's and the return to more idealist modes of textual practice in the work of symbolists and impressionists.

Like most "isms", those which concern me here were never really unified and coherent bodies of thought. Rather they are to be understood as signs of the gradual break up of mid Century notions of cultural unity which in turn provides evidence of the destabilising power of popular encodings of the work of Darwin and Nietzsche

and, later, of Einstein and Freud. The general trend of this destabilisation, in both the literary and wider social spheres, was to inform a concentration upon the individual as the site of perception in literary impressionism and in the popular understanding of Einstein's theory of relativity. A similar focus can be identified in the new sociology of Weber with his emphasis on the individual as a motivator of social action and as a register of the state of the nation or as representing the spirit of the age. It is also worth recalling that the centrality of the individual finds expression in the Dictionary of National Biography in Britain and similar lexicon's produced in France and Germany in the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries. From this brief overview it is possible to suggest that many of the shifts in literary technique were the product of aesthetic encodings of ideas or values first deployed in society at large.

Thus the move from Realism to a philosophically motivated Naturalism can be seen as the product of the spread of positivist modes of thought and as an interpretation of the notions of Darwin. Given that Man, in these newly dominant discourses, is perceived as an instinctual animal striving to survive in an uncaring universe, the depiction of social interaction had to take on a new significance and this motivated the

change from Realist to Naturalist modes. Darwinism, as it engaged with the hegemonic discourses of the mid-Nineteenth Century, acted as a catalyst for scepticism and so prompted a more fatalistic view of life; 'to be "naturalistic" meant, in one important sense, to explain all things without recourse to supernatural power' (Stromberg, p.xx) as the Romantics had done with their stress on the inexplicable "power" of the Imagination.

It is the fatalistic pessimism of Naturalism which enabled proto-modernists to focus upon the operation of irrational impulses which cracked the shallow veneer of civilization. It also engendered the hedonistic idealism of Decadence through a process of antagonistic dialogism. For the Decadents, Naturalism was a blind alley which did not sufficiently challenge bourgeois conceptions of society and its culture. The Decadents turned away from the commonplace and focused upon exotic subjects which were even more distant from bourgeois experience than the "low-life" depicted under the constraints of Naturalism.

Decadence was central to the mood of the fin de siècle; its reaction against positivism, shaped by the anxieties occasioned by the increasingly fraught clashes of the imperialist powers, meant that the literary circles of the 1890s were at the forefront of what came to be

perceived as a general rejection of Victorian values:

45

In so far as anti-Victorianism functioned on a coherent, comprehensive level, it can be seen as a complete rejection or reformulation of all of those key concepts governing mid-Victorian thought - Free Trade, Progress, Self-Help, Respectability, Christian Duty.
(P. Keating, The Haunted Study, Chapter 2, pp.91-151 (pp.101-102)) 46

The Decadent's rejection of the premises of Naturalism informed the growing concentration upon the formal qualities of literary production which produced the outlook crystallized by the phrase "Art for Art's Sake". This concern with technique spilled over into Symbolism, which fused an idealist subjectivism with technical innovation in its borrowings from decadent models of textual practice. Symbolism generated texts which were perceived as being classical in form and romantic in content (Stromberg, p.xxiv). Such contemporary accounts are a response to the evident commitment of symbolist writers like Mallarme to a version of literary experience which stressed the imaginative and spiritual as viable alternatives to the dominant materialism of the Age.

For Arthur Symons, the British poet and critic who promoted symbolism through his influential book The Symbolist Movement in Literature and his work as editor of The Savoy, symbolism was 'an attempt to spiritualise

literature, to evade the old bondage of rhetoric, the bondage of exteriority. Description is banished that beautiful things may be evoked, magically'. (Keating, Chapter 2, pp.91-151 (p.117)). This description owes a debt to W.B.Yeats - whom Symons was closely associated with - and his belief in the operation of occult forces in poetic creation; in turn this was derived from European exponents of symbolism who saw poetry as the means of bringing otherworldly insights to bear upon emotional situations. 47 In Europe, the influence of Nietzsche informed the darker and more febrile nature of symbolist theory and practice (Stromberg, p.xxv). Such raw philosophic symbolism was not a significant factor in Britain

Symbolism was a refinement of a generally anti-bourgeois stance amongst writers which, in Britain, can be traced back to the cultural criticism of the middle class made by Ruskin and Arnold but was given a more radical edge by Decadents like Beardsley and Wilde. 48 In Britain, symbolism generated a high degree of negative criticism: in critical circles this was driven by the perceived links between symbolism and home grown decadence and made a more easy response after the public outcry at the antics of Wilde. 49 That such criticism was informed by the artistic strictures of the now dominant realism reveals the extent to which dialogism

is confined to the immediate heteroglot context; for realism was part of the break up of cultural values which had enabled symbolism to come into existence. The fierce subjectivism of many symbolists, in the context of the growing crisis of rationalism and the associated mood of uncertainty in the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries, made it an inevitable target for the older generation of critics who had been socialized into the discursive norms of a more positivist and confident era (Stromberg, p.xxvii).

These modes of thought about textual practice entered into the literary practice of different nations through a process of dialogic interaction with more uniquely national traditions but a general trend does emerge. The French were generally the originators, or the most forceful propagandists, of a new artistic or literary movement; where they led much of intellectual Europe followed (Stromberg, p.xxix). As the Nineteenth Century drew to a close, with nationalism bolstered by imperial expansion, a ready enthusiasm for foreign innovation in heteroglossia it is not surprising to find that in Britain texts which diverged from those norms of textual practice were often criticised for displaying foreign influence. 50 Peter Keating concisely sums up the history of the influence of European ideas on

British writers in his argument that:

there were two main phases of foreign influence... during this period [1880-1914]. In the 1880s and 1890s the scene was dominated by French realism, naturalism and to a lesser extent symbolism, by Ibsen and the Russian novelists, notably Turgenev and Tolstoy. Then in the few years immediately preceding the First World War there was a further astonishing influx of ideas and artistic inspiration from Europe. However, unlike the earlier period, there was not a prominent emphasis on European fiction. Much of the experimental excitement focused on other forms of art - on Post-Impressionist and Cubist painting; the Russian ballet; Strauss, Debussy, and Stravinsky; French symbolist poetry; Marinetti and the Futurists. British novelists were influenced by these new styles and movements in a variety of ways, but immediately they experienced just as great an impact from the delayed arrival in Britain of the work of a slightly older generation of writers, philosophers and dramatists... Dostoevsky and Freud...[;] Strindberg [and] ...Chekhov [;]...Bergson and Nietzsche
(P. Keating, The Haunted Study, Chapter 2, pp.91-151 (pp.131-132))

After the War Britain experienced what may be seen as something of a literary renaissance as modernist modes of textual practice were developed. In the interests of clarity the following discussion of their development is limited to an account of general trends.

Raymond Williams has convincingly argued that the metropolis is a key social and cultural factor in the shift to modernism: as a melting pot of nationalities and their value systems the great cities of Europe - especially Paris but also Berlin, Munich, Vienna, Turin

and, to a lesser extent London - were sites of complex social relations and liberties of expression. 51 Many of the acknowledged innovators who created versions of a modernist textual practice came into these centres as immigrants from the more stultifying cultural milieus of other national cultures or the provinces.

When one recalls that the prime movers of literary modernism in Britain include one Pole (Conrad); two Irishmen (Yeats and Joyce); three Americans (Henry James, Ezra Pound and T.S.Eliot) and one provincial Englishman (D.H.Lawrence) one can begin to shade in the contours of truth behind Williams's generalization that:52

Liberated or breaking from their national or provincial cultures, placed in quite new relations to those other native languages... encountering meanwhile a novel and dynamic common environment from which many of the older forms were obviously distant, the artists and writers and thinkers of this phase found the only community available to them: a community of the medium...Thus language was perceived quite differently. It was no longer... customary and naturalized, but in many ways arbitrary and conventional... language was more evident as a medium - a medium that could be shaped and reshaped -than as a social custom. (Williams, 'The Emergence of Modernism', pp.45-46)

This focus on the language of fiction and on modes of textual practice owed a debt to the work of symbolists and to the growing sense of language as an arbitrary

medium which, for the period, was crystallized in the linguistics of Saussure.

In modernism writers engaged with received forms and the possibility of new modes of textual practice by treating language as central to their literary endeavour; 'languages become the discontinuities on which we base our perceptions and creative work in words becomes the way by which we can see.' (Karl, Modern and Modernism, Chapter 2, pp.40-79 (p.68)). 53 The early phase of literary modernism is marked by a rejection of the liberal aesthetic which held that the text's formal qualities could be accessed without reference to its content. As Conrad argued in his 'Preface' to The Nigger of the 'Narcissus', 'a work that aspires, however humbly, to the condition of art should carry its justification in every line':54

The cultural forms of the 'old, settled' language (always, in practice, never settled, however old) were indeed, at one level, the imposed forms of a dominant class and its discourse.
(Williams, 'Language and the Avant-Garde', p.79)

Thus the development of modernist textual practices was part and parcel of the wider discursive antagonisms in which the ideas of modern science generated responses within the heteroglossia which worked for the

destabilisation of hegemonic notions of social interaction.

The reciprocity of discursive interaction in the generation of these changes is illuminated in Frederic Karl's account of the rapid mutations in the history of ideas during the period 1880 to 1930. It is germane to quote this at length:

Within a fifty year span, we can list symbolism, Decadence, naturalism... expressionism, fauvism, cubism,...quantum mechanics, relativity, imagism, vorticism, Italian futurism, Russian futurism, Dada, surrealism, tactilism, dynamism, Russian imagism, Russian symbolism, Orphism, serialism, constructivism and neoplasticism, abstractionism and others. Many of these movements obviously owe a great deal to previous or parallel forces, with symbolism and naturalism nourishing several movements in the later nineteenth century, cubism and expressionism fuelling numerous others in the early twentieth. Still others are natural outgrowths of what preceded - futurism from the "new science" or, later, surrealism deriving from Dada and from Freud's theories of the unconscious. Once abstractionism with Picasso, Braque, Kandinsky took hold then it became the measure of all plastic art, and its influence appeared in a number of other areas: in literature, which became increasingly internalised, in stream of consciousness and related methods.

(Karl, Modern and Modernism, Chapter 3, pp.80-169 (p.118))

What occurs in British modernism in the later 1910s and the 1920s is a rejection of traditional forms and traditional accounts of social and literary experience which was fuelled by an interpretation of the motives

behind the First World War which characterised many of the hegemonic discourses of the pre-War heteroglossia as no longer viable. I cannot hope to chart the different versions of modernist textual practice represented by the work of Pound, Eliot, Lawrence or Joyce for they constitute areas of diversity which cannot, in any meaningful way, be summarized. However, some exploration of this diversity will be essayed in my examination of the proselyting critical practice of modern authors like Eliot and Woolf in the next section of this work.

In summing up the characteristics of modernist textual practice, at least in the period 1918 to 1930, I want to stress that the major area in which it represented a break from the past was in its shifting of the parameters of the debate about literary representations of reality from a concern with the accurate depiction of the social to one which focused upon individual perception and its mediation and actualization of the social. This is linked to an increased concern with the techniques of writing and a questioning of how an author can communicate with the reader. The upshot of this is that whilst the writers of modernist texts 'exposed the literary parochialism and ideological limits of dominant English liberal culture [they

also]...prompted...a subsequent mutation in critical ideology, and a quite fundamental alteration in the features of modern English literature' (Brooker and Widdowson, 'A Literature for England, p.159) 55

Before moving on to discuss individual practitioners of literary criticism I want to devote a little time to the question of how the fiction of Joseph Conrad, and in particular Heart of Darkness, fits into the framework of changes in textual practice set out above. I am not claiming an exhaustive study of the influences at work on Conrad which led to his distinctive literary style, this would be a major work in its own right; rather I want to suggest why particular textual strategies enabled contemporary reviewers to construct particular ascriptions of influence. It is the operation of distinctive orientations of opinion, generated by discourses interacting to form the period's literary heteroglossia, in the criticism of Conrad's fiction which concerns me here.

Conrad's fiction is informed by discursive norms derived from symbolism and its offshoot, impressionism. 56 Thus, as Ian Watt argues, the innovations in textual practice which are a feature of Conrad's work 'reflect both the general ideological crisis of the late Nineteenth

Century and the literary innovations which accompanied it' (Conrad in the Nineteenth Century, Chapter 4, pp.126-253 (p.168)).

Impressionism was a term applied to the new art of the 1870s and 1880s associated with the work of Claude Monet. Yet in the reciprocity which characterises discursive interaction in the period it was soon applied to writers whose work seemed to possess the qualities commonly associated with impressionist art; 'to works that were spontaneous and rapidly executed, that were vivid sketches rather than detailed, finished and premeditated compositions' (Watt, p.172). Impressionism in literature was part of the reaction against the overly philosophic ponderings of Naturalism.

In art it was the painter's subjective vision which provided the subject of the painting whilst in literature it was the individual perceptions of the characters which became a central concern of texts produced in this mode. Both versions took part of their impetus from the general decline of rationalism as a viable explanation for behaviour in the late Nineteenth century: once Nietzsche and Darwin had murdered God all notions of omniscience were readily classifiable as outmoded. In literary impressionism the stress upon the

confused understanding of the individual and the related emphasis on the psychological as opposed to the social marks an important divergence from realism (Watt, p.171).

Conrad's deployment of the techniques of impressionism could be illustrated by several sequences from his early fiction, one of the best examples being that in Heart of Darkness in which Marlow describes the attack on the river steamer and the subsequent death of the helmsman (Part 1, pp.46-47). However, this is somewhat canonical in accounts of his impressionism and my purposes are equally well served by the following passage from Lord Jim: the Engineer of the Patna is arguing with the Captain on the bridge:

He let go the rail and made ample gestures as if demonstrating in the air the shape and extent of his valour; his thin voice darted in prolonged squeaks upon the sea, he tiptoed back and forth for the better emphasis of utterance, and suddenly pitched down head-first as though he had been clubbed from behind. He said 'Damn!' as he tumbled; an instance of silence followed upon his screeching: Jim and the skipper staggered forward by common accord, and catching themselves up, stood very stiff and still gazing, amazed, at the undisturbed level of the sea. Then they looked up at the stars.

What had happened? The weazy thump of the engines went on. Had the earth been checked in her course? They could not understand...
(Lord Jim, Chapter 3, pp.19-26 (p.26)57

Neither can the reader on an initial reading. The location of the narrative perspective in **medias res**

generates this confusion by refusing to break with the sequence of perception and it is only in a subsequent paragraph that the fact that the ship has passed over a submerged obstacle becomes clear. Conrad gives access to the scene via a limited point of view which means that the reader has to "experience" the event as the characters do: this curtailment of narrative omniscience enabled contemporary commentators to describe his technique as impressionistic.

Symbolism was closely related to impressionism; much the same concern with individual perception can be found in arguments for both discourses (Watt, p.181). Symbolism was a more literary discourse than impressionism and as such it had a greater impact in contemporary discussions of textual practice. Rene Wellek argues that the incorporation of symbolist versions of textual practice into critical understanding represents one of the most significant changes undergone by literary criticism in the early Twentieth Century. 58

The dominant British understanding of symbolism's implications for critical and textual practice was provided by Arthur Symons and W.B.Yeats. For these writers, the symbol was the vehicle through which the material and spiritual met.⁵⁹ For symbolism in the

Yeatsian "tradition" it was the writer's task to express personal insights impersonally; to deploy an emotionally charged content through the clarity afforded by a "classical" concern with literary form.

Conrad rejected the underlying assumption of this version of symbolism primarily because the artistic criteria he derived from the influence of writers like Flaubert and Turgenev and, to a lesser extent James and Ford, prompted a more "impressionist" concern with the overall unity of form and content. What Conrad appears to have derived from symbolist accounts of textual practice is a desire to render the imaginative impact of experience as accurately as possible given the limitations of language to engage with what, for symbolists, verged on the inexpressible. The argument informing this position is that expressed by Proust:

the truths which the intellect apprehends directly in the world of full and unimpeded light have something less profound, less necessary than those which life communicates to us against our will in an impression which is material because it enters us through the senses but yet has a spiritual meaning which it is possible for us to extract.

(The Past Recaptured) 60

The upshot of the in-mixing of an impressionist desire to base textual practice on the muddled perception of protagonists in the midst of events and a symbolist concern to shape the language of fiction to enable those

events to have their full imaginative impact is a narrative technique which Henry James memorably described as 'a prolonged hovering flight of the subjective over the outstretched ground of the case exposed' ('The New Novel', p.381). 61

Conrad's literary technique thus owes a debt to impressionism and symbolism: it is the product of his conceptual horizon on discursive norms from both discourses. His distinctive utilisation of these ideas about textual practice enabled contemporary critics to locate his texts in the context of a foreign tradition - with all that this implies in the era of nationalistic imperialism - whilst simultaneously marking a distinct advance in textual practice which later writers were able to consolidate upon in developing their own versions of modernism.

In his work with Ford on a new narrative technique which would allow the rendering of experience in a way that suggested the confused impact of events upon the mind; in his debt to what contemporary commentators would have seen as Jamesian notions regarding the unity of form and content, and in his own 'Preface' to The Nigger of the 'Narcissus' with its stress on making the reader hear, feel and see through the power of the written word: in

all these areas one can perceive Conrad's debt to what is properly understood as the symbolist aim of exploring 'the rich possibilities...of linguistic indirection' (Wimsatt and Brooks, Modern Criticism, Chapter 26, pp.583-609 (p.595). 62

In Heart of Darkness the "confused" operation of analeptic and proleptic shifts and Marlow's repeated insistence on the inability of language to re-cover experience are obvious markers of the presence of symbolist discursive norms. 63 Mallarmé's definition of the aims and methods of symbolism offers an account of textual practice which resonates in the aesthetic which informs Heart of Darkness:

To name an object is to do away with three quarters of the enjoyment of the poem which is derived from the satisfaction of guessing little by little; to suggest it, that is the illusion. It is the perfect handling of the mystery that constitutes the symbol: to evoke an object little by little in order to show a state of mind or inversely to choose an object and to disengage from it a state of mind, by a series of unriddlings.

(Réponse à une Enquête,) 64

Before I offer an examination of how Heart of Darkness's obvious borrowings from new accounts of textual practice were responded to by the literary critics of the period it is necessary to offer an intermediate synthesis of the issues discussed thus far. This is best provided through an analysis of the critical practice of leading

figures in the period's literary critical circles: individual's whose work established the framework for the period's critical practice. In the next section of this work I shall give weight to my account of criticism and of the versions of textual practice available to it and, through my analysis of the work of leading practitioners, will offer further support for my theory of the operation of discourse as a motivating factor in critical practice.

PART 3: THE PRACTICE OF LITERARY CRITICISM: 1900 - 1930

In this section I offer brief accounts of the critical practice of the period's leading practitioners, suggesting ways in which their work illuminates the interaction of discourses discussed at a more abstract level in previous sections. I examine the work of literary journalists, academics and that of writers who were producing criticism at this time.

Here my interaction with my sources changes: whilst I rely upon them for the historical framework of dates and inter-relations I base my characterisation of critical practice on personal readings from works of criticism. Since I am concerned to establish the operation of discourse as a motive for distinctive orientations of critical opinion in the period I have tended to avoid canonical critical texts in favour of works which are less overdetermined in recent literary histories. From a Bakhtinian perspective any text ought to provide evidence which enables one to place its author in his dialogic context:

Any utterance - the finished, written utterance not excepted - makes response to something and is calculated to be responded to in turn...Each monument carries on the work of its predecessors, polemicizing with them...Each monument in actuality is an integral part of science, literature or political life. The monument, as any other monologic utterance, is set towards being perceived in the context of current scientific or current literary

affairs...it is perceived in the generative process of that particular ideological domain of which it is an integral part.
(Marxism and the Philosophy of Language, Part II, Chapter 2, pp.65-82 (p.72)) 1

In what follows I establish the context from which each a critic was writing in a more or less a self-contained assessment of the parameters of an individual critic's conceptual horizon on the discourses of the literary and social heteroglossia but an overview does emerge. In each case I seek to place the critic in relation to the discourses I have identified in previous chapters by examining his work for traces of the distinctive orientations of opinion generated by adherence to a particular discourse. Whilst I offer an assessment of the contemporary status of the critic under discussion and comment upon his success or failure I am primarily concerned with an examination of the relative authority of a particular discourse and with an illustration of the ways in which its adherents were directed to examine texts

i. LITERARY JOURNALISTS & ACADEMIC CRITICS

Arthur Symons

As noted in the discussion of symbolism in the previous section of this work, Symons was the leading

practitioner of what may loosely be described as a symbolist influenced criticism. 2 He was one of the most influential critics of the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries: through his reviews in journals as diverse as the Star and the Athenaeum, via his editorial policy on the Savoy, in books and through his extensive contacts with 'virtually every important French or British writer of the time', Symons was at the heart of the literary scene (Beckson, Arthur Symons, 'Introduction', pp.1-3 (p.2)). 3

I have chosen to examine one of his many collections of essays; partly to gauge the range of his critical interests but more importantly to assess the norms which provide him with his critical criteria. Symons was influenced by the Victorian aestheticism of Walter Pater as well as by French impressionist and symbolist writers of the decadent fin de siècle: his criticism contains a typical mixture of old and new ideas about textual practice. 4

In his Studies in Prose and Verse (1904), Symons declares that in criticism he is solely concerned with 'first principles' ('Dedication', pp.v-vi (p.v)): this essentially means that he wishes to recover the author's intentions by imaginatively resurrecting what he understands the writer's view point to be. 5 This

practice is motivated by a symbolist desire to uncover what today might be termed the idiolectic transformations of sociolect codes and it enables Symons to avoid comparison and biography and to concentrate upon the imaginative intensity of a work. Symons rejects the idea that criticism is 'an examination with marks and prizes' ('Dedication', p.v) and argues for what may be classified as an informed subjectivity. Criticism should be 'an evaluation of Forces' (ibid) in which the critic is concerned 'with force only in its kind and degree' (ibid). As with Yeats, and with symbolism generally, it is the unique intensity of a given author which provides the focus for Symons' criticism. 6

In the brief introduction to his Studies in Prose and Verse, 'Fact in Literature' (pp.1-4), Symons sounds a note which recalls Henry James' 1899 critique of reviewers, when he argues that the growth of the market for criticism has hastened the decline of literary standards because all works are reviewed and not just those of merit (p.1). 7 Symons regards this lessening of literary standards as a symptom of a broader change in which the growth of the popular Press and its fostering of a desire for facts is seen to have hastened the destruction of the cultural conditions in which the Beautiful was important (p.2). Here Symons reveals his

aesthete, anti-bourgeois roots; his argument is underpinned by a feeling that middle class utilitarian and materialist values have destroyed the significance of imaginative truth. Individuals now demand factual news which, for Symons, merely displays 'the foulness of everyday, day by day, morning and evening' (p.3).

Yet Symons goes on to imply that a turn to an inscrutable aestheticism is in many ways an evasion of the task of the literary critic. Citing Arnold, he argues that the ideas expressed in literature are actually especially valuable kinds of facts about humanity. There is little hope of these imaginative truths becoming widely disseminated or understood because the 'plague' (ibid) of popular journalism has already destroyed all possibility of a rapprochement between Art and the common man. Indeed, Symons suggests that the values informing this separation of opinion are spreading throughout society and so no matter how True a text's account of experience is that account will not be wholly accepted because it is couched in imaginative terms: 'the answer will be considered, at the best, a little unsatisfactory, because a plain man wants a plain answer'(p.4).

These deliberations lead Symons to claim that the diversity of taste in society is a fact which criticism

has to learn to accept. Taken together, the introductory essay and the Dedication to this volume alert the reader that Symons is writing for a restricted range of readers who share his belief in the significance of imaginative fact. The defensive tone of both pieces illustrates the fact that Symons discursive norms are in an antagonistic dialogue with other discourses of the heteroglossia.

The scope of Symons' book implies an uncomplicated sense of the accessibility of texts which fails to take into account the symbolist "revelation" of the non-notational character of language. In his belief in the fixed nature of meaning and the consequently uncomplicated nature of its accession one can identify a gap between the textual strategies of the avant garde and criticism's understanding of the implications of those strategies. This also illustrates how "foreign" discourses were re-shaped by their interaction with native ones.

Symons' discussions cover European literature and criticism of the recent past and are essentially concerned with those writers who are new or who have influenced the new. With those authors who are closest to his own criteria of intensity and imagination Symons formulates with clarity and assurance. Although he

tends to describe what happens in a given text he also draws out recurrent themes and evaluates a work's power to affect the imagination. There is a tendency to analyse the author's mind as it is "revealed" in a text and to offer impressions rather than illustrated points. Symons' 'fateful fluency' (Beckson, Chapter 3, pp.30-52 (p.31)) is his major limitation as a critic; when compared to the informed pondering of Saintsbury or Quiller-Couch his arguments are often ephemeral. This quality of Symons' prose is a product of his symbolist belief that imaginative intensity was the prime requirement of any textual practice: in its most effective moments the fervid outpouring of ideas in this style enables Symons to 'isolate the significant moment, revealing the truth of character and situation when moment becomes symbol' (Beckson, Chapter 3, pp.30-52 (p.35)). In his desire to 'strike through the words to the meaning; and deeper, to that meaning's meaning' (Dedication, p.v) Symons engages with the text to a far greater extent than many of his contemporaries discussed below.

As many commentators note, Symons' tendency to produce 'striking formulations' (Wellek, English Criticism 1900-1950, Chapter 1, pp.1-22 (p.16)) is a product of the interaction of British aestheticism and French symbolism: the resulting stress on the centrality of

imaginative verisimilitude lends his criticism its distinctive energy. This discursive nexus can be seen in operation in his discussion of Zola, 'A Note on Zola's Method' (pp.152-163). This contains the liberal critique of Naturalism in the complaint that Zola's vision of Man is too dark and the symbolist rejection of technique in the argument that Zola's work lacks spiritual intensity because it is devoted to an earthbound and pessimistic depiction of social interaction. This is summed up in Symons' complaint that Zola 'sees the beast in all its transformations, but he sees only the beast' (p.163).

Throughout this work Symons can be seen to deploy symbolist criteria as the basis of his critical judgements. Thus he laments that Maupassant can be read rapidly and simply for "the story" because in truly great fiction the story is 'never more than the means to an end, to the interpretation, the new creation of life' ('Guy de Maupassant', pp.97-107 (pp.105-106)); Tolstoy and Gorky are lauded for what Symons sees as their passionate concern 'to find out the meaning of life' and for their interest in the soul ('The Russian Soul', pp.164-182 (p.169)); Meredith is praised because through 'the intensity of his vision' he shows us an alternate world, the 'living imagination' behind it being the means by which we are made 'thrillingly conscious' of

our own ('A Note on George Meredith', pp.143-151 (p.151)). These comments, and others like them, reveal the debt to and allegiance with the discursive constraints of symbolism in Symons' critical practice.

One of the most interesting essays in Symons' collection, for my present purpose, is his comment upon the contemporary critical scene in 'A Censor of Critics' (pp.183-191). This piece was prompted by John Churton Collins' Ephemera Critica: or; Plain Truths about Current Literature; the title alone would have excited Symons' symbolist distaste for the mundane and the commonsensical. Collins' book was prompted by his rage at the literary establishment over his failure to win the Merton Professorship of English Language and Literature in 1885; that the post went to A.S.Napier, 'a philologist with no literary interests' (Wellek, English Criticism: 1900-1950, Chapter 2, pp.23-54 (pp.24-25), merely intensified his disgust. Collins sought to reshape university English studies, calling for a reduction in the role given to the classics and philology and stressing the virtues of amassing a detailed knowledge of British literary history.

This kind of nationalistic purpose for English studies was not without its supporters, as my discussion in the preceding section illustrated, but Collins' "uncouth"

attacks upon the Oxford Establishment meant that he was shunned by the majority of critics and his vociferous calls for reform were quashed. Collins' 1901 book is part of his ongoing crusade against the literary Establishment and, as a prominent member of that group, Symons' article is part of the process of negating the aims and underlying values of Collins' crusade. 8

Symons' piece is an assured put down. Ironically, this assurance of tone illustrates the truth of Collins' claim that criticism is controlled by a clique. Thus Symons' counter claim that Collins is suffering from an overactive imagination represents a complete evasion of the reality of the situation ('A Censor of Critics', p.183). As a spokesman for the new Symons is quick to dismiss Collins' claim that modern literature is worthless; this claim, he suggests, is based on rather misguided notions (p.188). Symons becomes strategically self-depreciating when he claims that he knows little of modern fiction but feels that the praise of reputable reviewers cannot be so easily dismissed. He implies that rather than attacking the critics, Collins should show that he has read and understood the texts they are commenting upon.

Having suggested that Collins' argument is inaccurate and his breadth of knowledge inadequate, Symons goes on

to question whether there is anything to actually argue about. This enables him to characterize Collins as completely misguided when he claims to have discovered 'something startling' (p.189). Symons suggests that it is inevitable, given the growing numbers of unsophisticated readers, that the bulk of contemporary literature is directed at the mass:

good art, except sometimes the very greatest, so great that it possesses every quality, even commercial value, has never been a money making commodity.
('A Censor of Critics', ibid)

Collins, it emerges, is not a true man of letters because he is dismayed by the fact that "a good book will not be praised" (p.188). Collins is regarded as being unable to comprehend the processes of ascribing literary value because he has failed to realise that 'the present time is not exceptional in its disregard for good art, there it is but repeating history' (p.190). Whilst Symons agrees with Collins that the present range of bad art is much broader than in previous eras he argues that this is not a problem since good art and good criticism will survive as long as critics and good writers distance themselves from the demands of the masses.

In Symons' criticism one can see the workings of a praxis which is informed by European symbolism and notions of aesthetic value derived from more distinctly

national literary norms. His trail blazing allegiance to the norms of a new discourse is made more acceptable for his contemporary audience by his deployment of more traditional norms of literary criticism.

Walter Raleigh

Raleigh was an academic, but like many of his contemporaries, his critical practice took its guiding principles from Nineteenth Century notions which promoted a criticism that was based upon considered subjective appreciation. He was the first truly literary Professor of English at Oxford, taking the post of Merton Professor in 1904 when it was split between language and literature. ⁹ Prior to Oxford, Raleigh had enjoyed a varied academic career. From 1885 to 1887 he taught English at Aligarh's anglo-oriental college but by 1888 he had lost interest in his work because of the teaching methods imposed by the college. ¹⁰ He returned to England and, after a brief period as a lecturer on the Oxford extension circuit, took up temporary duties as Professor of English at Owen's College, Manchester; again he was dissatisfied by the existing method of organization and when the Chair of English at Liverpool was offered he moved West. Raleigh worked at Liverpool until 1900 when he took up the Regius Professorship of

English Language and Literature at Glasgow. His move to Oxford in 1904 was reluctant, primarily because by that time Raleigh was increasingly plagued by doubts about the value of literary study and of literary criticism.

Raleigh was neither a pedantic academic nor an idealistic believer in the spiritual or social value of literary experience. In his criticism he is close to the higher kind of literary journalism discussed in the previous section of this work: his criticism is impressionistic, confidently opinionated and rhetorically persuasive. By the time he came to Oxford his reforming zeal had largely been eradicated but in his time there he managed to build a modern English school from virtually nothing. 11

D.J.Palmer's account of Raleigh, in The Rise of English Studies, underplays his great distaste for criticism as it was practised in the universities. Raleigh's letters are full of laments about the problems of teaching literature and reveal his very low opinion of his colleagues and his students; in a letter to his sister Jessie, for example, he comments:

It takes a bullet-headed, stupid kind of man to do the work at these colleges...I lectured on Shelley today to gaping loons and wanted to be carried out on a stretcher...Of course they do not want to hear any of Shelley, but I could make them if I had a free hand...But if I tried

to give real Literature lectures - a criticism of Life-I should soon come into conflict with the Powers.

(The Letters of Sir Walter Raleigh: Volume I, 'To His Sister Jessie, May 12th 1889, pp.127-129)

Raleigh was an odd mixture of macho nationalist and sensitive man of letters. Indeed, he eventually left teaching to become a war historian and Government propagandist. Raleigh's nationalism makes him something of a hero worshipper; for him the great British authors were sources of nationalistic pride. Rene Wellek's descriptive account of Raleigh's criticism offers a critic of 'considerable miscellaneous learning' (Chapter 2, p.26) who had a contempt for systematic criticism which left him with only subjective criteria on which to base his judgements. Chris Baldick concurs on these points and suggests that Raleigh's author centred studies enabled him to evade distasteful forays into criticism by allowing him to concentrate upon revivifying the genius behind the work rather than explaining the ways the work enabled an individual to attain a higher cultural sensibility. 12

The posthumous collection, Some Authors, contains a range of essays on a variety of authors which were produced between 1896 and 1916. 13 The majority of these are concerned with authors from the Sixteenth, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries - eras which were

being established at this time as locations for the origins of distinctive features of the national character - and are little more than descriptive accounts spiced with biographical detail and subjective judgements: in this they are typical of the era's literary journalism. Raleigh's Style revealed him to be a rather cynical Romantic, arguing on the one hand that the Classical ideal could 'undo Babel, and Knit together in a single community the scattered efforts of mankind towards order and reason' (Style, p.38) whilst eventually plumping for a framework of belief in which:

the Romantics are right, and the serenity of the classical ideal is the serenity of paralysis and death. A universal agreement in the use of words facilitates communication, but, so inextricably is expression entangled with feeling, it leaves nothing to communicate. Inanity dogs the footsteps of the classical tradition.

(Raleigh, Style, p.39) 14

It is said to do this largely because it throws scorn on the 'irresistible novelty of personal experience' (pp.39-40): thus for Raleigh a classical poet is "'a dead Romantic"' (p.39).

Raleigh adhered to the norms of Romanticism, some of which were being re-articulated for the late Nineteenth Century by impressionism and symbolism. Thus whilst he believed that great literature presented experiences 'in their immediate relation to the individual soul' he felt that this meant that literature enabled the

understanding of authorial genius rather than providing the vehicle for an understanding of the spiritual significance of the commonplace which was the upshot of the same norm in symbolism. 15 As was the case with Symons' symbolist inspired criticism, Raleigh was not interested in separating form and content but, unlike Symons, this was because he regarded both as evidence of an author's genius. For present purposes the essays on Blake and Matthew Arnold in Some Authors are particularly useful as they provide insights into Raleigh's own critical concerns as he discusses Romanticism and criticism (pp.251-288 and pp.300-310, respectively).

Blake is soon co-opted into Raleigh's anti-systematic vision: as suggested in my discussion of literary journalism in the previous section of this work, one of the characteristic features of its mode of practice was the way in which it "revealed" that the valued textual practices of a canonical author were prompted by an adherence to the same norms which inform the critic's writing. Thus it is both Blake's and his own stance which is described when he comments that Blake 'trusted his vision absolutely and believed only what he saw'(p.251).

Blake is seen as a liberator for those with 'the will and the power to learn' (ibid) from him. Raleigh's enthusiastic explication of what he sees as Blake's stress upon the need to trust personal perception rapidly becomes a case of rhetorical blindness. Whilst attempting to explain the function of personal perception in critical judgement Raleigh argues that critics are so:

drilled and schooled...in codes of interpretation, that when they come to look at the world, and to ask questions of it, they cannot look at it on their own account. They see it by the light of half a dozen preconceived theories. They have learned a thousand glosses by heart before they ever attempt to read the text.
(Raleigh, Some Authors, p.252)

Logically this must be the basis of all personal perception. Whilst Raleigh is trying to suggest that great men can overcome these limitations the implications of his argument to the contrary are so persuasive that its connotations hasten its deconstruction.

Perception is not personal because it is shaped by the 'thousand glosses' (ibid) inculcated during the ongoing processes of socialization. Raleigh argues that through the operation of intellect and conviction one can escape these misprisons: given that the parameters of conviction are never simply personal such an escape is simply a move to a more rarified level of subjectivity.

The value which Raleigh invests in personal perception leads him to argue that 'questions of form and expression' (ibid) are not relevant to critical inquiry: it is the understanding of the Truth of a line which counts. If a text's "message" is True then 'no reason or demonstration' (p.253) can dismiss it. This position is fundamental to the school of criticism in which informed judgement and experience of culture form the basis of critical comment. Given these criteria Raleigh is able to dismiss the contemporary claims for Blake's obscurity by arguing that if some areas of his work are accepted as presenting illuminating truths then those areas which are 'still dark to us' (ibid) are, in actuality, truths which we are as yet unable to comprehend but which are nonetheless valuable.

Just as Raleigh was caught between the demands of pedagogy and his Romantic conviction of the irrelevance of systematic study so Blake is seen to be at odds with the literary world of his era:

while Doctor Johnson gave the law to literary society, [Blake] found out for himself, as if by instinct, the poets who had most to teach him.

(Raleigh, Some Authors, ibid)

Here Raleigh's belief in an innate and subjective understanding as the basis for critical practice is being lent the weight of what he sees as the example of Blake. Like the version of Blake in the quotation

above, Raleigh believed that instinctive knowledge was more valuable than the laws of literary society. It is this belief which leads him to make statements like 'the only thing that Christina [Rossetti] makes me want to do is cry, not lecture'.¹⁶ Amidst the literary historians and pedantic classical scholars Raleigh was as uncomfortable as his visionary Blake is assumed to have been in the literary London of the Eighteenth Century. Raleigh's credo was that 'Genius is spontaneity, the life of the soul asserting itself triumphantly in the midst of dead things' (p.265). This shapes his claim that the critic must try and taste the flavour of the work and then follow through with an account of his own vision of the author's creation (ibid).

Raleigh implies that criticism can only operate successfully when the critic sheds himself of his preconceptions and approaches the text as sympathetically as possible. This means that Raleigh's criticism inevitably fails to be analytic or comparative because an author is only judged by Raleigh's understanding of his particular version of textual practice. Raleigh concedes that the complexity of Blakean mythology 'may yield up its meaning to the rack and thumbscrew of a scientific criticism' (p.283) but believes that such an approach will corrupt Blake's imaginative insights.

Raleigh's commitment to imaginative truth as the essential principle of criticism derives from an Arnoldian distaste for the application of systematic conceptions to what "should" be an exercise in disinterested discrimination. Raleigh is therefore something of an interested party when he comes to write the 'Introduction' to an edition of Arnold's Essays in Criticism, reproduced in Some Authors as 'Matthew Arnold' (pp.300-310).

Raleigh sees Essays in Criticism as 'a manifesto, an attempt to define, and illustrate in practice the vital functions of criticism' (p.300). However, Raleigh's nationalism, coupled with his Romanticism, makes Arnold's attitude to foreign culture difficult to accept and his classical stress on the need for criticism to be a considered construction is wholly unacceptable:

construction is too mechanical a word to describe the operation of the mind in a great poet...the process is a vital process, not external, like bricklaying; so that if architecture must needs be invoked, it is rather the architecture of the shellfish, with its mysterious involutions and delicate suffusions of colour.
('Matthew Arnold', ibid)

Here the Romantic Raleigh stresses the aesthetics of literary creation and denigrates systematic accounts of text generation. He goes on to suggest that Arnold fails to understand literary creation because he does not recognise the "fact" that the only rules which

concern the writer are those of his own creating (ibid).

Raleigh's account of Arnold's sense of a decline in English Letters naturally stumbles when it comes to the "European ideals" which he promotes as the means of "saving" English Literature (p.304). Raleigh's nationalism made it impossible for him to accept this argument and therefore he suggests that Arnold failed to understand the English character and so ultimately fails to be an adequate critic of English Culture. Arnold is felt to be too tainted by foreign ideas to be able to understand English Literature; it is an 'intensely national literature, and can only be imperfectly criticized from the cosmopolitan point of view' (pp.305-306). Arnold is characterized as a foreigner (p.306) and is therefore regarded as racially unable to see or to feel the ways in which English Literature resonates in English minds (p.308).

Raleigh moves on to make a sustained attack on Arnoldian critical practice. His foreign intellect is said to cause him to fail in his analysis of the causes of poetic greatness (p.307). Raleigh ignores his own distaste for analytic criticism here and then tries to cover this fact by arguing that Arnold's lack of analysis is centred upon his failure to engage with the ideas of the writers he discusses. This fault is said

to be generated by the presence of the many 'sound rules' (ibid) which are to be found in his criticism. Raleigh tries, and fails, to have it both ways: Arnold is both unreasoning and unanalytic yet also disinterestedly unsympathetic and rule bound. The central flaw which Raleigh finds in Arnold's criticism is in what is characterised as his cosmopolitan concern with ideas over and above the men who produced them (ibid). The Romantic Raleigh sees this as the product of Arnold's classicism; a mode too 'correct and cold and mechanical' (p.302) for it to be able to provide access to the peculiarities of the English imagination.

Raleigh is a more critical critic than Symons; more ready to mount an argument for his own point of view. This would appear to stem from the fact that he did not value criticism highly and therefore was not as restricted by notions of appropriate critical practice as some of his contemporaries. Raleigh's uncertainty about the value of what he was doing motivates the high degree of subjectivity in his work. His nationalistic interest with what he felt to be the peculiarly British nature of great English Literature meant that he ascribed merit according to the extent to which an author could be shown to illuminate the national character. Whilst he can be more incisive than Symons in his judgements his doubts about the literary critical

element of his work often lead him to adopt a pluralistic line of argument in which he changes tack too often to retain much overall coherence. One might charitably describe this as the product of his belief in the intuitive nature of critical practice in which subjective appreciation alone can revivify the author's imaginative truths. However, I cannot accept this view and would prefer to characterise Raleigh as lacking the imagination to offer the truly intuitive insights which the best criticism in this vein can produce.

Arthur Quiller-Couch

The critical canon of Arthur Quiller-Couch has been classified by George Watson as a 'triumph of historical criticism' (The Literary Critics, Chapter 8, pp.148-160 (p.148)): this is the mode self-consciously practised by Edmund Gosse, George Saintsbury and Quiller-Couch himself. 17 Here Watson deploys a standard ploy of the historian of criticism keen to demonstrate the range of his subject; dressing up what was a ragbag of liberal aestheticism and patriotic pride as a critical movement does not disguise the fact that with Quiller-Couch one comes upon yet another example of the endurance of Nineteenth Century critical values into the Twentieth Century. That Quiller-Couch can be associated with such

critical luminaries is not to be disputed, although how he arrived at the height of literary circles is more contentious: in the dominant version the adventure novelist and yachtsman rose from the lowly ranks of literary journalism to the King Edward VII Professorship of English at Cambridge because of his loyalty to the embattled Liberal Party. 18

In many ways Quiller-Couch can be seen as a less anxious and less dogmatic version of Raleigh. His critical credo was based on the merits of intuitive understanding. In his pluralist refusal to accept the validity of any single critical mode and in his stress upon the cultural value of literature Quiller-Couch was, like so many of his contemporaries, under the influence of Matthew Arnold. 19 Quiller-Couch also conformed to Establishment norms in his rather nationalistic praise for English authors above all others and his distaste for theories about literary experience:

I would I could persuade you to remember that you are English and to go always for the thing, casting out of your vocabulary all such words as 'tendencies', 'influences', 'revivals', 'revolts'
(Studies in Literature: Volume 1) 20

Like Raleigh, Quiller-Couch's nationalism made acceptance of schematic, "foreign", accounts of literary change impossible. It is ironic that the version of English which was to emerge from Cambridge in the

1930's, in the work of F.R. Leavis and associated writers, as the liberal-humanist field of inquiry was hastened to its final form by a most intolerant nationalism. During the First World War Quiller-Couch was one of the leaders of the assault on "Teutonic" influences in literary studies; rejecting philology and textual criticism in favour of what he characterised as an Anglo-Saxon humanism: this rejection was a product of war-time xenophobia but is also the logical upshot of long-standing notions derived from versions of nationalistic imperialism in which only that which was British was of value.

Quiller-Couch deployed a crude social Darwinist discourse in his denigration of German scholarship. The Germans, he argues, are racially incapable 'by the structure of [their] vocal organs' of reading English poetry, let alone writing about it. ²¹ Just as England went to War to save poor little Belgium so Quiller-Couch went to war on behalf of English studies, striving to free it from the yoke of "Teutonic" misapprehension.

One way of assessing Quiller-Couch's criticism is to examine material which was produced for pedagogic purposes, some of which is conveniently available in On the Art of Writing. The essays in this volume are the texts of Quiller-Couch's first lecture series at

Cambridge and are concerned with the diverse issues agitating the contemporary critical scene. 22

In the inaugural lecture (pp.1-18) Quiller-Couch discusses what is expected of him and quotes from the ordanance concerning his duties; 'the Professor shall treat his subject on literary and critical rather than on philological and linguistic lines' (p.7). This indicates the extent to which literature was felt to be about beliefs and values rather than language. Quiller-Couch goes on to argue that he will only be trying to promote an understanding of literature and not attempting to explain how one goes about the act of understanding via a critical practice. This is largely because of his recognition that 'some doubt does lurk in the public mind if, after all, English literature can, in any ordinary sense, be taught' (ibid). Quiller-Couch then offers the principles from which he intends to encourage zeal, direct the tastes and clear the vision of his students (ibid). His first principle is that one must read:

with minds intent on discovering just what the author's mind intended; this being at once the most obvious approach to [a work's] meaning...and the merest duty of politeness we owe to the great man addressing us
(On the Art of Writing, p.8)

The deferential quality of this attitude and the uncomplicated assumptions about the accessibility of

meaning are derived from the in-mixing of the discourses of class and culture. The works which Quiller-Couch's students will read are by "great men" and the appropriate attitude before superiors in the paternalism of the era was one of deference. Yet those students will also enjoy the vicarious satisfaction of having "intuitive" access to the cultural values of the 'noble and high and beautiful' (ibid). Since the ability to understand literary value is first and foremost the product of one's accumulation of the cultural artefacts of the canon there is no room for pedantic scholarship or excercises in literary history: these areas are of 'secondary and subsidiary' (p.9) importance when compared to the 'surrender' (p.8) of one's mind before the genius of the author's.

For those who possess the cultural capacity to approach the great works of English literature there is no need for 'definitions, formulae [or] creeds' (p.13). These are only valuable 'in that they restrain the ordinary unintellectual man from making himself a public nuisance with his private opinions...the initiated have little use for them (ibid). Naturally, the private opinions of the privileged are acceptable as the basis for critical judgement since they will be informed by "appropriate" values. Quiller-Couch reserves literary

study for the initiated few who can 'recognise and feel the thing'(p.14).

Quiller-Couch finally turns to the patriotic nature of English, explicitly relating the changing face of literary study to the expansion of Empire:

in English Literature, which, like India, is still in the making, you have at once an Empire and an Emprise. In that alone you have inherited something greater than Sparta.
(On the Art of Writing, p.16)

This inheritance is saved from dilettante aestheticism by the context in which its merits and values are exposed to reverent scrutiny: there is no danger of criticism failing because 'in Cambridge, with all her traditions of austere scholarship, anyone who indulges in loose...talk will quickly be recalled to his tether' (pp.16-17). The metaphor and the characterisation of scholarship are instructive. Quiller-Couch's own critical practice is indulgent, striving to 'adorn' (p.16) English literature; scholarly practice is distasteful to him because its austerity marks a classical refusal to be carried along by the spirit of the work; academic study is thus a tether because it deploys texts for pedagogic purposes like examinations rather than as the basis for a more general celebration of the 'noble and high and beautiful' (p.8) in English Letters. Quiller-Couch breaks his own rules and his failure to perceive this is a product of the confused

value system of English studies at this time. These confusions could only be resolved when the demands of pedagogy were contained within a discourse which redefined the value of academic engagements with the text: for that, Cambridge had to wait until the schemes of I.A.Richards for a practical criticism were accepted as part of the new English syllabus in the mid 1920s.

J.C.Squire

In the blossoming of modernist textual practice in the immediate post-war period the most persistent critic of those diverse developments was J.C.Squire:

During the war Squire and his friends...had begun building up a network of contacts which gave them considerable say in the review pages of at least half a dozen papers, including the Observer and the New Statesman. In addition, from 1919 Squire had his own journal, the London Mercury,...providing him with an influential platform from which to damn the dangerous literary bolsheviks of the period. (Gross,The Rise and Fall of the Man of Letters, Chapter 9, pp.255-279 (p.261-262))²³

This group were dubbed "the Squirearchy" by their modernist opponents; the term encapsulated their bellicose patriotism and general all round heartiness which was anathema to "sensitive" intellectuals like Eliot and Middleton Murry. ²⁴ In the 1920s, Squire was at the height of his literary authority: editor of the London Mercury, chief reviewer on the Observer, editor

of a new series of the influential English Men of Letters series for Macmillan and literary advisor at Longmans:

none of this was enough to transform a literary politician into a literary statesman; and though a cultivated middlebrow public remained loyal to the Mercury...the real action was going on elsewhere.
(Gross, Chapter 9, p.263)

Squire sought to offer a middle class view of literature and his commonsensical rejection of modern fiction put him at the heart of the dialogic upheavals which marked the growth of modernist versions of textual practice. One gets the feeling that Squire was something of an opportunist: the cub reporter from the cultural backwater of Plymouth made his London literary debut on Orage's progressive New Age in 1907 and then shifted to the liberal New Statesman in 1913. By the 1920s he had moved on to cash in on the reading public's distaste for literary experimentation. In his collection Books Reviewed one has access to the workings of an embattled critical aesthetic. 25

Squire's review of Katherine Mansfield's Bliss ('Miss Mansfield's Stories', pp.9-16) opens with a lament for the decline of the genre since the 1890s; according to Squire by the 1920s the field had split between those who wrote to meet the demands of the magazine reading public for light short fiction and the work of 'the

refined authors' (p.9) who 'have published volumes of short pieces difficult to write and difficult to read; but nothing has been published which has had more than an ephemeral reputation' (ibid). Modern short stories are 'the best means of producing a headache' he knows (p.10). Squire may have been familiar with Mansfield from her early work in the New Age but her association with the literary enemy, Middleton Murry, informs this piece. Squire identifies a 'talent for expression' (ibid) and a prose technique based on 'accurate observations accurately expressed' (ibid) and couched in 'an extraordinary visual' (ibid) style.

However, he goes on to argue that Mansfield's ability to 'produce a beautiful and exalting expression' (p.14) is actually the basis of the failure of her work to move its readers. This failure is directly ascribed to her modernism, which Squire characterises as 'the theory that it is cheap and vulgar to let anything happen in a narrative' (p.15). In claiming that Mansfield is a 'realist playing tricks with reality' (ibid) Squire deliberately ignores the extent to which she is working in a different - what less pejorative contemporaries might classify as impressionist - mode of textual practice.

He concludes with the argument that Mansfield should realise that readers do not want a literature 'which makes its principle appeal to the recognising eye' (p.16) or which stimulates the intellect but rather one which can be "simply" enjoyed. He laments that her 'theoretic restraint' (ibid), arising from a reliance upon 'the treatment' (ibid) of events, spoils one's capacity to enjoy her work.

Here Squire is arguing against what many contemporaries saw as a classical concern with matters of form and its related neglect of content; such an enthusiasm for technique was widely held by Squire and his ilk to have caused the decline of the crafted story with a beginning, middle and end appearing in chronological sequence.

Whilst Squire values what he might have characterised as the heightened realism of Conrad or Stevenson (p.9) the later development of a concern with description as a basis for furthering narrative understanding represented too great a break with realism for Squire to accept. Thus his claim that 'I do not believe that there exists a greater work of prose fiction in English than "Moby Dick"' ('Herman Melville', pp.214-222) is based on an understanding of the encyclopedic realism of that work; for Squire Moby Dick is a great adventure story spiced

with 'obscure splendours and speculations of terrifying sombreness' (pp.216-217).

Squire's reluctance to accept anything other than a heightened realism and his treatment of German culture as the nationalist propaganda of an imperialist enemy ('they made the ghastly mistake of thinking it was possible to spread...[their culture] by mere boasting and force of arms', 'The Prospects of English', pp.268-275 (p.269) are factors which reveal him to be fairly typical of literary journalism in the period. Squire's work is important because, unlike those critics discussed earlier, his views set the parameters of middle class notions of literary value: he is a leading spokesman for the dominant view of literature which new versions of critical and textual practice had to overcome if they were to make any headway at all.

I.A.Richards

The work of I.A.Richards is widely regarded as responsible for initiating the most far reaching changes in the practice of criticism to arise in the period under investigation. 26 In following other literary historians I would not want to be seen to suggest that his work was so blindingly original as to

be without precedent but rather that it had the fortune to appear at a place and time which enabled it to become something far greater than the sum of its borrowings from extant norms and values. In what follows I propose to content myself with a discussion of Richards' debt to and reaction against ideas already noted in previous sections and thus to suggest the factors informing its contemporary impact.

Chris Baldick has convincingly argued that Richards' work took hold so rapidly because it provided the post war generation of Cambridge students with an unsentimental way of engaging with literature which fostered the ongoing discrediting of the prewar values of their elders:

the new English school was discreetly shaped by a cabal of younger men dedicated to an experimental approach to literary studies; an approach befitting the clean sweep which post-war reconstruction seemed to require.

(Baldick, The Social Mission of English Criticism, Chapter 6, pp.134-161 (p.135))

Yet Richards' rejection of the dominant critical schema was ultimately only superficial. The value placed on poetry in his work which characterises it as a secular discourse containing the lost positives through which religion was thought to have once united society takes us straight back to Matthew Arnold and main stream critical history: indeed the notion is to be found in the Newbolt Report. In his laments over the reliance on

established opinion in the critical act in Practical Criticism one can identify another version of Walter Raleigh's complaint that the glosses of critical opinion intrude into the critical act; these are 'merely a cover for critical ineptitude...[for] the most trivial or baseless generalisation may really mask good and discerning judgement' (Practical Criticism, 'Introductory', pp.3-18 (p.12)). 27 Richards appears to develop the deployment of subjective ascriptions of value to a point where readers are trapped by the culture in which they are socialised; the "self-evident" values of that culture's classifications of literary merit no longer function as vehicles for judgement: indeed it is only the ordinary genius of the author and the highly trained critic who can understand literary value:

most "well-educated" persons remain, under present-day conditions, far below the level of capacity at which, by social convention, they are supposed to stand. As to the less "well-educated" - genius apart - they inhabit chaos. (Richards, Practical Criticism, 'Summary', pp.309-351 (p.325))

Richards, then, is writing for a cultured minority but it is one which is in a dominant position in society.

The uptake of his ideas at Cambridge was rapid partly because his work could be seen as a rationalisation of pre war values but also because its emphasis on practical criticism provided English with a dimension

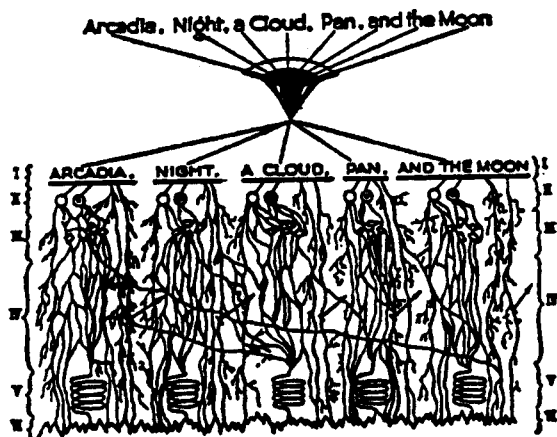
which suited the demands of pedagogy:

avoiding mere Germanic 'fact grubbing' on the one hand and vague impressionism on the other, the practical criticism examination offered the examiner a definite touchstone (the pure text) against which candidates could readily be judged.

(Baldick, Chapter 6, pp.155-156)

Judging by the evidence of the protocols in Practical Criticism vague impressionism seems to be the stock basis for a reading of the text but this merely serves to prove his point that stock responses prevent readers from truly understanding how poetry works.

Richards' training in moral philosophy and psychology gave his work a systematic rigour and angle of approach unlike the bulk of the literary commentary produced in the period. 28 The ponderous consideration of the minutiae of critical practice in his Principles of Literary Criticism is often laughably exhaustive; at one point he offers the following diagram to illustrate the 'stream of reaction' (Chapter 16, pp.87-102 (p.96)) which occurs as the eye reads across a line of poetry: 29



The fact that Richards found it necessary to resort to this kind of pseudo-science in his development of a psychology of reading suggests the strength of his single-mindedness: given that this was developed in an academic context notionally overseen by Quiller-Couch who, it will be recalled, argued that literary judgement can only be made by those who could 'recognise and feel the thing' (On the Art of Writing, p.4) one can also begin to see why Richards' work became so influential.

Richards begins Principles of Literary Criticism with the claim that 'a book is a machine to think with', a deliberate echo of Le Corbusier's definition of a house as 'a machine for living in'. 30 The futuristic formalism of the Bauhaus seems out of place in the context of the woolly impressionism of Cambridge English and this upsetting of accepted perceptions is part of Richards' aim:

critics and even theorists in criticism currently assume that their first duty is to be moving, to excite in the mind emotions appropriate to their august subject matter. This endeavour I have declined.
(Principles of Literary Criticism, Preface, pp.1-3, (p.3)) 31

The fact that this is an apology to those who felt that there was no place for theoretical rigour in criticism does not undermine the confidently antagonistic tone which Richards adopts throughout this work. Principles of Literary Criticism was intended to provide the

intellectual framework for a re-ordering of critical priorities. Like the architects and designers of the Bahaus, Richards aims to eradicate the existing clutter of critical opinions in favour of a highly functional critical apparatus. Before outlining his project Richards disdainfully picks over the devices of contemporary critical practice:

a few conjectures, a supply of admonitions, many acute isolated observations, some brilliant guesses, much oratory and applied poetry, inexhaustible confusion, a sufficiency of dogma, no small stock of prejudices, whimsies and crotchets, a profusion of mysticism, pregnant hints and random aperçus.
(Principles of Literary Criticism, p.2)

These are of no value to Richards because they are part and parcel of contemporary criticism's failure to address the fundamental issue of how the arts are to be valued.

This failure is said to be caused by criticism's lack of an adequate theory of value. He dismisses aesthetic assessments of literary experience because they are based on false principles; for Richards there is no such thing as an aesthetic mode of experience, rather there are just different experiences of language (Chapter 2, 'The Phantom Aesthetic State', pp.6-11). This informs the errors of contemporary criticism which, in attempting to describe literary experience, can only offer a host of paraphrases and cliches derived from the

lexicon of critical expression:

we are accustomed to say that a picture is beautiful, instead of saying that it causes an experience which is valuable in certain ways. (Principles of Literary Criticism, Chapter 3, pp.12-16 (p.13))

The problem here, as is the case with Richards' argument in general, is that replacing the meanderings of aesthetic criticism with a psychological account of the value of literary experience may provide the basis for a more rigorous defence of literary culture - a 'stronghold', even (Chapter 5, 'The Critic's Concern with Value' (pp.24-27 (p.25)) - but essentially only marks a shift in the terms of the debate. In this chapter on literary value Richards offers an argument in which the task of developing a theory of the cultural value of Art is made more pressing by the 'gulf' (p.26) between 'the level of popular appreciation' (ibid) and the 'consensus of best qualified opinion' (ibid). Aside from the fact that Richards has already expressed his deep scepticism about the value of the existing consensus it is evident that his psychological account of critical practice is merely an attempt to give 'qualified opinion' (ibid) the "weight" of scientific "fact". His psychological criticism will not 'narrow the interval' (ibid) between popular ascriptions of literary value and those of the elite but continue to re-enforce it: this fact escapes Richards.

The solution to the 'awkward position' (p.26) which the man of letters finds himself in when defending his standards of taste is to draw upon the "evidence": Richards is unable to perceive that this evidence is merely another version of the subjective ascription of value he finds untenable in aestheticism. His objectivity is limited by his belief in the correctness of his position; a position which, whilst perhaps more readily defensible than the gesture to standards of taste made by critics like Quiller-Couch, is only valid if one accepts Richards' limited model of psychological interaction.

This is based on an ill-defined 'theory of feeling' (Chapter 11, 'A Sketch for a Psychology', pp.62-69 (p.69)) which is deployed in the argument that 'to know anything is to be influenced by it, directly when we sense it, indirectly when the effects of past conjunctions of impressions come into play'. (ibid): if knowledge is based upon the conjunction of the event or object before us with the mind's stock of impressions from past experiences then the nature of those experiences is crucial. That only those available to the educated middle class are acceptable as the basis for ascriptions of value rapidly becomes apparent when Richards comes to discuss the application of his

theories in 'The Analysis of a Poem' (Chapter 16, pp.87-102).

This chapter is so myopically intent on proving that Richards' theories are true accounts of what happens to the mind when it encounters a poem that one gets no overall sense of how a final judgement might be reached. Richards adumbrates a textual practice which requires the detailing of how words effect the mind of a reader: this mode is so detailed that it can only be viable - to my mind - in the criticism of short poems; any other text being too verbose for his theory to operate on effectively. Richards tries to evade this problem by arguing that only in the case of the "complexity" of poetry is the kind of detail represented by the diagram I reproduced above a necessity. When this claim is set in the context of the argument that the critical method is dependant upon the author studied and that no two writers can be approached in the same way (p.87) one is brought up against the huge limitations of Richards' theory.

If his Principles of Literary Criticism is to provide an effective "machine" for thinking about literature; for ascribing literary value and for defending that ascription then it is not unreasonable to expect his theory to be a viable means of analysing any text: that

it patently cannot do so is not evident to Richards. The theory of how one gains access to poetic experience is impossibly vague:

This separation inside the poetic experience of certain parts which are means from certain other parts which are the ends upon which the poetic value of the experience depends...
(Principles of Literary Criticism, p.88)

At this point in the book, let alone the chapter, Richards has yet to define just what constitutes 'the poetic experience'; he does not make clear how 'certain parts' of the text can be understood as qualities ('means', OED) derived from other parts of the text, or indeed what form they take initially: if this semantic spaghetti is untangled Richards appears to be arguing that in the act of reading the critic identifies parts of the text as notable for their literary merit or their suggestive associations: these categories are the basis of ascriptions of poetic value. It seems to me that Richards' theory is something of a critical lamb in wolf's clothing: once the pseudo-scientific verbosity of his prose is hacked away a position is revealed which is suspiciously close to that which he began his book by disparaging: there is ultimately little difference between Quiller-Couch triumphantly pointing to the "thing" in Shelley and Richards arguing that those qualities he identifies in teasing out the psychological impact of a Hardy text make him value that particular poem.

To be fair, Richards does attempt to deal with this problem when he addresses the fact that the experiences of readers, 'even good critics' (ibid), differ in the reading of the same text. He begins by diluting the problem; some differences are 'much more important than others' (ibid). He then claims that one must not exaggerate the significance of personal perceptions when evaluating the 'ends' of a poem. Here one is forced to ask of Richards: just what else is perception based upon if it is not personal perception which is to inform his critical practice? How can a concentration upon the psychological processes of reading enable a critic to assess the ends of a poem when the functioning of such a psychology is intricately bound up with the individual's socialization into a culture which shapes his ability to ascribe value? Richards does not answer these questions in Principles of Literary Criticism, perhaps because he is unable to or because he was unaware of the need to raise them.

The kind of criticism Richards suggests in this work is ultimately limited to bland objectivity and one may detect a fierce anti-humanist vein running through this work which suggests that Richards distrusted critics' ability to read effectively because their human idiosyncrasies intrude upon the soulless processing of psychological data. These matters are at a far remove

from the practicalities of literary criticism for most of its practitioners in this period.

What is particularly interesting about Richards' work is the extent to which what sets out as an avowed rejection of existing critical practice ultimately fails to shift the framework of criticism: Richards simply re-inscribes extant critical values in an alternative lexicon by replacing the vagaries of cultural value with the processes of psychology: the upshot of both discourses being that the values of a minority are set up as the cultural standards of the nation. More importantly, Richards' criticism failed to shift the ground of critical practice and its "revolutionary" character was only really apparent in the limited, if ultimately influential, context of Cambridge. Although later critics developed his ideas into an approach which truly altered the nature of critical practice Richards' work did not bring about any immediate changes. The more significant shifts in critical practice in this period came from writers whose textual practice required defending in the face of antagonism from critics operating with more dominant values regarding literary merit; and it is to the propagandist criticism of modern writers that I will now turn my attention.

ii. WRITERS AS CRITICS: 1880 - 1930

Here I will be examining the ways in which writers of the newer kinds of literature drew upon the discursive norms of their textual practice in their criticism. Whilst the Eliot/Pound "revolution" eventually percolated through the literary heteroglossia the vast majority of critics went on basing their judgements on ideas first mooted in the 1890s and early 1900s. The impact of Eliot and Pound in the 1920s was hastened by their propagandist writing in major journals and also by the uptake of versions of their ideas by academics like I.A.Richards. In less rarified circles the literary scene was still, as my discussion of J.C.Squire suggested, dominated by debates about realism and the novel. In what follows I will be concentrating on writers whose criticism has some bearing upon wider debates about the form of the novel.

Henry James is discussed because his criticism links the Nineteenth and Twentieth Century and, in the context of the ongoing development of his fiction, represented one of the most sustained accounts of literary production in the early part of this period. I offer a brief account of Ford Madox Ford's re-arrangement of the novelistic canon in The English Novel; a work which seeks to

explain the importance of the shifts in technique seen in the work of James and Conrad.

T.S.Eliot's criticism is discussed from a perspective which sees him developing the possibilities for critical practice which changes in literary style necessitated. Virginia Woolf's reviewing work was influential in the setting of parameters in the debate about prose technique and a short discussion of her version of a modernist influenced criticism is given here. This section concludes with an account of one of the often overlooked instances of critical debate from this period which is to be found in E.M. Forster's critique of Percy Lubbock's The Craft of Fiction.

Henry James

In his recollections of the early Twentieth Century literary scene, Ford Madox Ford locates James in a literary tradition which descends from the mid-Nineteenth Century French Realists. 32 Ford also notes that in literary circles James was regarded as 'The Master' of the techniques of prose fiction. James' criticism was authoritative and, for literary circles at least, one of the main channels through which the

monologic tendencies of the dominant discourses of literary heteroglossia were challenged.

James drew upon what his contemporaries saw as a "foreign" or, more specifically, French interest with matters of form: in James technique is just as much a vehicle for meaning as it is part of a novel's content and here one can identify what contemporaries would perceive as the symbolist origins of his concern with language. Most commentators agree that modern prose criticism has its roots in Jamesian critical practice.³³ Despite his concern with form James' criticism is stylistically similar to the aesthetic impressionism of belle lettrism. James was concerned with the in-mixing of form and content but the language available to him - as Raleigh and Richards were aware - was shaped and structured by moralistic and aesthetic criteria drawn from Nineteenth Century discourses.

James' work marked a turning of the tide in critical practice but not one which broke the barriers of extant modes of critical expression. Whilst he is confident and assured he cannot be credited with the desire to 'create from nothing an English Tradition in the criticism of the novel' (George Watson, The Literary Critics, Chapter 8, pp.148-160 (p.152)).³³ It is clear that James, like many other practitioners at the time,

was dissatisfied with existing critical practice but the path he pursued in working through that dissatisfaction lacked support until later in the period, by which time its radical edge had been lost and critical debate had moved on.

The upheavals in literary criticism from about 1910 form a fault line in critical history which divides between a fathering discourse of psychological realism and a diverse progeny which can be lumped together as the discourses of modernism. By the time that Percy Lubbock came to write The Craft of Fiction in 1921 the TLS could note that this Jamesian account of textual practice was the best book on the subject available. 34 Throughout the period Jamesian notions about textual and critical practice gradually become the norm; an accepted and viable mode in their own right.

James' 1884 essay on 'The Art of Fiction' is essentially an argument for a more conscious concern with form: the English novel is weak because its practitioners and its critics are complacent about the purposes and the techniques of fiction. 35 The prevalent attitude is satirised by James when he comments that for most people 'a novel is a novel, as a pudding is a pudding, and...our only business with it could be to swallow it' (p.78). James is concerned that nobody really knows how

the pudding is made. However, he does note a change of approach; a growth in discussion about the novel as a genre and a decline in the treatment of fiction as a delightful spectacle (p.79). In calling for a growth in this trend James is suggesting that a more considered approach is important if fiction is to continue to develop; one cannot - as some commentators have done - assume that this plea for a more conscious approach to fiction entails the creation of an analytic criticism.³⁶

James is arguing for a novel of ideas in which 'a direct impression of life ' (p.83) is offered; the merit of such a fiction would be gauged by the 'intensity of the impression' (ibid). This stress upon impressionism signals that the life which James feels that the novel should include is the inner life of the mind. As the argument unfolds it becomes clear that the confused reactions of the mind are given precedence over more formalised and polished renderings of life. Thus he argues that whilst novelists must write from experience they cannot limit or attempt to complete it because rather than being "what happens" experience is actually 'the very atmosphere of the mind' (p.85).

James' critical position is a familiar one. The growth of materialist and positivist values amongst the middle class was widely felt to have caused some writers to

diversify in order to meet their supposedly less stringent literary needs. In his 1891 essay on 'Criticism', James argues that the expansion of education has had a lamentable effect upon fiction because it has created a new audience of women and young people who, in his order of things, are incapable of appreciating the novel as an artistic experience and merely approach it as a means of vicariously enjoying the tribulations of others.³⁷

James' real fear is not that the modern popular novel will come to be the only kind of fiction published - he is too confident in the cultural authority of the elite for that - but rather that meritorious works will go unnoticed amidst the torrent of trash ('Criticism', p.222). Herein lies a problem; if the only novels to have a future are those which have 'for criticism, a present and a past' (p.221) - i.e. are part of the tradition of great works and not merely the reflection of contemporary taste - how can the critic differentiate between the temporarily successful work and the enduringly great one.

James claims that this problem is superficial (p.221) but spends the rest of the essay proving that it is not. He writes so persuasively about the declining standards of fiction and offers only intuitive reasons for the

inevitability of the survival of the truly great that it is difficult to believe that the problem is only a superficial one. The Darwinist discourse underpinning his account posits the survival of great works of literature because of their fitness to do so but since that fitness is determined by a process of cultural validation which only operates for a social minority the logic of Darwinism overturns James' argument: given the etiolated cultural authority of the elite and the vigour of popular culture it ought to follow that the latter is the fittest discourse and that its values will persist.³⁸

Having claimed that the conventions of a stale criticism and the unintellectual demands of the new audience are limiting the novel's capacity for innovation and having argued that the blandness of English society is replicated in its fiction James' suggestion that the novel enjoys 'a luxurious independence of rules and restrictions' (p.222) is disputed by his own argument.

In this display of critical confusion James is comparable with the academic and journalistic critics discussed above. For all the novelty of his technique, James' critical discourse was readily absorbed and naturalised by traditional versions of literary value. The changes which impressionist and symbolist techniques

brought to the English novel were not accompanied by any rapid shift in critical practice because they were readily accommodated as refinements in literary technique with a moderate provenance in the traditions of the novel. The changes which modernism brought to textual and critical practice were regarded by contemporaries as owing a debt to James' "French" concern with the formal arrangements of prose but this was only recognisable after the upheavals of the war and the disturbances of modernism's incorporation into notions of literary value had become accomplished facts. This position is well brought out in Ford Madox Ford's history of the English novel which appeared at the very end of the period.

Ford Madox Ford

Ford's The English Novel is full of the bounce and brio which characterises so much of his criticism. To dismiss it as ephemeral chat or as self-publicising verbosity is to be guided by notions of the sobriety of critical discourse which are quite alien to Ford. Indeed, the general rejection of his epithetical verve implies an adherence to critical standards which ought to motivate a similar dismissal of the far more self-referential criticism produced by D.H. Lawrence and, in

certain modes, Ezra Pound: a rejection which most literary historians would be wary of accepting. 39

The general rejection of Ford in the history of criticism is largely based on the enduring authority of contemporary critical assumptions about his literary merit and snide comments on his critical acumen by people like Eliot. 40 In this literary history has clearly neglected an important figure. Ford's editorship of the English Review saw the publication of new writers like Wyndham Lewis and D.H. Lawrence alongside established figures like Hardy and Wells and his disinterested editorship of the Transatlantic Review created the space for writers like Ernest Hemingway, Gertrude Stein and James Joyce to publish work which was radically new. Indeed, it was Ford who persuaded the wary Joyce to allow a portion of what was to become Finnegan's Wake to appear as 'Work in Progress'. 41 Ford's lack of critical status means that his criticism tends to get overlooked and whilst I would not want to make claims for the importance of his critical work when compared to that of Eliot, for example, I would not wish to adhere to that strand of literary history which appears to dismiss his criticism out of hand.

Ford's The English Novel is essentially an argument for the inevitability of the arrival of psychological realism at a pre-eminent position in the history of the novel. He begins by noting the staggering diversity of styles in the history of the novel:

that was never better exemplified then quite lately when you had...Thomas Hardy, George Meredith, Henry James, Joseph Conrad and Mark Twain. Each was a considerable figure but each sat, as it were, alone on his little peak surrounded by his lay satellites, and each was entirely uninfluenced by the work of all the others.

(The English Novel, Chapter 1, p.3) 42

Whilst this makes it clear that Ford is actually writing about the novel in English it also implies that he is working with a notion of ordinary genius: a notion which his knowledge of the influences of French and Russian novelists on Conrad should have made untenable. However, his point turns out to be close to that of James in 'The Art of Fiction': until the late Nineteenth Century the English novel was lacking an appropriate concern with form and it is the influence of European versions of textual practice on British writers which Ford will be examining (p.4):

For the Art of Writing is an affair as international as are all the other Arts - as International, as Co-operative and as mutually uniting. Shakespeare could not have written as he did had not Boccaccio, Petrarch and Plutarch preceded him...Nor yet could Conrad have written Heart of Darkness or Lord Jim had Flaubert not written Bouvard et Pécuchet or Alphonse Daudet, Jack.

(The English Novel, Chapter 1, pp.4-5)

Ford's arguments for influence have a pleasing ring of heresy about them and he goes on to argue that he is in disagreement with all previous accounts of the development of the novel (pp.5-6). Whilst this is excessive it does reveal the extent to which Ford wishes to combat received wisdom, particularly that propagated by the academy:

The young, earnest student of literature for professional purposes should, if he desires good marks, write in his thesis for examination pretty well the opposite of what I have here set down.

(The English Novel, Chapter 1, p.6)

Ford's disagreement with contemporary criticism is not, however, particularly marked. His argument that the modern novel is 'indispensable to the understanding of life' (p.8), for example, is based on realist notions which would not be out of place in the work of Quiller-Couch. The function of this understanding appears to be to enable individuals to respond to events appropriately: here we are back with the idea that novelists encode a morality which can be accessed in the interests of social harmony.

In Ford's rather jumbled prose this is tied up with a version of the Arnoldian notion of literature providing a secular religion whose precepts enable individuals to make appropriate judgements about behaviour:

It is, in short, unbearable to exist without some view of life as a whole, for one finds oneself daily in predicaments in which some sort of pointer is absolutely necessary. Even though no novel known to you may exactly meet your given case, the novel does supply that cloud of human instances without which the soul feels unsafe in its adventures.
(The English Novel, Chapter 1, p.12)

The problem with deploying literature as a guide to life, as the authors of the Newbolt Report noted, is that some texts are more suitable than others. Ford is unable to see the problem because he is working with notions of cultural value in which an individual can only respond appropriately: that there are moralities and value systems other than those of the intellectual middle class does not occur to him.

Ford goes on to argue that the modern novelist is now the only source of figures which can fire the imagination of the nation or stand as points of reference in the assessment of behaviour (pp.13-18). Modern mass democracy throws up captains of industry or 'prize-fighters, aviators and performers for the cinema' (p.18):

But these scarcely fill in the departments of public morals and ethical codes the places that used to be occupied by Pericles, Cicero, and Lucius Junius Brutus...We have, then, to supply their places - and there is only the novel that for the moment seems in the least likely or equipped so to do.
(The English Novel, Chapter 1, p.18)

This leads Ford on to claim that 'the function of the

Arts in the State...is so to aerate the mind of the taxpayer as to make him less dull a boy' (p.21). Ford has his tongue firmly in his cheek when he argues that the city financier would benefit from taking a break from his work to refresh his mind in contemplating 'the attempts at escape from the chair of the central character of Mr Dreiser's American Tragedy' (pp.21-22): even the most cursory reading of that classic of American naturalism entails a questioning of the values of capitalism.

Ford is aiming to inspire dissent: he deliberately makes outrageous statements and wild generalisations in the hope of making his readers think through their own prejudices. It is a technique which Lawrence developed into a fine art but Ford has his moments. His book is aimed at 'the Lay Reader' (p.24) but is more obviously engaged with baiting academics:

I should hate to be a professor, I should hate to be taken as dogmatizing, and I should still more hate that what dogmatizing I do perforce indulge in should be unquestioningly accepted by any poor victim.
(The English Novel, Chapter 1, p.25)

As the opening chapter draws to a close Ford offers a potted version of the literary history which the work as a whole, with many asides, sets out. This is basically that 'the conception of novel-writing as an art began for Anglo-Saxondom with Joseph Conrad' (p.26).

As Ford moves towards this summation of the English novel one comes across a whole range of comment on various canonical authors which, taken as a whole, amounts to a re-ordering of the canon:

in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth centuries mere length was not a deterrent, because there was an immense amount of time for vacant minds to fill in and relatively very few books.
(Chapter 2, 'Towards Defoe', pp.29-64 (p.50))

You might call [Richardson] an eighteenth century Henry James and not go so far wrong
(Chapter 3, 'Towards Flaubert', pp.65-104 (p.75))

from the death of Swift to the publication of The Way of All Flesh there is very little to be found in the English novel that is not slightly unworthy of the whole attention of a grown-up man - say a grown up Frenchman.
(p.85)

if you omit Dickens and Thackeray as immense amateurs...the amount of work that you can read in English produced between 1799 and 1899 or so will seem extremely small - supposing you to be of any at all adult tastes or of any seriousness of approach to literary matters.
(p.104)

These comments and others like them prepare the way with a degree of inevitability for the conclusion that fiction only became an adult and worthwhile pursuit in the French influenced work of Joseph Conrad.

For Ford, a truly great author will refuse the commonplace value judgements of criticism and examine the workings of technique in other novelists: here he is arguing for the cross fertilization of the English Novel with the more conscious modes of European fiction where the emphasis is on rendering a scene rather than telling it. This technique is largely derived from Flaubert, as Ford makes clear (p.123), and his characterisation of it resonates in the work of James and Conrad; for Ford, Flaubert remained aloof from his fiction 'uttering no comments, falsifying no issues and carrying the subject - the Affair - he has selected for rendering, remorselessly out to its logical conclusion.' (p.123). Ford's work stakes a claim for the centrality of Conradian textual practice in the history of the novel: that this axe was still being ground in 1930 offers some sense of the resistance with which those shifts in technique were met.

T.S.Eliot

Ford Madox Ford argues that the impact of Eliot and Pound was indeed revolutionary; that the literary critical values of 1914 were radically disturbed 'by these young fellows' (Thus to Revisit, Part II, Chapter

1, pp.129-142 (p.136). Ford argues that because of their effective self-publicising they:

succeeded in interesting a usually unmoved but very large section of the public - and forced that public to take an interest not in the stuff but in the methods of Art.

(Thus to Revisit, Part II, Chapter 1, p.137)

Ford is characteristically overstating the case; the new poetic and its propagandists only came 'very near' (p.139) to ousting the traditional forms at this time. Eliot, Pound and their associates were too new, too threatening to the materialist and nationalist values of an increasingly anxious middle class to have much of an impact before the war had taught the nation lessons about irrationality and uncertainty. ⁴³ Eliot was in contact with readers outside of literary London through his work as an Oxford extension lecturer but this public - 'mostly, I believe, ladies' (Letter to Conrad Aitken, 21st August 1916, Collected Letters: Volume I, pp.143-146 (p.144) - merely wanted an uncomplicated dose of culture. Although there is evidence to suggest that Eliot found this work rewarding he lacked the will and the temperament to pursue that interest. ⁴⁴

For my present purposes I will restrict myself to a key text from Eliot's The Sacred Wood and in examining its premises aim to establish the kind of critical values which were available to other practitioners at the time

as an Eliotian version of critical practice. I end my account with a brief discussion of the kind of criticism which Eliot was seen to be promoting as editor of The Criterion.

In his criticism written between 1917 and 1920, collected in The Sacred Wood, one can identify something new in critical terms as well as several things with some history in critical practice. 45 The crisp, classical precision of his prose is obviously a refreshing change for modern readers after the confused meanderings of Raleigh or the impossible vagueness of Quiller-Couch and doubtless this contributed to contemporary claims for its authority. Yet its roots are in Arnold's evasively anti-bourgeois stance and its classicism, whilst owing a debt to T.E.Hulme's reworking of symbolist notions of language, is hardly new. 46 Its recherche range of references is a feature of criticism familiar from the awesomely learned Saintsbury; indeed the latter's confidence in his judgements meant that he did not resort to the condescending tone which Eliot often adopts. 47

Eliot felt that criticism was detrimentally dominated by aesthetic and impressionistic criteria which were overly concerned with the content or the "beauty" of a literary

work: in this he foreshadows Richards. Like James and Ford, he believed that Britain was isolated from the cultural developments of Europe and so limited in its understanding of critical and textual practice. ⁴⁸ This cosmopolitan approach to culture may well have been a reaction against the crude nationalism of many critics at this time. In his early work Eliot may be located in a discursive nexus which promotes a criticism that deploys an informed cultural understanding of what constitutes effective textual practice. Even the polemical 'Tradition and the Individual Talent' achieves its effects through the operation of suggestive metaphor and impressionistic analogies rather than close argument.⁴⁹

In stressing the need for an 'Impersonal theory of poetry' ('Tradition and the Individual Talent', p.53) Eliot resorts to a now famous analogy concerning catalytic conversion (p.54): arguing that the poet's mind is like the platinum in the reaction of oxygen and sulphur dioxide because the reader is changed by his encounter with the poem like the oxygen and sulphur dioxide are changed by the platinum does not provide a vehicle for critical judgement which is any different to that employed by Raleigh when he argues that in his criticism Arnold tended to select a tiger lily when a

rose and a sprig of mignonette were available. Both critics are relying upon the sociolect norm which posits metaphor as a device which heightens and embellishes meaning: Eliot's use of a "scientific" analogy is already presupposed by the connotations of the impersonal theory of poetry he is trying to present.

At this time science could only be understood as objective if one ignored the findings of recent anti-positivist accounts of perception - the work of Einstein on relativity for example, for example: Eliot's view of scientific discourse is therefore a conventional one. His assumption that using its terminology is somehow going to enable him to more precisely describe literary experience is what makes it impossible for him to realise that his analogy is no more accurate than the kind found in the work of critics like Raleigh.

Where Eliot differs from Raleigh and indeed the vast majority of the pre-War critics is in his conception of the tradition which informs the ascription of poetic value: his re-ordering of the canon was to become highly influential and a discussion of it will enable a clearer understanding of the kind of critical values which were available to contemporaries as distinctively Eliot's. When one assesses 'Tradition and the Individual Talent'

in the context of the series of articles on criticism which appeared in the Athenaeum in 1920 a version of critical practice emerges which it is important to spend some time establishing. 50

'Tradition and the Individual Talent' is a measured and confident account of the interaction of contemporary poetic practice with that of previous eras. Its disagreements with contemporary versions of criticism emerge in considered arguments rather than pyrotechnic polemic. These qualities account for the authority of Eliot's criticism: his rejection of extant values is couched in a style which seeks to disarm antagonism by rationality. Indeed, Eliot deploys contemporary critical notions and seeks to modify them rather than to reject them outright.

The essay opens with the claim that the British misunderstand the centrality of tradition in the poetic act. Given that the contemporary reaction would have been to reject this, citing the "evidence" of the Englishman's awareness of the great traditions of the nations past and their guiding influence upon contemporary mores, Eliot's strategy is effective. By citing the intertext of national heritage Eliot forces the reader into a position in which tradition is

understood as that property peculiar to a race of peoples. This is intensified when he argues that tradition is only acceptable in the context of the 'reassuring science of archaeology' (p.47).

The findings of archaeology, a practice guided by the relativistic discourse of anthropology, tended to produce arguments for the validity and significance of other civilizations and therefore was not particularly 'reassuring' for the widespread British version of tradition which asserted the uniquely valuable norms and values encoded in the nation's history. Eliot thus suggests the limited nature of British conceptions of tradition and the "scientific" evidence for the inaccuracy of such conceptions without straying into personal assertions: this technique is the essence of his impersonal critical practice.

Having established the problem of British versions of tradition by inference Eliot can go on to sketch in their impact on the field of criticism:

Every nation, every race, has not only its own creative, but its own critical turn of mind; and is even more oblivious of the shortcomings and limitations of its critical habits than of those of its creative genius'
('Tradition and the Individual Talent', *ibid*)

This position, familiar from the work of Raleigh and developed in the work of Richards, is one which Eliot

does not accept. For Eliot, it leads to the lamentable insistence on notions of originary genius, 'our tendency to insist, when we praise a poet, upon those aspects of his work in which he least resembles anyone else'(p.48).

Eliot, like James and Ford, believed in the vital intertextuality of the creative process and this means that he cannot accept notions of originary genius as the basis for ascriptions of literary value:

if we approach a poet without this prejudice we shall often find that not only the best but the most individual parts of his work may be those in which the dead poets, his ancestors, assert their immortality most vigorously.
('Tradition and the Individual Talent', ibid)

Eliot is able to playdown the radical aspect of this argument by arguing that since the evaluative processes of criticism are based upon comparisons with the past it is not unreasonable to expect a poet to be aware of the interrelation of his textual practices with those of previous writers:

you cannot value him alone; you must set him, for contrast and comparison, among the dead. I mean this as a principle of aesthetic, not merely historical criticism.
('Tradition and the Individual Talent', p.48)

Where Eliot differs from the aesthetic and historical criticism of the period is in his argument that the radically new can cause us to re-interpret and perhaps re-assess the work of previous poets, 'the whole existing order must be, if ever so slightly,

altered'(p.50). This means that 'the canons of dead critics' (ibid) are not valuable as the impact of the new will change those canons. This claim is more complicated and more radical than Eliot's neutral prose suggests: what is at stake here is the fixity of the canon which provides the basis for assessment of literary merit. If the canon changes then literary merit is a more fluid concept than Eliot's contemporaries would have been able to allow; indeed, Eliot himself was unable to follow through the logic of this argument, settling instead for a re-ordering of the canon which enabled his version of textual practice to fit in.

Thus when he argues that 'fitting in is a test of...value' (ibid) he is suggesting that the ascription of value is dependent upon which version of tradition one adheres to: it is not simply a case of the really new causing a modification; that principle is too general to serve Eliot's propagandist purpose. The sub-text of his argument is that his version of textual practice has necessitated his own re-organisation of the canon; the essay is thus an argument for his acceptance in the tradition of English poetry and a description of the critical positions which could be deployed to validate that acceptance.

The second part of 'Tradition and the Individual Talent' may be viewed as an attempt to suggest how the theory of poetry informing Eliot's own work underlines its importance as a development of a particular version of English poetry. As was the case in Ford's history of the English novel, Eliot's argument has one eye, if not two, firmly fixed on the place of his own work. Eliot argues that an artist's merit is to be gauged by the extent to which he successfully extinguishes his personality from the text (p.53). This notion is derived from French versions of textual practice familiar from the work of James and evident in symbolist accounts of the creative act:

my meaning is, that the poet has, not a "personality" to express, but a particular medium, which is only a medium and not a personality, in which impressions and experiences combine in peculiar and unexpected ways.

('Tradition and the Individual Talent', p.56)

It is the poet's re-working of formal strategies from previous orders to create his own distinctive medium which is the basis for ascriptions of value in Eliot's criticism. This leads him to reject the Romantic conception of originary genius and the related argument that poetry is produced by the workings of genius upon emotion in the quasi-religious tranquillity of the creative act (p.58). For Eliot, truly great poetry is 'an escape from emotion: it is not the expression of personality but the escape from personality' (ibid).

The anti-humanism inherent in this position was readily interpreted by contemporaries as evidence of a classical concern with formal matters of textual arrangement. Eliot claims that the upshot of this is 'to divert interest from the poet to the poetry' (p.59) which was indeed a 'laudable aim' (ibid) in the context of the period's critical practice but it is also one which ultimately generates a perspective in which the poet is a mere cog in the machine of tradition; perhaps altering the movements of the machine but not actually contributing to its dismantling in the way Eliot implies.

Whilst the denial of originality in Eliot was a reaction to what he saw as an overemphasis on the individual's place in literary history it also suggests a fundamental anxiety about the capacity of the individual to influence his environment. That Eliot could argue that great poetry involves personality and emotion only to the extent that the poet has had the depth of 'personality and emotion..[to] know what it means to want to escape from these things' (p.58) suggests that his impersonal theory - like every theory - is the product of his own psychological anxieties. Ultimately the function of the poet's re-ordering of tradition is to provide him with the shielding fragments which enable him to construct a reassuring sense of his place in the

order of things. Into the later 1920s Eliot's growing reputation as a poet assisted the acceptance of his criticism. The fact that he was simultaneously involved with the creation of a new poetic mode and, via The Criterion, with the expansion and modernisation of critical practice gave Eliot status and influence in critical circles.

The Criterion was the main vehicle through which Eliot was able to influence critical practice in the period. This is not the place for a detailed assessment of the developments in criticism represented by the work which appeared in The Criterion. What I want to do here is suggest the diversity of critical practice and the wide-ranging nature of the literary-critical debates of the period: that the work appearing in The Criterion was associated with Eliot is important but a review of the contents of the journal also enables me to sketch in the diversity which my concentration upon the general trends of criticism and on the distinctive work of influential individual critics has tended to underplay. One could equally well examine The Calendar of Modern Letters for these purposes. What follows is not an exhaustive account and is simply intended to suggest the kinds of issues debated in a leading critical journal in the period.

The first issue of The Criterion contains work of marked differences. Eliot's The Wasteland appears here as does a highly traditional article from Saintsbury on 'Dullness' (Volume 1, No.1, October 1922, pp.1-15). The second issue contains a long article by Ezra Pound 'On Criticism in General' (No.2, pp.143-156). Here he acknowledges the role of Ford and James in shaping contemporary critical attitudes but his argument that the best criticism requires the critic to be 'sufficiently absorbed in the subject' to afford a text 'the right treatment' (p.145) is a critical commonplace. Pound advances an argument in which Ford is seen as the founder of a criticism fitted to modern modes of textual practice (ibid) but has reservations about Ford's stress on the visual as a criterion of excellence (p.146). In teasing out the genealogy of the modern novel Pound studiously avoids Conrad in preference to Ford's own fiction.

In subsequent volumes one comes across articles on metaphysical poetry (Herbert Read, No.3, April 1923, pp.246-266); Freud (Jacques Rivière, No.4, July 1923, pp.329-347); Eliot's 'The Function of Criticism' where he argues for the importance of comparison and analysis over personal opinion (Volume 2, No.5, October 1923, pp.31-42); Middleton Murry defending Romanticism against Eliot and Hulme's classicism (No.7, April 1924, pp.272-

295); Woolf on 'Character in Fiction' in which Conrad is dismissed from English Letters because he is not English (No.8, July 1924, pp.409-430); Herbert Read on the possibility of a psychoanalytic criticism (No.10, pp.214-230); Eliot on fascism and literature (Volume 8, No.31, December 1928, pp.280-290) and I.A.Richards on interpretation (Volume 10, No.38, October 1930, pp.412-420).

These articles, and the host which I have not mentioned, are part of the increasing diversity of interest which is a feature of criticism as it develops in this period. There is more precision in describing textual practice, associated with the growth of a recognisably modern range of critical terms. That these terms were still in the process of definition is clear from the ongoing debate between Eliot and Middleton Murry on the relative merits of a classical or romantic conception of the motivation of textual practice. 51

In The Criterion, criticism focused upon concepts like character, dreams, intelligence, intuition and, above all, on criticism. The debates contained within its pages about the nature of critical practice reveal an increased awareness about what is at stake in the act of reading and interpreting a text and whilst these issues were, as Chris Baldick argues, expanded upon and

incorporated into the ongoing process of modifying the academic study of English it is important to emphasise the fact that the development of modern criticism was hastened by the work of Eliot and by the related debates that his work inspired. 52

Virginia Woolf

Woolf produced a vast amount of review work for the TLS and other journals but here I intend to restrict my comments to her combatative essay on modern textual practice. Before discussing that work I want to offer a brief characterisation of her critical practice as it is exemplified by her review work in general.

Woolf was regularly writing journalistic reviews and essays on a diverse range of authors from 1904 and from 1905 was writing on a weekly basis for the TLS. 53 Woolf also taught at Morley College, a working men and women's educational institute in London, between 1905 and 1907; gaining insights into alternative notions of successful textual practice. 54 In 1908 she produced a series of articles for the Cornhill Review in which she was given greater scope than in her normal journalistic work but in the following year she was almost exclusively employed in writing for the TLS. 55

Reviewing stopped during the period 1912 to 1915 when Woolf was incapacitated by a mental breakdown but by 1916 she was once again busy with contributions to the TLS and 1917 saw her publishing articles nearly every week. 56

All this made Woolf a significant contributor to ongoing literary debates. Her criticism lacked the precision of Eliot's and only occasionally does she stray from the ephemeral aestheticism which was the standard mode of contemporary critical practice. Whilst Woolf's critical style is unremarkable her stress upon the centrality of the text and her dislike of biographical or preciously rhetorical approaches makes her work stand out from that of many of her contemporaries. Although a believer in the socially reflective capacities of fiction Woolf also believed that great art was able to transcend the context of its production. 57 Like the symbolists, Woolf ascribes literary merit on the basis of an intuitive understanding of the truth and intensity of a text's rendering of life. By the end of the period this kind of impressionist response was no longer radical and was increasingly being met by inter-discursive challenges from the work of critics like Eliot and Pound.

Woolf seems, albeit in a dilatory fashion, to have been a practical reviewer and a person committed to the ideals which shaped her imagination: for her it was necessary to write about the ephemeral operation of a text upon the imagination. She laboured over her reviews and sought to be honest in her appraisals; obviously that honesty turns about aesthetic criteria inculcated by the various discourses of Bloomsbury but the pluralism of that discursive context frequently enabled her criticism to be shrewdly conscious of its own limitations.

Wellek presents Woolf as a proto-phenomenologist; concerned with the relativity of contemporary opinions and aware of the ways in which opinion alters over time as the text and the context of its actualization interact to generate a new reading of an old work. 58 That this concern is also to be found in Eliot suggests the extent to which modern writers inevitably address the issue of the incorporation of the new. Her concern with how texts are actualized leads to an engagement with what for contemporaries was the "Jamesian" problem of point of view; Woolf sought to master the perspective of a text in order to comprehend how the novelist orders the fictional world. 59 From Woolf's perspective 'our modern problem is that we want to preserve the beauty and romance of the heroic together with what is called

character drawing and likeness to life' ('In a Library', TLS, 23rd December 1916, [p.22]) 60 Whilst this is part of the common lament over the break up of the cultural sphere Woolf is not wholly pessimistic; she feels that in the current confusion over modes of textual practice 'something of great importance is taking shape' ('The Claim of the Living', TLS, 13th June 1918, [p.17]). 61 This is the new discourse of modernism whose birth pangs were de-forming the literary scene just as the war was dislocating the social.

Woolf seems to have seen little value in reviewing: shaped by the need to transform an intuitive response into an acceptable public statement such criticism could offer little more than an account of a text 'in grammatical English' ('Books and Persons', TLS, 5th June 1917, [p.60]). 62 The demands of critical convention - 'the adjectives, the grammar, the logic, the ink pot' (ibid) - stripped review based criticism of its capacity to recover truth. Woolf was also wary of the overly intellectual tendencies of some of the new fiction. In 'Philosophy in Fiction' she argues that:

intelligence, with its tendency to acquire views and its impatience with the passive attitude of impartial observation may be a source of danger in fiction should it get the upper hand
(TLS, 10th January 1918, [p.69]) 63

In her reviews Woolf seems to have allowed convention an

upper hand as there is little evidence of her own interest in new modes of textual practice. Thus her manifesto like 'Modern Fiction' is significant for in it she establishes the parameters of the kind of textual practice she perceives to be modern and dismisses Arnold Bennett, John Galsworthy and H.G.Wells from their perceived position as eminent novelists.

'Modern Fiction' represents a moment in the dialogic conflict between the old realism and the new, psychologically based mode of textual practice. Woolf is guarded and ambivalent in her comments to begin with: modern fiction is only 'somehow an improvement upon the old' (p.145). 64 Woolf argues that since she and her readers are unable to escape the situation in which they are reading there can be no pretence of objectivity when one comes to chronicle the state of modern fiction:

we only know that certain gratitudes and hostilities inspire us; that certain paths seem to lead to fertile land, others to the dust and the desert.

('Modern Fiction', *ibid*)

Drawing upon the by now familiar notion of a clash between materialist and spiritual values Woolf objects to the kind of textual practice engendered and exemplified by the work of Wells, Bennett and Galsworthy: 'these three writers are materialists...concerned not with the spirit but with the body...they write of unimportant things'(p.146).

Here the polemical edge of the essay is plain; as Raleigh might have disparagingly noted, Woolf wants English fiction to follow the continental model and to concern itself with ideas.

She argues that fiction should concern itself with the 'myriad impressions - trivial, fantastic, evanescent, or engraved with the sharpness of steel' (p.148) which the mind receives during waking life and in a famous passage Woolf attacks the realists for basing their textual practice on the surface regularities of life:

life is not a series of gig lamps, symmetrically arranged; life is a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end.
('Modern Fiction', p.149)

This, I believe, derives from the description of Marlow's narrative method in Heart of Darkness. Marlow is a non-realist narrator, his tales lack the 'direct simplicity' (p.9) which Woolf finds objectionable in Bennett and his ilk. 65 Marlow's tales are different:

to him the meaning of an episode was not inside like a kernel but outside, enveloping the tale which brought it out only as a glow brings out a haze, in the likeness of one of those misty halos that sometimes are made visible by the spectral illumination of moonshine.
(Heart of Darkness, ibid)

It is not that the passages are alternative ways of saying the same thing; nor do I want to argue that Woolf had Conrad in mind when she wrote her essay. Rather I

want to stress the extent to which impressionist notions about textual practice have permeated the literary critical heteroglossia and are available for deployment in an account of what constitutes modernity.

Thus when Woolf turns her attention to Joyce and Ulysses, then appearing in The Little Review, one discovers that the constituent element of Joyce's modernity is another tenet of Conrad's textual practice:

Mr Joyce is spiritual; he is concerned at all costs to reveal the flickerings of that innermost flame which flashes its message through the brain.
('Modern Fiction', p.150)

Marlow claims that 'we live in the flicker' (Heart of Darkness, *ibid*), referring not only to the fitfully maintained civilization of Europeans but also to the nature of our grasp upon events. Certainly it is out of such fragmentary perception that Woolf sees new modes of textual practice arising; whether it is through the 'dark places of psychology' ('Modern Fiction', p.151) or in the emphasis on the 'vague and inconclusive' (p.152) - which recalls Heart of Darkness as 'one of Marlow's inconclusive experiences' (p.11) - the art of fiction, for Woolf, must turn about the flicker of perception.

Woolf's essay is the culmination of a view of textual practice developed in the fiction of authors like

Conrad, Ford and James. By the 1920s, Conrad's fiction was part of the dominant literary impressionism which the literary avant garde sought to oust. 66 As Woolf's essay makes clear, there was still a great deal of work being produced in a realist vein and its outmodedness could be made clear by deploying versions of textual practice found in a semi-canonical author like Conrad as the basis for critical arguments for its obsolescence.

Before I conclude this discussion of the work of writers as critics I want to examine the nature and extent of the perceived divergence of intention between modernist writers like Woolf and intermediary figures like James and Conrad. This is brought out in the "debate" between Percy Lubbock and E.M.Forster on the nature of textual practice which emerges from a comparative reading of The Craft of Fiction (1921) and Aspects of the Novel (1927)

Percy Lubbock and E.M.Forster

Both Lubbock and Forster appear to have been influenced by the aesthetic impressionism which provided critical standards at Cambridge. Lubbock went on to become an influential critic, bringing a "Jamesian" concern with technique to the criticism of the novel; his account of

The Craft of Fiction is an enduringly valuable discussion of the role of point of view in fiction and certainly deserves to be classified alongside work by Eliot or Richards as one of the period's major contributions to critical practice. E.M.Forster seems, in the fertile ground of Bloomsbury, to have developed the most extreme account of the spiritual and imaginative value of fiction. 67 In 1926 he was at the high point in his critical standing as author of the highly praised A Passage to India and in 1927 he was asked to give the prestigious Clark Lectures at Cambridge which were collected for publication as Aspects of the Novel. 68 This work is full of opinion, epithetical summation and imaginative brio. Like Ford or Lawrence, Forster can entertain and explain simultaneously but it has to be admitted that his book is generally short on explanation; tending to evoke and imply in a manner familiar from other critics already discussed.

Whilst Lubbock's is the more measured book and Forster's highly idiosyncratic a dialogue can be established between them. This turns about the emphasis on technical matters at the expense of imaginative verisimilitude which Forster finds problematic in Lubbock's account. The version of textual practice

which Lubbock adheres to was semi-canonical by the late 1920's and yet his book in 1921 was an attempt to argue for the centrality of the concentration upon technique as the great mode of contemporary fiction: in a very short time literary impressionism became outmoded in the avant-garde circles of Bloomsbury as writers shifted to the greater interiority of stream of consciousness. What complicates matters here is the fact that Forster's own textual practice was not as advanced as some of his Bloomsbury counterparts; thus Aspects of the Novel is partly an attempt to present an avant garde view for the critical Establishment at Cambridge but more largely an idiosyncratic but broadly influential carving up of the novel as a site for critical practice. In what follows I spend some time establishing the view of the novel and its criticism set out in The Craft of Fiction and then move on to assess Forster's work in the light of his disagreement with the version of textual practice which he perceives as informing Lubbock's.

Lubbock's book is an argument for the "dramatic" method of novel writing in which events are rendered scenically, ideally through the consciousness of a single individual: the great model for this mode being the work of Henry James in a text like What Maisie Knew. Lubbock discusses the work of a range of novelists

firmly established for contemporaries as classics as well as those whose work modified contemporary versions of the English novelistic tradition.

Lubbock's opening paragraph is a clear statement of the centrality of an impressionist aesthetic to the act of reading:

To grasp the shadowy and phantasmal form of a book, to hold it fast...that is the effort of the critic of books, and it is perpetually defeated. Nothing, no power, will keep a book steady and motionless before us, so that we may have time to examine its shape and design...A cluster of impressions, some clear points emerging from a mist of uncertainty, this is all we can hope to possess...in the name of a book.

(The Craft of Fiction, Chapter 1, pp.1-13 (p.1)) 69

For Lubbock, the critic's task is to 'scrutinize' and to 'compare reflectively' (p.2); thus 'criticism is not very precise, not very exact in the use of its terms' (ibid). Despite this anxiety, Lubbock makes his reader very clearly aware of what point of view is and why for him it is central to critical understanding of textual practice.

Lubbock argues that form is crucial to any assessment of fiction and that 'fine taste and keen perception' (p.3) are worthless without an understanding of the operation of a novel's formal arrangements. He goes on to sketch a psychology of perception, based on the notion that 'we

are continually piecing together our fragmentary evidence about the people around us and moulding their images into thought.' (The Craft of Fiction, p.7)

Lubbock stresses the creative element in reading; the decline in narrative "authority" associated with the loss of an omniscient author and the polyphonic interaction of competing sources of meaning in works of impressionism requires readers to come to their own conclusions; 'we proceed to create what is in effect a novel within the novel which the author wrote' (ibid). For Lubbock, effective reading turns about the creative application of the everyday techniques of perception, 'the page that has been well read has the best chance of survival' (p.8). However, this progressive concept is curtailed by the need for 'a trained taste' (ibid) to inform critical practice. Yet it also emerges that this is only the case for works from the past: the modern novel is conceived as essentially democratic for it merely requires its readers to use the 'common gift' (p.9) of the techniques of perception:

a novel is a picture of life, and life is well known to us; let us first of all "realize" it, and then, using our taste, let us judge whether it is true, vivid, convincing - like life, in fact.

(The Craft of Fiction, ibid)

Whilst one would want to note that in focussing upon taste and truth Lubbock is back with the subjective

ascription of value based on the culture of the elite which dominated pre war criticism it is also important to stress that in establishing the reader as a co-creator of the text Lubbock is suggesting something very new.

Lubbock laments the lack of an appropriate language for criticism, 'we have no other language than that which has been devised for the material arts...yet these are only metaphors after all, that cannot be closely pressed.'(p.11). He goes on to suggest that each reader's version of a novel is partly based upon what is contained in the book and partly on the associations it sparks off in the mind of the reader, thus one's conception of a book is 'nebulous' (ibid) because it is the result of the sifting of the impressions contained within the text and their impact upon the idiosyncratic contents of one's memory. This leads Lubbock to argue that critical formalism is doomed to failure because a book is not just the sum of the words on its pages:

it would be impossible for [a critic]...to give a really scientific account of the structure of the simplest book, since in the last resort he cannot lay his fingers upon a single one of the effects to which he refers.
(The Craft of Fiction, ibid)

For modern readers this will recall the excesses of some of the more extreme versions of reader-response criticism which denied the role of the author in text

generation; certainly Lubbock indulges in the propagandist's use of overstatement. His own book exemplifies his sense of the impossibility of grasping a particular textual strategy as it is almost wholly free of illustrative quotations in its eighteen chapters. This seems to be the result of Lubbock's adherence to venerable notions of taste and standards of judgement which sit uneasily with his progressive account of the act of reading: given that one "knows" what is right one does not have to quote to prove one's point. Whilst his rejection of the possibility of a formal criticism is overzealous it does enable him to argue that although no critic can grasp the text "itself" one can move towards critical agreement by concentrating upon the words on the page:

The beginning of criticism is to read aright, in other words to get in touch with the book as nearly as may be. It is a forlorn enterprise - that is admitted; but there are degrees of unsuccess.

(The Craft of Fiction, p.13)

Whilst Lubbock implies that variation in interpretation is acceptable he also hints that he believes there is a, broadly speaking, correct reading which is the one which tallies most adequately with contemporary versions of reality.

Lubbock's second chapter sees a narrowing of the frame of reference as he continues to work through the

implication of his psychological approach to reading. The standards of taste are evoked again when, citing Emerson, he returns to the subject of creative reading: because taste plays so large a part in ascriptions of value Lubbock has to argue that this kind of reading 'comes instinctively to few of us' (Chapter 2, p.16). 70 Lubbock argues that objectivity in critical reading is vital (p.17) and that one should not bemoan the author's selection of material but rather accept that one is dealing with a version of life 'already subject to art' (p.19). In Lubbock's reader-response criticism the parameters of response are dictated by the author prior to the creative re-interpretation of them by the reader; therefore the critic 'is the maker of a book which may or may not please his taste when it is finished' (p.17).

Lubbock's third chapter is a discussion of the formal qualities of Tolstoy's War and Peace. Here he advances what for his contemporaries would have been understood as the Jamesian argument that:

The best form is that which makes the most of its subject - there is no other definition of the meaning of form in fiction. The well-made book is the book in which the subject and the form coincide and are indistinguishable - the book in which the matter is all used up in the form, in which the form expresses all the matter.

(The Craft of Fiction, Chapter 3, p.40)

This inter-connection between form and content leads

Lubbock to develop an argument for unity as the touchstone of successful textual practice: 'a subject, one and whole and irreducible - a novel cannot begin to take its shape till it has this for its support' (p.41). The critic ought to be able to put the novelist's intention into a single phrase and, in an argument which recalls the work of Riffaterre, Lubbock advances the notion that this matrix dictates the form of the novel:71

It may be the simplest anecdote or the most elaborate concatenation of events, it may be a solitary figure or the widest network of relationships; it is anyhow expressible in ten words that reveal its unity. The form of the book depends on it, and until it is known there is nothing to be said of the form.
(The Craft of Fiction, p.42)

Lubbock does not really pursue this argument, for him it explains the facts of the matter and is not open for debate. Had he been able to push this idea and the analysis of War and Peace which frequently hints at the autonomy of the narrating characters - 'His people move in an atmosphere that knows no limit... The communication between the men and women of the story and the rest of the world is unchecked' (Chapter 4, p.45) - then critical history might have been very different.

In citing Flaubert as the model novelist Lubbock lines up behind James and Conrad:

The famous "impersonality" of Flaubert and his kind lies only in the greater tact with which they express their feelings - dramatising them, embodying them in living form, instead of stating them directly.

(The Craft of Fiction, Chapter 5, pp.67-68)

This expression turns about the 'difficult question of the centre of vision' (p.73) and Lubbock's ground breaking account of point of view (pp.73-76) crisply classifies the options available, noting that the author must 'break into the privacy of his characters and open their minds to us' (p.74) and that a narrative in which one finds 'this point of view blended with that, dramatic action treated pictorially, pictorial descriptions rendered dramatically' (p.75) is highly effective.

Lubbock's book is a call for precision in criticism and an argument for the centrality of "Jamesian" textual strategies in any assessment of the importance of modern fiction. His argument is that:

the whole intricate question of method, in the craft of fiction,...[is] governed by the question of point of view.

(The Craft of Fiction, Chapter 17, p.251)

E.M.Forster would argue that the novelist's task was to create characters who possessed imaginative verisimilitude; he 'considers point of view of secondary importance, deliberately rejecting Lubbock's insistence on the Jamesian doctrine' (Wellek, English Criticism:

1900-1950, Chapter 3, pp.55-91 (p.86)). Forster's debate with Lubbock as it appears in the chapters of Aspects of the Novel is not couched in polemic: The Craft of Fiction is characterised as 'a sensitive yet poor spirited book' (Stallybrass, 'Extracts from Forster's Commonplace Book', p.160) although it 'examines various points of view with genius and insight' (Aspects of the Novel, Chapter 4, pp.71-84 (p.81)). 72

Forster legitimately argues that whilst Lubbock's work provides the critic with a 'sure foundation for the aesthetics of fiction' (Chapter 4, Part 2, p.81) it also leads to a concentration upon matters which Forster regards as peripheral:

the whole intricate question of method resolves itself...into the power of the writer to bounce the reader into accepting what he says - a power which Mr Lubbock admits and admires, but locates at the edge of the problem instead of at the centre.

(Aspects of the Novel, pp.81-82)

This concern with the centrality of character in fiction is presented as the straightforward view of a non-critic, which is a little disingenuous as Forster is clearly engaging with critical accounts like Lubbock's. He argues that critics have a professional interest in differentiating the form of the novel from that of drama; 'they feel it ought to have its own technical

troubles before it can be accepted as an independent art; and since the problem of point of view is peculiar to the novel they have rather overstressed it' (p.82). What is at stake here is the preeminence of differing versions of the novel.

For Forster, Lubbock's literary critical version is all well and good but it smacks of the study and not of the experience of reading to learn about other people. The novel, and inevitably Forster's own are implied paradigms here, must provide emotional access to others mind's. That this access may best be provided by an understanding of the function of point of view is accepted by Forster:

The speciality of the novel is that the writer can talk about his characters as well as through them, or can arrange for us to listen when they talk for themselves. He has access to self-communing, and from that level he can descend even deeper and peer into the subconscious...All that matters to the reader is whether the shifting of attitude and the secret life are convincing.

(Aspects of the Novel, Chapter 5, pp.85-86)

The difference in the kind of textual practice which Forster validates here and that which informs Lubbock's discussion is one of degree. Forster is concerned that a concentration upon point of view will lead to novelists to "mistreat" their characters (Chapter 4, p.84) by omnisciently classifying them as types which illustrate some universal principle rather than allowing

their idiosyncrasies to evoke such principles:

Indeed, this power to expand and contract perception (of which the shifting viewpoint is a symptom), this right to intermittent knowledge - I find one of the great advantages of the novel form, and it has a parallel in our perception of life. We are stupider at some times than others; we can enter into people's minds occasionally but not always.
(Aspects of the Novel, Chapter 5, p.83)

It is a psychological realism which Forster is arguing for here and whilst this is not very different from the version of textual practice which motivates Lubbock's concern with point of view the greater emphasis on imaginative verisimilitude in Forster's work is important. Given the long standing distrust of systematic formulations of the principles of critical practice Forster's comments are not very remarkable and this provides the key to the work as a whole.

Forster is working with fairly traditional notions of textual practice and whilst his location in the context of Bloomsbury gave him access to alternative positions the modernist influences on him tend to operate merely by re-orientating the concerns of traditional criticism. Whilst he accepts the validity of a psychological realism he is only able to see it as an advance in terms of improved characterisation; of greater imaginative truth.

In his discussion of Wells' debate with James (Chapter 8, pp.144-145) the basis of this anxiety is clearly stated: can the rigid patterns of unity demanded by a Jamesian belief in the preeminence of technique in fictional composition 'be combined with the immense richness which life provides?' (p.145): Forster's answer is a qualified no:

It may externalize the atmosphere, spring naturally from the plot, but it shuts the doors on life and leaves the novelist doing exercises, generally in the drawing room. Beauty has arrived but in too tyrannous a guise.

(Aspects of the Novel, *ibid*)

Forster's belief in the centrality of character represents an influential position in criticism at this time: that it is held by one of the writers traditionally associated with the stirrings and refinements of a modernist textual practice in Bloomsbury is a register of the dominance of traditional modes throughout the period.

Forster's adherence to traditional critical values is highly suggestive of the fate of new ideas about textual practice and their influence upon criticism. The operation of, by the standards of 1927, venerable versions of textual practice in his criticism reveals the hegemonic status of realism in the literary heteroglossia; indeed, my account of the critical

practice of leading literary journalists, academics and writers in the period 1900 to 1930 reveals far more conformity than diversity. The changes which do arise are small scale and often tempered by re-deployments of older critical notions. That the innovations of symbolism and impressionism were only semi-canonical at the end of the period is clearly going to be of importance when I move on to discuss the criticism which Conrad's Heart of Darkness generated in the early part of the period in the next section of this work.

**PART 4: THE OPERATION OF DISCOURSE IN CRITICAL PRACTICE
CONRAD CRITICISM 1899 - 1930**

In this, final, section of my work I will demonstrate how the discourses characterised and isolated in earlier sections operated as motivating factors in the formation of critical opinion on the fiction of Joseph Conrad during the period 1899 to 1930. In general I have limited myself to a consideration of the material generated by Heart of Darkness but also discuss material prompted by his other works. In the course of my research I have examined the bulk of the criticism generated by the novella in Britain; from the early reviews to later attempts to locate it in overarching characterisations of Conradian textual practice. 1

From the range of material available I have selected those pieces which appear to be particularly important. The priorities informing my selection were as follows: (1) work by major critics from the period; (2) work by associates of Conrad; (3) work which identifies themes in Conrad's work which were to become dominant in later years. In my analysis of these pieces I want to examine how particular discursive formations operate in critical practice; how the antagonisms of heteroglossia were incorporated into the conceptual horizons of individual

critics and thus came to operate as motives for their account of Conrad's fiction.

I divide my account into four sections. The first establishes Conrad's critical standing prior to the appearance of Heart of Darkness. The second deals with the novella's initial reception both in its serial form and its later appearance as part of the Youth volume.² The third section examines the emerging trends of Conrad criticism up to 1915 via an analysis of four general studies. The final section offers an account of the trends of Conrad criticism from 1916 to 1930 as they are manifested in six key works from this period.

i. CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES ON CONRAD: 1895 - 1899

The appearance of Heart of Darkness in Blackwood's magazine in February, March and April of 1899 marked Conrad's eleventh appearance in print in four years.³ By 1899 he was a critically acclaimed author with two novels, a novella and a collection of short stories to his credit. As Robert Kimborough notes in his 'Introduction' to the Norton Critical edition of the novella, 'with the publication of Almayer...fame and publicity came quickly, and by the time of Heart of Darkness Conrad was an established literary figure'

(p.ix). 4 Before discussing the critical reception of Heart of Darkness it is necessary to spend a little time establishing just what constituted critical opinion on Conrad prior to its publication.

Conrad's earliest works were quickly classified as variations on the techniques of realism which owed a debt to what contemporaries would have characterised as French versions of textual practice. Some reviews of Almayer's Folly (1895) and The Nigger of the 'Narcissus' (1898) compared Conrad to Zola but the general trend was influentially crystallized by Edward Garnett in 1898 when he produced the first general survey of Conrad's fiction to appear in Britain. 5 His 'Mr Joseph Conrad' argued that in Conrad's work 'we have the poetic-realism of the great Russian novels. Mr Conrad's art is true realism of that high order' ('Mr Joseph Conrad', p.106).6

As I suggested in an earlier section, Conrad's famous Preface to Nigger of the 'Narcissus' offers an impressionist perspective on textual practice. The Preface may also be read as an attempt to correct critical assumptions about his fiction. It is particularly important to recall that the Preface first appeared as an Author's Note at the end of the final instalment of the serial version of the novel. 7 Thus

it can be understood as an attempt to shape the reader's understanding, offering a way of classifying the text. The quietist closure of The Nigger of the 'Narcissus', with its dissolutions of the tensions depicted on board the Narcissus via the narrator's claim that, in memory at least, the ship's company were 'a good crowd' (The Nigger of the 'Narcissus', Chapter 5, p.143) and the focus upon the "redeeming" and manly work of sailing through which the crew can 'wring out a meaning for our sinful lives' (ibid), stands in stark juxtaposition to a meditation upon the aesthetics of literary creation. 8

This is a peculiarly Conradian opposition and one which seems to be deliberately exploited by the placing of the note as a rejoinder to the conclusion of the novel. The opposition between "ordinary" life and the aesthetics of literary creation was at the centre of contemporary literary debates: the opposition is central to Naturalism's break with Realism, for example. The Preface appears to go beyond that particular antagonism because there Conrad rejects all creeds which seek to dictate artistic practice, classing them as little more than unstable props. In his terms, the writer:

cannot be faithful to any one of the temporary formulas of his craft...Realism, Romanticism, Naturalism...all of these gods must, after a short period of fellowship, abandon him... to

the stammerings of his conscience and to the outspoken consciousness of the difficulties of his work.

(Preface to The Nigger of the 'Narcissus', paragraph 8)

In this passage one can identify an early example of the promotion of the notion of fidelity; here it is to the craft of fiction. Within this framework it is not success or failure which matters but rather a selfless devotion to the aims of art:

To snatch in a moment of courage, from the remorseless rush of time, a passing phase of life, is only the beginning of the task. The task approached in tenderness and faith is to hold up unquestioningly, without choice and without fear, the rescued fragment before all eyes in the light of a sincere mood.

(Preface, paragraph 7)

'Courage'; 'tenderness'; 'faith'; 'unquestioning'; 'without choice'; 'without fear'; 'sincere': these terms are being claimed as the parameters of Conradian textual practice. In turning away from 'the temporary formulas of his craft' and stressing the centrality of human interaction and solidarity to his work Conrad makes a claim for what can be classified as a humanist conception of human solidarity as the corner-stone of his fictional concerns:

One may perchance attain to such clearness of sincerity that at last the presented vision... shall awaken in the hearts of the beholders that feeling of unavoidable solidarity; of the solidarity in mysterious origin, in toil, in joy, in hope, in uncertain fate, which binds men to each other and all mankind to the visible world.

(ibid)

Human solidarity provides the 'core of each convincing moment' (ibid) but Conrad is too distant from literary realism to suggest that such a focus provides any direct access to the parameters of belief which inform behaviour. Rather he strives for a 'clearness of sincerity' (ibid) in his prose for such a clarity provides the basis from which his readers can proceed to the wider significance of the actions, experiences and emotions rendered in his texts. Thus if he succeeds in making his readers hear, feel and see he may also provide a platform from which 'that glimpse of truth for which [they] have forgotten to ask' (ibid) may be discovered.

Conrad was not a realist and nor was he a naturalist for both versions of textual practice demand a narrative which spells out the "truth" implicit in the scenes depicted: Conrad argues for a textual practice which uses the methods of symbolism to magically evoke the hidden meaning of events. 9 In a letter to a reviewer of The Nigger of the 'Narcissus' Conrad made it clear that despite his rejection of formulae in art he was working within the symbolist-impressionist frame sketched above:

Formulas and theories are dead things, and I wrote straight from the heart - which is alive. I wanted to give a true impression, to present and [sic] undefaced image...I also wanted to connect the small world of the ship with that larger world carrying perplexities, fears,

affections, rebellions, in a loneliness greater than that of the ship at sea.
(To ? [a reviewer of The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'], 9th December 1898, pp.420-421) 10

For Conrad, in 1897, the techniques of impressionism - of showing rather than telling; of making the reader "see" rather than "listen" - were central to his textual practices. In the discourse of contemporary criticism a concern with technique of this order was readily located in the context of foreign traditions of innovation derived from readings of the work of French writers like Maupassant or Flaubert and that of Russians like Tolstoy or Turgenev. As will become clear below, this further influences the reception of Conrad's early fiction. The Preface to The Nigger of the 'Narcissus' established Conrad's position on textual practice and this also created a framework for critical practice. From the criticism generated by Heart of Darkness it appears that few commentators paid very much attention to the Preface, rather they tended to construct their version of Conrad from an understanding of the culmative value of his work up to the point of writing: a version shaped by their position in relation to the dialogics of discursive interaction in the literary world.

It is therefore particularly odd that so few reviews of Heart of Darkness attempted to compare it with Conrad's previous works. Conrad's earlier work was generally

well received by the critics. 11 Both Almayer's Folly and An Outcast of the Islands dealt with what may be termed the Conradian themes of honour, fidelity and the folly of idealism, and both were highly wrought fictions in which the reader's understanding is fostered by the cumulative effect of the narrative encounter with the characters rather than by an omniscient commentary. Techniques like this enabled critics to praise the quality of Conrad's fiction but there was an uncertainty about how to respond to the settings of his works and also about the characters which occupied central places in them. Dutch traders, scheming Malay tribesmen, alluring tribeswomen and wily Arab pirates were people whose lives were very remote from those of British readers.

The literary precedent of adventure fiction informs the widespread early classification of Conrad as an adventure novelist; a notion which tended to overlook the problematic of the technical complexity of Conrad's work when compared to other examples of the genre. Conrad's choice of Far Eastern settings for his early work may be informed by the truism which suggests that writers draw upon personal experience but I would argue that the exotic settings of Conrad's early work appears to have been motivated by a desire to explore human interaction away from the niceties of Western Europe; as

Marlow puts it:

Do you notice how, three-hundred miles beyond the end of telegraph cables and mail-boat lines, the haggard utilitarian lies of our civilization wither and die, to be replaced by pure exercises of imagination, that have the futility, often the charm, and sometimes the deep hidden truthfulness of works of art?
(Lord Jim, Chapter 29, pp.213-217 (p.213)) 12

The cadences of the Preface to The Nigger of the 'Narcissus' are present in this quotation which clearly suggests that there is more at stake in Conrad's use of exotic locations than additional "background colour".

Conrad's depiction of colonial activity marked his work off from run-of-the-mill adventure yarns which deployed similar locations and character types for less socially-critical purposes. The closest models for Conrad's early texts are provided by the uncharacteristically dark South-Sea tales of Stevenson. Both 'The Beach at Falesa' (1892) and 'The Ebb-Tide' (1893) deal with the corruption of white men in a degenerate colonial context. In his early work Conrad deploys the cliches of imperialism and of adventure fiction and transforms them into an alternative register; a transformation which takes its impetus from modern literary techniques and his own deep-seated distrust of imperial activity.¹³

The unsettlingly sceptical account of dominant ideology in Almayer's Folly and An Outcast of the Islands may have been unacceptable to contemporaries and this may inform the exclusion of these early texts from comparative criticism of his later works. By the 1910s some of Conrad's early fictions were being deployed as yardsticks against which critics judged his more recent works: Lord Jim, Heart of Darkness and The Nigger of the 'Narcissus' were quickly established as "great works".

It is particularly striking that in reviews of Heart of Darkness Conrad is treated as a new author, with only The Nigger of the 'Narcissus' regularly noted as a previous publication. Given the technical competence of his earlier works I can only suggest that it is their troubling perspective on colonial activity which prevented them from becoming critical favourites: this early neglect became self-perpetuating. Heart of Darkness tends to survive in later accounts of Conrad's fictions because of its portentous symbolism; its savage critique of colonialism is too dangerous to be addressed and is therefore almost wholly neglected, as will be seen below.

ii. THE INITIAL RECEPTION OF HEART OF DARKNESS:
1899 - 1903

I have argued above that the literary-critical connotations of 'Conrad' in 1899 generated notions which were increasingly at odds with the reality of his textual practice. On a technical level contemporary commentators claimed Conrad as some sort of realist; a writer who sought to present his characters via a narrative of imaginative intensity which was fostered by his "French" desire to show what happens rather than to tell it via an omniscient narrative perspective. With Heart of Darkness critics felt they were dealing with something of particular merit but because of the oblique style of narration employed in the novella and the deliberate fostering of uncertainty about the significance of events the precise nature of its merit was open to interpretation.

What contemporaries felt to be obscurity in the novella was a product of a definite intention; as Conrad makes clear in a letter to his publisher, William Blackwood, Heart of Darkness:

is a narrative after the manner of Youth told by the same man dealing with his experiences on a river in Central Africa. The idea in it is not as obvious as in Youth - or at least not so obviously presented... I have no doubts as to the workmanship... The subject is of our time distinc[t]ly - though not topically treated. It is a story as much as my Outpost of Progress was but, so to speak, 'takes in' more - is a

little wider - is less concentrated upon individuals.
(To William Blackwood, 31st December, 1898, pp.139-140) 14

or, as he put it to R.B. Cunninghame-Graham:

the idea is so wrapped up in secondary notions that You - even You! - may miss it. And also You must remember that I don't start with an abstract notion. I start with definite images and as their rendering is true some little effect is produced.
(To R.B. Cunninghame-Graham, 8th February, 1899, pp.157-158)15

One gets the impression, which is supported by Watt's Conrad in the Nineteenth Century, that Heart of Darkness marks a change in the critical standing of Conrad because it represents a significant change in his literary technique. 16 In Heart of Darkness and Lord Jim Conrad can be seen working out the implications of the credo established in the Preface to The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'. In just three years Conrad's desire to make his readers see had led him to develop a narrative technique in which a first-person narrator of 'discreet understanding' ('Author's Note' to Youth, p.4) represents events in a narrative generated by an un-named frame-narrator. 17 The interaction of the free indirect speech of the characters; its colouring and re-coding within Marlow's skewed retrospective omniscience and the location of the whole complex in a fluid sequence of analeptic and proleptic shifts generates texts of great narrative complexity. The textual practice crystallised in Heart of Darkness and Lord Jim represents an advance

in Conrad's ability as a writer and, more generally, in the field of British novelistic practice. Thus the received wisdom of criticism on Conrad was not much help for the early reviewers.

One of the earliest comments on Heart of Darkness came in William L. Alden's column on the London literary scene in the review section of the New York Times. Alden's 'London Literary Letter' for the issue of May 6th 1899 contains a short comment on the serial version of Heart of Darkness.¹⁸ Alden's column is very much a product of the belle-lettrist 1890s; gossip about literary London is mixed with brief, impressionistic comments about newly published works. The discursive site for his practice is thus fairly typical of that in which much of the period's review work was produced but Alden's comments are also informed by progressive notions of textual practice.

Heart of Darkness is seen as 'a very decided advance'(p.304) on Conrad's previous work, which Alden implies was rather insubstantial. Alden is impressed by Conrad's latest work, arguing that its appearance in volume form will lead to a re-appraisal because Heart of Darkness shows that 'there is more in Mr Conrad than has hitherto been supposed' (ibid): given what most critics saw as the lush aestheticism of Almayer's Folly and

An Outcast of the Islands Alden is clearly following the accepted wisdom in this assessment.

Later in the same year, whilst discussing H.G.Wells' When the Sleeper Wakes, Alden notes that Conrad is a new kind of realist. Whilst he is said to 'write out of experience' ('London Literary Letter', New York Times, 17th June 1899, p.388) Alden also claims that Conrad 'does not invent, he merely records' (ibid). 19 Conrad's text turns about the irrational and the subjective and cannot ultimately be located in a discursive context which values objective and omniscient clarity. Alden accepts that Conrad cannot be seen as a "mimetic" writer when he notes that the "realism" of Heart of Darkness is 'tinted with poetic hues' (ibid).

To argue that Conrad's prose has 'the rhythm and pathos of Chopin' (ibid) is to explain away Conrad's divergence from accepted textual practice by reference to the fact of his Polish origins. The implicit argument supporting this tactic runs as follows: Conrad is a notable author whose most recent work is informed by stylistic techniques which are new to English prose fiction; this divergence from accepted modes is prompted not by the author's desire to change literary norms but rather by the influence of a foreign culture.

The deployment of Chopin as an intertext in Alden's piece is validated by the discourse of Social Darwinism which deployed the "facts" of national origin in a classification of national character. There is a pejorative sub-text generated by the tensions which arise from Alden's affirmation of Polish poetic excellence in the context of literary London's nationalistic patriotism. Chopin was not a fixed reference point but rather a site for dialogic antagonism between differing interpretations: the intertextual citation of Chopin as a validating example is inherently de-stabilising because it is an acceptable tactic only in social-Darwinist terms and these are so interwoven with xenophobic nationalism that what Alden intends as praise is very easily read as evidence of artistic failure.

Language qua discourse is double-edged and the hegemonic status of nationalism at this time means that praising Conrad for his Polish romanticism inevitably generates the recollection that Poland is a "lesser" nation than Britain and that its culture must be less valuable: Alden's praise contains the discursive fragments necessary to denigrate. Alden may not intend this but he cannot avoid suggesting a negative version of his account because language is never a neutral medium for expression but rather a site of discursive antagonisms

which overlay and seek to appropriate even the most cursory comments.²⁰

What I find particularly significant in Alden's piece is how the tensions of the discursive site in which he writes interact with his work to suggest a position which opposes his own. Alden's brief statements on Conrad are motivated by a conscious desire to classify and characterise the author in order to make his texts accessible to the readership of Alden's column. The work of discourse generates a position which questions the validity of Alden's statements: therefore language escapes and exceeds authorial intention because it is saturated by discursive positions which offer competing explanations of the same word in the same context.

The divergence from the norms of realism which Alden noted in his comments on the serial publication of Heart of Darkness forms the basis for many accounts of the novella when it appeared as part of the Youth volume. As I suggested earlier, these critics were responding to the very definite advances in narrative technique evinced by Youth and Heart of Darkness when compared to Almayer's Folly or An Outcast of the Islands. Given the limited space made available to them and the problem of writing about innovative work in a way which made it accessible for the general reader many of these early

reviewers nonetheless produced remarkably sympathetic accounts of Conrad's work.

The unsigned review which appeared in the Daily Mail for November 25th 1902 concentrated upon questions of style.²¹ The reviewer declares that Conrad's prose is full of 'aggravating mannerisms':

as often as not [he] prefers to use jumpy, staccato English, and often verbless and sometimes nounless sentences...
(Daily Mail, 25th November, 1902, p.2)

What appears to be faulty in 1902 was to become, in the 1910s, part of Conrad's appeal to the modernist avant garde. This review is notable because it deploys impressionism as an authorising criterion for the ways in which Conradian textual practice achieves its effects. That impressionism was part of the ongoing assault on the tenets of realism should be recalled because the tone of the review implies that impressionism's account of textual practice could be accepted in an uncomplicated fashion.

Conrad is classified as a verbal Monet; his account of the mind's engagement with events is characterised as a presentation of 'infinite detail' (ibid) rather than the omniscient attempts at mimesis offered by realist texts. Conrad's prose is said to present 'a confusion of strokes' (ibid) which become 'a beautiful scheme from a

little distance' (ibid):

'The Heart of Darkness' is a wonderful impression. It is, however, the application of the methods of Mr Henry James to Central Africa! The association is incongruous but the result strangely interesting.
(ibid)

The recognition of Conrad's impressionism; the suggestion of links between his work and that of Henry James and the awareness of the incongruity of such modern stylistic practices being deployed on material more usually associated with the boys-own adventures of Marryat or Haggard are recurrent features in Conrad criticism at this time. The review marked their first appearance but, more importantly, it also reveals the extent to which modern ideas had penetrated the literary heteroglossia; to the point at which they were available for use in the conservative Daily Mail. The reviewer admits to the oddity of Conrad's fiction and begins by criticising the prose for the aggravating mannerisms of its technique. This implies a vein of criticism which would lump together the methods of James and the techniques of impressionism as aggravations. The reviewer plays this down by arguing that those techniques nevertheless produce 'a beautiful scheme'; the reviewer seeks to be neutral and so offers praise and criticism.

Whilst review work could rise above the discursive constraints of its context by equivocating more often than not it failed to do anything more than pander to what the reviewer understood as the literary tastes of the readership. The review of Youth by "O[liver] O[nions]." in The Sketch is typical of this kind of criticism. 22

The Sketch was an advertisement-laden periodical on general topics which seems to have been aimed at the socially aspiring. This issue contains articles on the life of the royal family and gossip about London high society; a wealth of moodily-lit photographs of actresses; an interview with the popular novelist Lucas Malet (Mrs. Mary St.Leger-Harrison) and pictorial "studies" of fox-hunting and pheasant rearing. Tucked away amongst columns of advertisements are the two short paragraphs of "O.O." 's review.

This characterises Youth as a collection of 'sea studies' and while failing to mention Heart of Darkness or End of the Tether finds time to praise Lord Jim. The assertion that 'Mr. Conrad has triumphed' is not qualified other than by implication. After The Nigger of the 'Narcissus' and Typhoon it became a critical commonplace to characterise Conrad as a writer of the sea and here the reviewer implies that with Youth one

has access to three more tales of a similar ilk. This critical failure is partly shaped by the journal in which the review appears - with criticism demoted to a tail-end slot and given only limited space - but ultimately is a product of a critical inclination which follows a line of popular preconception. If one compares this with the unsigned review in the very similar Graphic for the 3rd of January 1903, where the reviewer has only one short paragraph, the limitations of "O.O." 's review soon become apparent.²³

In the Graphic readerly expectation is met head on when the reviewer argues that his praise for the quality of Youth does not mean that Conrad is a dull author: the reviewer encodes the separation of critical and popular opinion and seeks to dissolve it by arguing that whilst critics usually praise works which the general reader finds dull in Conrad's case one has an author whom critics can praise and whom the general reader can enjoy.

Again it is Conrad's style which is singled out for commentary:

His style has distinction: and his incidents and portraits owe a good half of their actuality to his force and choice of words.
(Graphic, p.28)

This claim meshes with Conrad's intention as established

in the Preface to The Nigger of the 'Narcissus': my difficulty, as a reader remote from the original context, is that the reviewer's terms are so generalised that they are available for assimilation and interpretation in at least two competing registers. The argument that Conrad 'can express a whole character or picture in a single touch' (ibid) can be taken to mean that Conrad is an impressionist or that he is a consummate realist: it depends on how one understands the notion that 'a single touch' is all that a great writer requires to "capture" a character. The brevity of the comments makes it impossible to ultimately decide from which position the review is written.

In moving from style to a description of content the reviewer deploys terms familiar from the social Darwinist inspired xenophobia which informed notions of cultural degeneracy prevalent at the turn of the century:

'Heart of Darkness' [is] a lurid study...of one of those demonic personalities which have more than once, found scope beyond the utmost borders of civilization for lust of wealth, of power, of freedom.
(ibid)

Contemporary readers did find the novella 'lurid'; Kurtz is said to go beyond the boundaries of civilized behaviour and is said to have exerted an almost supernatural hold over the tribespeople that he

intimidated: the reviewer is accounting for some of the story and excluding other aspects like its critique of colonialism or the fact that it is as much a story about Marlow's inconclusive experiences on an African river as it is about Kurtz's turn from civilization. Heart of Darkness is treated as an adventure story about the collapse of civilised values and as such it is very familiar to the reviewer's audience - it is 'one of those' stories.

The Graphic's reviewer moves between discursive positions in a similar way to the reviewer in the Daily Mail. Both reviews are examples of how critical discourse in the context of review work often strives to be objective and neutral by avoiding coming down in favour of a particular interpretation. The reviewers are able, by dint of the over-arching presence of the heteroglossia, to suggest complexity without claiming it as the product of a particular textual strategy. Had the reviewer in the Graphic argued that Conrad's style was impressionist in more deliberately loaded terms then the antagonistic intertext of literary realism would be drawn in more urgently since a strenuous claim for innovation can only be made against the yardstick of accepted practice. As Bakhtin argues:

even the slightest allusion to another's utterance gives the speech a dialogical turn...The entire utterance is constructed, as it were, in anticipation of encountering this response...
(M.Bakhtin, 'The Problem of Speech Genres', p.94) 24

Some reviewers, like those of the Daily Mail and the Graphic, deploy the heterogeneity of discourses in heteroglossia to sketch in the diversity and complexity which the limited scope of their work cannot incorporate. In a very simplistic way this critical practice is at base polyphonic because the critic ushers in differing discursive positions but does not lend them the localized "weight" of his support. Discursive formations are evoked by the connotations and inter-textual resonances of the critics' work and so add depth and complexity to to what would otherwise be brief generalisations. In larger studies more of what an individual critic wishes to promote as a unique understanding will be put forward and here critics draw heavily upon those discourses which contain notions that support their claims whilst seeking to exclude those which do not.

Hugh Clifford's long review of the Youth volume in the November 29th. 1902 issue of the Spectator illustrates the problems faced by critics when their "own" belief systems are challenged by values promoted in the text which they are commenting upon. 25 Conrad and Clifford

became close friends and although they had corresponded occasionally prior to this review their friendship was cemented by it and thus personal relations do not inform the piece. 26

Clifford sees the Youth volume as the work of an author guided by impressionist notions of textual practice. Conrad's prose style is said to generate texts which are the literary equivalent of a mosaic (p.827). Clifford's adherence to Nineteenth Century realist norms emerges when he argues that it is this impressionistic quality which undermines the real strengths of Conrad's fiction. He argues that the subtlety of characterisation and presentation of events occasioned by Conrad's mosaic technique makes his fiction unacceptably complicated for the average reader.

Clifford's prose is couched in the disinterested tones of subjective appreciation; this discursive site promotes a criticism in which the critic has merely to point out the existence of a good work because the shared value system of critic and reader was felt to make further evaluative or interpretive commentary unnecessary. By warning people of the difficulties faced in approaching Conrad's work Clifford is attempting to police the text, ostensibly because of its unrewarding difficulty but actually because of its

dangerous critique of imperialist values. In Clifford's review more is at stake than the relative merits of impressionism or realism.

Clifford was an important civil servant in the Foreign Office and had recently returned from a three-year posting as Governor of Labuan and North Borneo: his whole career was tied up with the practicalities of colonial administration. 27 Thus his attitude towards Heart of Darkness's critique of colonial and imperial activity have an added significance because they are informed by what may be regarded as semi-official notions about the value of the imperial endeavour. Clifford is unable to account for Kurtz outside of his conceptual horizon. From Clifford's perspective, the white man is morally superior to the black and is therefore incapable of working evil. This motivates Clifford's characterisation of Kurtz as a victim of the 'power of the wilderness' (p.828). Kurtz is not seen as an individual whose own capacity for corruption is free to express itself because of the lawless nature of colonial expansion but rather 'a soul that knew no restraint, no faith, and no fear' (Heart of Darkness, p.66).

Clifford, like many critics, takes advantage of the competing explanations put forward for Kurtz's activity

and fate in order to authorise his particular version. He presents his account as a straightforward precis of what happens in the text and whilst modern readers may well find it difficult to see how Clifford can claim that Kurtz's degeneration is caused by the mere fact of 'contact with barbarism and elemental men and facts' (ibid) his contemporaries, steeped in notions of the ongoing degeneration of Western Civilization, may have found it easier to accept.

One may now begin to see that Clifford's desire to warn readers about the difficulty of Heart of Darkness is partly motivated by the difficulty which he has with the text's account of imperial experience. Clifford's allegiance to the discourse of imperialism means that he has to ignore those areas of the text where Marlow explicitly argues that the reality of the blind rush for commercial and territorial gain is that men live by ruthless and self-seeking values and operate with the ruthless expediency of action which leads inexorably to the Kurtzian dictum - 'Exterminate all the brutes'. Even though Marlow is careful to exclude the British, because 'some real work' is done in their territories (Heart of Darkness, p.13), the logic of Conrad's critique is so antagonistic to all forms of colonial activity that the British cannot be said to escape from the general criticism:

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 at it too much.
(Heart of Darkness, p.10)

However much Conrad might have personally wanted to distance himself from the implications which this comment, and others like it, has for all forms of colonialism it implies a critique which is readily applicable to the work of British imperialists like Clifford.

To the extent that a correlation with reality was inevitable it seems likely that Conrad intended his novella to be taken as a critique of Belgian colonialism but the acute discursive antagonisms generated by the revelations of the nature of British colonial activity during the Boer War and Belgian activity in the Congo makes the general statement quoted above applicable to all forms of colonialism. Even when the critique is "softened" by the claim that, however bloody, imperial activity is redeemed by the philanthropic ideal behind it (Heart of Darkness, *ibid*), for an imperialist like Clifford it remains dangerously antagonistic. 28

Adherence to the discursive norms of imperialism shapes Clifford's reading and causes him to warp the text so that it can no longer threaten his norms. Thus his

review illustrates one of the ways in which discursive allegiances operate as motives in the actualization process; Clifford's location in the nexus of discourses about the value of imperialism prevents him from commenting upon the text "itself". Instead, he generates an alternative text which does not trouble his value system. Clifford has to argue that Kurtz's collapse is the product of the disorganised nature of the colonial activity depicted in the novella and his conceptual horizon on imperialism means that he is unable to make the imaginative leap required to realise that in Kurtz's exploitative interaction with the tribespeople of the area surrounding the Inner Station Conrad traces the parameters of the dark heart of all colonial activity.

Clifford's involvement in colonialism skews his account of the novella. Edward Garnett, with less at stake than Clifford, was able to generate a review which was far closer to the text. Garnett was an important friend of Conrad and a significant figure in literary circles. 29 His review, in the long-established and influential Academy, set the tone for later response. 30 The Youth volume is praised as a whole; Garnett applauds its appearance as 'one of the events of the literary year' (p.606). Whilst the title story and The End of the Tether are seen as more generally accessible, Heart of

Darkness is characterised as 'the high water mark of the author's talent' (ibid). In terms which resonate in the symbolist accounts of textual practice Garnett describes the novella as 'a consummate piece of artistic diablerie' (ibid).

Like Alden, Garnett sees the novella as a mixture of realism and impressionism: it is an 'impression taken from life' (ibid). Garnett appears to be more at home with Conrad's stylistic innovations than Alden was, stressing the importance of the novella's psychological realism and clearly relating the effectiveness of the text to its borrowings from the techniques of impressionism; the art of the tale lies in its ability to show the relation:

of the things of the spirit to the things of the flesh, of the invisible life to the visible, of the sub-conscious life within us, our obscure motives and instincts, to our conscious actions, feelings and outlooks.
(ibid)

Here Garnett is writing from a discursive nexus of impressionism and what contemporaries would understand as Jamesian psychological realism; a nexus which, as argued earlier, Conrad may be readily located in. Thus his conceptual horizon on the literary heteroglossia causes the high degree of sympathy towards modern textual practice which informs this review.

Garnett classifies the novella as a 'psychological masterpiece' (ibid) and his discussion of the relation between the visible and invisible cited above resonates in the ideas about literary technique advanced in the Preface to The Nigger of the 'Narcissus' and in Heart of Darkness, where Marlow's inconclusive experience:

seemed somehow to throw a kind of light on everything about me - and into my thoughts. It was sombre enough too - and pitiful - not extraordinary in any way - not very clear either. No. Not very clear. And yet it seemed to throw a kind of light.
(Heart of Darkness, p.11)

Indeed Garnett would appear to take his understanding of the text wholesale from Marlow for he goes on to argue that the events of the novella are presented in such a way that they enable its readers to more fully understand their own 'conscious...outlooks': thus they, like Marlow, will find that the events of Heart of Darkness throw a kind of light.

Given the sympathetic position adopted by Garnett it is not surprising that his view of Kurtz, whilst informed by the all-pervading discourse of nationalist imperialism, is less evasive than that of Clifford. Garnett's Kurtz is far from being the passive victim of the dark continent. Garnett recognizes that, via Marlow's account, Conrad is offering material that 'has been hitherto carefully blurred and kept away from European eyes' (p.607). He argues that Heart of

Darkness catches the:

infinite shades of the white man's uneasy, disconcerted and fantastic relations with the exploited barbarism of Africa; it implies the acutest analysis of the deterioration of the white man's morale, when he is let loose from European restraint.

('Mr Conrad's New Book', ibid)

Garnett was a liberal and had reservations about colonialism and thus is able to respond more sympathetically than many of his contemporaries to the novella's implicit critique of colonialism.

Garnett argues that Heart of Darkness is a creation of literary impressionism:

There is no 'intention' in the story, no partis pris, no prejudice one way or the other: it is simply a piece of art, fascinating and remorseless and the artist is intent on presenting his sensations in that sequence and arrangement whereby the meaning or meaninglessness of the white man in uncivilized Africa can be felt in its really significant aspects.

('Mr Conrad's New Book', p.607)

That this experience is felt to be 'too strong meat for the ordinary reader' (ibid) is partly because of what Garnett defines as the complexity of the narrative technique - 'which calls for close attention on the reader's part' (ibid) - but also because of the 'subtlety of its criticism of life' (ibid). Again one finds a critic sounding a note of warning because the text contains a critique of a hegemonic discourse. The notion that Heart of Darkness 'is simply a piece of art' (ibid) is a loaded one, suggesting the separation

of art from reality which was central to the liberal aesthetic which provided Garnett with the basis of his critical stance. Garnett is genuinely seeking to praise Conrad but the tensions of discursive interaction filter through the praise and come to stand as antagonistic connotations which complicate his account of the novella's depiction of colonialism.

Although he is pluralistic about the treatment of the white man - it is either meaningful or meaningless - Garnett's stress on the novella as pure art implies an uncertainty about the status of the work's social criticism; an uncertainty which is fostered by imperialism's hegemonic saturation of discourse interaction at this time. Although Garnett could engage with the novella's formal qualities in a progressive way he was unable to fully accept its critique of colonialism and therefore he offers a version of the text which promotes the literary over the social.

The unsigned review which appeared in the Manchester Guardian on December 10th 1902 is another example of the tendency of critics to go out of their way to defuse the novella's critical account of colonialism. 31 In terms of its contribution to the ongoing assessment of the status of Conrad the review contains little that is new. Although the reviewer makes the interesting claim

that 'Youth' and 'Heart of Darkness' form 'a kind of sequence' ('Mr Conrad's New Book', p.3) this is not pursued and the claim would appear to derive from the fact that Marlow narrates both stories.

The reviewer initially appears untroubled by Conradian technique, arguing that 'Youth' and 'Heart of Darkness' 'follow Mr Conrad's particular convention; they are the outpourings of Marlow's experience' (ibid). Yet it is clearly the problem of Conrad's 'particular convention' which leads the critic to suggest that neither text will be accessible to the general reader; 'it would be useless to pretend that they can be very widely read' (ibid). It appears that the critic's relaxed characterisation of Conrad's method derives from a belle-lettrist lack of interest in the mechanics of text production; this aesthetic can be seen at work in the weary dismissal of the work which has just been lauded as touching 'the high water mark of English fiction' (ibid): 32

Even to those who are most impressed an excitement so sustained and prolonged, in which we are braced to encounter so much that menaces and appals, must be something of a strain.
(ibid)

This is a subtle put-down, deploying terms with negative connotations in the context of literary production to reshape the critic's earlier enthusiasm. The passage begins with a circumlocution which seeks to establish

the critic's objectivity by implying that he is not one of "those" easily impressed by Conrad's novel technique. It goes on to denigrate Conrad's fictions as mere 'excitement' which, for the critic, are not stimulating because they are over extended: a lament which quickly became a commonplace as critics sought to account for Conrad's new mode of narration. In characterising the reader as one who is 'braced' for an encounter with the text the critic again suggests the unpleasantness of the experience of submitting oneself to Conrad's fiction. By claiming that Conrad offers material which will menace and appal the reviewer draws on the dominant conception of fiction, which posits it as mere entertainment, in order to support his claim that Conrad's texts will not be widely read.

'Heart of Darkness' is characterised as 'a destructive experience' (ibid), only lightened by the ending which is said to bring 'us back to the familiar, reassuring region of common emotions' (ibid). Once again, the reviewer is working with the dominant conception of fiction and has to twist the text's ending to make it fit those norms; to claim that the conclusion of Heart of Darkness 'shows us how far we have travelled' (ibid) is to miss the point entirely. Far from being a relief from the "destructive experiences" which Marlow relates, the closure of the novella works by revealing that even

in the familiar and "reassuring" world outside of the Congo we are tainted by the comfortable lies which Kurtz sees through in his experience of "the horror". By arguing that the novella's ending represents a restoration of order the critic reveals a desire to impose a unity and sense of resolution upon a story which is set up by its frame narrator to be inconclusive and which closes with a vision of unrelieved pessimism that is re-enforced by the symbolic deployment of a darkening sky in the concluding paragraph.

Because of his adherence to norms governing textual practice which are at odds with those that Conrad worked with the critic misreads the text. In his desire to focus on fiction as a means of entertainment he has to play down the novella's obvious critique of imperialism:

It must not be supposed that Mr Conrad makes attack upon colonisation, expansion, even upon Imperialism. In no one is the essence of the adventurous spirit more instinctive. But cheap ideals, platitudes of civilization are shrivelled up in the heat of such experiences.
(ibid)

Conrad is set up as an adventure novelist, his menacing and appalling material reduced to mere background detail which intrudes upon the reader's enjoyment of the tale. Whilst the reviewer acknowledges that Conrad does address the issues of imperialism he cannot perceive that in Heart of Darkness the shrivelling of civilised values in the face of Marlow's African experience is

part and parcel of the novella's attack upon the myths of imperialist activity in general.

On matters of technique the reviewer is, to be fair, generally accurate. His concluding paragraph offers an effective, generalised, account of Conrad's methods. However, this is qualified by a disclaimer to the effect that it offers an account which only 'those in sympathy with Mr Conrad's temperament' (ibid) will be able to agree with. The reviewer stresses those aspects of Conrad which enabled critics to link him with Stevenson and Kipling as some sort of adventure novelist with comments claiming that he offers 'a great expression of the world's mystery and romance'(ibid) or that 'he is the greatest of sea-writers' (ibid). However, a fair characterisation of Conrad's style is also provided:

Mr Conrad's style is his own - concentrated, tenacious, thoughtful, crammed with imaginative detail, breathless, yet missing nothing. Its grim earnestness bends to excursions of irony, to a casual humour, dry, subdued to its surroundings. Phrases strike the mind like lines of verse; we weary under a tension that is never slackened.
(ibid)

The Conrad who emerges from this review is clearly seen as a pessimistic writer whose idiosyncratic style can become overbearing - presumably because of the emphasis it is felt to place on the reader's role in making sense of what is presented - and even in a passage designed to

praise the reviewer's distance from the literary values informing Conrad's technique is clear. The review contains much that is characteristic in terms of the techniques used by critics to offer their assessment of a writer whose work challenged many of the dominant conceptions about what made "Good Literature".

The dominance of realist norms meant that many reviewers struggled as they sought to account for the novella's style from more traditional discursive sites. George Palmer Putnam's review in the TLS of December 12th 1902 and in the highly influential Athenaeum on December 20th provide further illustration of some of the problems faced by critics when they sought to read the novella according to the norms of realism. 33 In his TLS piece Putnam sees the Youth volume as marking a 'return to an earlier taste' (p.372) in fiction in which the writer "simply" tells a story rather than offering the reader 'everything [he] has to say about anything' (ibid). Whilst there is a strong emphasis on what Genette would term the diegetic in both Youth and Heart of Darkness it is wrong of Putnam to assume that Conrad's desire to tell a story in any way detracts from an equal desire to comment upon man's relations with his fellow men or to reveal 'the appalling face of a glimpsed truth' (Heart of Darkness, p.69) about Congolese colonialism. 34

Putnam naturalizes the impressionistic aspects of the text by treating them as nothing more than regrettable deviations from realist norms. These elements are felt to be 'a little precious' (ibid); the passages of psychological impressionism are interpreted as a 'tasting of the quality of the phrases' (ibid) and as an 'indulgence in poetic rhetoric' (ibid): Putnam is clearly troubled by the text's proto-modernist features.

Whilst Putnam praises Conrad for the technique of vividly accumulating detail and allows that this produces a degree of rhetorical power - an 'iterative persistency of emphasis' (ibid) - he cannot accept the ways in which Conrad diverges from the standards of realist prose. The closure of Heart of Darkness is dismissed as 'an indulgence...quite extravagant according to the canons of art' (ibid).

Such a rejection of the accepted standards of textual practice is anathema to Putnam. Since he cannot approach the tale outside of the conceptual horizon which leads him to believe that psychological impressionism, tour de force description and unrounded endings are not aspects of good prose fiction Putnam is unable to accept or analyse the aesthetic criteria in accordance with which the novella was written. The tenets of realism are equally to the fore in Putnam's

review in the Athenaeum. Whilst this is a more reasoned account it ultimately remains as dissatisfied with Conradian textual practice as his TLS piece.

The review opens with the classic belle-lettrist technique of damning with faint praise. Putnam begins by stating that 'The Art of Mr. Conrad is exquisite and very subtle' (p.824). This grandiloquent statement is double-edged because art which is "exquisite and subtle" teeters on the brink of signifying art which is overly-wrought and idiosyncratic. These notions are drawn out when Putnam goes on to comment that:

In more ways than one, Mr. Conrad is something of a law unto himself, and creates his own forms, as he certainly has created his own methods. Putting aside all considerations of mere taste one may say at once that Mr. Conrad's methods command and deserve the highest respect, if only by reason of their scholarly thoroughness
('Short Stories', *ibid*)

This is saturated with critical double-meanings: Conrad is outside the law, which was not an acceptable thing in 1902, and neglects existing literary forms and techniques in favour of his own. Putnam's pompous condescension is clear when he notes that if taste is put aside then - and, by implication, only then - is it possible to praise Conrad's methods. Clearly what Putnam means is that on its own terms Conrad's idiosyncratic prose technique merits a merely scholarly interest.

His critique is motivated by his adherence to realist norms regarding textual practice. Putnam is able to praise Conrad's ability to evoke an atmosphere because he can draw upon the realist insistence on the credibility and centrality of place in fiction but laments that Conrad is 'over-subtle in his analysis of moods, temperaments and mental idiosyncrasies' (ibid): thus the very factors which enable a reader to classify Conrad as a psychological realist are picked up by Putnam as evidence of Conrad's failings as an author.

Whilst Putnam isolates Heart of Darkness as 'the most important part' of the Youth volume he stresses the novella's complexity - it 'cannot be read understandingly' (ibid). For Putnam, Conrad's divergence from the standards and methods of realism prevents readers from attaining understanding. His reviews reveal the limitations which arise when a text is read against the grain of its author's discursive allegiances. Whilst Heart of Darkness is made more complex by the narrative strategy Conrad deployed one cannot, as Putnam implies, read it as a realist text flawed by psychological notation. His failure to critically engage with the novella derives from his adherence to discursive positions at odds with those informing Conradian textual practice.

Putnam's review illustrates the dialogic antagonism between the discourses of realism and impressionism which was a feature of the heteroglossia of the era. Again, it is clear that Conrad's textual practice challenged hegemonic critical notions concerning the techniques of prose fiction. This challenge was met by critical commentaries motivated by discourses antagonistic to those informing his work.

The most authoritative rejection of Conrad's impressionistic prose technique came in Arthur Quiller-Couch's review of the Youth collection for the New York Times Saturday Review.³⁵ As noted in my discussion of his work in the previous section, Quiller-Couch's critical mode was that of subjective appreciation. Therefore one can anticipate the fact that his discursive allegiances are going to be antagonistic to those which are encoded by Conrad's textual practice in Heart of Darkness.

In this review it quickly becomes apparent that Quiller-Couch finds Conrad's subject matter and style improper for textual practice. His claim that Conrad's fictions are 'wrought into a tissue of truth so fine as to resist the keenest skepticism' (p.224) is plainly an admission that, for him, those fictions strain credulity. The vehicle for this admission is his idiolectic

transformation of the common sociolect adage in which one refers to a "tissue of lies". Whilst Quiller-Couch re-works the adage so that it notionally signifies the opposite of its normal meaning, its common significance is still present and therefore allows Quiller-Couch to say one thing but imply another.

Quiller-Couch's main difficulty with Conrad lies in the area of narrative technique. Whilst Quiller-Couch admits that Conrad has a method the tone of his comments imply that is an unacceptable one. Even though he accepts that Conrad's technique provides a certain rhetorical vigour Quiller-Couch still feels that much of his prose is little more than 'wordy underbrush' which detracts from the true business of fiction .

Quiller-Couch characterises Conrad's narrative technique as one in which events 'move swiftly' (ibid) but also suggests that this acceptable realist trait is too often thwarted by 'attacks of analytic meditation' (ibid). Like many of the other reviewers discussed, Quiller-Couch is most troubled by those aspects of Conradian textual practice which were to inform what was to become modernism. Conrad's re-formation of realist narrative praxis marks a bridging point between several discourses in the literary heteroglossia. Whilst Heart of Darkness has its foundations in realist norms the

superstructure of the text, its mode of narration in which analeptic and proleptic divagations re-form the reader's perception of the significance of a given sequence of events, is informed by the discourses of impressionism and symbolism in which the recourse to what Quiller-Couch disparagingly calls 'analytic meditation' is an accepted tactic. 36

In realism, the provision of 'analytic meditation' by the author in the "dear reader" address, or by the omniscient narrator, is accepted as objective commentary because it is typically couched in the "impersonal" third person mode of address. In Conrad and James, the main practitioners of impressionistic verisimilitude at this time, there is little analysis which is authorial; rather it derives from the uncertain comprehension of individual characters and thus was seen to typify a subjective mode of understanding.

Although both author's offer the kind of meta-commentary similar to that which the third person commentary or authorial address of realist texts provided the crucial difference lies in the fact that in James and Conrad the kinds of analysis on offer are rarely finalised attributions of motive or overarching interpretations of character: such indeterminacy was untenable in realist texts and represented a failure of textual practice;

this informs Quiller-Couch's adverse reaction to the innovations in narrative technique of the Youth volume. His allegiance to the norms of realist discourse means that it is inevitable that he finds the 'entanglement of psychological with external phenomena...more or less wearying' (ibid).

In order to illustrate his point about the irritating recourse to subjective analytic "asides" Quiller-Couch quotes a passage from Heart of Darkness. 37 Before discussing how the quote is used one should note how Quiller-Couch describes its selection. It is said to be a passage 'culled at random' from the text (ibid). In the context of his generally hostile review the connotations of this critical cliché take on an added importance. What must be noted is the metaphor used to describe the act of quotation. Whilst "to cull" does mean "to select" (OED) it also means to remove something of inferior quality, normally for slaughter (ibid). I would suggest that both senses are at work here because given Quiller-Couch's attitude towards the impressionistic tendency that the selected quotation is said to exemplify one can argue that the material he removes from the text for scrutiny is that which he finds inferior and therefore fit to be culled in the term's second sense.

The same factors influence Quiller-Couch's strategic editing of the quotation. In his review it ends before Marlow explains, as he invariably does after he has "indulged" in 'analytic meditation', just what he has been trying to say - 'I am not trying to excuse or even to explain - I am trying to account to myself for - for - Mr Kurtz - for the shade of Mr Kurtz' (Heart of Darkness, p.50). By silencing Marlow the text is altered, no longer does it appear as one of the many proleptic analyses of the significance of Kurtz but rather it simply stands as a moralistic comment about 'the ability of the average man to stand up against the assaults and temptations of life in the wilderness' (ibid), as Quiller-Couch argues. Thus, rather than being a text which threatens the dominance of realist discourse, Heart of Darkness with its vigorous story is actually an adventure novel which misguidedly imports the kind of authorial commentary - in quoting Marlow anonymously Quiller-Couch implies that the "moralising" in the quotation is omniscient and authorial - that is best left to to "proper" realist texts.

As a somewhat ill-conceived adventure story Heart of Darkness cannot, in Quiller-Couch's terms, be a threat to realist modes of textual practice because as all informed readers know, the adventure genre is not a "serious" - i.e. important - mode of textual practice.

Thus Quiller-Couch seeks to obscure the discursive antagonisms which inform his reaction to the text and makes his main objection to Conrad's "moralising" tendency appear to be that it impedes the reader's access to the story which every adventure novelist should put to the fore. For Quiller-Couch these speeches are felt to 'occur at - to the reader in quest of happenings - the most inopportune moments' (ibid). By treating the text as something other than it is Quiller-Couch is able to evade and defuse the assault it represents to the discursive norms which he adheres to. Once again a critic's perspective on the versions of textual practice available in the heteroglossia can be seen to operate as a limiting frame in the processing of a text.

iii. DEVELOPMENTS IN CONRAD CRITICISM TO 1915

Here I will be examining four more general pieces of Conrad criticism which seem to me to represent significant and influential positions on Conrad. I will discuss Henry James' major assessment of Conrad in his late essay on 'The New Novel' from the TLS in 1914, Richard Curle's pioneering biography from 1914, Wilson Follett's methodical book on Conrad's intellectual and emotional attitude towards his work, published in 1915,

and Arthur Symons' article from The Forum in the first quarter of the same year. 38

Before discussing these works it seems helpful to briefly characterise the shifts in literary techniques in general and in Conrad's critical standing in particular during the period 1904 to 1915. As I argued earlier, this era in the literary history of the novel is characterised by a continuation with the past and, Conrad's work apart, it was not until the publication of Lawrence's Sons and Lovers in 1913 or Joyce's Dubliners in 1914 that there was any hint of a break from the concerns and techniques of writers like Bennett or Wells. 39

The innovations in prose technique in the early part of the period 1904 - 1914 come from Conrad himself: his development of the use of time shifts and indirect discourse to foster narrative uncertainty reaches its peak in the multiple perspectives and analeptic and proleptic divagations of the narrative in Nostromo (1904). Not surprisingly, the initial critical reaction was not positive; critics lamented the convoluted narrative and as a whole the novel was seen as further evidence of Conrad's lamentable divergence from realist norms. 40

Nostromo, The Secret Agent (1907) and Under Western Eyes (1911) were all criticised for breaking with realist traditions. 41 However, the publication of Chance in January of 1914 marked a reversal in Conrad's standing with the critics and, more importantly, with the reading public. Whilst it is an exaggeration to describe the novel as a best-seller the fact that in two years of war-time privation it managed to sell 13,000 copies - three times as many as Under Western Eyes achieved in a similar period - made it a huge success in Conrad's terms. 42 What is more important is the fact that by 1914 or 1915 Conrad was widely regarded as a grand old man of letters; of the same literary standing as James or Hardy. 43 From such a position his divergence from the traditions of realism could more readily be accepted as part of his "genius".

Much of the criticism produced in this period tends to be prompted by this sense of Conrad's status as an author. As Norman Sherry notes, critics seemed 'incapable of finding anything wrong with...[Conrad's] work. Evaluation is being replaced by adoration' (Conrad: The Critical Heritage, 'Introduction', pp.1-44 (p.30)) throughout the period. James' late essay on 'The New Novel', whilst recognising the significance of Conrad's textual practice, does not indulge in this uncritical trend. James writes from the height of his

authority as the Master of English fiction and has no qualms about speaking his mind. This essay, despite the impenetrability of its prose, is a straightforward lament over the lack of concern shown by English novelists for matters of technique. 44

James argues that criticism has failed in its duty to the novel by not offering technical advice to stem the flood of ill-conceived texts. He goes on to suggest that 'the low critical pitch is **logically** reflected in the poetic' (p.358 [James' emphasis]). According to James he writes at a time of critical stupidity (p.359) which arises from the philistine influences of democracy upon publishing and critical standards:

Beyond number are the ways in which the democratic example, once gathering momentum, sets its mark on societies and seasons that stand in its course.
(*'The New Novel'*, *ibid*)

For James this dangerous influence can be seen most clearly at work in the New Novel with its misplaced concern for 'the "condition of the people"' (*ibid*). James claims that modern fiction is dominated by a desire to find 'a common literary level' which results in a devaluation of 'individual quality' in favour of the 'undiscriminated quantity and rough and tumble "output"' (*ibid*) of popular publishing: one does not need the inverted commas to feel the depth of James' distaste for the popular taste of his age. Having

discussed the shortcomings of the modern novel as it is manifested in the work of Bennett, Wells, Cannan and Walpole, James turns to the question of what he wants from fiction (p.376).

This centres upon the need for more attention to be paid to the methods of fiction by writers and critics. What is needed is evidence of the 'touch of the hand of selection' (p.377). Whilst James is in favour of fiction being a 'slice of life'(ibid) he argues that a slice is not amorphous but a defined and limited illustration of an idea. Whilst the 'happy-go-lucky'(p.378) incorporation of "everything" does produce some 'aesthetic pleasure'(ibid) 'it takes method, blest method'(ibid) to shape an incident in such a way that it can be shown to determine action. James then turns to Conrad's Chance as 'a supreme specimen of the part playable in a novel' (p.379) by method.

Although Conrad is held up as exemplary he is not uncriticised; James sets the tone for his assessment of Conrad's method in arguing that Chance:

is none the less an extraordinary exhibition of method by the fact that the method is...without a precedent in any like work. It places Mr Conrad absolutely alone as a votary of the way to do a thing that shall make it undergo most doing.

('The New Novel', ibid)

This seems to place an overemphasis on method which may

drive readers away rather than attract them. James' praise, as an accepted master of English, carries great weight and his validation of Conrad's technique marks an important stage in the acceptance of Conrad as one of the major writers in England: by 1919 Conrad was seen as the master of English fiction. 45 One should note that James' comments incorporate his awareness of the extent to which Conrad was in competition with him for the laurels of literary greatness and thus his criticism can be said to be tinged with self-interest.

According to James, Conrad has reversed the normal processes of fiction by making selection and not inclusivity the cornerstone of his work. This reversal is caused by Conrad's strict adherence to the belief that a novel should 'be "art" exclusively or...be nothing' (p.380):

the general effect of Chance is arrived at by a pursuance of means to the end in view contrasted with which every other current form of the chase can only affect us as cheap and futile.
(*'The New Novel'*, *ibid*)

In placing Conrad's selective powers at the heart of his work's claims to greatness James is going against the grain of the dominant notion of Conrad's early critics who argued that he put too much that was irrelevant into his works. That James goes on to offer a sympathetic explanation of Conrad's technique is clearly the result

of his adherence to similar values about textual practice: in describing Conrad's method he also provides a position which could assist critical understanding of his own works.

James approvingly notes Conrad's use of multiple narrative perspectives. Conrad's transgression of 'the general law of fiction' (pp.380-381) which posits that narrators are subservient to the story they tell is seen as positive because the reader loses sight of the author in his engagement with the narrator:

Mr Conrad's first care...is expressly to posit or set up a reciter, a definite responsible intervening first person singular, possessed of infinite sources of references, who immediately proceeds to set up another, to the end that this other may conform again the practice, and that even at that point the bridge over to the creature, or in other words to the situation or the subject, the thing 'produced', shall, if the fancy takes it, once more and yet once more glory in a gap.
(*'The New Novel'*, p.381)

The slightly pejorative tone which emerges at the close of the passage is expanded upon in James' account of his own version of this mode. He asserts that in his works he has found it more practical to limit the number of narrators and not to personalise them to the extent which Conrad does (*ibid*).

Despite the critical edge to his comments, James' account of Conrad's narrative technique is accurate:

the omniscience, remaining indeed nameless, though constantly active, which sets Marlow's omniscience in motion from the very first page, insisting on a reciprocity with it throughout, this original omniscience invites consideration of itself only in a degree less than that in which Marlow's own invites it; and Marlow's is a prolonged hovering flight of the subjective over the outstretched ground of the case exposed. We make out this ground but through the shadow cast by the flight... ('The New Novel', *ibid*)

Thus whilst Chance provides the reader with a full account of the motivation of its characters there is a 'danger of steeping his matter in perfect eventual obscuration'(p.382). Although Chance is praised as an example of objectivity, 'most precious of aims'(*ibid*), its presentation is 'definitely compromised'(*ibid*) by the mechanics of technique obtruding into the fiction. James argues that the novel is overwrought, compromised by:

the Marlows..., the Powells, the Franklins, the Fynes, the tell-tale little dogs, [form] the successive members of a cue from one to the other of which the sense and the interest of the subject have to be passed on together, in the manner of the buckets of water for the improvised extinction of a fire, before reaching our apprehension ('The New Novel', p.383)

The result of this method is that the reader's grasp of the importance of the events of the narration is often tentative; as James puts it, a portion of the reader's apprehension has 'to be allowed for as spilt by the way'(*ibid*).

James' patronising account of the operation of detail in Conrad's narrative practice - 'the tell-tale little dogs'(ibid) - should not be allowed to disguise the fact that what he describes in Conrad is also a feature of his own work. It is not so much the method which James despises, rather it is Chance's acceptance by the common reader which disturbs him; underlying the ironic statement that 'great then would seem to be after all the common reader'(ibid) are James' elitist literary values which forbid him to accept popularity as a measure of greatness. 46

James goes on to argue that despite the failings he identifies in Chance Conrad's 'pages differ in texture...from that straggle of ungoverned verbiage' (p.384) which other writers produce. Conrad's emphasis on technique enables him to focus his text on the 'aspects, surfaces, presences, faces and figures of the matter we are either generally or acutely concerned with'(ibid). Whilst Conrad is not regarded as one of the influences on modern fiction in the way that Wells and Bennett are shown to be, this is not to say that James diminishes Conrad's standing in the field. Conrad's style is shown to be directly opposed to the dominant mode of textual practice and whilst James has profound reservations about Conrad's technique he is

clearly more in favour of the Conradian method than that of Bennett or Wells.

Conrad is set up as an outsider, pursuing his own tasks away from the mainstream, partly in an attempt to distance him from the literary scene where his works were competing with James' for critical attention but more simply as a reflection of Conrad's distance from the literary world at this time. His account of Conrad's method is far more accurate than that offered by earlier critics because the techniques he discusses are very much part of his own style and, unlike Ford, he was confident enough of his status in literary circles to be critical of Conrad without any anxiety over the extent to which his analysis could be destructively applied to his own work.

James' article extended the scope of Conrad criticism and its stress on technique as central to any account of his work was profitably taken up by later critics in the general assessments I will be examining in later sections of this chapter. The remaining major work of criticism to be discussed from this pre-war period is Richard Curle's biography, Joseph Conrad: A Study. This work is an early manifestation of the other dominant trend in post war Conrad criticism: the uncritical lionisation of a literary great.

Curle's work was the first critical biography of Conrad and it remains, for all its omissions, an important reference point in Conrad studies. Curle covers a lot of ground in a conversational, "all Conradians together" style. When discussing the fiction Curle, like most of his contemporaries, simply deploys it as proof of what he is suggesting - there is very little that can be seen as critical argument: this is typical of the belle-lettrist aesthetic which underpins Curle's work.

Curle sees Conrad's fiction as marking a 'new epoch' (Chapter 1, p.1) in prose, largely because of the role which is afforded to imagination in his work (Chapter 1, p.3). 47 It is important to note that Curle is very uncertain of how to place the "new" impressionistic mode of textual practice and whilst he tends to play down the more realist aspects of Conrad's technique he does not accept Conradian innovation at face value.

Curle is aware of the dangers of discursive allegiances in criticism. He sees critical practice as 'something of an intellectual vested interest' (p.6) and is aware that:

when critics get hold of an author they are not only annoyed if outsiders disagree, but they are annoyed if the author himself disagrees. In other words they are pained when an author's work does not fit their preconceived theories about it. That is one reason why critics are so fond of labels.

(Joseph Conrad: A Study, *ibid*)

Curle is here trying to distance himself from the label of critic, thus isolating his comments from the dialogics of the literary heteroglossia. This kind of meta-commentary suggests that although Curle is sympathetic to Conrad's mode of writing many of his critical ideas are derived from what he might want to term common sense. Thus his criticism is based on belle-lettrist notions about individual genius for in that discursive context labels are not needed. Curle's attempt to adopt a position remote from the dialogics of literary heteroglossia is doomed to fail but the fact that he attempts to escape from the discursive parameters of literary criticism is significant. It enables him to present his study of Conrad as something other than criticism; as a work of objective appraisal, free from intellectual vested interests. From this perspective it follows that Curle's conversational and non-critical style is not the product of critical whim but rather is directly shaped by his adherence to a belle-lettrist aesthetic.

Curle's discussion of 'Conrad's Novels and Stories' (Chapter 3, pp.27-65) is little more than a series of descriptive plot summaries. These are never an account of "what happens" because Curle stresses some areas of the story over others. Given his critique of critical motivation it is inevitable that his own criticism

masquerades as uninterpretive description. In his account of the tales in the Youth volume (pp.52-53) and of Heart of Darkness in particular the constraints of his anti-critical stance lead him to trot out what, by now, were commonplace observations about the novella.

Whilst Curle's comments are still in the vein of moralising character study his sympathies with French modes of textual practice and with the Jamesian and Conradian concern with technique allow him to offer a sense of Kurtz's role in terms of the text's structure. Heart of Darkness is not only a 'sombre story of the dark forests of the Congo' (p.51) which earlier critics had seen but is also the sombre tale 'of the darker hearts of men' (ibid). Thus Kurtz is not quite the passive victim; whilst the wilderness is said to have corrupted him it is important to note that Kurtz's iconic function is drawn out in Curle's comment that he is 'like the embodiment of that lawless and unhappy land' (ibid). The cliché of the white man's corruption by the savage is taken from imperialist discourse but the notion of the interrelationship between Kurtz and the wilderness would seem to derive from popular psychology and notions of the white man's degeneration. Curle's adherence to traditional notions of textual practice informs his rejection of Heart of Darkness, a rejection couched in terms which are reminiscent of

reviews written over ten years earlier:

Heart of Darkness suffers from exaggeration. It is an extremely impressive story but it is almost too over heavy. It is positively too rich. As a creation of atmosphere it is immense, as a work of art it leaves something to be desired.
(Joseph Conrad: A Study, Chapter 3, pp.27-65 (p.53))

Curle's limited understanding of narrative technique is a product of his reliance upon intuitive criteria for evaluating success or failure. For the modern reader, and for Curle's more perceptive contemporaries, a belief in Curle's critical acumen cannot withstand comments like 'the creation of Marlow would seem a mistake' (Chapter 6, pp.112-144 (p.125)) . His failure to understand the centrality of the Marlow character to Conrad's narrative technique severely limits his ability to engage with his texts.

The critical blindness which allows Curle to argue that 'Conrad's work actually does mark a new epoch' (Chapter 1, pp.1-14 (p.1)) and yet fail to explain what constitutes its epoch-making qualities derives from his location in a discursive context which favours a subjective attribution of literary value and promotes a compelling story (content) over technical excellence (form). That Curle can bemoan the lack of critical praise for Nostromo (p.3) does imply a deep-seated uncertainty about what he believes in.

It appears to me that this confusion derives from Curle's desire to commemorate all of Conrad's work in his self-consciously pioneering study. Curle wants to be outside of Criticism but the outcome of that desire is a magnificent peroration wholly lacking in any practical understanding of prose technique. In attempting to escape the dialogics of criticism and to sum up Conrad as an author Curle turns to bland generalisation and critical cliches. His work cannot hope to succeed because his motives for writing it make him unable to study Conrad's fiction in any meaningful way:

Criticism, unlike creation, has few magic words at its service: There is a kind of intuitive accord that seems to defy expression, a kind of close and familiar appreciation that seems to illumine the mind and to paralyse the tongue. The business of criticism is to surmount this impasse, between conviction and the power to convince.

(Joseph Conrad: A Study, Chapter 1, p.1)

Despite acknowledging what criticism ought to be about Curle fails to qualify his intuitive praise for Conrad's work. Indeed, one should recall that Curle quickly distances himself from the intellectual vested interests of critical practice (p.6): it is his stubborn attempt to operate outside of criticism which dooms Curle's work.

To further one's understanding of the limitations of a work like Curle's and to assist in a characterisation of

the state of Conrad studies in Britain it is useful to examine Wilson Follett's 1915 book on Conrad; the American equivalent of Curle's work in that it was the first book-length study of Conrad to appear in that country. Although Follett's prose is often indigestible because of its lush intensity there is what contemporaries might have seen as a Jamesian concern with a text's formal arrangement which makes this short book a far more progressive account than Curle's.

Follett's work begins with a Foreword where he isolates two areas in which Conrad's significance as a writer can be established. The first lies in what Follett terms 'his special contribution to the body and permanency of the short story as a form' (Foreword, pp.vii-x (p.vii)) and the second is his 'probable importance to modern realism' (ibid). 48 For my present purpose it is the Introduction and first few chapters, in which Follett establishes his version of Conrad's attitude towards his fiction, that are most useful.

The 'Introductory' section (pp.3-13) sees Follett establishing the ground for his own work by arguing that 'there has grown a gap between what Mr. Conrad offers himself as being, and what he is commonly received for'(p.4). This refers to the by now hegemonic account of Conrad as an adventure novelist of the sea and the

exotic East: by suggesting the inadequacy of received opinion Follett clears the space for his own corrective account. His overbearingly precious attitude towards authorial opinion is clear from the following statement of intention:

What our audacity aspires to is precisely Mr. Conrad's story - the story, that is, of his own intellectual and aesthetic adventure.
(Joseph Conrad: A Short Study, p.5)

Follett's gushing prose frequently obscures his meaning; it is as if he is striving to attain a Jamesian pomposity but lacks the status of "Master" which lends James' pontifications their stuffy authority.

Follett is trying to construct a psychology for Conrad based upon his fiction: this approach leads Follett to engage with the words on the pages of Conrad's texts to a far greater extent than the other critics discussed thus far. However, the modernity of his approach is countered by the critical commonplaces about Conrad's fiction which appear to shape his understanding. Follett's ideas always seem more significant and suggestive as generalisations: when he comes to explain and classify his original vision becomes cluttered by the tools of pedagogy; Follett is unaware of this problem.

Thus he can argue that the devices of critical classification are inappropriate in the study of Conrad because he is 'inexorably and serenely himself...he holds out equally against classification in terms even of his own past...' (p.6). The inability of critical terminology to apply to Conrad is caused by his divergence from the norms of textual practice which that terminology had been developed to process. Follett suggests Conrad's modernity lies in his innovations in narrative technique but cannot make the connection directly because he has to use the critical cliché which posits divergence from the norm as evidence of a genius's idiosyncratic textual practice.

To be fair to Follett, his work also contains new angles on Conrad which later critics were able to develop in more detail. Thus in discussing Conrad's "pessimism" (Chapter 1, pp.14-39 (pp.20-23)) Follett links him with Hardy as a novelist who created an 'indifferent universe' (p.20), although for many readers this phrase will recall Dickens' Bleak House. 49 Follett suggests that Conrad is a better author than Hardy because the latter goes too far and 'paints the universe so indifferent as to make at Malevolent' (ibid) whilst in Conrad:

the mind and will of Man, even where they are defeated, remain the hero - the mind more vast and intricate than all the rest of the spectacle because it can comprehend the vast

intricacy of the whole and invent its own values in addition.

(Joseph Conrad: A Short Study, p.23)

Yet there is nowhere in Conrad where any character, save doomed idealists like Jim or Kurtz, claims to understand the whole of experience or to invent values which are beneficial to wider humanity. Conrad is deeply sceptical about idealism and some of his most complex fictions are about the defeat of illusion and the crushing of man's will. Follett is unwilling, or unable, to see this but one should note that his failure is relative because his desire to discuss Conrad's attitudes prompts a greater engagement with the text than was the case with the majority of the critics previously discussed.

Follett suggests that Conrad is to be understood as a symbolist who uses the 'tinsel trumpery of suspense, surprise, coincidence' (p.25) as a shorthand which hastens his readers to the point where they can understand the spiritual. Follett, again, becomes confused as he tries to explain. Conrad does make use of the novelistic cliches of adventure fiction because they generate situations in which men and women have to face the extreme and it is humanity in extremis which interests Conrad. Why a cosmopolitan dilettante like Decoud gets involved in the unstable politics of a small South American republic and how he copes when totally

removed from even that limited society; how the unimaginative Captain MacWhirr copes with a typhoon: these are typically Conradian problems. They allow him to register or to imply ideas about humanity in general and about the individual's relation to society in particular and to this extent Follett is accurate when he argues that Conrad uses novelistic cliches for more significant ends than entertainment.

What Conrad appears to have aimed at was not a representation of the spiritual but rather an examination of how social values became limiting or sustaining tools that enable individuals to cope or collapse in extremis. Conrad's analysis of Typhoon is particularly revealing on this point:

A wrestle with wind and weather has a moral value like the primitive acts of faith on which may be built a doctrine of salvation and a rule of life.

(To W.Blackwood, 26th August, 1901, p.354) 50

Follett's account of Conrad's 'restrained symbolism'(p.25) lacks authority and is ultimately unacceptable. His analysis of Conrad's life as a construct of three distinct lives (pp.27-29) is, however, an account which rapidly becomes dominant in Conrad studies.

Follett argues that an understanding of these lives will provide the key to Conrad's work as a whole. He

suggests that each phase represents a period of intellectual transition through which the experiences and values of the previous period are re-assessed and re-defined in the light of those which inform the current phase. Follett influentially argues that the shifts from Pole to sailor to writer are to be understood as expatriations. This is a strong term which still meant to be banished or to renounce one's allegiance to a country (OED).

He argues that each remove 'was not improvement, but enrichment' (p.31) which implies that he does not understand the strength of the term he employs because if the move from Pole to sailor was a renouncement of all sympathies for things Polish then it ought to be understood as an improvement. Follett does not pursue his claim but it becomes dominant in later criticism, perhaps because the two occupations are superficially so distant that they resonated in accounts of Conrad as an idiosyncratic author and could operate as a key to his divergence from accepted forms. 51

Given his earlier confused insistence on the centrality of pessimism to Conrad's order of things it is odd to find Follett arguing that the characteristic of Conrad's fiction is:

the discovery of men in their undiscouraged,
their obstinate, their sometimes blind and

tragic gropings for a hand to touch in friendship or in love.
(Joseph Conrad: A Short Study, Chapter 2, pp.40-70 (pp.45-46))

Having suggested that human relationships are of central importance in Conrad's fiction - and thus contradicted his earlier argument that 'the mind and will of Man...remain the hero' (Chapter 1, p.23) - Follett goes on to argue that:

Mr. Conrad performs no task more faithfully than his analysis of the man who, by accident or his own act, is cut off from his natural associations, and whose whole way of existing and thinking is traceable to being so cut off.
(Joseph Conrad: A Short Study, Chapter 2, p.50)

Follett's shifts of opinion are enabled by the tenets of the discourse of realism which takes everyday individuals and by dint of recounting their story converts them into exemplars of a particular social order or set of character traits. Follett has already noted that Conrad is a modern realist and therefore dwells on the psychological rather than the social. What seems to be meant by his classification of Conrad as a restrained symbolist who uses novelistic cliches to attain the spiritual is that by placing his characters in extremis Conrad can be seen to examine the essential qualities of human relationships; as Follett puts it:

Mr. Conrad's people were born to be common, but, pressing and transmuting them under the weight of many surcharged atmospheres, he has kept them from becoming common-place.
(Joseph Conrad: A Short Study, p.53)

Here one can identify the realist norm which promotes

the creation of compellingly "real" - i.e. not commonplace - characters; a norm which conceives the novelist's aim as centrally concerned with a tracing out the lessons offered to society at large in the experiences and behaviour of individual's. Character is central to realism and this explains why Follett's account of Conrad's pessimism is so garbled.

Conrad's supposedly world weary outlook smacked of the abstract theorising of naturalism and was not an acceptable focus for textual practice according to realist norms. A concern for the illustrative potential of human relations was acceptable in realism and thus Follett is able to deal with Conrad's treatment of man in extremis only by transposing the implied or stated pessimism of so many of his fictions into mere background against which his characters seek to gain the comfort of a human relationship.

Despite arguing that Conrad's realism is of a different order Follett's account of Conradian textual practice does not go beyond the parameters of realism. Conrad, he argues, offers his readers detail 'as sharply as the professional notebook realist' (Chapter 3, pp.71-111 (p.91)):

But his fancy is ever constructively out working upon the finer congruities that subsist between the aspect observed and the sensitised observing faculty; so that...he is not to be

confounded with the globe-trotting realists who have offered their memoirs and confessions under the guise of fiction.

(Joseph Conrad: A Short Study, p.92)

It is clear that Follett is actually trying to distinguish Conrad from adventure novelists and travel-writers and to suggest that he is a "proper" - i.e. realist - novelist: thus the only difference between Conrad and the traditional realist, for Follett, are the "exotic" settings of Conrad's work.

Follett manages to raise questions about Conradian textual practice which very few British critics had asked. His account of Conrad's method stresses that the technique described enables a more accurate depiction of life but this realist emphasis on mimesis does not seriously compromise the accuracy of his claim that:

in the overpowering culmative effect of a story, we see a score of minor episodes and a hundred tangential meanings brought into alignment, reduced to a fine organisation, all made to count, and count simultaneously.

(Joseph Conrad: A Short Study, p.96)

Again one finds Follett's insight failing when he moves from generalisation to specifics: realism demands that he classify Kurtz as the hero of Heart of Darkness (Chapter 2, p.56) and it appears to be realism which prevents Follett from applying the kind of account quoted above in his discussion of the novella. Rather he trots out Darwinist-inspired critical cliches:

Heart of Darkness presents the...tragedy [of] the too intimate understanding of things across the gulf of race. Kurtz, initiated into the monstrous and unnamable rites of savages, loses his bearings in space and time, and slips back into a twilight of chaos like that before mind dawned on the body's bestiality.
(Joseph Conrad: A Short Study, Chapter 2, p.56)

This account is the product of Follett's belief that in Conrad the reader is presented with an 'analysis of the man who...is cut off from his natural associates' (p.50) and his claim that the setting of Conrad's fictions is simply a means of furthering that analysis means that the question of exploitative colonization does not feature in his comments on the novella.

Follett's book is notable for two main reasons. It suggests the greater role of analytic commentary in American criticism and it reveals the stability of critical opinion because its version of Conrad would not have been out of place in the London of 1903. By 1915 a hegemonic realism was still claiming as its own the techniques of authors like Conrad or James and thus Follett's text illustrates how Conrad's stylistic innovations were being classified as exemplary but venerable tools in the craft of fiction. Follett's work reveals that the problematic of Conrad's impressionism could be dissolved by re-inscribing his version of textual practice into a realist context in which its innovations could be claimed as modifications of realist

technique. Because of the ongoing domination of the literary heteroglossia by the discourse of realism even a progressive critic had to incorporate realist notions which could easily destabilise the counter claims of the discursive position he sought to promote.

This problem is clearly a major cause of the confusion at the heart of Arthur Symons' 1915 article on Conrad for The Forum. 52 This piece was initially prompted by the publication of The Secret Agent but was not published until 1915 when the success of Chance had made the market for commentary on Conrad broad enough to encompass something as idiosyncratic as Symons' article. 53 Two main factors are at work in this piece; Symons' allegiance to a Yeatsian version of symbolist textual practice and the fact that he was re-ordering his thoughts on Conrad only months before his collapse into insanity. Symons' madness is well documented by his biographer and here it is helpful to draw upon biographical information to offer a fuller account of the ways in which the discourses informing a critic's conceptual horizon operate as constraints in the act of reading.54

Symons' rather fervid imagination found an early avenue for expression in the writings of Browning and, a little later, in French symbolist poetry. Romantic imagination

provided an alternative lexicon of belief to the strict Wesleyanism of his childhood. 55 After moving to London to develop a literary career begun at the precocious age of seventeen Symons discovered symbolist poetry with its dark spiritualism and lush sensuality. This was a discourse which promoted values that he found particularly compelling. From Symbolism, via Romantic aestheticians like Coleridge and Blake, Symons took the notion of 'the isolated, narcissistic artist' (Beckson, Chapter 5, pp.65-79 (p.76)) but it is from the psychological complications engendered by the interaction of the hedonist norms of symbolism and fin de siecle London with those of his Wesleyan socialization that gives Symons his sense of the delightfully destructive power of sin:

What exquisite indecency,
Select, supreme, severe, an art!
The art of knowing how to be
Part-lewd, aesthetical in part,
And fin de siecle essentially.
('To the Memory of Charles Baudelaire') 56

Symons' pre-breakdown life is summed up by the last three lines of the stanza.

Symons is generally credited with promoting the sombre vein of Conrad criticism which casts the author as a metaphysician of darkness. Conrad's sceptical depiction of human folly resonated within Symons' troubled consciousness. His 1915 article begins with the

critical commonplace of Conrad's difficulty for the average reader. Symons notes 'Conrad's inexplicable mind' ('Conrad', p.579) and characterises it as 'an elemental sarcasm discussing human affairs with a calm and cynical ferocity' (ibid). In terms which take their authority from the discourse of symbolism, Symons goes on to argue that 'behind that sarcasm crouches some ghastly influence, outside of humanity, some powerful devil...spawning evil for his own delight' (ibid). Symons' desire to get beyond the text to the mind of its creator was standard critical practice at this time but in this case the discourse authorising the tactic is particularly clear.

Romanticism promotes authorial genius via its conception of the centrality of the imagination in the creative act: from this perspective a great writer is someone who has a highly developed imaginative faculty. In symbolism the notion of authorial genius is more complex because the text is "simply" the medium through which one gains access to the symbol: the writer's task is to articulate concepts which are 'too subtle for the intellect' (Yeats, 'The Symbolism of Poetry', p.45) by creating symbols which 'evoke an emotion which cannot be evoked by any other arrangement of colours and sounds and forms' (ibid). 57 Romanticism and Symbolism legitimize Symons' search for extra-textual meaning but

his interpretation of Conrad's sarcasm as the product of devilish possession is the product of his unbalanced mind. Whilst Symons knew of the occult significance given to the symbol by theorists like Yeats - who believed that the mystical could reveal truth via occult correspondences - he was far more drawn to notions which interpreted madness as a creative energy of the highest calibre. 58

Symons' reading of Conrad is directed by symbolism and this means that there is no place for explanation or examples: there are grand gestures and impressionistic rhetorical flourishes but little evidence of accurate close reading of the texts. When he moves on from broad, generalised statements like 'Reality, to Conrad, is non-existent' (p.580) to a discussion of characterisation Symons is unconvincing.

His attempt to account for the lack of central women characters in Conrad's fiction is a typical example of his failings. Symons claims that:

It is only men who can be represented heroically upon the stage of life...woman [is] only a parasite or idol, one of the illusions of men.
(*'Conrad'*, pp.583-584)

Obviously a modern reader would want to suggest that Symons' view of women's suitability for central roles in fiction owes something to his personal problems with

sexuality as well as to the norms of the patriarchal society he lived in. One might also want to suggest that heroism in Conrad's texts is a value scrutinised and rejected; the evidence available to Symons does not support his claim. Characters like Jewel in Lord Jim, Mrs. Gould in Nostromo, Winnie in The Secret Agent or Flora in Chance have central and significant roles and whilst one might query Conrad's ability to understand the problems of women under patriarchy it is just as meaningless to label Conrad a sexist as it is for Symons to indulge in his diatribe: neither position furthers one's understanding of the role of women in Conrad's fiction. Symons offers a very simplistic piece of received opinion which does not stand up to the evidence. It appears that Symons takes comments like 'the women...are out of it - should be out of it' (Heart of Darkness, p.49) as Conrad's own opinions rather than as part of the ongoing characterisation of the cynical Marlow.

Although Symons' critical opinions are derived from a theoretical and progressive account of textual practice he still lacks a terminology for effective textual analysis. One cannot criticise Symons for not doing something when he lacked the equipment to do it but it is surprising that one of the period's leading critics and promoter of a version of textual practice which

until recently had been at the cutting edge of literary developments can argue that:

Conrad's stories have no plots, and they do not need them. They are a series of studies of temperament, deduced from slight incidents; studies in emotion, with hardly a rag to hold together the one or two scraps of action out of which they are woven.
('Conrad', p.590)

The in-mixing of old and more recent ideas about textual practice in this^r quotation is problematic in Symons' account as a whole. Symons repeats the critical orthodoxy which suggested that one could read Conrad as a novelist of character who had given his work a modern, psychological twist. This notion sits uneasily with the wild symbolist account which opened Symons' article: studies in emotion sound rather more accessible than an elemental sarcasm spawned at the bidding of a devil.

Symons' "modern" notions about the spiritual importance of imaginative writing sit uneasily with the parochialism of his essay's concluding remarks. This confusion is in part the product of Symons' unbalanced mind but has at least one root in the ongoing dominance of realism in the literary heteroglossia.

iv. CONRAD CRITICISM 1916 - 1930: THE DIALOGICS OF INTERPRETATION

The growth of Conrad criticism in the period 1916 to 1930 would appear to be motivated by only a few factors but the content of that criticism is very broad. Whilst one can reduce the concerns of Conrad criticism at this time to four major areas - Conrad as Slav; Conrad as pessimist; Conrad as technical innovator and Conrad as pre-cursor of the modern tradition - the ways in which critics came to classify Conrad under such headings are quite diverse.

Often one finds that what for one individual is a problematic factor in Conrad's work is for another one of the most praiseworthy features of his work. Since I am interested in establishing how critical opinion is formed and why particular dialogic antagonisms generate differing actualizations at a given moment in time it does not seem helpful to gloss over critical disagreement by deploying generalized description of critics' thematic concerns.

However, a minute analysis of the critical commentaries on Conrad from this period is not really feasible in the space available in this work. In what follows I will offer further evidence for the constraints which a

critic's discursive allegiances place upon the actualization process via a detailed analysis of several commentaries which seem to me to be significant contributions to particular ways of seeing Conrad's work.

What is strikingly evident in the work of Conrad's critics in the period 1916 to 1930 is the extent to which the issues of technique which vexed earlier commentators become accepted as evidence of the author's artistic merit: critical energy was now focussed on how Conrad's technique could be classified. This shift is facilitated by the general acceptance of the viability of an impressionist mode and by changes in the practice of criticism arising from its growing academic power base. Throughout this period there is a steady decline in the number of articles on Conrad written by literary journalists and "men of letters" and an increase in articles written by and for academics. In what follows I will examine these changes and their relation to the ongoing mutations of the literary heteroglossia through a close analysis of five key works of Conrad criticism.

H.L.Mencken, eminent American journalist and cultural critic, published two major pieces on Conrad. The longest discussion occurs in the first edition of A Book of Prefaces (Part 1, 'Joseph Conrad', pp.11-64) - the

second occurs in the fifth series of Prejudices ('Conrad', pp.191-196). 59 In both Mencken offers an account of Conrad as a cynical Slav; an account which takes Wilson Follett's notion of Conrad as isolated Polish exile as its starting point but is built up through the operation of Mencken's Nietzschean inspired misogyny, anti-puritanism and anti-democratic beliefs.60

In the first of these essays, Mencken argues that the cynical pessimism which he identifies as the key feature of Conrad's fiction derives from his Slavonic roots. Mencken acknowledges that his view of Conrad is shaped by Wilson Follett's account and like him Mencken derives his version of Conrad from a reading of early texts like Heart of Darkness and Lord Jim. Through sleight of rhetoric Mencken makes his work appear to be an introduction to Conrad which "discovers" an overarching theme but in reality he presents a partial account which proves the appropriateness of his own pessimistic engagement with society.

Mencken argues that Conrad's characters 'are destroyed and made a mock of by the blind, incomprehensible forces that beset them' (p.12). This locates Conrad in a tradition of pessimistic fatalists whilst allowing for a romantic metaphysical conception that runs against the fatalism of naturalism: characters destroyed by Fate are

not the same as characters destroyed by social forces. Mencken's generalisation holds true for texts like Heart of Darkness in which Kurtz's material success is also the basis for his understanding of "the horror"; thus one can argue that the incomprehensible is established as the agent of destruction in the novella. Yet Mencken's formula cannot be applied to Lord Jim or Nostromo with any success: in the former the reader is given detailed evidence of how Jim's over-active moral sense engenders a paranoia which drives him out of society whilst in Nostromo it is the corrupting power of material interests rather than anything immaterial which drives the action. In neither work can it be argued that the incomprehensible prompts incident; indeed Conrad appears to go to great lengths to provide his reader with evidence that justifies the behaviour of his characters.

Mencken's desire to validate his discursive position leads him to twist even those texts which could support his claim for Conrad as a pessimistic author. Thus with Heart of Darkness Mencken argues that:

the exact point of the story of Kurtz...is that it is pointless, that Kurtz's death is as meaningless as his life, that the moral of such a sordid tragedy is the wholesale negation of all morals.

('Joseph Conrad', p.16)

The notion that Heart of Darkness's moral is that there

is no morality is a rather facile and Mencken can only make it by forcing the text to serve as an exemplar for his partial understanding of Conrad's world view. For Mencken, Conrad's pessimism is so great that morality is a fiction but in order to prove this point he has to misread the texts which serve as examples. Like the majority of critics at this time, Mencken conflates the world-weary fatalism of Marlow and the imaginative naturalism of the implied authorial position in order to create a perspective which is felt to open up what is claimed to be Conrad's own pessimism for critical commentary.

Mencken has to claim that Heart of Darkness is about the collapse of the comforting fiction of morality because it provides him with a basis from which to address his central point. This is found in the idea that 'Conrad grounds his work firmly in [a] sense of cosmic implacability' (ibid): a notion which enables Mencken to characterise Conrad's texts as 'confession[s] of [the] unintelligibility' (ibid) of human behaviour outside the petty confines of a social order. Mencken's position is supported by the gnomic wisdom of Charlie Marlow but not by the position of the implied author. Mencken's version of Conrad clearly derives from comments like the following:

when you have to attend to things of that sort the mere incidents of the surface, the reality - the reality, I tell you - fades. The inner truth is hidden - luckily, luckily. But I felt it all the same; I felt often its mysterious stillness watching me at my monkey tricks, just as it watches you fellows performing on your respective tightropes for - what is it? half-a-crown a tumble...
(Heart of Darkness, p.36.)

or:

three hundred miles beyond the edge of telegraph cables and mail-boat lines the haggard utilitarian lies of our civilization wither and die...
(Lord Jim, Chapter 29, p.213.)

From comments like these Mencken constructs a version of Conrad; a version based upon a misreading of Marlow's extradiegetic statements which classifies them as Conrad's own views. Only by treating Marlow as a fictional extension of Conrad can Mencken argue that:

he is pre-eminently not a moralist... His undoubted comradeship, his plain kindness toward the soul he vivisects is not the fruit of moral certainty, but of moral agnosticism. He neither protests nor punishes; he merely smiles and pities...He is sympatico precisely because of this ironical commiseration, this infinite disillusionment, this sharp understanding of the narrow limits of human volition and responsibility...I have said that he does not criticise God. One may even imagine him pitying God.
('Joseph Conrad', p.17 [Mencken's suspension points])

Given that this version of Conrad is only supported by the overly symbolist Heart of Darkness it is not surprising that Mencken regards the novella as 'the best book of imaginative writing that the Twentieth Century

can yet show'(Wellek, American Criticism: 1900 - 1950, Chapter 1, pp.1-16 (p.3)).

Mencken's account of Conrad as a radical pessimist is part of a growing trend in Conrad criticism which begins with Arthur Symons' 1915 essay in The Forum and Wilson Follett's book from the same year. Mencken's argument is particularly forceful because of his own deep-seated anti-humanism. 61 Mencken deploys what he perceives as the fact of Conrad's dissection of morality and Conrad's "aristocratic" Polish background in a critique of contemporary manners under democracy, which he disparages as 'the mobile vulgus set free'.(p.20) The values of consensus and equality are dismissed as 'unintelligible in reality'(p.21); their dominance has led to a situation where 'whatever is profound and penetrating we stand off from; whatever is facile and shallow, particularly if it reveal a moral or mystical color, we embrace' (p.24). For Mencken, Conrad's greatness rests upon his divergence from this position.

Throughout his introduction to Conrad one finds Mencken offering close readings which are based on the misconception that narrator and author are one and the same. His inability to distinguish between these positions limits his understanding of Conrad but Mencken cannot see this because his understanding is pre-formed

by his own anti-humanist perspective: in this his criticism is a clear example of the fact that it is not the text which generates criticism but rather the interaction of the conceptual horizons of the author and critic.

Given the emphasis on Conrad's pessimism in this essay it is surprising to find that Mencken begins his 1926 piece by attempting to dismiss the idea that Conrad is an author whose works tend to produce depression:

Sometime ago I put in a blue afternoon reading Joseph Conrad's "Youth". A blue afternoon? What nonsense! The touch of the man is like the touch of Schubert.
('Conrad', p.191)

Here Mencken implies that the cultured reader is able to see beyond the populist account which casts Conrad as difficult to read because of his cynicism; if one reads Mencken - it is implied - one will be able to understand Conrad as "naturally" as one appreciates great music. Similar factors inform the way in which Mencken "describes" the effect of Conrad - 'one leaves him in the clear, yellow sunshine that Nietzsche found in Bizet's music' (ibid). Mencken is aware that his language is vague and attempts to clarify his position in a rabid rant against the unenlightened masses and their political leaders:

again the phrase is inept. Sunshine suggests the imbecile, barnyard joy of the human kohlrabi - the official optimism of a steadily delighted and increasingly insane Republic. ('Conrad', *ibid*)

Only the cabbage-brained animals of the democratic Republic will misread Mencken: it is clear that this is aimed at an elite, or that Mencken desires to make his Smart Set readers feel that they constitute an elite. He argues that Conrad gives his readers access to facts which are normally elusive (pp.191-192) and this means that his view of the world 'has an atheistic and even demonical smack' (p.192). Mencken leaps from arguing that Conrad deals with the elusive and unusual to claiming that he has a demonical world view not because of textual evidence but rather because of his adherence to a Nietzschean-inspired pessimism. This is particularly clear in the section in which he talks about Conrad's God - 'an extremely ingenious and humorous Improvisatore and Comedian with a dab of red on His nose and maybe somewhat the worse for drink - a furious and far from amiable banjoist upon the human spine' (*ibid*).

Mencken claims that Conrad laughs at the solemnity of death, seeing in it far more irony than pathos (pp.192-193). As I suggested earlier, it is because Mencken focuses upon the early texts that this extreme account of Conrad's scepticism appears to be authorised; by

taking Heart of Darkness as 'the archetype of his whole work' (p.193) Mencken reveals that his approach to the Conradian canon is an extremely selective one. This seems to me to be a product of the various inter-discursive polemics which engaged and simultaneously locate Mencken in the multiplicity of discursive sites operating in the heteroglossia.

In literature Mencken was a propagandist for what he saw as philosophically fatalistic naturalism - which he found in the work of Conrad and Theodore Dreiser; from Nietzsche he took support for his own mysogyny and a contempt for democracy: both factors inform his extreme views on criticism, views which find their essential expression in the notion that 'Criticism, at bottom, is indistinguishable from skepticism'. 62 For Mencken, the naturalist novel unflinchingly presents the world as it is and therefore cannot offer an idealist account of the nature of Being. In his scheme of things the banalities of other fictional modes simply do not merit discussion whilst those which truthfully encode the facts of existence do not warrant further explication: Mencken's unreasoning approach to criticism is informed by his desire to promote a particular account of life and it is this which impels him to isolate the pessimistic element in Conrad's work and inflate it into a paradigm for his complete canon.

With Mencken one can see his idiosyncratic beliefs at work in his criticism in a relatively clear-cut way. This openness about his beliefs stems from his propagandist aims. Other critics are more circumspect about exposing the exact nature of their discursive allegiances; often critics will strategically adopt positions which they do not adhere to in order to further their aims. This provides a means of investing the ideologemes of an antagonistic discourse with an alternative meaning; a tactic which Bakhtin refers to as hidden polemic. In this an individual can strike 'a blow at the other person's word about the same topic and at the other person's statement about the same object' (Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics, Chapter 5, p.162). 63 This duplicitous use of discourse is to be seen in Ford Madox Ford's Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance.

This is a key work in English Conrad criticism in the 1920s and is central to any history of Conrad criticism. Whilst it is a typically Fordian production couched in an anecdotal and often polemical style this work is full of the vitality which is lacking in so much of the criticism discussed so far. Ford's stylistic idiosyncrasies energise his examination of Conrad's technique and whilst his work is really an after-the-event explanation of the foundations of Conrad's greatness it stands out from the majority of Conrad

criticism at this time because it contains a detailed, text based, account of Conrad's style which is unparalleled in British criticism in this period.

In what follows I will locate Ford's comments in the context of the contemporary critical opinions discussed previously and also in the frame afforded by my account of how the era's critical theory could classify the aesthetic informing Conradian textual practice which concluded Part 3 of the present work. This dual focus enables me locate his comments in the context of his contemporaries' understanding of Conradian technique.

Ford's association with Conrad was the key to this work's influence over critical opinion; the fact of his collaboration with Conrad on The Inheritors (1901), Romance (1903) and The Nature of a Crime (1924 [written 1908]) lent credence to his account of Conrad's aims and methods. 64 As many commentators note, Ford's comments have to be treated with caution because one, unstated, aim of much of this work is self-promotion.

To be fair, his study is clearly stated to be a personal remembrance;

the record of the impression made by Conrad the
Impressionist upon another writer,
impressionist also.
(Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance, Part I,
Section 2, pp.38-42 (p.39) 65

One cannot simply dismiss Ford's slapdash impressions but must attempt to sift them for the grains of truth which they contain. For my purposes here Ford's work is of central importance because it represents the first full summing up of Conrad and his work after his death; whilst Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance is very much Ford's own version of Conrad the account offered influentially categorised him for critical history well into the 1930s.

Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance examines Conrad's life and work through a series of anecdotes illustrating what Ford regards as typical Conradian behaviour. These are supplemented by generalisations about his artistic and political beliefs. Ford's way of seeing - his conceptual horizon on the heteroglossia of the era - informs these characterisations of Conrad and his recollections can be seen as an attempt to underline Conrad's significance for the modernist avant garde.

Ford's account of Conrad's techniques, forming Part 3 of Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance, will be discussed in detail below but first it is useful to examine the version of Conrad presented in the rest of the text in order to assess the extent to which Ford recast notions put forward by earlier commentators.

Ford quickly establishes Conrad as a natural genius whose style is the product of an osmotic encounter with a diversity of literature. He is presented as an 'Elizabethan Gentleman Adventurer' (Part 1, Section 1, pp.11-39 (p.25)), a characterisation which links with the ongoing "discovery" of the Elizabethan Age as the source of modern British values: calling upon Drake and Raleigh as models for Conrad enables Ford to prepare the ground for his later dismissal of the 'Conrad as Slav' argument.⁶⁶ In linking Conrad with these paragons of British independence of spirit Ford is able to imply that Conrad was more in tune with essential British values than many native citizens: through strategies like this Ford is able to claim Conrad as a great English novelist. It needs to be stressed that Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance is partly an exercise in Fordian self-aggrandisement and thus comments which stress Conrad's untutored genius are vehicles for Ford's claims to have shaped and honed Conrad's style:

We talked about Flaubert and Maupassant - sounding each other, really. Conrad was still then inclined to have a feeling for Daudet - for such books as Jack. This the writer contemned with the sort of air of the superior person who tells you that Hermitage is no longer a wine for a gentleman
(Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance, p.35)

This playing with critical positions and conversational registers is characteristic of Ford's criticism and is a

fruitful technique in that it allows several points to be canvassed simultaneously.

In the passage above Ford is able to cover the literary nature of his discussions with Conrad and also to suggest that literary value - like taste in wine - is subject to the vagaries of fashionable opinion. Ford implies a degree of distance between his own position and that of the vagaries of literary taste by suggesting that his dismissal of Daudet was part of the sounding out process rather than a response to a fundamental flaw in Conrad's sense of literary value: in describing the tone of his condemnation Ford sets up a tension between the opening's suggestion of literary banter amongst equals - 'sounding each other out, really' - and the conclusion's evocation of cultured snobbery. In this deployment of cultural standards of taste Ford is using a technique of belle-lettrist criticism but with his tongue firmly in his cheek.

Ford's desire to distance his work from the standards of literary fashion becomes clear when the reader encounters further characterisations of his conversations with Conrad. A sense of innovators putting the literary world to rights is deliberately developed in passages like:

we agreed that the writing of novels was the one thing of importance that remained to the world and that what the Novel needed was the New Form. We confessed that each of us desired one day to write Absolute Prose
(Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance, pp.35-36)

Conrad's desire to write Absolute Prose may appear to sit uneasily with Ford's earlier claim that he was an adventurer in the mould of Raleigh: either the discovery of Absolute Prose is a literary equivalent of the New World or, and more likely, Ford "forgets" earlier ascriptions in favour of newly coined perceptions: this lends vigour to his style but does not advance his arguments.

In these early sections of Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance Ford offers his reader a ragbag of ideas about Conrad and accounts of their Kentish literary exile. Ford glosses W.E.Henley's early support of Conrad, and in suggesting that Conrad confessed his difficulties with English to him he raises a notion which dominated Conrad criticism: Conrad is reported to have said to Henley: 67

"Look here. I write with such difficulty: my intimate, automatic, less expressed thoughts are in Polish; when I express myself with care I do it in French and then translate the words of my thoughts into English. This is an impossible process for me desiring to make a living by writing in the English Language.
(Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance, p.37)

On Henley's advice Conrad approached Ford who claims to

have collaborated on everything Conrad wrote from Heart of Darkness to Nostromo. 68 This enables Ford to write about Conrad's textual practice as if he were both a co-author and creator of his style.

Because of the emphasis on their work towards a new mode of novelistic practice Ford is keen to dismiss the popular notion of Conrad as a dreamy romantic:

the last thing that he was was Slav. For the Slav, to be true Slav, must be helpless before the vicissitudes of this world - as helpless as a new born kitten...

Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance, Part 1, Section 4, pp.52-70 (p.55)

Ford's Conrad is a practical and level headed individual - 'If you asked Conrad how to circumvent a Banker he would have an expedient' (ibid) - who consciously formulated a style which enabled him to examine the vicissitudes of this world. 69

Ford's potted biography of Conrad leads up to his 'critical estimate of this author' (Part 3, Section 1, pp.167-179 (p.167) by establishing him as a rugged individualist who, under Ford's guidance, blossomed into a truly great writer. In his account of Conrad's technique Ford does not stray from received opinion in locating the impetus for Conrad's style in the aesthetic advanced in the Preface to The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'. The third part of Joseph Conrad: A Personal

Remembrance takes its title from that work - 'It is above all to make you see' - and Ford's account represents the most detailed and sympathetic estimation of Conrad's style published in Britain in the period under investigation as a whole. Ford offers his reader practical illustrations of the points he makes as well as cross referencing scenes from Conrad's work: the third part of Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance stands as a guide to and something of a manifesto for "Absolute Prose".

As I argued in Part Two of this work, by the mid-1920s mainstream criticism had incorporated the aesthetic which informed the textual practice fostered by literary impressionism into its notion of what was expected in literature and Ford's belated polemic serves to set the record straight regarding his and Conrad's role in those changes. By 1924 Conrad was accepted as a literary Great; Ford's desire is to reveal that this was always the case but criticism had failed to realise it:

The world certainly did not want us: not at that date [the late 1890s]; and to be reputed the finest English stylist was enough, really, to get you sent to gaol. Something foreign, that was what it was.

(Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance, Part 1, Section 1, pp.11-38 (p.38))

Prior to examining specific areas of the 'something foreign' in Conrad's technique Ford offers some glosses on his beliefs and attitudes. The opening paragraphs of

the third part of Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance may be read as an attempt to correct the notion of Conrad as pessimist advanced most influentially by critics like Symons and Mencken. Ford argues that Conrad's stress on Fidelity has been misinterpreted by those who argue that it leads him to be a moralist:

When he had said that every work of art has... a profound moral purpose...he had done with the subject. So that the writer has always wished that Conrad had never written his famous message on Fidelity. Truly, those who read him knew his conviction that the world, the temporal world, rests on a very few simple ideas...

Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance, Part 3, Section 1, pp.167-179 (p.167)

The belle-lettrist's trick of implying in an aside that only he has read the evidence aright disguises the extent to which Ford is borrowing from Conrad's "message" in the Preface to A Personal Record. Conrad's Preface was an attempt to respond to what he saw as persistent misreadings of his work and towards the end he raises the place of the notion of Fidelity:

Those who read me know my conviction that the world, the temporal world, rests on a very few simple ideas; so simple that they must be as old as the hills. It rests notably, among others, on the idea of Fidelity.

(A Personal Record, 'A Familiar Preface', pp.xi-xxi (p.xix)70

The effect of such borrowing on other critics - his main target here - would be to recall Conrad's own position and thus to validate Ford's lament that the idea of Fidelity in Conrad has been blown out of all proportion.

This tactic is made more complex by the fact that in A Personal Record Conrad sought to present the normative aspects of his work and to play down the "foreign" enthusiasm for technique and moralising identified by so many of his early critics. Whilst Ford faithfully reproduces Conrad's opinion he does so against the weight of critical opinion and, as will become apparent below, against the grain of his own presentation of Conrad's innovations in technique.

With a term which today suggestively resonates in the work of Bakhtin, Ford argues that Conrad possessed a great intuitive understanding of:

the architectonics of the novel, over the way a story should be built up so that its interest progresses and grows up to the last word.
Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance, p.169)

This is certainly the area in which critics in the 1920s like Walpole and Davidson, whose work I discuss later in this section, discover the basis for their claims about Conrad's greatness, and when one recalls the antipathy with which early commentators discussed the structure of Conrad's narratives it is clear that Ford is again re-presenting a key Conradian position. 71 In the Preface to A Personal Record Conrad jokingly notes his perceived divergence from the standards of the day; noting that he has 'been charged with discursiveness, with disregard of chronological order (which in itself

is a crime) with unconventionality of form (which is an impropriety' ('A Familiar Preface', pp.xi-xxi (p.xx). In this first section of his account of Conradian technique Ford examines the importance of beginnings for Conrad's architectonics.

Ford argues that Conrad favoured 'the dramatic opening' (p.172) which I take to mean that his fictions begin in **medias res** rather than with an authorial reflection on the events which are to follow. It would be easy to argue that Ford is being pejorative for he goes on to claim that he personally favoured 'the more pensive approach' (ibid). The relative weight of the terms 'dramatic' and 'pensive' in the language of the day tends to promote what is thoughtful and meditative over what is theatrical or immediate.

What seems to be at work here is Ford's desire to suggest the extent of his influence in shaping the natural talent of Conrad: in critical circles at the time the idea of dramatic prose was most closely associated with the work of Henry James whose status as Master of technique diminishes the pejorative edge of the 'dramatic' tag. Indeed, Ford is evenhanded in his discussion of the problems associated with both techniques:

The disadvantage of the dramatic opening is that after the dramatic passage is done you have to go back to getting your characters in, a proceeding the reader is apt to dislike. The danger with the reflective opening is that the reader is apt to miss being gripped at once by the story. Openings are therefore of necessity always affairs of compromise.

(Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance, p.173)

In practice the element of compromise tends to dissolve the opposition Ford is setting up. Dramatic openings will tend to contain hints about the milieu of the novel and may suggest things about the characters the reader is about to meet. Reflective openings, often found in first-person narratives in which the narrator is a participant or involved witness to events, tend to contain similar clues as well. All openings must raise some sort of question in a reader's mind - from the simple 'what happens next?' to more complicated inquiries like 'Why is this said' or 'what makes this important'. Ford goes on to imply his agreement with the position I have sketched above when he argues that the single most important factor informing his discussions with Conrad about the ways of commencing a fiction was the desire to capture the reader's attention:

Would this passage grip him ? If not it must go. Will this word make him pause and so slow down the story ? If there is any danger of that, away with it. That is all that is meant by the dangerous word **technique**.
(ibid [Ford's emphasis])

In the second section of this part of Joseph Conrad: A

Personal Remembrance Ford offers a detailed account of that technique.

Here Ford plans to offer his reader an insight into the 'formulae for the writing of the novel at which Conrad and [he] had arrived...in 1902' (Section 2, pp.179 - 215 (p.179)). Under an impressive range of headings covering 'Impressionism', 'Conversations', 'Style', 'Cadence', 'Structure', 'Progression d'Effet' and 'Language', among other areas, Ford suggests the parameters of a Conradian poetics. Throughout this section Ford is guided by the notion of Conrad as impressionist and many of his comments evoke the aesthetic established in the Preface to The Nigger of the 'Narcissus' in 1897.

It is worth recalling the dialogic interchanges at work on the formulae which Conrad sketched in 1897 and he and Ford refined in 1902 as well as assessing how the traces of these earlier interactions relate to an audience in 1924. In the 1890s literary impressionism was part of what was seen as a decadent revolt against Victorian values, and Conrad's Preface is readily located in the context of the reformation of literary techniques; its emphasis on exposing the nature of things as they are experienced fits in with dominant characterisations of Decadent technique:

The Decadent...is a child of Victorian materialism, and as precise as a Pre-Raphaelite in his impressions of it. Pater's grasping at things as they pass is taken without Pater's delicate but dubious selectivity, for example by Symonds who, searching for the 'quintessence of things', turned his attention to experience, whatever the nature of the experience, merely for its existence; he sought its *vraie vérité* in the impression. The precise, impressionistic manner went with an idea that art should represent impartially whatever life had to offer...
(*'Decadence' in Later Nineteenth Century England'*, p.26) 72

The task approached in tenderness and faith is to hold up unquestioningly, without choice and without fear, the rescued fragment before all eyes in the light of a sincere mood. It is to show its vibration, its colour, its form; and through its movement, its form and its colour, reveal the substance of its truth - disclose its inspiring secret: the stress and passion within the core of each convincing moment.
(Preface to The Nigger of the 'Narcissus' [Appendix, paragraph 7])

Conrad's Preface was readily located in the context of what many felt was a disturbingly anti social discourse - especially when it is recalled that only two years earlier literary London had been exposed to acute public scrutiny following the arrest and imprisonment of Wilde. That it first appeared as an Author's Note following the last serial episode of The Nigger of the 'Narcissus' allows it to be seen as a defence of technique in an antagonistic discursive site.

Ford suggests that the formulae he discusses were developed in 1902 and at this time literary

impressionism was still a relatively new mode. Its practitioners met with hostility from critics whose beliefs about textual practice were derived from the increasingly embattled discourse of realism, which at the time was clinging to its dominance of the literary heteroglossia thanks largely to the discrediting of impressionism which followed Wilde's trial. 73 As Ford puts it in his brief account of 'Impressionism':

We accepted without much protest the stigma: 'Impressionists' that was thrown at us. In those days Impressionists were still considered to be bad people: Atheists, Reds, wearing red ties with which to frighten householders. But we accepted the name because...we saw that Life did not narrate, but made impressions on our brains. We in turn, if we wished to produce on you an effect of life, must not narrate but render...impressions.

Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance, p.182)

By the 1920s impressionism was the orthodoxy against which newer writers were rebelling. Conrad's divergence from dominant literary standards did shock his early critics, as I have demonstrated but by the 1920s he was a canonical author whose style was to be read as part of his genius. Avant garde critical opinion about Conrad at this time is illuminated by Ezra Pound's dismissal of Heart of Darkness as too insubstantial to provide the epigraph for The Waste Land. 74 Ford's polemic on behalf of the technique which he and Conrad are said to have developed is thus oddly belated and appears to be occasioned more by a desire to secure an enduring place for Conrad - and thereby himself - in literary history

than an argument for the relevance of that technique to the textual practice of the era: Ford was too shrewd a literary entrepreneur to make that error.

Ford's first heading, 'General Effect', is taken up with an examination of the maxim that 'the general effect of a novel must be the general effect that life makes on mankind. A novel must not be a narration, a report.' (ibid). This links with the second point, quoted earlier, which concerns the impressionist desire to ensure that the novel renders impressions. Clearly, the general effect of Heart of Darkness can be classified as impressionistic and this line was taken by the story's early critics - as I have demonstrated above. From the moment the frame narrator informs the reader that in Marlow's tales 'the meaning of an episode was not inside like a kernel but outside, enveloping the tale which brought it out only as a glow brings out a haze...' (Heart of Darkness, p.9) one is alerted to the non-mimetic nature of the text.

Ford's next point is that 'the whole of Art consists of selection' (p.182). He argues that the impressions a writer selects for rendering are chosen according to the extent to which it is hoped that they will 'carry the story forward or interest the reader.' (p.183). This process of selection is illustrated by the changes which

Conrad made to Heart of Darkness when he was preparing it for publication as part of the Youth volume. In his revision between manuscript, typescript, magazine and the text published in 1902 Conrad can be seen working towards what contemporary critics would have classified as a more fully impressionist text. Thus from an early characterisation of colonial activity Conrad cut a heavily critical account of Belgian colonialism, thus making the following passage a less directed piece of social criticism. Marlow argues that the Romans:

were not 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. **That's all. The best of them is they didn't get up pretty fictions about it. Was there, I wonder, an association on a philanthropic basis to develop Britain, with some third rate king for a president and solemn old senators discoursing about it approvingly and philosophers with uncombed beards praising it, and men in market places crying it up. Not much! And that's what I like! No! No!** 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.
(Heart of Darkness, Part 1, p.10 [Manuscript text emboldened]) 75

In the manuscript version Marlow's comments are set in the context of the 1890s debate about Leopold's methods in the Congo but Conrad, as he stated in a letter to his publisher, William Blackwood, did not want to treat the subject topically: 'that sombre theme had to be given a

sinister resonance, a tonality of its own, a continued vibration that, I hoped, would hang in the air and dwell on the ear after the last note had been struck.' (Author's Note to Heart of Darkness, p.4). 76 Cuts like the one discussed above enabled Conrad to carry through this symbolist desire.

Ford extends his discussion of selection to the incorporation of speech ('Selection (Speeches)', pp.184-188, and 'Conversations', pp.188-189). For Ford, a fiction driven by a desire to render impressions faces a particular problem with dialogue because 'the object of the novelist is to keep the reader entirely oblivious of the fact that the author exists' (p.186) and the mechanics of dialogue - 'he said', 'she interjected', etcetera - shatter the dramatic illusion. A further problem is that 'to render anything at all in a given space will take up too much room - even to render the effect and delivery of a speech' (p.188).

Ford argues that Conrad found dialogue particularly problematic but solved his difficulties by 'the use of indirect locutions together with the rendering of the effects of portions of speech' (p.186). Ford argues that having chosen to render impressions rather than narrate, the author who reports the speech of his characters shatters the illusion that the reader is a

witness to events because:

To pretend that any character or any author writing directly can remember whole speeches with all their words for a matter of twenty-four hours, let alone twenty-four years, is absurd.
(ibid)

Ford claims since the novel was based upon conventions Conrad believed that 'you might as well stretch convention a little further, and postulate that your author or your narrator is a person of prodigious memory for the spoken.' (p.187). In the comments on his narrators in his Author's Notes for the Doubleday Collected edition, Conrad can be seen acknowledging and downplaying his stretching of convention. The most notable occurs in the Note to Lord Jim where Conrad asserts that Marlow's part of the narrative 'can be read through aloud...in less than three hours. Besides...we may presume that there must have been refreshments on that night, a glass of mineral water of some sort to help the narrator on' (p.7). 77

This attempted realist explanation evades the use of a highly complex sequence of time shifts and narrative perspectives in Lord Jim and thus is wholly unconvincing; Conrad's textual practice and his reflections on it in his letters clearly indicate a distance from such realist niceties. 78 In other Notes he was a little more honest about the selection process

at work in the construction of his narratives: of Nostromo he comments:

In justice to myself, and to allay the fears of prospective readers, I beg to point out that the few historical allusions are never dragged in for the sake of parading my unique erudition, but that each of them is closely related to actuality; either throwing a light on the nature of current events or affecting directly the fortunes of the people of whom I speak.

As to their own histories I have tried to set them down...with as cool a hand as was possible in the heat and clash of my own conflicting emotions. And after all this is also the story of their conflicts. It is for the reader to say how far they are deserving of interest in their actions and in the secret purposes of their hearts revealed in the bitter necessities of the time.

('Author's Note to Nostromo, pp.xliii-xliv) 79

Whilst this again attempts to treat the text as reality in a rather arch fashion for 1917 it clearly seeks to justify the incorporation of material which the novel's critics had regarded as extraneous. 80 It is also important to note the emphasis placed on the reader's role which lends support to Ford's assertion that the poetics which he and Conrad evolved was a reader centred one. 81

Ford is less accurate when he cites one of the specific rules which he and Conrad are said to have followed in their representation of conversations:

for genuine conversations that are an exchange of thoughts, not interrogatories or statements of fact...no speech of one character should ever answer the speech that goes before it.
(Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance, p.188)

This does not ring true in the context of Conrad's fiction. The psychological impressionism of his works was fostered by the centring of his narratives on a single, framing perspective - of a named narrator like Marlow in Lord Jim or an unnamed narrative position like that which coordinates the reader's access to Nostromo.

In his narratives Conrad habitually deploys the perspectives and opinions of the story's characters as a means of modifying or re-orientating the point of view provided by the frame narrator. Conrad's fictions tend to polyphony and in a complex text like Nostromo the intermixing of the perspectives of Captain Mitchell, Mrs Gould, Nostromo and others with the omniscient narrator's "voice" creates a narrative of great richness in which the only truly privileged perspective on the events it describes is, ultimately, that of the reader who is in a position to sift the rendered impressions and create his own text. 82

Conrad's use of indirect speech allowed him to break up his dialogues and to intersperse the reflections of a central narrator with other perspectives and so diminish readerly boredom. Ford acknowledges this when he goes

on to argue that 'there must come a point in the dramatic working up of every scene in which the characters do directly answer each other...It was in this department that Conrad was matchless' (p.190).

Ford then turns his attention to 'the eternally vexed' subject of literary style ('Style', pp.193-200 (p.193)). He begins by stating that the 'business of style is to make [a] work interesting' (ibid):

A style ceases to interest when by reason of disjointed sentences, over-used words, monotonous or jog-trot cadences it fatigues the reader's mind. **Too** startling words, however apt, **too** just images, too great displays of cleverness are apt in the long run to be as fatiguing as the most over-used words (ibid [Ford's emphasis])

This commonsense account represents an evasion of the fact that more was at stake in Conrad's style than a desire to avoid fatiguing the reader; it is all very well to avoid disjointed sentences but when one's narrative consists of multiple perspectives on events and is built up through the subtle interaction of independent points of view the reader is going to experience disjunction in a far more intrusive fashion than was accepted in 1902.

Although Ford notes that Flaubert and Maupassant were the 'chief masters in style' (p.195) for him and Conrad, his account tends to stress what may be termed as the

realist motives informing their textual practice. Whilst it is true that Conrad's vocabulary does not possess the tortuous quality of Henry James - who took the scenic rendering of events in narrative to its extreme in his later works - Ford's claim that he and Conrad used the language they 'employed in talking to one another' (p.196) is disingenuous. It is obvious that they could only use their own language to write in and Ford, in seeking to characterise language as merely a means of expression rather than as a vehicle for rendering cultural and artistic positions, plays down the contribution of language qua discourse to style.

By ignoring the role of language as a foundation of and a vehicle for style Ford diminishes the very innovations of technique he seeks to praise. If Conrad is the finest stylist in English prose - as Ford claims earlier (Part 1, p.38) - because of his incorporation of a supposedly "foreign" concern with technique into the novel the resulting style must sit uneasily within the confines of the simple language of 'Middle-High-English' (p.197): Ford is trying to suggest the accessibility of Conrad's work but can only do so by evading the complexity of his style.

Indeed it is in this area that Ford admits defeat with his disclaimer that 'Questions...of vocabulary,

selection of incident, style, cadence and the rest' (p.203) are best left for more 'official and learned writers' (ibid). In his discussion of 'Structure' (pp.203-208) he reworks the venerable Jamesian notion that character must be seen to determine the incidents of a novel whilst reaction to an incident must clearly illustrate character. 83 The concept is re-shaped by setting it in the context of Conrad's maxim that a 'work which aspires, however humbly, to the condition of art should carry its justification in every line' (Preface to The Nigger of the 'Narcissus', Appendix, Paragraph 1):

Before everything a story must convey a sense of inevitability: that which happens in it must seem to be the only thing that could have happened...It must be inevitable because of his character, because of his ancestry...or on account of the gradual coming together of the thousand small circumstances by which Destiny, who is inscrutable and august, will push us into one certain predicament.

(Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance, p.204)

The Conradian cadences employed at the end of this passage evoke the often detailed justification for action which form the backbone of so many of Conrad's narratives: Heart of Darkness with its multiple perspectives on Kurtz; Nostromo with its detailed examination of the inevitability of Decoud's suicide or 'The End of the Tether' with its unflinching investigation of Captain Whalley's decline; all these texts carry detailed evidence which lends their account

of an individual's behaviour substance and authority:

In writing a novel we agreed that every word set on paper - every word set on paper - must carry the story forward and, that as the story progressed, the story must be carried forward faster and faster and with more and more intensity. That is called **progression d'effet** (Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance, p.210 [Ford's emphasis])

For Ford, Conrad's fictions offer detailed justifications of their characters actions because they are written in accordance with the dictates of this impressionist theory.

Ford's Conrad is clearly an impressionist, concerned with technique as the means of rendering a true account of the psychological intricacies which inform human interaction. Ford argues that the theory of fiction he examines in this section of Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance:

will be found to be nowadays pretty generally accepted as the normal way of handling the novel. It is founded on common sense and some of its maxims may therefore stand permanently (ibid)

By 1924, as I have argued earlier, the novel of psychological impressionism was an accepted form and one which was in the process of being challenged for dominance in the literary heteroglossia by newer modes of textual practice which had grown out of its revelation of the validity of a technique founded upon a concern to render the often incomplete impressions of

individuals. Ford attempts, with some success, to characterise an historical mode and to promote the work of Conrad as the greatest example of its practical application. This desire to propagandise on behalf of Conrad dictates the drift to a normative assessment of his methods. Ford is seeking to promote his friend's permanent place in literary history and so offers Conrad's rejection of realist technique as a common sense refinement of an outmoded practice. In the account of his collaboration with Conrad in his memoirs Ford was less cautious, arguing that 'at bottom Conrad was a Pole, a Roman Catholic and Romantic and Slav pessimist' ('A Settlement of Aliens', p.271) and that 'the technique of Conrad's work was then singularly revolutionary.' (ibid). 84

In Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance Ford steers clear of this kind of blunt taxonomy because the incorporation of such critical commonplaces would destabilise his account of Conrad's enduring significance by more directly locating his work in the critical arena. Furthermore, Ford is able to evade the critical debates of 1924 partly by focussing on the antagonisms of the past and partly by examining Conrad's work in the restricted light of their friendship and collaboration. The "insights" which he offers are made from the relatively unassailable position of his

personal recollection. Although Conrad's wife sought to correct what she saw as Ford's gross exaggerations his account was secure from attack by other critics. 85

In his exploration of the formulae which he and Conrad are said to have developed, Ford generally achieves a balance between accurate analysis and idiosyncratic egotism; he genuinely illuminates areas of Conrad's method by focussing on technique and providing quoted or created examples which support his claims. It is this combination of genuine insight and detailed examination which made Ford's work so influential: certainly it is a landmark in Conrad criticism and its account of technique marks a shift to concerns more suited to the criticism of an era increasingly dominated by the analytic critical practice developed by Richards out of Eliot.

Yet it is not until the early 1930s and Leavis's re-evaluation of Conrad in Scrutiny that English criticism produces an account which can match the vitality and, ultimately, the authority of Ford's exploration of technique in Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance. For the key responses to the new analytic emphasis in critical practice in the field of Conrad studies in the later 1920s one has to examine work produced outside of Britain. Ford apart, the lack of vitality and

innovation in the Conrad criticism produced in Britain in the 1920s makes the work of critics from other literary-critical communities appear tremendously modern. Whilst I am primarily concerned with assessing the role of discourse on critical practice in a British context it is not unreasonable to assume that work from overseas would have been read and so become part of that heteroglossia - however much its findings remained marginalised or just plain rejected by native Conradians.

Ruth Stauffer's short study Joseph Conrad: His Romantic-Realism is of note for several reasons. 86 Her work is the first which sets out to prove an explicitly stated theory about Conrad's textual practice although in practice Stauffer's account is essentially a re-encoding of Conrad's own statement on his mode of writing in terms of a conflation of the genres of romance and realism. Throughout the text Stauffer refutes or engages with various trends in Conrad criticism; thus her text illustrates the internationalism of the discourse. This factor is reinforced by the mix of English and American critics in her work's useful annotated bibliography. Taken as a whole these factors add up to an illustration of the fact that academic American criticism was better equipped for the analysis of Conrad's textual practice. Here I wish to

concentrate upon the ways in which Stauffer's seemingly independent theory actually derives from Conrad's own position on textual practice.

Stauffer commences her work with a discussion of 'The Meaning of Romantic-Realism and its Application to Conrad' (Part I, pp. 11-29). Stauffer sees critics falling into three schools of thought: those who see Conrad as a Romantic; those who see him as a Realist and those who see him as something from both genres (p.12). Those of the latter persuasion all make the mistake of classifying Conrad as a Realist with a Romantic strain when, for Stauffer, the truth is that Conrad was a Romantic-Realist (p.13). Stauffer argues that there is little point in setting forth all that critics have written on the subject by way of definition because differentiation at the abstract level of criticism is not relevant to the movement between modes which occurs at the creative level of textual practice (pp.13-14).

For Stauffer 'the distinctions underlying the Romantic and the Realist [artist] are of three kinds: a difference in subject matter; a difference in method; and...a difference in the spirit of the writer' (p.14). For all the differences in setting and character, in events and their depiction and in the chronotope appropriate to each genre it is ultimately the

'individuality of method' (pp.15-16) which traditionally allows a reader to differentiate between the two modes of textual practice:

The traditional view, therefore, is that the Romanticist constructs through his imagination and an instinctive perception of the fitness of things; a Realist, through his observation and his reason.

(Joseph Conrad: His Romantic Realism, p.16)

Already we can detect the bias in Stauffer's notionally objective account: 'imagination', 'instinctive perception' and 'fitness' all imply that Romanticism is ultimately more valuable for her than Realism which is simply concerned with 'observation' and 'reason'.

Stauffer goes on to explain in some detail (pp.16-22) how a romantic-realism is put together. She argues that it is essentially a matter of which generic features a writer emphasises - since 'the real and the romantic are inherent in all human affairs' (p.21) - which determines how she or he may be classified. Stauffer suggests that in Conrad one may identify a combination of 'the poetic imagination of the Romanticist and the minute observation of the Realist' (p.27). She suggests that in Conrad the often startling juxtaposition of the mundane and the marvellous, of the 'incongruous' and 'matter of fact' (ibid), is motivated by 'the high purpose of presenting life as it actually is' (p.28). Only at the very end of this section does Stauffer

reveal the hidden source for her account: in order to illustrate the accuracy of her account of Conrad's textual practice she quotes from the Preface to The Nigger of the 'Narcissus' but what actually emerges is the fact that she takes her understanding of what constitutes Romantic-Realism from a wholesale plundering of Conrad's Preface. Stauffer quotes from the opening paragraphs of the Preface and deliberately cuts out the fourth, fifth and sixth paragraphs in which Conrad sets out an impressionist account which would complicate and weaken her attempt to classify him as a romantic-realist. 87

Stauffer's debt to Conrad emerges in several ways. At a broad level her loaded accounts of Realism resonate within Conrad's explicitly non-Realist stance in his Preface; similarly her account of Romanticism tallies with Conrad's presentation of an exemplary mode of textual practice. More specifically, there are two direct - but completely unacknowledged - quotations from the 'Preface' and much of Stauffer's text can be seen as a conversion of Conrad's; her work is a transformation of the paradigmatic meaning of the notions contained in his. She expands upon the sociolect significance of distinctive Conradian lexemes but converts them from their original site of discursive resonance - the late 1890s debate about impressionistic modes of rendering

experience - to a site in which they become part of an academic debate about the critical status of two well-established genres.⁸⁸

Thus when Stauffer quotes Conrad's argument that the prose artist:

speaks to our capacity for delight and wonder, to the sense of mystery surrounding our lives; to our sense of pity, and beauty, and pain; to the latent feeling of fellowship with all creation...and to the subtle but invincible conviction of solidarity that knits together the loneliness of innumerable hearts
(Preface to The Nigger of the 'Narcissus', paragraph 3)

one recalls passages like the following which were read as Stauffer's and now discovered to be conversions of Conrad:

The Romanticist finds out the unusual, the heroic, the imaginatively stimulating in the occurrences of daily life, and lays emphasis upon them. He sweeps us on by sheer intensity of action through a series of events with alternate checks of mystery, terror, premonition, suspense to surprise and climax.
(Joseph Conrad: His Romantic Realism, Part I, p.21)

or:

Into the deeds of men and this picture that frames them, the Romanticist reads the mystery of all human existence. The great Romanticist is gifted with the language of a poet to suggest that mystery, and to unveil what he has found of its meaning.
(Joseph Conrad: His Romantic Realism, Part I, p.22)

By converting Conrad's account of textual practice into her own terms Stauffer is able to appear to be

objectively locating Conrad in literary history. In actuality her account simply discovers the premise for its inception; in between her opening paragraph's unacknowledged quotation from the Preface and the extensive quotation from it at the close of the chapter, Stauffer offers an extended variation upon the themes set out in Conrad's Preface and by mixing this with quotations from authoritative writers and critics - Zola (p.16); Jonson (p.16); Aristotle (p.17); De Maupassant (p.17); Stevenson (p.19); Walter Raleigh (p.21) - she is able to "discover" that Conrad, by his own admission, is readily to be located in the context of the literary history of romantic and realist modes but is also a writer whose work, by fusing realism with a dominant Romanticism, adds to that history.

If Stauffer openly declared that her work was essentially an account of how and why Conrad, from the evidence of his Prefaces and his fiction, should be seen as a Romantic-Realist then my critique would be unviable. Because she claims to be making a discovery about Conrad, and offers it as an objective account which can correct the misreadings of previous commentators, it is both surprising and problematic that her account is so heavily derivative. Essentially Stauffer is doing what Mencken or Symons were - but with less polemic. She takes a particular aspect of Conrad

and uses it as the basis for an account of his total project. For critics who really offer the kind of account which might be recognised today as effective we have to turn to the work of Donald Davidson.

Donald Davidson is a lesser figure in the American literary-critical revolution which eventually became labelled as New Criticism. Davidson worked at Vanderbilt with John Crowe Ransom and, more closely, with Allen Tate: clearly he comes out of a new and vigorous site of critical practice.⁸⁹ His article on Conrad, in the then politically conservative but critically radical Sewanee Review, is an attempt to analyse a feature of Conrad's textual practice and although it appeared in early 1925 there is no hint which might allow one to suggest that it can be seen as a retrospective assessment of the man and the work.

Davidson's 'Joseph Conrad's Directed Indirection' is an analysis of Conrad's narrative technique.⁹⁰ He argues that the modern element in Conrad rests with the way in which his narratives 'turn attention inward - upon character, motive, consequence, thesis' ('Joseph Conrad's Directed Indirection', p.165): this 'inverse method' (p.164) results in a directed indirection of the reader's attention - away from plot and towards the psychology which informs action:

He discounts the purely animal curiosity which we may all have as to the outcome of his drama by telling us at the beginning (of course with great reserve and subtlety) just what the end of a given episode may be.
(*'Joseph Conrad's Directed Indirection'*, p.165)

Davidson sees Conrad as something of an adventure novelist; an adventure novelist whose narrative technique has significant impact upon the norms of that genre. In Conrad, he argues, melodramatic material is made part of the account of a character's psycho-social evolution; because we know what is to come we are more concerned with 'the suspense of an evolving character...than...mere incidental outcome' (ibid). As Davidson develops his argument one notices two features. Firstly, there is a lack of practical demonstration of the evidence for his claims. Secondly, when he does attempt to illustrate his argument he turns to Lord Jim and Nostramo: once again we find a critic attempting to define Conrad's total canon by reference to a tiny percentage of that corpus.

What Davidson has to say about the 'inverse method' is acceptable as a characterisation of an aspect of Conrad's style in a limited number of texts; for the period it is a strikingly analytic assessment of narrative technique. Having offered the traditional critical disclaimer - 'A precise definition...is difficult to give' (p.166) - Davidson sets out to show

that he can achieve this difficult task. With a rhetorical flourish designed to suggest the importance of his account - 'Conrad's method, in its scope and boldness, is unique in English fiction' (ibid) - Davidson offers his definition:

The inverse method...consists in transposing the natural order of incidents, so that they are presented to a large extent in non-chronological order. It is often a veritable turning upside down of chronology, so that the story moves backward rather than forward. More frequently it consists in the interruption of a narrative to treat of prior events, and, even then, not in a summary form but in direct dramatic narrative.

('Joseph Conrad's Directed Indirection', ibid)

Davidson seems to recognise that the 'veritable turning upside down' is not something one can find 'often' in Conrad's work when he argues that the most frequent results of the inverse method are what would today be called analeptic and proleptic shifts. 91 Given this argument it is not surprising that Davidson limits himself to Lord Jim as the exemplar of the inverse method but it is highly dubious that Heart of Darkness is rejected as an illustrative text because its narrative is 'straightforward' (Note to p.196): the novella is built around analeptic and proleptic movements because these shifts give a meditative and vaguely metaphysical quality to Marlow's brooding recollection.

Davidson writes analytically because of the discursive context of his critical practice - the influence of Tate and Ransom, of Eliot and of Richards - but his work is only superficially analytic: like the belle lettrist critics discussed earlier he seeks to prove a theory which is based upon a reading of a small number of texts. Whilst Davidson is able to generalize effectively and so provides his discourse with an overarching authority it is only at the stylistic level that he differs from those critics who offer bland appreciations. For a thoroughgoing analytic approach one must move to V.Walpole's account of Conrad's narrative technique. 92

Walpole worked in South Africa, at the University of Stellenbosch in Cape Town. One might assume that his isolation from the centres of critical change in Europe and America would lead him to produce work of a generalised rather than analytic nature. I have been unable to discover anything about Walpole's training or his other critical productions but from the evidence of this article I would suggest that he is influenced by the new, analytic mode of critical practice developed at Cambridge throughout the 1920s. 93 Walpole's prose does exhibit the precision of vocabulary which underpins Richards' "scientific" approach: he dissects, displays and classifies Conrad's textual strategies rather than

generalizing about their overall effect. 94 However, this may equally be the result of the influence of American conceptions of critical practice; conceptions which Rene Wellek has classified as presenting an 'industrial, efficient, aridly theoretical, ideal of scholarship' at this time (Wellek, English Criticism: 1900 - 1950, Chapter 8, pp.239-264 (p.245)). For the moment I can only offer an account of Walpole's article which treats it as an illustration of the fact that the kind of progressively analytic criticism, normally devoted to poetry at this time, was deployed in the ongoing discussion of Conrad's work.

Walpole makes no claim to offer a complete account of Conrad's techniques. He is concerned with 'Some Formal Aspects' of his style and so cannot be accused of attempting to evaluate Conrad's work in its totality. Walpole concentrates upon Lord Jim and Nostramo but also comments upon The Nigger of the 'Narcissus', The Secret Agent, Chance and The Rescue. He rejects the received wisdom which posits Conrad as an acolyte of the Jamesian style and argues that 'in Chance...the range and variety of material and source strain the [omniscient] method almost to breaking point' ('Conrad's Methods: Some Formal Aspects', p.1); this positive evaluation of Chance - based upon the complexity of its narration - has only become accepted comparatively recently. In

arguing that Conrad 'experiments continually with chronology. Nostromo is at once the most striking example and the greatest achievement' (p.7) Walpole is again moving from general opinion, which tended to rank Lord Jim as the pinnacle of Conrad's work, and is establishing an independent position. As noted previously, Walpole offers accounts of the operation of analepsis and prolepsis in Lord Jim and Nostromo, giving the chronological sequence in one table and the narrated sequence in another (pp. 2-3 on Lord Jim; pp.7-8 on Nostromo). This kind of approach is unique in Conrad criticism at this time.

For Walpole, Conrad is a psychological novelist who achieves his effects by experimenting with the omniscient convention and accepted notions of chronological sequence. Like Davidson, he argues that it is human values which interest Conrad and the disruption of chronology and the use of multiple narrative perspectives enable him to focus upon the question of why individuals react as they do rather than on how they react; unlike Davidson, Walpole backs up his claims with detailed evidence from the texts. Walpole starts to sum up his discussion of Conrad by arguing that:

the particular effects Conrad aims at are...best obtained by complete abandonment of...traditional method[s of narration], and by a shuffling of vital factors to obtain what might be called a sequence of significance ('Conrad's Method: Some Formal Aspects', p.17)

Walpole argues that it makes no sense to dispute the viability of Conrad's methods, even when they become extreme; rather one has to explain what justifies those methods by reference to a work's internal logic (p.17).

Walpole deploys what appear to be almost symbolist criteria when he suggests that all of Conrad's narrative devices 'are directed to the one end of elucidating an obscure and subtle spiritual complex, of giving a more vivid idea of an uncertainly poised soul than any direct narrative or even direct analysis could do' (p.18). Conrad achieves this by making his narratives a sequence of impressions which, taken collectively, generate significance:

There are...a given number of events, characters, circumstances, which form the chronological and factual basis of what is to be an artistic and significant structure...in the Marlow novels...it becomes quite patently a question not of the order of events, but of the order of ideas, these ideas being the essential aspects of the story. ('Conrad's Method:Some Formal Aspects', p.18)

What seems to me to be particularly striking here is the extent to which the analytical Walpole is returning to the impressionistic Conrad of the Preface to The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'. In arguing that Conrad's technique

is directed to the process of explicating a truth Walpole is working through just what it means to make readers feel and see 'by the power of the written word alone' (Preface, paragraph 6)

One cannot claim that Walpole deploys Conrad's 'Preface' in the way that Stauffer did because there is not the evidence. Walpole appears to be taking Conrad's statement about his textual practice and in examining how the texts work towards the presentation of 'an obscure and subtle spiritual complex' (p.18) seeks to assess the extent to which Conrad's credo is to be identified at work in the processes of text production. Walpole's text-based account is the first piece of criticism of Conrad which is written from a (proto) New Critical perspective: this makes it significant from the perspective of critical history: what is more significant is the fact that Walpole's piece seems to have received no attention from his contemporaries in Conrad studies and is not mentioned in more recent work, save that of bibliographers.

If Walpole's work can be said to point to the future trends of Conrad criticism then Gustav Morf's The Polish Heritage of Joseph Conrad can be regarded as a more traditional work, despite its use of psychology. Morf's work may be seen as a psychological biography rather

than a work of literary-critical evaluation. This alone makes it notable in the theoretically deficient context offered by British Conrad criticism in the late 1920s. Morf draws on the theories of Freud and, in particular, Jung to examine Conrad's psychological traits as they are "revealed" in his fictions. In his work Morf does address issues which dominated critical perceptions of Conrad but tends to adhere to orthodoxy rather than offering fresh insights as was the case with Walpole. As noted earlier, Morf's psychological approach enables him influentially to crystallize the dominant trend in British Conrad criticism in the 1920s because it allows him to take up the notion of Conrad as Slav and to develop it to the point where he can reveal the centrality of cultural traits for any evaluation of Conrad's fiction

In what follows I examine the early chapters of his work in which he sets out the racial and familial influences on Conrad and then move on to a detailed discussion of his influential account of Lord Jim. Whilst many of his arguments are thought-provoking, his work is undermined by a rather simplistic use of psychological notions to validate his claim that Conrad's fictions are the working out of personal cruxes.

The kind of social psychology which Morf offers his readers often appears to be little more than a redeployment of Darwinian nationalistic classifications of racial difference in the alternative register provided by psychological theory. His claim that 'the romance of war still exercises a great fascination for the Pole' (The Polish Heritage of Joseph Conrad, Chapter 1, 'The Ancestors', pp.1-22 (p.12)) is typical of the rather crude use of commonplace notions about racial characteristics which mar Morf's work for the modern reader. 95 In the context of the rather unformulated notions which underpinned much of British Conrad criticism at this time such classifications, with their air of scientific precision, would appear more acceptable.

Morf's use of his generalised assertions is equally problematic. In the above example Morf is impelled to claim that the Polish love of the romance of war dictates the use of military characters in Conrad's fictions (ibid) but quickly qualifies this inaccuracy by arguing that in Conrad sailors fulfil the same role as soldiers and are portrayed engaged in a romantic battle with the elements. This claim is inaccurate but, supported by the "science" of psychology which allows the unconscious to locate values in other registers through the process of displacement, fits in with Morf's

discursive allegiances. The extent of his evasion of the evidence to the contrary in Conrad's texts is quite staggering.

In 'Typhoon', for example, the Captain's reliance upon the wisdom offered by textbooks on navigation leads his ship into great danger, his attempt to combat the sea is complete folly and marks a dereliction of duty - the ultimate crime in Conrad's scheme of things - which is not held up in a romantic light. Furthermore Morf is disingenuous when he argues that it is the Polish love of war which promotes sailors to such a prominent role in Conrad's fictions; clearly if one must look for extra-textual motives for the use of seafarers as central characters the simplest reason for their use lies with Conrad's familiarity with them from his sea career.

Morf's investigation proceeds by identifying a Polish characteristic and then examining Conrad's fictions for evidence which reveals its influence on his mode of writing. He intensifies his characterisation of Conrad's Polish heritage by outlining the tensions arising from the conflict between the outlook of the Korzeniowski and Bobrowski families as it is manifested in his personality. 96 Thus the influence of the

rational and pragmatic Bobrowski is said to motivate Conrad's hatred of idealists like Kurtz or Decoud (p.22) a hatred which is complicated by the fact that it involves rejecting the Korzeniowski aspect of his character. These tensions in Conrad's personal development became a staple of Conrad criticism and today are accepted as commonplace; Morf's account is the culmination of the Conrad-as-Slav school of criticism in the period and manages to build innovatively on well trodden ground because his use of psychology facilitates a more penetrating account of the influence of Conrad's family on his outlook.

The danger of Morf's account is that in making Conrad so completely a product of Polish modes of thought his status as an English author is diminished, along with the originality of his innovations in English prose techniques. His book offers detailed evidence of Conrad's foreign qualities and whilst nationalist feeling in Britain was not shaped by the xenophobia of the late Nineteenth Century it was still generally regarded as undesirable to display foreign influence in one's behaviour and beliefs.

Whilst Morf's argument frequently clarifies existing accounts his insights are frequently compromised by an

over-emphasis on the Polish character of Conrad's style. Morf's claims tend to be supported only by the evidence he provides for Conrad's Polishness and not by any wider frame of analysis; there is little reference to the critical opinions his comments engage with because psychology offers itself as a self-sufficient means of analysis. Ultimately this failure to address critical perspectives on Conrad weakens the reassessment which Morf offers.

His account of Conrad's ironic angle of vision is a typical example. Conrad's 'sarcastic mind' (Chapter 2, 'The Parents', pp.23-43 (p.37)) is attributed to the influence of his father's distinctive outlook but in the son what Morf classifies as the radical '"public irony"' of the father becomes a '"cosmic irony"' (ibid). It is this which makes Conrad's texts:

sarcastic books, provocative books, they are
"pamphlets of seditious contents" in the form
of symbolic stories.
(The Polish Heritage of Joseph Conrad, ibid)

This is a fair account of Conrad's major works with their unsettling account of the existing order - Heart of Darkness's ambivalent account of colonialism, for example - but it is a generalisation which, inevitably, does not fit his complete cannon. The partiality of his characterisation becomes clear when Morf goes on to note that the 'principal merit' (Chapter 3, 'The Boy', pp.45-

78 (p.48)) of his 'master books' (ibid) rests upon 'that "awful sensation of the inevitable", which he could, after Hardy, express so well' (ibid).

The 'master books' Morf cites are The Nigger of the 'Narcissus', 'The Shadowline', Heart of Darkness and 'The Secret Sharer': his psychological leanings are evident because each text is centred upon a complex relationship between two characters who are mirror images or doubles of each other or is taken up with an investigation of the psychological state of the central characters.

Such a list of key texts does not rest easily with the critical orthodoxy of the late 1920s which promoted works like Lord Jim over what were perceived as Conrad's less substantial, psychological, texts. Morf's re-ordering of the critical ranking of Conrad's fictions and his comparison between the work of Conrad and Hardy are important shifts from accepted critical positions which were taken up by later critics. 97 Yet despite this and the claim for literary-critical authority implied by the listing of his academic credentials on his work's title page Morf is strangely reluctant to engage with critical debate; it is as if he fears that incorporating material from other sources will

destabilise his account and detract from the implied argument about the status of psychology vis a vis literary criticism.

The lack of a literary dimension to Morf's argument means that the niceties of narrative technique do not enter his frame of reference; that the narrator could offer an account which differs from Conrad's own position is a notion which does not sit easily with Morf's desire to reveal the psychological motivation behind Conrad's fictions. It is this which forces Morf to argue that Conrad's characters and narrators are versions of himself; are presentations of an ideal self which enable him to work through problems in his inner quest for equilibrium.

Morf's argument simply reverses the line taken by literary critics who argued that the presence of introspective narrators gives Conrad's work its intensely reflective qualities:

Marlow resembles Conrad in all essential traits of character. Besides being a cosmopolitan, he is a fascinating story-teller, with a strong sense of romance, and a marvellous power of intuition, observation and imitation. He is really the projection of Conrad's best qualities.

(The Polish Heritage of Joseph Conrad, p.90)

To make this claim Morf has to ignore the impressionist desire to remove the author from the frame of the

fiction which motivated the construction of a narrator like Marlow. It quickly becomes apparent that Morf's argument is driven by the dictates of psychological theory when he goes on to argue that the evidence provided by the presence of narrators like Marlow 'is certainly another proof of Conrad's deep introspection' (ibid).

This notion is central to Morf's major thesis which posits Conrad as a Jungian 'intuitive type':

The intuitive type possesses in a remarkable degree the faculty of putting himself in the place of others, or rather, of feeling as if he were some third person, of "identifying himself" with others, as the technical expression is. The consequence is that he adapts himself very easily to whatever appeals to his imagination and that he understands and penetrates and literally "makes his" the motives of all sorts of men.

(The Polish Heritage of Joseph Conrad, pp.90-91)

As Frederic Karl has argued, the label could equally be applied to any writer but it is important to note that in setting up his generalisations as part of a greater body of technical knowledge Morf is attempting to disarm such responses. 98 His intuitive type fits with the 1920s conception of what was to be expected from a great writer and the additional "weight" lent to his generalisation by the incorporation of supposedly technical expressions forestalls criticism by limiting

the frame of reference from which one can respond to his claims.

Morf is arguing for a reappraisal of Conrad which more fully comprehends the influence of his Polish background upon his way of seeing. His concern with this aspect of Conrad is a logical product of over twenty years of critical inquiry which turned upon the author's Slavonic qualities and in this self consciously pioneering work Morf's desire to set the record straight, perhaps, excuses his overemphasis. Morf's monologic presentation of the psychological foundations of Conrad's fictions illustrates the problems which one's discursive allegiances can cause. Morf's theory suggests that the defining characteristics of Conrad's work come from his Polish heritage of values and beliefs and therefore everything in those fictions can be taken as evidence. Since he writes from a perspective which claims to be a self sufficient means of accounting for a phenomenon Morf does not need to engage with other discursive positions which might destabilise his account by questioning its premises.

Whilst the weight of critical opinion is with Morf in attributing distinctive Slavonic characteristics to Conrad there is an equally strong body of thought which

suggests that the key factors of Conrad's fiction are derived from his reworking of realist versions of textual practice in line with notions derived from symbolist and impressionist aesthetics. Such a perspective challenges Morf's rather simplistic psycho-biographical reading of the novels and therefore cannot be referred to by him. Morf would, perhaps, claim that he does not need the imprecise findings of criticism because his argument receives its authority from the discourse of psychology.

In concluding his chapter on Nostromo, for example, Morf clearly distances his work from that of literary critics:

Nostromo is not only a remarkable achievement from a literary point of view, but also full of significance for the psychologist. It is one of the best examples of the compensatory functions of artistic creation. All the repressed Polish reminiscences, sentiments, aspirations and resentments, lying deep under the surface of the artist's conscious mind, had their day of rehabilitation when this book was written.

(The Polish Heritage of Joseph Conrad, Chapter 5, pp.127-148 (p.148))

Here it is implicitly claimed that only psychology can uncover the hidden factors of Conrad's fiction; the terms of this technical discourse - 'compensatory function', 'repressed', 'conscious mind', 'rehabilitation' - lend weight to Morf's simplistic assertions. By the late 1920s psychology was almost

respectable and certainly fashionable in literary circles; in the simplified reworking of Freud having "complexes" and "repressing" one's emotions were notions that had become part of intellectual culture. Morf's use of psychology is to be seen as part of the discourse's wider uptake in society. As with many new discourses, psychology promised to reveal what had hitherto been hidden and Morf's belief in its revelatory power motivates his claim that without Conrad's distinctive Polish characteristics 'there would be no Nostromo' (ibid).

Morf's use of psychology is generates a perspective which is close to that derived from the use of Darwinist discourse by academics arguing for the incorporation of English into university courses: both claim to be able to identify racial characteristics from an author's thematic concerns and both argued that the nationalist character of fiction was of crucial importance. This implies that for all the modernity of his theory Morf is working with a notion of textual practice which originates in the Nineteenth Century. In Morf's case modern psychological theory disguises the venerable aesthetic he appears to be working with but one cannot avoid the sense that Morf is simply dressing up the notion of Conrad as Slav for a late 1920s audience who

may have been less convinced by a straightforward social darwinist reading. This tension is particularly apparent when one examines Morf's inventive reading of Lord Jim

The essential point of his account of the novel is that Jim is Conrad and through the problems which follow his jump from the Patna Conrad is able to reconsider the problematic nature of his relationship with Poland. This notion has become a perennial in Conrad criticism; even recent commentators take Morf's stress on the psychological issues which Jim's leap from the Patna raises as the basis for arguments like:

In Jim's indecisions, his desire for adventure, his romanticism about his big opportunity, his nagging sense of failure, his need for integrity, his desire for a good reputation, the novel manifests Conrad's fear that he might fail as artist...as craftsman in his new calling...as professional, as someone striking out into fresh territory where adventure is always tempered by reality.
(Frederic Karl, Joseph Conrad: The Three Lives, Chapter 6, pp.445-468 (p.461).

For Morf 'Lord Jim is more than a novel, it is a confession' (p.149), a confession made in the disguised form of a work of fiction. Morf argues that 'the psychology of Freud and Jung'(ibid) provides the only means by which one can discover the nature of the confession Conrad makes because those theories alone facilitate the tracing of 'the unconscious forces

guiding Conrad in the choice of his subject and in the development of its theme' (ibid). Here Morf disarms criticism by claiming that he is going to deal with hidden material which only psychology can disclose. He then sets out the 'general principles' of his theory of the '"biology of artistic creation' (p.150).

Morf sets aside aesthetic issues which he regards as concerned with a static 'intention to please'(ibid) and focuses upon the '"dynamic" intention'(ibid) which is concerned with the desire to teach the reader or to redirect his thoughts. How the desire to please can be constant and the desire to teach a variable feature of a text is not explained. Morf clearly fails to comprehend Conrad's version of textual practice in which the desire to please is part and parcel of the desire to change readerly perceptions. This failure is shaped by Morf's conception of the act of writing which posits it as an unconscious or half conscious expression of the 'repressed conflicts, fears, wishes, hopes or joys there happen to be in the writer's soul' (ibid). Thus the writer does not just offer reappraisals of the human condition which may enlighten his readers but in addition reassesses cruxes in his own life and attempts to work them out through the actions of the characters in his works:

The solution will be symbolical, as in dreams and fairy tales. This is the only possible way, since the conscious mind cannot solve problems to which it attributes insolubility. On the other hand, repressed conflicts must be solved, if they are not to endanger the mental well-being of the person concerned.
(The Polish Heritage of Joseph Conrad, pp.150-151)

This rather static account of mental processes incorporates the suggestion that Morf's theory must be true for all writers and this is supported by the sketches of Goethe and Beethoven which follow. The former's work is said to be the expression of inner suffering whilst Beethoven is said to have sublimated the titanic conflicts of his inner life in his music (p.151). The venerable romantic notion which posits art as emotion recollected in tranquillity seems to be at work in Morf's argument here as well as the underlying assumption that Conrad turned to fiction to work out damaging psychological cruxes from his past.

Morf commences his analysis with a synopsis of the novel's plot which, because it re-orders the complex chronology of the narratives which make up the text, plays down the fragmentary way in which the reader's sense of Jim is developed. Morf wants to present the text as straightforward autobiography and cannot allow the subtleties of Conrad's narrative practice to disrupt his argument. His claims carry less weight outside of a

chronological reading of the text of the kind offered in his synopsis. His argument that Jim was at ease prior to Brown's arrival (p.153), for example, does not tally with the reader's experience of the text because our view of Jim's island life is coloured by its presentation through Marlow's retrospective narrative which is full of asides concerning Jim's past and its relation to the narrative present. Marlow's incomplete narrative, laced with his cynical asides, prepares the ground for the final portion of the novel to the extent that Jim's death is readily to be regarded as inevitable.

In his presentation of Jim's response to the threat posed by Brown to his idyll on Patusan, Morf strays into literary interpretation and offers the kind of analytic reading more often found in the work of non-British critics at this time. Morf accurately accounts for Jim's reaction to Brown because of his understanding of the psychology of motivation. Since he is discussing the reasons for Jim's actions in psychological terms he is able to present his analysis as something other than criticism and so can avoid breaking with the norms of the discourse which authorises his writing. After this rather compelling examination of Jim (pp.153-159) Morf returns to more dubious assertions when he deploys Jim's

physique as the clue which leads him to claim that Jim is an idealised version of Conrad, whose height and youth psychologically compensate for Conrad's age and small stature. In what will now be recognised as a defensive move, Morf trots out the theoretical justification for his claim:

Using the psychoanalytical terminology, it may be said that **physically** Jim is the projection of Conrad's unconscious wishes for compensation. Mentally or morally, he is, on the other hand, the projection of Conrad's repressed fears.

(The Polish Heritage of Joseph Conrad, p.161 [Morf's emphasis])

This claim has a rather shaky basis in the text and a less secure one in the evidence which Morf offers. By arguing that because the 'circumstances leading up to Jim's "jump" are modelled on those leading to Conrad's naturalization as a British subject.' (ibid) Morf can re-enforce his claim that Jim equals Conrad. Morf's logic here is laughably ingenious:

Jim's father is a parson. We know that in Conrad's writings a clergyman easily stands for a man believing too blindly in Providence. Apollo Korzeniowski belonged to that type.

(The Polish Heritage of Joseph Conrad, ibid)

This is only viable in the context of Morf's version of Conrad; there is very little biographical evidence for this position and whilst blind faith in a benevolent Providence is often a motive for incident and a negative characteristic in Conrad's fiction this is surely a product of the debunking of the Victorian conception of

a benevolent deity which followed the popularisation of versions of Darwin's theory. Morf's argument becomes even more ludicrous when argues that the 'sinking ship is Poland. The names are similar. Patna is the name of the ship, and Polska the (Polish) name of Poland' (p.163). Aside from the alliterative similarity there is no connection between the two words and Morf's argument is further compromised by the fact that the place where Jim finds temporary success is called Patusan which, by Morf's logic, should also be claimed to be similar to Poland.

Although there is a grain of truth in Morf's psychological reading it seems to me to be inflated out of all proportion, so driven is he by the dictates of the theories which help him make sense of the text. His claim that Jim's death marks Conrad's 'victory' (p.164) over his anxieties about his departure from Poland and the notion that our memory of Jim is 'of a man of unstained honour' (p.165) does not make sense in the light of Morf's earlier critique of idealism. It is clearly Jim's romanticism which shapes his actions and his misplaced values, derived from adventure fiction and underpinned by a parsonage morality, lead him - in ways which Morf clearly explains - to the failure of perception implicit in his trust of Brown. Jim's death

can be seen as 'a last flicker of superb egoism' (Lord Jim, Chapter 45, pp.305-313 (p.310)) but not as a heroic act which restores him to a position of 'unstained honour' (Morf, p.165): the whole novel works to provide the reader with a position from which to gauge the huge irony of its title.

Morf can accurately account for Jim but his belief in the value of psychology as a means for assessing fiction creates a blindness to the insights of his own analysis. This tension between moments of insight and gross misinterpretation characterises Morf's work as a whole. Morf provided critics with a deeper understanding of what was at stake in the notion of Conrad as Slav and his account of the psychological processes which Conrad focuses on in his characterisation developed earlier critical claims for Conrad to be seen as a psychological novelist. Such contributions to the development of Conrad criticism were incidental to Morf since he was primarily concerned with examining the psychology of the author as it is revealed in the text. In his deployment of notions from the increasingly dominant discourse of psychology Morf can be said to be the first critic of Conrad to respond to the challenge to traditional critical practice offered by the work of I.A.Richards.99

Although Richards was more concerned with the psychology of the reading process he was keen to promote psychological theory as a more appropriate basis for literary interpretation and Morf, in his studied evasion of contemporary opinions on Conrad, would seem to share Richards' belief that traditional criticism could no longer serve as the basis for critical practice. The failure of Morf's work is occasioned by the same kind of myopic adherence to what are promoted as the self evident benefits of a psychological approach as can be seen in Richards. Unlike the American critics discussed earlier in this chapter, Morf still clings to unrefined notions about literature which sit uneasily with the radical slant of the theory which underpins his work. For Morf fiction gives access to the writer in a relatively uncomplicated fashion and it is the task of the psychological critic to explain why a novelist wrote in a particular way rather than to analyse that writing and seek to explain how it achieves its effects.

Morf is a product of British critical notions which were based on unrefined assumptions of authorial genius and a realist aesthetic which suggested that fiction was a reflection of life. His reading of Freud, whose Interpretation of Dreams is cited as a source for the analysis of Lord Jim, is crude and unconvincing but

represents the earliest use of psychoanalytic theory in Conrad studies. 100 For all its inaccuracy and exaggeration Morf's The Polish Heritage of Joseph Conrad is part of the theoretical maturation of Conrad criticism. That the psychological theories he deploys were available from the first years of the Twentieth Century illustrates the slowness with which new discourses become available for use in the heteroglossia. In many ways Morf sums up the dominant trend in Conrad criticism in the period 1899 to 1930 by offering an exhaustive account of the Conrad as Slav notion first raised by Edward Garnett in 1898. 101 His use of an explicit theory to support his claims points the way forward to the more theoretically rigorous critical practice of Conrad critics in the later 1930s and beyond.

CONCLUSION: DISCOURSE & CRITICAL PRACTICE

In this work I have moved from a broad characterisation of social and literary discourses in the era 1899 - 1930 to a detailed analysis of their operation in the criticism of Conrad's fiction. Via this gradual intensification of focus I have been able to assess the extent to which the ideological parameters of a critic's conceptual horizon act as constraints upon and motives for a particular interpretation. Throughout I have adopted a perspective which conceives of discourse as 'striving...to determine the very basis of our ideological interrelatedness with the world, the very basis of our behaviour ('Discourse in the Novel', p.342) ¹

Discourse uses individuals even as it is made use of by them. Thus in re-working the fate of Kurtz, for example, Hugh Clifford could be seen acting in accordance with his conception of the value of imperialism. ² Clifford's allegiance to the discourse of imperialism dictated his transposition of the novella into an alternative register of significance in which its unsettling account of the colonialist project was replaced with an account of Kurtz as the victim of Black barbarity. In diminishing the text's critique of colonialism Clifford contributes, in a limited fashion,

to the ongoing domination of imperialism in heteroglossia because his reading deployed its values as a means of understanding; thereby re-enforcing its claim to be a viable way of accounting for social reality.

Despite Clifford's suppression of the novella's attack on colonialism the overarching presence of the heteroglossia as the "ur-text" from which all utterances take their content enabled me to read his account of Heart of Darkness against the grain of his argument and so come to uncover the motives informing his article. Throughout my analysis of the criticism generated by Conrad's fiction it has been shown that:

However monological the utterance may be..., however much it may concentrate upon its own object, it cannot but be, in some manner, a response to what has already been said about the given topic, on the given issue...The utterance is filled with **dialogic overtones**, and they must be taken into account in order to fully understand the style of the utterance. ('The Problems of Speech Genres', p.92) 3

From the evidence amassed in previous sections I can claim that a Bakhtinian perspective on the act of criticism fruitfully draws out the dialogic overtones of a critical text and thus enables a discussion of the value judgements and ideological positions which inform a critical commentary.

In concluding my discussion of the operation of discourse in critical practice I want to stand back from

the minutiae of critical practice and offer an account of some of the problems inherent in the Bakhtinian perspective I have sought to adopt and also to suggest why the analysis it facilitates is of value as a critical mode.

Initially it ought to be stressed that the present work does not represent a full blown Bakhtinian analysis. Leaving aside the problematic status of completeness in Bakhtin's theorising it is important to note that a more fully Bakhtinian account of the operation of discourse in critical practice would involve an examination of the discourses from which I derive my conceptual horizon. Clearly the sources I rely upon to gain access to the heteroglossia of Britain in the period 1899 - 1930 are just as much subject to the constraints of discursive allegiances as those critics whose work forms the focus of this thesis.

Whilst I have sought to overcome this problem by reading contemporary literary history alongside works produced in the era under investigation my work is clearly a product of modern conceptions of literary value. My account of the shifts in textual practice in Part 2 of this work, for example, takes for granted a canonical account of the inter-penetration of realism, impressionism, and symbolism which casts these modes in

a sequence which feeds into modernism. Given the Bakhtinian basis of this thesis am I in error when I monologise what in actuality was a complex sequence of dialogic interaction?

A partial solution to this problem is to be found in the kind of approach I have adopted in this work: by investigating the discourses which animated the social and literary heteroglossia of the period and comparing the works of a variety of critics I have sought to examine the diversity of discursive positions which individuals derived from the heteroglossia and to allow some sense of the heterogeneity of critical opinion to inform my account. By reading traditional literary histories of the period alongside those inspired by Marxism and post-structuralism I have attempted to diminish the problematic represented by the discursive allegiances of my sources.

That the problem can only be diminished may be regarded as one of the limitations of the Bakhtinian approach I have followed but I would argue that the issue of how a critic can engage with the dynamics of literary debate from a previous era is a factor in all critical practice. Bakhtinian theory provides a basis for criticism in which such limitations are accepted and not glossed or evaded; nevertheless one is left with a

nagging doubt: if discourse operates as a motive for critical practice how can one offer a Bakhtinian analysis which is not, to some extent, compromised by one's discursive allegiances; not least by one's allegiance to Bakhtinian theory.

The Bakhtinian "answer" is equally problematic: 'there are always authoritative utterances that set the tone' ('The Problem of Speech Genres', p.88) and therefore one cannot escape one's discursive allegiances. If this holds true for all utterances then dialogism becomes a comforting fiction; a merely linguistic means of rejecting the authoritarianism of the monologic discourses which shape our ways of seeing. As Ken Hirschkop comments:

The ideal of dialogism as an unending conversation, every utterance finely balanced between two personalised voices, between being represented and representing, is obviously a pipe-dream...
('Bakhtin and Cultural Theory', p.25) 4

Given that the individual consciousness is constructed by the incorporation of the discourses of heteroglossia the utterance will represent an individual perspective which only signifies in a social context. Although an individual utterance will tend to be monologic the dialogism of discourse interaction at the societal level means that monologism tends to be destabilised.

Despite the emphasis on the individual utterance in Bakhtin's work it is clear that the individual is not a free agent - a factor which those critics who use his works to celebrate the subversive power of literary works appear to neglect. The radical aspect of Bakhtin's theory rests on his dynamic account of language interaction at a meta-linguistic level: here dialogism can be called upon to conceptualise the interaction of the linguistic diversity represented by the heteroglossia. Thus Bakhtin's work can provide the basis for a critical practice which subverts the canon and incorporates an understanding of:

the social relations of literary texts, finding in them inscriptions of the ideological matrix in which they were produced...
(Peter Widdowson, Hardy in History, Chapter 1, pp.11-76 (p.11) 5

In examining the ideological impetus informing critical reaction the Bakhtinian critic accepts that criticism is the product of its era and that one's own perspective represents a factor in the attribution of value.

The value of a Bakhtinian perspective rests upon the capacity of his theorising to open up the complexity of signification: a dialogic criticism conceives sign systems - from utterances to texts - as signifying through a process of citation, negation and displacement of other discursive positions from the heteroglossia which offer competing explanations of the same

phenomena. A Bakhtinian analysis will attempt to avoid monologic characterisations of texts because it is based upon an understanding of the impossibility of offering a total account. Despite the philosophical limitations of Bakhtinian theory his work, underpinned by that of Voloshinov, offers the basis for an effective mode of literary critical analysis.

The viability of Bakhtinian theory as a mode of pedagogy is derived from its capacity to equip criticism with a means of assessing its own procedures: as a meta-linguistic account of the interaction of language Bakhtinian theory offers a framework in which criticism's premises and hierarchies of value can be assessed. 6

The work of Bakhtin facilitates a discussion of why a particular ascription of value or interpretation is made at a particular juncture: thus his work provides the basis for a clearer understanding of the processes informing critical practice and recasts the issues of an era's literary history into their originating social and cultural contexts, thereby illuminating the factors underpinning the formation of critical opinion and literary reputations.

Whether these areas of investigation are central issues which contemporary criticism needs to address is clearly a matter for debate: certainly they are areas which my conceptual horizon causes me to characterise as valuable.

FOOTNOTES: INTRODUCTION: MIKHAIL BAKHTIN & THE ANALYSIS
OF DISCOURSE

1. In my unpublished M.A. Dissertation, Intertextuality: A Critical and Practical Assessment of Three Theories (University of Warwick, July 1986), I discussed the work of Bakhtin, Barthes and Riffaterre. The present work represents a shift in focus in that here I am concerned with the implications of intertextuality for critical practice whereas the earlier work was concerned with the application of the theory in practical criticism.
2. On the question of the authorship of the texts of the "Bakhtin School" see 15 below. Throughout this work I attribute disputed texts to the author given on a text's title page. See bibliography for works by Halliday and other socio-linguists.
3. Key texts here are Foucault's The Order of Things and The Archaeology of Knowledge and Williams' The Long Revolution, Marxism and Literature and The Politics of Modernism. For all texts see bibliography.
4. For Clark and Holquist's critical biography of Bakhtin see bibliography. Further references will be attributed in the text.
5. On Bakhtin's philosophy of language see Clark and Holquist, Mikhail Bakhtin, Chapter 3, 'The Architectonics of Answerability', pp.63-94; Chapter 9, 'Discourse in Life and Discourse in Art', pp.197-211, and Chapter 10, 'Marxism and the Philosophy of Language', pp.212-237. Further references to this work will be attributed in the text. Also see Holquist's Dialogism: Bakhtin and his World (see bibliography), Chapter 3, 'Language as Dialogue', pp.40-66; Julia Kristeva's 'The Ruin of a Poetics', in Russian Formalism: A Collection of articles and texts in translation (see bibliography), pp.102-119, and Tzvetan Todorov's Mikhail Bakhtin: The Dialogic Principle (see bibliography), Chapter 3, 'Major Options', pp.29-40, and Chapter 4, 'Theory of the Utterance', pp.41-59.

6. Since I am unable to read Russian I am deeply indebted to Michael Holquist's 'Glossary' in The Dialogic Imagination, (see bibliography), pp.423-434. Further references will be attributed in the text.
7. Todorov, 5 above, Chapter 2, 'Epistemology of the Human Sciences'. Further references to this work will be attributed in the text.
8. For text see 5 above. Further references to this work will be attributed in the text. On this point also see Clark and Holquist, 4 above, 'Introduction', pp.1-15 (pp.6-7).
9. Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics (see bibliography), Chapter 5, 'The Word in Dostoevsky'. Further references to this work will be attributed in the text.
10. Bakhtin's account of the individual's construction of a conceptual horizon on the discourses of heteroglossia is illuminated by work in sociolinguistics on diglossia and code-switching. For an overview on this topic see Ralph Fasold's The Sociolinguistics of Society (see bibliography), Chapter 2, 'Diglossia', pp.34-60, and C.A.Fergusson's 'Diglossia' in Language and Social Context (see bibliography), ed. Pier Paolo Giglioli, pp.232-251. The concept of diglossia enables socio-linguists to relate language form to social function: implicit in this notion is the idea of hierarchies of discourse within a society. Diglossia implies that an individual is aware of how speech can indicate status and can therefore select a mode most appropriate to the context of an utterance; thus, as Bakhtin argues, the utterance is shaped by the speaker's awareness of how the addressee may respond.
11. 'Discourse in the Novel', in The Dialogic Imagination, 6 above, pp.259-422. Further references to this work will be attributed in the text.
12. Susan Stewart, 'Shouts on the Streets: Bakhtin's Anti-Linguistics' (see bibliography).

13. On this see Bakhtin's discussion of the construction of the utterance in 'The Problem of Speech Genres' in M.M.Bakhtin: Speech Genres and other Late Essays (see bibliography), pp.60-102 (pp.84-87). Here Bakhtin argues:

Genres correspond to typical situations of speech communication, typical themes, and, consequently, also to particular contacts between the **meanings** of words...
(p.87)

Therefore in deploying a particular speech genre the individual limits the range of meanings available for his utterance. Further references to this work will be attributed in the text.

14. The text used is that given in Bakhtin School Papers (see bibliography), ed. A. Shukman. Voloshinov's 'Discourse in Life and Discourse in Poetry' occurs on pp.5-30 of this volume. Further references to this work will be attributed in the text.

15. For the text of Marxism and the Philosophy of Language see bibliography. Further references to this work will be attributed in the text. On the vexed question of the authorship of this volume I refer my reader to the discussion in Clark and Holquist's Mikhail Bakhtin, 5 above, Chapter 6, 'The Disputed Texts', pp.146-170 (p.166), where it is argued that the work is 'clearly Bakhtin's'(ibid).

If this text is not accepted as Bakhtin's - or at least as representing a Bakhtinian position - the authority of his theory of language interaction is greatly diminished. Ken Hirschkop's critique of the ambiguity of Bakhtin's theory of dialogism is the product of his failure to incorporate the position developed in Marxism and the Philosophy of Language into his account of Bakhtin. See his 'Introduction' to Bakhtin and cultural theory (see bibliography), pp.1-38.

16. On ideology as a system of beliefs see Holquist's 'Glossary', 6 above, p.425. See also Marxism and the Philosophy of Language, Chapter 1, 'The Study of Ideology and the Philosophy of Language', pp.9-15 (p.10).

17. On this point see Clark and Holquist, 5 above, Chapter 3, p.73.

18. For the text of Freudianism: A Marxist Critique see bibliography. Further references to this work will be attributed in the text.
19. For the text of The Formal Method of Literary Scholarship see bibliography. Further references to this work will be attributed in the text.
20. On this point see Marxism and the Philosophy of Language, 15 above, Chapter 2, 'Concerning the Relationship of the Basis and the Superstructure', pp.17-24 (p.19).
21. Graham Pechey, 'On the borders of Bakhtin', in Bakhtin and cultural theory, see 15 above, pp.39-67.
22. Julia Kristeva, Revolution in Poetic Language (see bibliography), Part 1, 'The Semiotic and the Symbolic', Chapter 8. 'Breaching the Thetic: Mimesis'. Further references to this work will be attributed in the text.
23. S/Z, translated by Richard Miller. See bibliography for text.
24. On the problematic of literary competence see Paul Bové's 'The Poetics of Coercion: An Interpretation of Literary Competence' (see bibliography).
25. 'Criticism as Language' originally appeared in English in the TLS in 1963. The text referred to is that given by Lodge in Twentieth Century Literary Criticism: A Reader (see bibliography), pp.647-651.
26. On this point see Clark and Holquist, 8 above, pp.6-7. See also Evelyn H. Zepp's 'The Criticism of Julia Kristeva: A New Mode of Critical Thought' (see bibliography).

27. 'From Notes Made in 1970 - 71', in M.M.Bakhtin: Speech Genres and other Late Essays (see bibliography), pp.132-158. Further references to this work will be attributed in the text.
28. On this point see Kristeva, 5 above, p.114. Also see 26 above.
29. Zepp, 27 above. Further references to this work will be attributed in the text.
30. On this point see John Frow's Marxism and Literary History (see bibliography), Chapter 5, 'For a Literary History', pp.103-124. Frow offers a clear account of the problematic of the critic's ideology in discussions of critical ideology. Further references to this work are attributed in the text.

31. For an excellent account of the processes at work in the incorporation of an author into the canon see Peter Widdowson's Hardy in History: A Study in Literary Sociology (see bibliography), especially his 'Introduction: Literature, criticism, history', pp.1-8, and Part 1, Chapter 1, 'The critical constitution of "Thomas Hardy": A Critiography', pp.11-76.

For Widdowson:

A critiography...is a study of the process by which literature becomes 'Literature'...[it] studies the historical construction of this product as an essential prerequisite of understanding what it currently means...

(Chapter 1, p.15)

Unlike Widdowson, my emphasis in the present work falls on what a work was made to mean in the context of the conceptual horizon of a critic within the heteroglossia of a given era.

FOOTNOTES: PART 1: THE DISCOURSES OF SOCIAL HISTORY:
1900 - 1930

1. I base my selection of the key areas of discursive activity in the period 1880 to 1930 on my readings in social history (see bibliography). General sources for each area are listed in a footnote at the start of the appropriate section. Only those points unique to a particular historian will be referenced through these notes.

2. My information for this section is drawn from the following texts: Robert Colls, 'Englishness and the Political Culture', in Englishness: Politics and Culture 1880-1920, edited by Robert Colls and Philip Dodd, pp.29-61; Hugh Cunningham, 'The Conservative Party and Patriotism', *ibid*, pp.283-307; Philip Dodd, 'Englishness and the National Culture', *ibid*, pp.1-28; Dennis Smith, 'Englishness and the Liberal inheritance after 1886', *ibid*, pp.254-282; James Joll, Europe Since 1870, Chapter 4, 'Imperialism', pp.78-112, and Chapter 5, 'Liberalism and its Enemies', pp.113-142; Pauline Gregg, A Social and Economic History of Britain: 1760-1972, Part 2, Chapter 18, 'The End of "Victorian Prosperity"', pp.367-387, and Part 3, Chapter 25, 'Epilogue', pp.539-546; Hugh Cunningham, 'The Language of Patriotism', in Patriotism: The Making and Unmaking of British National Identity: Volume 1: History and Politics, edited by Raphael Samuel, pp.57-89; Richard Gott, 'Little Englanders', *ibid*, pp.90-109; Preben Kaarsholm, 'Pro-Boers', *ibid*, pp.110-126; Anne Summers, 'Edwardian Militarism', *ibid*, pp.236-256; J.M.Roberts, A General History of Europe: Europe 1880-1945, Chapter 4, 'International Competition, 1880-1901', pp.78-122 and Chapter 8, 'International Relations, 1901-1914', pp.239-262; Fred Reid, 'The disintegration of Liberalism, 1895-1931', in The Context of English Literature: 1900-1930, edited by Michael Bell, pp.94-125; Patrick Brantlinger, Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism, 1830-1914; Henry Pelling, Modern Britain: 1885-1955, Chapter 2, 'The Era of Imperialism, 1886-1901', pp.24-46; Michael Biddiss, The Age of the Masses: Ideas and Society in Europe since 1870, Part 1, '1870 - 1914', pp.29-179. For all texts see bibliography

3. On these points see Philip Dodd, 'Englishness and the National Culture', 2 above, pp.1-28, and Robert Colls, 'Englishness and the Political Culture', *ibid*, pp.29-61.
4. On this see Joll, 2 above, Chapter 4, 'Imperialism', pp.78-112 (p.83).
5. On this see Colls, 3 above, p.29.
6. See 2 above. I am indebted to Brantlinger's excellent discussion of imperialism and ideology in the section which follows this quotation; see his 'Introduction', pp.7-8, and Chapter 1, 'From Dawn Island to Heart of Darkness', pp.19-45.
7. See 2 above for text. Further quotations from this work will be attributed in the text.
8. For a detailed discussion of these changes see Biddiss, 2 above, Chapter 4, 'Social and Political Thought', pp.107-143.
9. On this see Joll, 4 above, pp.84-85.
10. Joll, 4 above. Further quotations from this work are attributed in the text.
11. On this see Biddiss, 8 above, pp.67-71. Also see Frederic Karl's encyclopedic account of Modern and Modernism: The Sovereignty of the Artist 1885 - 1925 (see bibliography). Karl suggests that writers drew upon anthropological accounts of the exploration of unknown territory and the new accounts of the workings of the dark territories of the unconscious as legitimating discourses for a psychological and interiorised mode of narration. See Chapter 6, 'Stream of Consciousness and Enclosure', pp.232-267 (p.255).

12. On this see Biddiss, 2 above, Chapter 3, 'Philosophical and Religious Thought', pp.76-106 (pp.83-87) and Chapter 5, 'Literature and the Arts', pp.144-179 (pp.158-166). Biddiss argues that Dada and Surrealist works are influenced by Freudian theory and relativistic ethical theories derived from a re-working of Einstein's theory of relativity.
13. On this see Joll, 4 above, pp.104-105.
14. On this see Joll, 4 above, p.85.
15. On the impact of imperialism in intellectual circles see Jefferson Hunter's Edwardian Fiction (see bibliography), Chapter 8, 'Complications of Imperialism', pp.99-111.
16. This contemporary attitude is well illustrated by Vera Brittain's Testament of Youth (see bibliography); see in particular Part 1, pp.17-239.
17. Sources for this section are as follows: Michael Biddiss, 2 above, Part 2, '1914-1945', Chapter 6, 'The Social and Political Environment', pp.183-201, and Chapter 7, 'Ideological Confrontations', pp.202-236; James Joll, 2 above, Chapter 8, 'The European Crisis, 1914-1918', pp.196-238; Charles Loch Mowat, Britain Between the Wars: 1918-1940; Henry Pelling, 2 above, Chapter 4, 'The First World War', pp.72-93, and Chapter 5, 'Post-war Retrenchment', pp.94-118; John Stevenson, British Society 1914-45, especially Chapter 2, 'War, Patriotism and the State', pp.46-77, and Chapter 3, 'Home Front', pp.78-102; David Thomson, England in the Twentieth Century: 1914 - 1979, Part 1, 'From Great War to Great Depression (1914-29)', pp.15-126, and Stephen Yeo, 'Socialism, The State and some oppositional Englishness', in Englishness: Politics and Culture 1880-1920, 2 above, pp.308-369. For all texts see bibliography
18. Under the war-time Defence of the Realm Act strike action was made illegal. On this see David Thomson, 17 above, Chapter 2, 'Britain at War 1914-1918', pp.36-59 (pp.45-55). Quotations from

this work will be attributed in the text. See also John Stevenson, 17 above, Chapter 2, 'War Patriotism and the State', pp.46-77 (pp.54-55 and pp.59-60). Quotations from this work will be attributed in the text.

On the notion that imperial Britain was fatally flawed see Thomson, 17 above, pp.32-33, and Fred Reid, 2 above, p.113 and p.117.

19. On this see Thomson, 18 above, pp.37-42, and Stevenson, 18 above, pp.46-53.
20. The text of Heart of Darkness used is that of the Norton Critical Edition, edited by Robert Kimborough (see bibliography).
21. On this see Charles Loch Mowat, 17 above, Chapter 1, 'Backwards or Forwards? 1918-1920', pp.1-78 (pp.43-45) and Thomson, 17 above, Chapter 3, 'Into the Wasteland, 1919-23', pp.60-90 (pp.69-70).
22. On this see Stevenson, 17 above, Chapter 3, 'Home Front', pp.78-102 (pp.98-102); Thomson, 21 above, p.69, and Mowat, 21 above, pp.38-39.
23. On this see Thomson, 21 above; Stevenson, 22 above, p.99, and Mowat, 21 above, pp.41-42.
24. On this see Stevenson, 17 above, Chapter 6, 'Occupations, Work and Organized Labour', pp.183-202 (p.202).
25. Henry Pelling, 17 above, Chapter 5, 'Post-war Retrenchment'. Further references attributed in the text.
26. On this see Mowat, 17 above, Chapter 6, 'Dead Centre: the General Strike and After, 1925-1929', pp.284-352 (p.311).
27. See Mowat, 26 above, for a detailed commentary on the events of the strike. Also see Pelling, 25 above, pp.110-112.

28. See Thomson, 17 above, Chapter 4, 'From MacDonald to MacDonald, 1924-9', pp.91-126 (pp.108-116 on the strike in general and p.115 on this point).
29. I take the Daily Mail headline from Mowat, 26 above, p.32. On the end of the strike and its impact on trade unionism see Thomson, 28 above, pp.114-116.
30. On this see Thomson, 28 above, pp.116-118. On Little Englandism see Richard Gott, 'Little Englanders', 2 above.

FOOTNOTES: PART 2: LITERARY HISTORY 1900 - 1930
AN OVERVIEW

1. Major sources for this section as a whole are as follows: Chris Baldick, The Social Mission of English Criticism: 1848-1932, especially Chapter 3, 'A Civilizing Subject', pp.59-85, and Chapter 4, 'Literary-Critical Consequences of The War', pp.86-133; Peter Brooker and Peter Widdowson, 'A Literature for England', in Englishness: Politics and Culture 1880-1920, edited by Robert Colls and Philip Dodd, pp.116-163; Brian Doyle, 'The Invention of English', *ibid*, pp.89-115; Brian Doyle, English & Englishness; Terry Eagleton, The Function of Criticism: From 'The Spectator' to Post-Structuralism; John Gross, The Rise and Fall of the Man of Letters: English Literary Life since 1800 ; Douglas Hewitt, English Fiction of the Early Modern Period: 1890-1940; Jefferson Hunter, Edwardian Fiction; Frederic Karl, Modern and Modernism: The Sovereignty of the Artist 1885-1925; Peter Keating, The Haunted Study: A Social History of the English Novel: 1875-1914; D.J.Palmer, The Rise of English Studies; J.W.Saunders, The Profession of English Letters; C.K.Stead, The New Poetic: Yeats to Eliot; George Watson, The Literary Critics: A Short Study of English Descriptive Criticism; Rene Wellek, A History of Modern Criticism 1750-1950, Volume 5, English Criticism: 1900-1950; Raymond Williams, The English Novel From Dickens to Lawrence; Raymond Williams, The Politics of Modernism: Against the New Conformists; W.K.Wimsatt Jr. and C.Brooks, Literary Criticism: A Short History: Volume 4: Modern Criticism. For all texts see bibliography.
2. The phrase is E.A.Freeman's famous dismissal of English studies: I take it from Baldick, 1 above, Chapter 3, pp.59-85 (p.73).
3. On this point see Gross, 1 above, Chapter 1, 'The Rise of the Reviewer', pp.1-25. Further references to this work will be attributed in the text. Also see Wellek, 1 above, Chapter 2, 'Academic Critics', pp.23-54 (p.23); Eagleton, 1 above, Chapter 3, pp.45-67, and Baldick, 1 above, Chapter 3, 'A Civilising Subject', pp.59-85 (p.61).

4. I am indebted to Professor Bernard Bergonzi for this information.
5. On this see Gross, 1 above, Chapter 3, 'The Higher Journalism', pp.62-97.
6. On this see Gross, 1 above, Chapter 5, 'The Bookmen', pp.131-166 (p.131), and Baldick, 1 above, Chapter 2, 'Matthew Arnold's Innocent Language', pp.18-58.
7. See Gross on Saintsbury, 6 above, pp.139-144. See also Wellek, 3 above.
8. See Gross, 6 above, p.158.
9. See Gross, 6 above, p.162.
10. The text used is that of the 1898 first edition of Saintsbury's A Short History of English Literature (see bibliography). Quotations will be attributed in the text.
11. I take this quotation from Saintsbury from Gross, 6 above, p.162. No source is given.
12. Jefferson Hunter, 1 above, Chapter 2, 'From Personality to Personality'. Further quotations from this work are attributed in the text.
13. I take the Woolf quotation from Keating, 1 above, Chapter 2, 'The Prevailing Sound of the Age', pp.91-151 (p.92). It originally occurs in her essay, 'Mr Bennett and Mrs Brown'.
14. Keating, 1 above, Chapter 1, 'Novelists and Readers'. Subsequent quotations from this work are attributed in the text.

15. In my account of the development of English studies I am indebted to the work of Baldick, Gross, Doyle and that of Brooker and Widdowson: see 1 above.
16. On this see Wellek, 3 above, and Gross, 1 above, Chapter 6, 'Early English', pp.167-189.
17. On this see Doyle, 'The Hidden History of English Studies', in Re-Reading English (see bibliography), edited by Peter Widdowson, pp.17-31 (p.26). Further references are given in the text as appropriate.
18. On this see Baldick, 3 above. Quotations from this work are attributed in the text.
19. For the history of English teaching at school level see David Shayer, The teaching of English in schools 1900-1970 (see bibliography).
20. On this see Doyle, 17 above, and Wellek, 3 above, Chapter 2, pp.24-25.
21. On this see Palmer, 1 above, Chapter 7, 'The Founding of the Oxford English School', pp.104-117, and Baldick, 3 above.
22. See Baldick, 3 above, p.62 and p.67. See also Doyle, 17 above, pp.24-25.
23. See 1 above for text. Further quotations are attributed in the text.
24. On this see Baldick, 3 above, p.70.
25. The short title of the Report; all quotations will be attributed to this title. The Report's full title is THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH IN ENGLAND: BEING THE REPORT OF THE DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE APPOINTED BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO INQUIRE INTO THE POSITION OF ENGLISH IN THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM OF ENGLAND (see bibliography).

26. See Doyle, 23 above, Chapter 2, 'English, the state and cultural policy', pp.41-67, on The Teaching of English in England and academic resistance to its aims.
27. See Baldick, 1 above, Chapter 4, 'Literary-Critical Consequences of the War', pp.86-108 (pp.93-98).
28. See 27 above.
29. On Napier and resistance to English at Oxford see Gross, 16 above, pp.192-198. See also Baldick, 3 above, pp.72-75.
30. See the Report's Chapter 7, pp.195-251, on the teaching of English in the university and Chapter 8, pp.252-277, on English in adult education.
31. Developed in his Principles of Literary Criticism (see bibliography), Chapter 34, 'The Two Uses of Language', pp.261-271. For a discussion of Richards see Part 3 of the present work.
32. This must not be understood as a case of the condescension of posterity (see 38 below): having examined the history of the period in some detail I cannot help but become convinced that the demand for a literary education from the mechanic's institutes and other adult education centres was manipulated by middle class educationalists in their attempts to shore up a divided nation; the popularity of these courses indicates the extent to which received middle class wisdom dominated educational provision and sought to install a false class consciousness.
33. For example, Eliot's argument about the Seventeenth Century 'dissociation of sensibility' ('The Metaphysical Poets', TLS, October 20th 1921 (in Selected Prose of T.S.Eliot (see bibliography), edited by Frank Kermode, pp.59-67)). I am indebted to Dr John Goode for this point.

34. 'The Bearing of English Studies upon the National Life', C.H.Herford (English Association Leaflet, No.16), June 1910, especially pp.11-14. See bibliography.
35. On this see Philip Dodd, 'Englishness and the National Culture', in Englishness: Politics and Culture 1800-1920, 1 above, pp.1-28 (p.11). Also see Robert Colls, 'Englishness and the Political Culture', pp.29-61 (pp.43-48). Quotations from these essays will be attributed in the text.
36. See Raymond Williams, The Long Revolution, 1 above, Part Two, Chapter 2, 'The Growth of the Reading Public', pp.177-194. Williams notes that in the Eighteenth Century 'the reading public did not increase proportionately with the increase in titles' (p.186). From his estimates it is possible to suggest that the reading public in the Eighteenth Century was only around 2% of the population (p.188). Williams stresses the difference between the literary and general reader (p.189). On the readership of fiction see also Keating, 1 above, Chapter 7, 'Readers and Novelists', pp.369-445.
37. I cannot accept Doyle's argument about the resistance to the Newbolt Report being motivated solely by a desire to maintain the autonomy of the universities. If this was the case there would have been a far greater outcry from academics at blatantly political appointments like that of Quiller-Couch at Cambridge. For Doyle's argument see 26 above. On Quiller-Couch see Part 3 of the present work.
38. Harold Perkin, The Structured Crowd: Essays in English Social History (see bibliography), Chapter 10, '"The Condescension of Posterity": Middle Class Intellectuals and the History of the Working Class', pp.169-186 (p.172). His arguments are readily applicable to the committee responsible for the Newbolt Report.

39. The text of Heart of Darkness is that of the Norton Critical Edition (see bibliography), edited by Robert Kimborough. Further quotations are attributed in the text as appropriate.
40. See Baldick, 27 above, p.98.
41. The phrase 'an instant of trembling order' is used by Karl, 1 above, Chapter 1, 'Getting to be Modern: An Overview', pp.3-39 (p.22), as a description of Futurism: it is usefully suggestive of the process involved in the creation of literary histories.

In my discussion of the versions of textual practice advanced in the period I draw upon Bell; Hewitt; Karl and Keating: see 1 above. I have also found the following texts particularly useful: Ian Watt, Conrad in the Nineteenth Century (see bibliography), especially Chapter 4, 'Heart of Darkness', pp.126-253, Section IV, 'Critical Perspectives' (pp.168-213), Part A, 'Impressionism', pp.169-180) and Part B, 'Symbolism' (pp.180-200); Wellek, 1 above, Chapter 1, 'Symbolism in English', pp.1-22, Williams, The Politics of Modernism, 3 above, and Wimsatt and Brooks, 1 above, Chapter 26, 'Symbolism', pp.583-609. I am heavily indebted to R.N.Stromberg's Realism, Naturalism and Symbolism (see bibliography) for his dense and detailed discussion of these movements and for the concise summary of their shifting nature in his 'Introduction', pp.ix-xxxvi.

42. On this see Stromberg, 41 above, 'Introduction', pp.ix-x. References to this work are attributed in the text as appropriate.
43. Williams, 41 above, Chapter 1, 'When was Modernism?', pp.31-35. Further references to this essay will be attributed in the text.
44. Williams, 41 above, Chapter 3, 'The Politics of the Avant-Garde', pp.49-63. Further references to this essay will be attributed in the text.

45. On this point see Pauline Gregg, A Social and Economic History of Britain: 1760-1972 (see bibliography), Chapter 25, 'Epilogue', pp.539-546 (pp.544-545).
46. See 1 above. Further quotations are attributed in the text.
47. On Symons and Yeats see Wellek, 2 above, Chapter 1, 'Symbolism in England', pp.1-22, and Karl Beckson, Arthur Symons: A Life (see bibliography).
48. On Decadence see Ian Fletcher, ed., Decadence and the 1890s (see bibliography).
49. On the blunting of the radical edge of British Decadence following Wilde's arrest and trial see Ian Fletcher's account of 'Decadence and the Little Magazines', 48 above, pp.173-202.
50. See Hunter, 1 above, Chapter 3 'Continuities of Form', pp.21-34.
51. On this see Williams, 41 above, Chapter 2, 'Metropolitan Perceptions and the Emergence of Modernism', pp.37-48 (pp.44-45).
52. This is an amended version of a listing given by Brooker and Widdowson, 1 above, p.153. Further references to this essay will be attributed in the text.
53. Karl, 41 above, Chapter 2, 'Towards 1885: Thresholds', pp.40-79. Further quotations are attributed in the text as appropriate.
54. The Preface to The Nigger of the 'Narcissus' is reproduced as an Appendix to the present work. The text used is that given in Conrad's Prefaces to His Works (see bibliography), edited by Edward Garnett. This and all subsequent quotations from the Preface will be keyed to this text. The present quotation occurs in paragraph 1.

55. See 1 above.
56. Conrad's debt to French modes of textual practice is exhaustively discussed by Watt, 41 above. I find the links which Watt identifies more significant than he is able to, largely because he underplays Conrad's debt to symbolism. This would appear to be the result of his adherence to that norm of traditional literary criticism which presupposes that a major author is always something of an originating genius. Quotations from this work will be attributed in the text.
57. See bibliography for text of Lord Jim.
58. See Wellek, 41 above.
59. I take this point from Wellek, 41 above, p.6.
60. Quoted in Karl, 41 above, Chapter 7, '1900-1925: Within A Budding Grove', pp.268-365 (p.313).
61. Henry James, 'The New Novel', TLS March 10th 1914, pp.133-134 and April 2nd 1914, pp.157-158 (in Henry James: Selected Literary Criticism (see bibliography), edited by Morris Shapira, pp.358-391 (p.381)). For a discussion of James' article see Part 4 of the present work.
62. I quote from Wimsatt and Brooks, 41 above, p.595.
- On the Jamesian qualities of Conrad's textual practice see Watt, 41 above, Part C, 'Marlow and Henry James', pp.200-214.
- Whilst James does seem to have operated as a yardstick for Conrad in matters of appropriate technique I would suggest that their interrelation owes more to a shared interest in what contemporaries understood as the French tradition of narrative innovation and to the overarching influence of Turgenev and Flaubert on them both.

63. A sound account of the operation of analepsis and prolepsis is to be found in Diana Knight's demonstration of Genette's narrative theory. See 'Structuralism I: Narratology: Joseph Conrad, Heart of Darkness', in Literary Theory at Work: Three Texts (see bibliography), edited by Douglas Tallack, pp.9-28.

64. Quoted by Wimsatt and Brooks, 41 above, p.592.

FOOTNOTES: PART 3: THE PRACTICE OF LITERARY CRITICISM
1900 - 1930

1. See bibliography for text.
2. On this see Rene Wellek's A History of Criticism: 1750-1950: Volume 4: English Criticism 1900-1950 (see bibliography), Chapter 1, 'Symbolism in English', pp.1-22 (pp.13-18 on Symons (p.15)). Quotations from this work are attributed in the text.
3. See bibliography. On Symons' journalistic work see Chapter 6, pp.80-99 (p.91). Further references are attributed in the text.
4. On this see Wellek, 2 above.
5. For text see bibliography. Further quotations from this volume are attributed in the text.
6. On this see Wellek, 2 above.
7. For James' position see 'The Future of The Novel', in Henry James: Selected Literary Criticism (see bibliography), edited by M. Shapira, pp.218-227 (pp.218-220). As Beckson notes, it is disingenuous of Symons to make this complaint when he wrote so extensively for the popular press. See 3 above, Chapter 14, pp.212-224 (p.215).
8. For an account of Collins' battles see D.J.Palmer's The Rise of English Studies, Chapter 6, 'John Churton Collins and the Attack on Oxford', pp.78-103. Further references to this work are given in the text as appropriate.
9. I base my information on Raleigh on the account given by Palmer, 8 above, Chapter 8, 'Walter Raleigh and the Years of the English Fund', pp.118-150 (p.144). This account is supplemented by the information to be gleaned from The Letters of Sir Walter Raleigh (see bibliography). Palmer

notes that at the time of Raleigh's appointment the Chair was endowed by Magdalene College and only passed into the control of Merton in 1914 when the college increased its endowment and made the holder a fellow (ibid).

10. Whilst Raleigh's letters from Aligarh do contain criticisms of the college management David Nichol Smith, in his Preface to The Letters of Sir Walter Raleigh: Volume 1 (1879 - 1922), see 14 below, claims that Raleigh left India because of dysentery (pp.v-xx (p.viii)). Quotations from Raleigh's letters are attributed in the text.
11. See Palmer, 9 above, pp.118-121 on these details.
12. On this his The Social Mission of English Criticism (see bibliography), Chapter 3, 'A Civilising Subject', pp.59-85 (pp.75-80). Quotations attributed in the text.
13. First published in 1923 (see bibliography). Quotations attributed in the text.
14. I am indebted to Baldick's work for directing me to this quotation, 12 above, p.78. The text of Style used is the that of the fourth edition of 1901 (see bibliography). References to this volume will be given in the text as appropriate.
15. The quotation from Style is taken from Baldick, 12 above, p.78.
16. I quote from Wellek, 1 above, Chapter 2, 'Academic Critics', pp.23-54 (p.26). The comment originally appears in a letter to his Sister Alice, 10 above, January 11th 1892, pp.163-164 (p.164).
17. See bibliography. Further references given in the text as appropriate.
18. On this see Baldick, 12 above, p.80.

19. On this see Baldick, 12 above, pp.80-82.
20. Quoted in Wellek, 16 above, p.27.
21. I quote from Baldick, 12 above, Chapter 4, 'Literary-Critical Consequences of the War', pp.86-108 (p.88).
22. The text used is that of the 1923 edition of The Art of Writing (see bibliography), first published in 1914. References to this work will be given in the text as appropriate.
23. See bibliography. Further quotations referenced in the text.
24. See Gross, Chapter 9, 'Modern Times', pp.255-279 (p.261). My factual information on Squire is taken wholesale from Gross.
25. No publication date is given in my copy of Squire's Books Reviewed. Internal evidence puts it at least in 1920, if not later. I have been unable to confirm this hunch. Quotations from this volume are referenced in the text

On Squire's intriguing flirtation with Fabian Socialism see Gross, 24 above, p.262.
26. On Richards see Baldick, 12 above, Chapter 6, 'Literary-Critical Consequences of the Peace: I.A.Richards's Mental League of Nations', pp.134-161. Also see Wellek's account, 2 above, Chapter 7, 'I.A.Richards', pp.221-238. Quotations attributed in the text.
27. For text see bibliography. Further quotations from this work are referenced in the text.
28. On this see Baldick, 26 above, p.135 and Wellek, 26 above, pp.222-223.

29. The text of Principles of Literary Criticism is that of the 1928 second edition (see bibliography). Further quotations are attributed in the text. The diagram appears in Chapter 16, p.89.
30. The quote is taken from Michael Biddiss The Age of the Masses: Ideas and Society in Europe since 1870 (see bibliography), Chapter 9, 'Literature and the Arts', pp.275-312 (p.283). Le Corbusier used the phrase in his 1923 Towards an Architecture.
31. Page numbers are my own as none are given for the Preface in this edition.
32. On this see Ford Madox Ford's Thus to Revisit (see bibliography), first published in 1921, Chapter IX, 'Henry James, Stephen Crane and the Main Stream', pp.102-125 (p.104). Quotations from this work are attributed in the text.
33. See bibliography for text. Also see Wimsatt and Brooks Literary Criticism: A Short History: Volume 4: Modern Criticism (see bibliography), Chapter 30, 'Fiction and Drama: The Gross Structure', pp.681-698 (pp.681-686). Quotations from this and Watson's work are attributed in the text.
34. I paraphrase from the quotation given in the publisher's blurb at the back of the 1926 Everyman edition of Lubbock's work (see bibliography).
35. The essay occurs in Henry James: Selected Literary Criticism, see 7 above, pp.78-97. Quotations are attributed in the text.
36. I cannot accept George Watson's argument that James' created an analytic criticism for the novel.
37. For the text of James' 'Criticism' see 35 above, pp.167-171. Further references to this essay will be attributed in the text.

38. Of course, the hegemony of the elite and their resultant authority in cultural matters actually ensures that the logic of Darwinism does not operate here - that would be too dangerous. The "classic" works from a period survive to enter the great tradition because they are preserved by the life support machine of cultural hegemony.
39. Ford is noticeable by his absence from the standard critical histories like that of Wellek or Wimsatt and Brooks.
40. Eliot called Ford 'an unpleasant parasite of letters'. Letter to Sydney Schiff, Tuesday 31 August 1920, in The Letters of T.S.Eliot: Volume 1: 1898-1922 (see bibliography), pp.404-405 (p.405). Quotations from Eliot's letters are attributed in the text.
41. On this see Frederic Karl's Joseph Conrad: The Three Lives (see bibliography), Chapter 38, pp.866-911 (pp.895-898) and John Gross, The Rise and Fall of the Man of Letters (see bibliography), Chapter 8, 'Edwardians', pp.232-254 (p.249).
42. For the text of The English Novel: From the earliest days to the death of Joseph Conrad see bibliography. References to this work will be given in the text.
43. On this see C.K.Stead The New Poetic: From Yeats to Eliot (see bibliography), Chapter 3, '1909-1916: Poets and their Public', pp.45-66 and Chapter 4, '1909-1916: "Poetry" versus "Life"', pp.67-95.
44. On Eliot's interest in his lecturing see, for example, his letters to Charlotte Eliot Smith (21st March, 1917) and Eleanor Hinckley (23rd March 1917), 42 above, pp.165-166 and pp.167-169 respectively.
45. The text of The Sacred Wood (see bibliography) used is that of the 1928 edition.

46. On this see Baldick, 12 above, Chapter 5, '"On the Side of the Artist": T.S.Eliot's Early Criticism: 1917-1924', pp.49-70 (p.51).
47. Eliot recognised this in the Preface to the 1928 edition of The Sacred Wood, re-assessing his work, he notes 'a stiffness and an assumption of pontifical solemnity which may be tiresome to many readers' (p.vii).
48. On these points see 'The Perfect Critic' in The Sacred Wood, 45 above, pp.1-16.
49. 'Tradition and the Individual talent' appears in The Sacred Wood, pp.47-59. It was first published in the Egoist in 1917. Quotations from this article are attributed in the text.
50. The articles on imperfect critics are reprinted in The Sacred Wood, pp.17-46.
51. On this see Wellek, 2 above, Chapter 4, 'The New Romantics', pp.92-143 (pp.97-100).
52. On this see Baldick, 46 above, p.131.
53. On this see Quentin Bell Virginia Woolf: Volume I: Virginia Stephen: 1882-1912 (see bibliography), Chapter 5, '1904 - 1906', pp.87-111 (p.94).
54. See 58 above, pp.105-107 and Appendix B, 'Report on Teaching at Morley College', pp.202-204.
55. See 53 above Chapter 6, '1906 - 1908', pp.112-127 (p.126) and Chapter 8, '1909', pp.141-156 (p.153) on these points.
56. See volume two of Quentin Bell's biography of Woolf, Mrs Woolf: 1912 - 1941 (see bibliography), Chapter 2, '1915 - 1918', pp.28-62 (p.38 and Footnote to p.41).

57. On this point see Wellek, 2 above, Chapter 3, 'The Bloomsbury Group', pp.55-91 (On Woolf see pp.65-84 (p.67)). Quotations are attributed in the text.
58. On this see 57 above, p.68.
59. On this see 57 above, p.69.
60. Reprinted in Contemporary Writers (see bibliography), pp.21-23. Since the page references are to this text and not the original text I give them in square brackets.
61. 60 above, pp.15-17.
62. 60 above, pp.60-62. Further references are given in the text.
63. 60 above, pp.67-70.
64. I quote from the text given in The Common Reader (see bibliography), pp.145-153. Further references will be given in the text.
65. For text see bibliography.
66. On this point see 32 above, Chapter 6, 'Coda', pp.61-67 (p.61).
67. On this see Wellek, 57 above, p.84.
68. On this point see Oliver Stallybrass 'Editor's Introduction' to Aspects of the Novel (see bibliography), pp.9-19 (p.9). Further quotations are attributed in the text.
69. The text of The Craft of Fiction used is that of the third edition of 1922. See bibliography. Further references are attributed in the text.

70. Emerson argued that creative reading occurs when 'the mind is braced by labor[sic] and invention, the page of whatever book we read becomes luminous with manifold allusion. Every sentence is doubly significant, and the sense of our author is as broad as the world' ('The American Scholar' (see bibliography), p.698).
71. On the notion of the matrix see Michael Riffaterre's The Semiotics of Poetry (see bibliography), Chapter 1, 'The Poem's Significance', pp.1-22 (pp.19-21).
72. Forster's Commonplace Book appears as Appendix A to the edition of Aspects of the Novel used (pp.155-175).

FOOTNOTES: PART 4: THE OPERATION OF DISCOURSE IN
CRITICAL PRACTICE: CONRAD CRITICISM
1899 - 1930

1. It must be stressed that the present work is not a history of Conrad criticism. Although I discuss most of the major pieces of criticism occasioned by Conrad's work in this period there are omissions. My assessment of the trends in Conrad criticism is based on my readings of the criticism generated by Heart of Darkness plus more general pieces (see the Conrad criticism section of my bibliography for works consulted). My own research is supplemented by the invaluable coverage of the early criticism in Norman Sherry's Conrad: The Critical Heritage (see bibliography) and the information on the critical reception of his fictions to be gleaned from The Collected Letters of Joseph Conrad (see bibliography), edited by Frederic Karl and Laurence Davies

2. Heart of Darkness was first published in Britain in 1899 as 'The Heart of Darkness' in Blackwood's magazine. The serial version appeared in the February, March and April issues. The text was revised for publication as part of the volume Youth: A Narrative; and Two Other Stories which appeared in 1902. The story was serialised in America by Living Age magazine in its June through August numbers. I am indebted to Robert Kimborough's 'Introduction' to the Norton Critical Edition of Heart of Darkness (see bibliography) and to 'Bibliography I: Alphabetical Lists of Conrad's Collected Writings' from Jocelyn Baines' Joseph Conrad: A Critical Biography (see bibliography) for this information. For useful details about Conrad's preparation of the text for serial publication see Marion Michael and Wilkes Berry's 'The Typescript of "The Heart of Darkness"' (see bibliography).

3. Conrad's publications from 1895 to February 1899 were Almayer's Folly (1895); 'The Idiots', Savoy, October 1896; An Outcast of the Islands (1896); 'The Lagoon', Cornhill Magazine, January 1897; 'An Outpost of Progress', Cosmopolis, June-July 1897; 'The Nigger of the "Narcissus"', New Review, August-December 1897; 'Karain: A Memory', Blackwood's Magazine, November 1897; 'Youth', Blackwood's Magazine, September 1898; Tales of

Unrest (1898) - contained 'The Return', 'An Outpost of Progress', 'Karain', 'The Lagoon' and 'The Idiots'; The Nigger of the 'Narcissus' (1898); 'The Heart of Darkness', Blackwood's Magazine, February-April 1899. I take this information from Baines, 2 above.

4. I quote from Kimborough's 'Introduction' to Heart of Darkness (see bibliography), pp. ix-xvii (p.ix). All subsequent quotations from the novella are taken from this text.
5. Garnett's 'Mr. Joseph Conrad', Academy, 18th October 1898, was the first general account of Conrad published in Britain but Hugh Clifford's two and a half columns in the Singapore Free Press weekly edition of 1st September 1898 under the title 'Mr. Conrad at home and abroad' is perhaps the first general assessment to be published. I am indebted to the editorial work of Frederic Karl and Laurence Davies for my easy access to these details. See The Collected Letters of Joseph Conrad: Volume Two: 1898 - 1902 (see bibliography), 'To Edward Garnett', 12th. October 1898, pp.102-103 (note 5, p.103) and 'To William Blackwood', 13th. December 1898, pp.129-130 (note 2, p.130)
6. Garnett's article is reproduced by Sherry in his Conrad: The Critical Heritage, pp.104-108.
7. The December 1897 issue of the New Review saw the first publication of what became the Preface to The Nigger of the 'Narcissus' as an 'Author's Note' following the final instalment. See Karl and Davies, ed.s., Collected Letters Volume One: 1861-1897, 'To a reviewer of the Nigger', 9th December 1897, pp.420-422 (pp.421-422).
8. I quote from the Penguin Modern Classics edition of The Nigger of the 'Narcissus' (see bibliography). For the Preface to the novella see Appendix: all quotations from the Preface are keyed to this text.

9. This definition of symbolism is derived from Arthur Symons. I take it from Peter Keating's The Haunted Study (see bibliography), Chapter 2, 'The Prevailing Sound of the Age', pp.91-151 (p.117).
10. See 7 above.
11. Almayer's Folly was given the tolerance expected for a new novel by an unknown brought out by a prestigious publisher. Conrad noted that 'The provincial press is very good to me' (Collected Letters Volume One, 'To T.Fisher Unwin', 18th May 1895, p.219). Of An Outcast of the Islands Conrad commented:
I had a few reviews. Nothing remarkable. The Illustrated London News says I am a disciple of Victor Hugo, and is complimentary! Very!...But there is plenty of criticism also. They find it too long, too much description - and so on. Upon the whole I am satisfied.
(Collected Letters: Volume 1, 'To Katherine Sanderson, pp.270-271 (p.271))).
12. The text of Lord Jim used is that of the Penguin Modern Classics edition (see bibliography). Further quotations from this work will be attributed in the text.
13. On Conrad's relation to the adventure stories of the late Nineteenth Century see Richard Ruppel's 'Heart of Darkness and the popular exotic stories of the 1890s' (see bibliography) and Patrick Brantlinger's Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism 1830 - 1914 (see bibliography), especially Chapter 1, 'From Dawn Island to Heart of Darkness', pp.19-45 (pp.39-42). I arrived independently at similar conclusions to Brantlinger.
14. In Collected Letters: Volume 2, see 5 above.
15. In Collected Letters: Volume 2, see 5 above.

16. Conrad in the Nineteenth Century (see bibliography), Chapter 4, 'Heart of Darkness', pp.128-253.
17. Author's Note to Youth: A Narrative; and Two Other Stories (1917 Dent edition). I quote from the text given in the Norton Critical Edition of Heart of Darkness, pp.3-5.
18. See William L.Alden, 'London Literary Letter', New York Times Saturday Review of Books and Art, 6th May 1899, p.304 (see bibliography). For this and all the other examples of the early criticism of Conrad's Heart of Darkness discussed in this work I am indebted to the information contained in those works listed under the Bibliographical Studies heading of my bibliography.
19. See bibliography.
20. As Bakhtin argued, even in such extreme cases as a discourse coining neologisms, words are never straightforward means of communication because they are judged in the light of the hierarchies of discourse in the heteroglossia: 'The word is born into a dialogue as a living rejoinder...the word is shaped in a dialogic interaction' ('Discourse in the Novel' in The Dialogic Imagination (see bibliography), pp.259-422 (p.279)). The object of which a discourse speaks is:

overlain with qualifications, open to dispute, charged with value, already enveloped in an obscuring mist - or, on the contrary, [only perceived] by the 'light' of alien words that have already been spoken about it.
('Discourse in the Novel', p.276)

Thus any comment is, in effect, fought over by the discourses which compete to explain it.
21. Unsigned review of Youth: A Narrative; and Two Other Stories, The Daily Mail, November 25th 1902, p.2. Further references and quotations are attributed in the text.

22. 'O.O.', review of Youth: A Narrative; and Two Other Stories, Sketch, No.40 (December 3rd 1902), p.262. Sherry tentatively attributes a review of Lord Jim in the Sketch to Oliver Onions, see 6 above, p.118. On this evidence I feel I am justified in suggesting Onions as the reviewer of the Youth volume.
23. Unsigned review of the Youth volume in the Graphic, No.67 (January 3rd 1903), p.28. Further references are attributed in the text.
24. M.M.Bakhtin, 'The Problems of Speech Genres', in Speech Genres and Other Late Essays (see bibliography), pp.60-102.
25. Hugh Clifford, 'The Art of Mr. Joseph Conrad', Spectator, 89 (November 29th 1902), pp.827-828. Further references are attributed in the text.
26. On this point see Frederic Karl's Joseph Conrad: The Three Lives: A Biography (New York, 1979), Part V, 'The Writer: 1891 - 1899', Chapter 19, 'Into the Mouth of Hell', pp.425-426. For Conrad's early letters to Clifford see Collected Letters: Volume 2. For literary-historical purposes the letter of 9th October 1899 (pp.199-202) where Conrad argues for the central role of imagination in fiction and that of 2nd December 1902 (pp.459-460) in which Conrad discusses his concern with style are of particular interest.
27. See Karl, 26 above, on this. Also see Collected Letters: Volume 2, 'To Hugh Clifford', 13th December 1899, pp.226-227.
28. Conrad's true position on philanthropy is not that advanced by Marlow in Heart of Darkness; it would appear to be close to that which he expressed in a letter to R.B.Cunninghame Graham:
Egoism is good, and altruism is good, and fidelity to nature would be best of all, and systems could be built, and rules could be made - if we could only get rid of consciousness. What makes mankind tragic is not that they are the victims of nature, it is that they are conscious of it...We

cannot return to nature, since we can't change our place in it. Our refuge is in stupidity, in drunkenness of all kinds, in lies, in beliefs, in murder, thieving, reforming - in negation, in contempt - each man according to the promptings of his particular devil. There is no morality, no knowledge and no hope; there is only the consciousness of ourselves which drives us about a world that whether seen in a convex or concave mirror is always but a vain and floating appearance.

(Collected Letters Volume Two, 31st July 1898, pp.29-31 (p.30)).

Whilst this is overstated in order to make Conrad appear to be closer to Graham's radically sceptical position it nonetheless enables me to claim that Conrad was very wary about idealism and so can have had little time for the philanthropic idea at the back of colonialism.

29. On this friendship see Karl, 27 above, Chapter 15, 'Turning to Shore', p.331 and passim.
30. On the status of the Academy see John Gross, The Rise and Fall of the Man of Letters (see bibliography), Chapter 3, 'The Higher Journalism', pp.75-112 (pp.78-79).
Conrad, in a letter to Garnett thanking him for the review, notes his influence on other critics: 'the ruck takes its tone from you' (Collected Letters: Volume Two, 'To Edward Garnett, 22nd December 1902, pp.407-469 (p.468)).
Garnett's review, 'Mr. Conrad's New Book: Youth: A Narrative; and Two Other Stories' appears in the Academy, lxi (December 6th 1902), pp.606-607. Further references will be attributed in the text.
31. The review first appeared on page three of the Manchester Guardian for 10th December 1902. The text used is that given by Norman Sherry in his Conrad: The Critical Heritage, 6 above, pp.134-135. References and quotations are keyed to this text throughout.

32. This is a clear plagiarism from Edward Garnett's influential review of the Youth volume. I am indebted to Norman Sherry's 'Introduction' to Conrad: The Critical Heritage, pp.1-44 (p.17), for this point.
33. See 'Short Stories', Athenaeum, lxxv (December 20th 1902), p.824 and 'Youth', TLS (December 12th 1902), p.372. Further references to these works will be attributed in the text.
34. I take my understanding of Genette from Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan's discussion of his work. See her Narrative Fiction: contemporary poetics (see bibliography), Chapter 7, 'Narration: levels and voices', pp.86-105. The diegetic aspect of a narrative is constituted by the sequence of events (p.91).
35. I follow Teets and Gerber in attributing this review to Quiller-Couch (see bibliography). The review, 'Recent Fiction: Some Stories by Joseph Conrad', appeared in the New York Times Saturday Review (April 4th 1903), p.224. Further references are attributed in the text.
36. Conrad's prose style in Heart of Darkness is divagatory because it strives to recreate the wanderings of an oral narrative; it is presented to the reader as one of Marlow's atypical yarns. My characterisation is not to be understood as pejorative.
37. I give the passage below; Quiller-Couch's omission is emboldened:
Of course you may be too much of a fool to go wrong - too dull even to know you are being assaulted by the powers of darkness. I take it no fool ever made a bargain for his soul with the devil. The fool is too much of a fool or the devil too much of a devil - I don't know which. Or you be such a thunderingly exalted creature as to be altogether deaf and blind to anything but heavenly sights and sounds. Then the earth for you is only a standing place - and whether to be like this is your loss or your gain I won't pretend to say. But most

of us are neither one nor the other. The earth for us is a place to live in, where we must put up with sights, with sounds, with smells too, by Jove! - breathe dead hippo so to speak and not be contaminated. And there, don't you see, your strength comes in, the faith in your ability for the digging of unostentatious holes to bury the stuff in - your power of devotion not to yourself but to an obscure, back-breaking business. **And that's difficult enough. Mind, I am not trying to excuse or even explain - I am trying to account to myself for - for - Mr Kurtz - for the shade of Mr Kurtz.**
(Heart of Darkness, p.50)

38. Henry James' article on 'The New Novel' first appeared in the TLS for March 10th 1914 (pp.133-134) and April 2nd (pp.157-158). The text used is that given in Henry James: Selected Literary Criticism (see bibliography), edited by M.Shapira, pp.358-391. See 45 below.
Richard Curle's Joseph Conrad: A Study (London, 1914) was published by Kegan, Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co. in their Studies of Living Writers series (see bibliography).
Wilson Follett's Joseph Conrad: A Short Study of his Intellectual and Emotional Attitude Towards his Work and of the Chief Characters of his Novels (New York, 1915) was published by Doubleday Page and Co. I base my comments on the text used for the 1966 re-print (see bibliography).
Arthur Symons' article 'Conrad' was published in The Forum, 53 (January - June, 1915), pp.579-592 (see bibliography).
39. I cannot accept that The White Peacock (1911) or The Trespasser (1912) were significant contributions to ongoing developments in narrative technique.
40. On this see Karl, 26 above, Chapter 24, 'Nostromo's Epigone', pp.569-594 (pp.569-570).
41. On this see Karl, 26 above, Chapter 26, 'Sailing Close', pp.612-632 (pp.625-626) and Chapter 30, 'Enter John Quinn and Andre Gide', pp.695-710 (pp.702-706).

42. On this see Karl, 26 above, Chapter 32, 'Craft or Courage, Which?', pp.732-753 (p.740) and Martin Ray, 'Introduction' to Chance (see bibliography), pp.vii-xix (p.vii). Further references to and quotations from Chance are taken from this, the World's Classics, text.
43. This point is developed by Karl, 26 above, Chapter 31, '"I fear not death, but dying gives me pause"', pp.711-731 (p.722).
44. The text given by Shapira is taken from Notes on Novelists (London, 1914); this is a revision and expansion of the TLS pieces. See 38 above. The portion of the article dealing with Conrad is conveniently reprinted in Sherry's Conrad: The Critical Heritage, pp.263-270.
45. The claim was made by Conrad's friend Sir Sidney Colvin in the Observer of 24th August 1919. I take this information from Sherry's 'Introduction' to Conrad: The Critical Heritage, pp.1-44 (p.33).
46. The criticism of the diffuse quality of Conrad's narratives is not new; his earliest critics quickly identified this area as a definite barrier to his acceptance by a wide readership. That Chance was a popular success, by Conrad's standards, may indicate that the methods of impressionism were now part of the general conception of what was to be expected of good literature but its success probably owed more to its return to solidly Conradian ground after the political intrigues of The Secret Agent and Under Western Eyes; Chance marked a return to the sea and seafarers as his subject matter after many years and a return to the critically popular Marlow but its heavy promotion as a romance - complete with lurid dust-jacket - was also significant (on the latter point see Sherry's 'Introduction' to Conrad: The Critical Heritage, pp.1-44 (p.30). James' rather elitist literary values inform his sneering comments about the novel's popularity.
47. For text see 38 above. Subsequent quotations are attributed in the text

48. For text see 38 above. Quotations are attributed in the text.
49. See Chapter 6 of Bleak House, pp.109-131 (p.122) (see bibliography). Mr Jarndyce's loaded comment that 'The universe...makes rather an indifferent parent' (ibid) resonates in works like The Secret Agent and Chance where the treatment of children provides a central theme.
50. In Collected Letters: Volume Two. Heart of Darkness is a more symbolist work and therefore does not fit into this generalisation about the aims of Conradian textual practice. Conrad soon found the symbolist elements of the novella distasteful; in a letter to Elsie Hueffer he notes:
the fault of having made Kurtz too symbolic or rather symbolic at all. But the story being mainly a vehicle for conveying a batch of personal impressions I gave the rein to my mental laziness and took the line of least resistance.
(Collected Letters: Volume Two, 3rd December 1902, pp.460-461 (p.460))
51. The notion is central to Frederic Karl's treatment of Conrad's "three lives" in his biography, for example.
52. For text see 38 above. Quotations are attributed in the text.
53. On this see Karl, 26 above, Part VII, 'The Major Career, 1899-1910', Chapter 27, 'Burrowing In', pp.633-653 (pp.651-652). See also Karl Beckson's Arthur Symons. A Life (see bibliography), Chapter 17, 'Fatal initiation of madness', pp.250-264 (pp.252-253).
54. In the jargon of Peircian semiotics an individual's interpretation and deployment of the discourses of heteroglossia represents an idiolectic transformation of sociolect codes. In the main critical history cannot hope to recover the parameters which shape the idiolect of an individual critic. I cannot hope to trace the minute accretions from a critic's personal life

which subtly shape his discursive allegiances and so can only examine discursive constraints from the broad perspective of historical mutation in which challenges to hegemony may be traced.

Whilst I believe such an approach to be acceptable I acknowledge that it tends to neglect the role of the individual in society. This problem is the basis of Ken Hirschkop's critique of Bakhtinian theory; see his 'Introduction to Bakhtin and cultural theory' (see bibliography), pp.1-38 (pp.19-21 on the intersection of the individual and ideology in language). Hirschkop is unconvinced that ideology is always given a linguistic expression; his critique will be addressed more fully in my conclusion.

55. My account of Symons is derived from Beckson's excellent biography, see 53 above. References are attributed in the text where appropriate.
56. Quoted by Beckson, 53 above, Chapter 6, 'The World has been my mirror', pp.80-99 (p.86).
57. See 'The Symbolism of Poetry', in W.B.Yeats: Selected Criticism and Prose (see bibliography), pp.43-52. Also see Beckson, 53 above, Chapter 13, 'The Sacred Ritual', pp.189-211 (p.194 and passim) on Symons' version of symbolism.
58. See Beckson, 57 above, p.196.
59. For the text of Prejudices see bibliography. I quote from 'Conrad', pp.191-196 (p.193). Further references will be attributed in the text.
60. I take my understanding of Mencken from Wellek; see A History of Modern Criticism 1750-1950; Volume 6: American Criticism, 1900-1950, Chapter 1, pp.1-16 (pp.3-10). Quotations from this work are attributed in the text.
61. On this see Wellek, 60 above.
62. Quoted by Wellek, 60 above, p.5.

63. For text of Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics see bibliography.
64. Ford claims to have collaborated on everything Conrad wrote from Heart of Darkness to Nostromo. Although it is evident that he did work on passages of Nostromo and perhaps some of Heart of Darkness work on other texts seems to have been limited to taking down Conrad's dictation and discussing style. Certainly, as Frederic Karl, Bernard Meyer and others have argued, Conrad depended on Ford for 'emotional and intellectual stimulation, especially in the area of language and aesthetics' (Karl, Joseph Conrad: The Three Lives, Chapter 17, 'Marriage and Rescue', pp.368-403 (p.387) (see 26 above)). On their collaboration see Karl, Chapter 19 '"Into the Mouth of Hell"', pp.418-441 (pp.430-437).
65. Ford's Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance was published in association with the Transatlantic Review in London, 1924. (see bibliography). Further references are given in the text.
66. The placing of the essential English virtues in the Elizabethan era was begun by imperialist historians at Cambridge in the late Nineteenth century. On this see Robert Colls 'Englishness and the Political Culture', in Englishness: Politics and Culture 1880 - 1920 (see bibliography), pp.29-61 (p.44).
67. On the importance of Henley's acceptance of The Nigger of the 'Narcissus' for publication see Conrad's letter to the Chairman of the Provisional Committee of the Henley Memorial, 17th February 1903 where it is stated that the acceptance 'was the first event in my writing life which really counted'. Collected Letters: Volume 3: 1903 - 1907, p.115. Also see Collected Letters: Volume 2: 1898 - 1902, 'To W.E.Henley', 18th October 1898, pp.106-110 (p.109).
On Ford's claim see Karl, 64 above, Chapter 19 (p.433). For a very different account of Conrad's adoption of English as the medium for his work see his Author's Note to A Personal Record (1912), pp.iii-x (p.v) (see bibliography).

68. Ford is evasive about the truth of the situation here. In a letter to Henley discussing his work with Ford, Conrad can be seen addressing Henley's fears that collaboration will be dangerous for Ford and stressing the extent to which their partnership was entered into to help Ford. See Collected Letters: Volume 2: 1898 - 1902, 'To W.E.Henley', 18th October 1898, pp.106-110.
69. Ford's account of Conrad's practical qualities does not ring true in the context of his legendary financial problems. Ford's desire to correct the claims of the Conrad as Romantic Slav school of criticism prompt this inaccuracy.
70. For the text of A Personal Record see bibliography. This work was first published in The English Review, December 1908 - June 1909.
71. The TLS review of Nostromo, for example, described it as a 'shapeless work' (21st October, 1904, p.320 (in Conrad: The Critical Heritage, ed. Norman Sherry, pp.164-165 (p.165): the critic fails to understand the design of Conrad's complex narrative. For responses to Heart of Darkness see the first section of the current chapter.
72. The definition is R.K.R.Thornton's, see his '"Decadence" in Later Nineteenth Century England', in Decadence and the 1890s (see bibliography), ed. Ian Fletcher, pp.15-29.
73. On the rapid changes in the literary scene following Wilde's trial see Ian Fletcher's account of the petering out of impressionist and symbolist decadence as the main informing mode for contributions to the Little Magazines of the 1890s, 'Decadence and the Little Magazines', in Decadence and the 1890s (see bibliography), ed. Ian Fletcher, pp.173-202. See also Linda Dowling's comments on the impact of Wilde's arrest in her article 'Letterpress and Picture in the Literary Periodicals of the 1890s', in The Yearbook of English Studies: Volume 16: 1986 (see bibliography), ed. C.J.Rawson, pp.117-131 (p.131).

74. See 'Editorial Notes' to The Waste Land: A Facsimile and Transcript of the Original Drafts Including the Annotations of Ezra Pound (see bibliography), ed. Valerie Eliot, pp.125-131, Note to page 3 (p.125).
75. I am indebted to the editorial work of Robert Kimborough on the Norton Critical Edition of Heart of Darkness for my easy access to the manuscript material quoted here. Kimborough reproduces it as a note to page 10 of the text of Heart of Darkness in this edition.
76. See note 17 above. For Conrad's comments to Blackwood see Collected Letters: Volume 2: 1898 - 1902, 'To William Blackwood', 31st December 1898, pp.139-140 (p.140).
77. The Author's Note for Lord Jim, occurs on pp.7-8 of the Penguin Modern Classics edition of the novel (see bibliography).
78. On Conrad's distance from contemporary versions of textual practice see his Preface to The Nigger of the 'Narcissus' (see Appendix, paragraph 8) where he distances his work from all 'temporary formulas of the craft'.
On his personal "theory" of textual practice as expressed in his letters see, for example, his illuminating comments on Ford's Shifting of the Fire in a letter 'To Ford Madox Ford', [12 ?] November, 1898, in Collected Letters: Volume 2: 1898 - 1902, pp.118-119. Conrad writes of the need for a 'spiritual method' (p.118) and of snaring the invisible into a shape (paraphrase, p.119): clearly a symbolist aesthetic predominates here.
79. I quote from the text given in the World's Classics edition of Nostromo (see bibliography). The Note occurs on pp.xi - xlvii of this edition.
80. A typical example of this critical attitude is to be found in the unsigned review of Nostromo which appeared in the Daily Telegraph, 9 November, 1904, p.2, in Conrad: The Critical Heritage, pp. 167-169. The reviewer laments that:

vital situations hang fire while the author indulges in characteristic digressions; detail absorbs the position of outline, which becomes impossibly blurred...
(p.167)

For an equally confused response see the review discussed in 71, above.

81. Another notable defence of narrative technique occurs in the Author's Note to Under Western Eyes (see bibliography for text). Conrad comments that the old language teacher who narrates much of the novel:
- has been much criticized; but I will not at this late hour undertake to justify his existence. He was useful to me and therefore I think that he must be useful to the reader both in the way of comment and by the part he plays in the development of the story.
(pp.xxx-xxxii (p.xxxi))
- Not only does this Note stress the role of the reader, it offers a direction for reading and clearly attempts to justify the narrative technique employed in Under Western Eyes.
82. On this point see Keith Carabine's helpful discussion of the shifting narrative perspectives on Ribiera in Nostromo in his 'Introduction' to the World's Classics edition of the novel, pp.vii-xxxii (pp.xiii-xix)
83. James' dictum - 'What is character but the determination of incident? What is incident but the illustration of character' - occurs in his 'The Art of Fiction'. See Henry James: Selected Literary Criticism, ed. M.Shapira, pp.78-97 (p.88).
84. I quote from the Selected Memories section of Volume I of The Bodley Head Ford Madox Ford (see bibliography). This is an amalgam of Ford's memoirs. I quote from the section entitled 'A Settlement of Aliens', pp.266-278.

85. Jessie Conrad's Joseph Conrad as I Knew Him (see bibliography) is unreliable and too removed from the literary critical matters I am concerned with in the present work. If this work was a history of Conrad criticism the omission of Jessie's work would be unacceptable but in the context of an examination of the operation of discourse as a motive for critical practice her insubstantial memoirs are of little relevance. Those critics who knew Conrad attacked Ford's work but many reviews were favourable. See Ford Madox Ford: The Critical Heritage, edited by Frank McShane (see bibliography), 'Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance', pp.131-147, for a selection.
86. Joseph Conrad: His Romantic-Realism (see bibliography). The text is based on her M.A. thesis awarded by the University of California in 1919. Quotations from this work are attributed in the text.
87. See Appendix for the text of the 'Preface'; Stauffer's quotation from it is emboldened.
88. The notion of conversion is fundamental to the intertextuality of reading as described in Michael Riffaterre's powerful - if overly normative - account of text production. His work may readily be deployed in an assessment of the operation of intertextuality in the production of critical texts. Riffaterre's position is set out most fully in Text Production but one should also consult the important 'Syllepsis' (see bibliography), in order to get the full picture.
- Riffaterre is working with Peircian semiotics which, as Holquist notes, contains notions which are very similar to Bakhtin's translanguistics. See his Dialogism: Bakhtin and his world (see bibliography), Chapter 3, 'Language as Dialogue', pp.40-66 (p.50). Holquist does not pursue his assertion.
89. I am indebted to Professor Bernard Bergonzi for this information.

90. For text see bibliography. Further quotations are attributed in the text.
91. The terms are Genette's. See Rimmon-Kenan, 34 above.
92. 'Conrad's Method: Some Aspects', see bibliography. Quotations are attributed in the text.
93. I have examined the DNB and scoured the bibliographies of Conrad criticism but have been unable to find any information on V.Walpole. I also consulted Dr Keith Carabine of the University of Kent who is currently writing a history of Conrad criticism but he could shed no light on Walpole.
94. These characterisations of Richards are taken from Wellek's discussion in A History of Modern Criticism 1750 - 1950: Volume 5: English Criticism 1900 - 1950 (see bibliography), Chapter 7, pp.221-238. Quotations from this work are attributed in the text.
95. The text of Morf's The Polish Heritage of Joseph Conrad used is that of the 1930 first edition (see bibliography). Quotations from this work will be attributed in the text.
96. Conrad's father, Apollo Korzeniowski, was a romantic and idealistic believer in revolutionary action. His perspective on life appears to be diametrically opposed to that of his brother-in-law, Tadeusz Bobrowski who assumed responsibility for his nephew after Apollo's death: Bobrowski was a pragmatist with little time for idealism. For a detailed account of the two see Najder's Conrad Under Familial Eyes (see bibliography).
97. Apart from Morf's suggestion here and Follett's comment discussed earlier in this chapter it is not until the late Thirties that anything substantial on Conrad and Hardy is published. See Dorothy M. Hoare's 'The Tragic in Hardy and Conrad', in Some Studies in the Modern Novel (see bibliography), pp.113-132.

98. On the problem of the too generalised notion of the 'intuitive type' in Morf see Karl, 26 above, Chapter 4, 'Breaking Away', pp.95-121 (Note to p.110).
99. For a discussion of the problems of Richards' psychologically motivated critical practice see my discussion of his work in Part Three of the present work.
100. My major quarrel with Morf's use of Freud is that he appears to be working with an overly static conception of the unconscious. In his 1915 discussion Freud argues that the unconscious 'is alive and capable of development', a characteristic which seems to have escaped Morf. (See Sigmund Freud: The Essentials of Psychoanalysis (see bibliography), Chapter 3, 'The Concept of the Unconscious', 'The Unconscious (1915)', pp.142-174 (p.162)

For a more theoretically rigorous use of psychological and psychoanalytic theory to facilitate a discussion of Conrad see Bernard Meyer's Joseph Conrad: A Psychoanalytic Biography (see bibliography).

101. Garnett was the first critic to suggest a Slavonic dimension to Conrad's work. In his unsigned article in the Academy of 15th October 1898 he noted that Conrad's art was like the 'poetic realism of the great Russian novels'. For this article see Sherry's Joseph Conrad: The Critical Heritage, pp.104-108 (p.106).

FOOTNOTES: CONCLUSION: DISCOURSE & CRITICAL PRACTICE

1. In The Dialogic Imagination (see bibliography), pp.259-422.
2. On Clifford's 'The Art of Mr Joseph Conrad' see Part 4 of the present work, pp.220-225.
3. 'The Problem of Speech Genres' occurs in Speech Genres and Other Late Essays (see bibliography), pp.60-102.
4. Hirschkop's essay forms the 'Introduction' to Bakhtin and Cultural Theory (see bibliography), pp.1-38.
5. See bibliography for text.
6. To this extent Bakhtinian theory offers the kind of framework which Widdowson perceives as necessary for contemporary critical practice. See his Hardy in History: A Study in Literary Sociology, Chapter 1, 'The Critical Constitution of Thomas Hardy', pp.11-76 (pp.11-16). Widdowson appears to have overlooked this fact.

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The theoretical framework of this thesis makes my bibliography a significant part of this work: the texts cited represent my conceptual horizon on the subject of the role of discourse in critical practice. However, it is not feasible to cite every text which has shaped my outlook on literature and its criticism and therefore the works listed here are those which were found useful in the preparation of this thesis

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1. Responses to Heart of Darkness and other texts: 1896 - 1930

This listing does not claim to be a complete bibliography of the criticism generated by Conrad's fiction in this period. The texts cited are selected from a larger corpus of material - see below for bibliographies used - according to my understanding of their contribution to the ongoing debates about Conradian textual practice at the time. However, I have attempted to include the majority of reviews and articles on Heart of Darkness as well as most of the

significant general commentaries on Conrad's work. In this section I list items by their publication date.

In attributing authors to unsigned reviews I follow the consensus of Conrad's bibliographers; where attribution is uncertain the author's name follows the 'unsigned review' label. For the texts of Conrad's fiction referred to see Part 5, below. '*' denotes an item which is reproduced in Norman Sherry's Conrad: The Critical Heritage and thus easily accessible.

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Tvorčestva Fransua Rable i
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PART FIVE: LITERARY WORKS

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APPENDIX: CONRAD'S PREFACE TO THE NIGGER OF THE 'NARCISSUS'

The text used is that given in Conrad's Prefaces to His Works (London, 1927) edited by Edward Garnett. Ruth Stauffer's selective version is emboldened (see Part 4 of this work).

1. **A work that aspires, however humbly, to the condition of art should carry its justification in every line. And art itself may be defined as a single-minded attempt to render the highest kind of justice to the visible universe, by bringing to light the truth, manifold and one, underlying its every aspect. It is an attempt to find in its forms, in its colours, in its light, in its shadows, in the aspects of matter, and in the facts of life what of each is fundamental, what is enduring and essential - their one illuminating and convincing quality - the very truth of their existence. The artist, then, like the thinker or the scientist, seeks the truth and makes his appeal. Impressed by the aspect of the world the thinker plunges into ideas, the scientist into facts - whence, presently, emerging they make their appeal to those qualities of our being that fit us best for the hazardous enterprise of living. They speak authoritatively to our common**

sense, to our intelligence, to our desire of peace, or to our desire of unrest; not seldom to our prejudices, sometimes to our fears, often to our egoism - but always to our credulity. And their words are heard with reverence, for their concerns are with weighty matters: with the cultivation of our minds and the proper care of our bodies, with the attainment of our ambitions, with the perfection of the means and the glorification of our precious aims.

2. It is otherwise with the artist.

3. Confronted by the same enigmatical spectacle the artist descends within himself, and in that lonely region of stress and strife, if he be deserving and fortunate, he finds the terms of his appeal. His appeal is made to our less obvious capacities: to that part of our nature which, because of the warlike conditions of existence, is necessarily kept out of sight within the more resisting and hard qualities - like the vulnerable body within a steel armour. his appeal is less loud, more profound, less distinct, more stirring - and sooner forgotten. Yet its effect endures forever. The changing wisdom of successive generations

discards ideas, questions facts, demolishes theories. But the artist appeals to that part of our being which is not dependent on wisdom; to that in us which is a gift and not an acquisition - and, therefore, more permanently enduring. He speaks to our capacity for delight and wonder, to the sense of mystery surrounding our lives; to our sense of pity, and beauty, and pain; to the latent feeling of fellowship with all creation - and to the subtle but invincible conviction of solidarity that knits together the loneliness of innumerable hearts, to the solidarity in dreams, in joy, in sorrow, in aspirations, in illusions, in hope, in fear, which binds men to each other, which binds together all humanity - the dead to the living and the living to the unborn.

4. It is only some such train of thought, or rather of feeling, that can in a measure explain the aim of the attempt, made in the tale which follows, to present an unrestful episode in the obscure lives of a few individuals out of all the disregarded multitude of the bewildered, the simple, and the voiceless. For, if any part of truth dwells in the belief confessed above, it becomes evident that there is not a place of splendour or a dark

corner of the earth that does not deserve, if only a passing glance of wonder and pity. The motive, then, may be held to justify the matter of the work; but this preface, which is simply an avowal of endeavour, cannot end here - for the avowal is not yet complete.

5. Fiction - if it at all aspires to be art - appeals to temperament. And in truth it must be, like painting, like music, like all art, the appeal of one temperament to all the other innumerable temperaments whose subtle and resistless power endows passing events with their true meaning, and creates the moral, the emotional atmosphere of the place and time. Such an appeal to be effective must be an impression conveyed through the senses; and, in fact, it cannot be made in any other way, because temperament, whether individual or collective, is not amenable to persuasion. All art, therefore, appeals primarily to the senses, and the artistic aim when expressing itself in written words must also make its appeal through the senses, if its high desire is to reach the secret spring of responsive emotions. It must strenuously aspire to the plasticity of sculpture, to the colour of painting, and to the magic

suggestiveness of music - which is the art of arts. And it is only through complete, unswerving devotion to the perfect blending of form and substance; it is only through an unremitting never-discouraged care for the shape and ring of sentences that an approach can be made to plasticity, to colour, and that the light of magic suggestiveness may be brought to play for an evanescent instant over the common-place surface of words: of the old, old words, worn thin, defaced by ages of careless use.

6. The sincere endeavour to accomplish that creative task, to go as far on that road as his strength will carry him, to go undeterred by faltering, weariness, or reproach, is the only valid justification for the worker in prose. And if his conscience is clear, his answer to those who, in the fullness of a wisdom which looks for immediate profit, demand specifically to be edified, consoled, amused; who demand to be promptly improved, or encouraged, or frightened, or shocked, or charmed, must run thus: My task which I am trying to achieve is, by the power of the written word to make you hear, to make you feel - it is, before all, to make you see. That - and no

more, and it is everything. If I succeed, you shall find there according to you deserts: encouragement, consolation, fear, charm - all you demand - and, perhaps, also that glimpse of truth for which you have forgotten to ask.

7. To snatch in a moment of courage, from the remorseless rush of time, a passing phase of life, is only the beginning of the task. The task approached in tenderness and faith is to hold up unquestioningly, without choice and without fear, the rescued fragment before all eyes in in the light of a sincere mood. It is to show its vibration, its colour, its form; and through its movement, its form, and its colour, reveal the substance of its truth - disclose its inspiring secret: the stress and passion within the core of each convincing moment. In a single-minded attempt of that kind, if one be deserving and fortunate, one may perchance attain to such clearness of of sincerity that at last the presented vision of regret or pity, of terror or mirth, shall awaken in the hearts of the beholders that feeling of unavoidable solidarity; of the solidarity in mysterious origin, in toil, in joy,

in hope, in uncertain fate, which binds men to each other and all mankind to the visible world.

8. It is evident that he who, rightly or wrongly, holds by the convictions expressed above cannot be faithful to any one of the temporary formulas of his craft. The enduring part of them - the truth which each only imperfectly veils - should abide with him as the most precious of his possessions, but they all: Realism, Romanticism, Naturalism, even the unofficial sentimentalism (which, like the poor, is exceedingly difficult to get rid of), all these gods must, after a short period of fellowship, abandon him - even on the very threshold of the temple - to the stammerings of his conscience and to the outspoken consciousness of the difficulties of his work. In that uneasy solitude the supreme cry of Art for Art, itself, loses the exciting ring of its apparent immorality. It sounds far off. It has ceased to be a cry, and is heard only as a whisper, often incomprehensible, but at times and faintly encouraging.

9. Sometimes, stretched at ease in the shade of a roadside tree, we watch the motions of a labourer

in a distant field, and after a time, begin to wonder languidly as to what the fellow may be at. We watch the movements of his body, the waving of his arms, we see him bend down, stand up, hesitate, begin again. It may add to the charm of an idle hour to be told the purpose of his exertions. If we know he is trying to lift a stone, to dig a ditch, to uproot a stump, we look with a more real interest at his efforts; we are disposed to condone the jar of his agitation upon the restfulness of the landscape; and even, if in a brotherly frame of mind, we may bring ourselves to forgive his failure. We understood his object, and, after all, the fellow has tried, and perhaps he had not the strength - and perhaps he had not the knowledge. We forgive, go on our way - and forget.

10. And so it is with the workman of art. Art is long and life is short, and success is very far off. And thus, doubtful of strength to travel so far, we talk a little about the aim - the aim of art, which, like life itself, is inspiring, difficult - obscured by mists. It is not in the clear logic of a triumphant conclusion; it is not in the unveiling of one of those heartless secrets which

are called the Laws of Nature. It is not less great, but only more difficult.

11. To arrest, for the space of a breath, the hands busy about the work of the earth, and compel men entranced by the sight of distant goals to glance for a moment at the surrounding vision of form and colour, of sunshine and shadows; to make them pause for a look, for a sigh, for a smile - such is the aim, difficult and evanescent, and reserved only for a very few to achieve. But sometimes, by the deserving and the fortunate, even that task is accomplished. And when it is accomplished - behold! - all the truth of life is there: a moment of vision, a sigh, a smile - and the return to an eternal rest.