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Configurations of Imperialism and their Displacements in the Novels of Joseph Conrad

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines certain configurations of imperialism and their displacements in the novels of Joseph Conrad beginning from the premise that imperialism is rationalised through a dualistic model of self/"other" and functions as a hierarchy of domination/subordination. In chapters one and two it argues that both Heart of Darkness and Lord Jim configure this model of imperialism as a split between Europe/not-Europe. The third and fourth chapters consider displacements of this model: onto a split within Europe and an act of "internal" imperialism in Under Western Eyes and onto unequal gender relations in the public and private spheres in Chance.

Each chapter provides a reading of the selected novel in relation to one or more contemporary (or near contemporary) primary source and analyses these texts using various strands of cultural theory. Chapter one, on Heart of Darkness, investigates the historical background to British imperialism by focusing on the textual production of history in a variety of written forms which comprise the diary, travel writing, government report, fiction. It considers how versions of (imperial) history/knowledge are constructed through the writing up of experience. In chapter two, on Lord Jim, the hero figure is analysed as a product of the imperial ideology and the protagonist's failure is explored through the application of evolutionary theory.

Chapters three and four, on Under Western Eyes and Chance, investigate displacements of the imperial model: the failure of an "enlightened" Western Europe to challenge Russian imperialism in Poland forms the basis for reading Under Western Eyes with Rousseau's writings and a nineteenth-century history of the French Revolution. Chance presents a further displacement of this model in its relocation of imperialist imperatives in the sexual/gender inequalities practised in the "mother" country.

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Introduction

This thesis examines configurations of imperialism and their displacements in the novels of Joseph Conrad starting from the premise that imperialism is rationalised through a dualistic model of self/"other" which functions as a hierarchy of domination/subordination. It argues in chapters one and two that both Heart of Darkness (1899,1902) and Lord Jim (1900) configure this model of imperialism as a split between Europe/not-Europe. The third and fourth chapters consider displacements of this model: onto a split within Europe and an act of "internal" imperialism in Under Western Eyes (1911); and onto unequal gender relations in the public and private spheres in Chance (1914). Within the following exploration the different aspects of power relations will not be presented as simply reducible to each other, as each possesses its own history, particularity and complexity. But each aspect is also related to the others 1) as elements in the texts of one author and 2) as arising out of a particular historical moment. This historical moment provides a frame in which elements that are, at once, discrete and related can be contained.

The analysis of the texts chosen is informed by various strands of contemporary literary theory which takes in postcolonial, new historical, feminist and psychoanalytic approaches, as well as applying aspects of textual analysis. These theoretical methods allow a reading of Joseph Conrad's texts which entwines the analysis of the historical particularity out of which he wrote and the historicising of theories current at the time he was writing.

This approach avoids one current critical orthodoxy which indicts Conrad for failing to function as a post-World-War-Two spokesman for colonial liberation. This type of criticism tends to read his texts "prospectively", placing him as a postcolonial writer **manqué** whose writings approach the lineaments of a critique of imperialism, but ultimately refuse what they uncover by relapsing into an

(albeit) equivocal endorsement of the imperial system. In contrast to this trend, my purpose is to place Conrad's writing in a retrospective frame, in relation to the intellectual and political developments which informed his lived experience, his creative imagination and its written recording. This involves contextualising Conrad's writing within an emerging historical moment, reading his texts with the writings of his contemporaries and forbears to produce a more radical Conrad than is sometimes allowed for.

Conrad's affiliation with a particular intellectual and cultural tradition will be investigated in this thesis by reading each of the four selected novels with one (or more) contemporaneous primary source. These explorations will serve to focus his writing's confluences with and divergences from a "mainstream", dominant ideology and its more radical or oppositional inscriptions. In addition, putting Conrad's texts "into dialogue" with other contemporary texts indicates something of the multiplicity of voices which speak within and against the "dominant ideology" (I adopt this rather monologic term for convenience sake). Reading Conrad with his (near) contemporaries in a number of disciplines (history, natural science, feminism) therefore produces both a methodology and an historical/cultural context in which to "view" his novels.

Part of each chapter of this thesis registers the repetition, differently inflected, of the pseudo-scientific theories, arising out of the theory of "natural selection", which were applied to, and formed the basis of, theories about "race". Thus I will examine how "scientific" theory provided the underpinning for an idea of the superiority of the white (European) race, and the legitimation for the colonial/imperial enterprise and its theorising, as well as for the different models of power relations, one of which - gender relations - will be of relevance here.

Chapter one, on Heart of Darkness, investigates and provides the historical background to British imperialism by focusing on the textual production of history in a variety of written forms which comprise the diary, travel writing as "conquest narrative" (in Mary Louise Pratt's term), government report, fiction. H.M Stanley's Diaries (written 1874-77), his account of the founding of the Congo Free State (1885) and Roger Casement's 1904 Report on Belgian atrocities in the Congo are read alongside Conrad's own fictional configuration of imperialism in this novel in order to think about how versions of (imperial) history/ knowledge are constructed through the writing up of experience - how the event in some way becomes its recording - and how a particular written form affects what we can know and what we don't (want to) know.

Chapter two reads Lord Jim focusing both on the failure of Jim's attempt to take on the heroic persona as presented in the imperialist-inflected adventure story, and on the related difficulties of genre that the novel displays viz. the famous "split" between the two parts. Following a hint from Gillian Beer's Darwin's Plots, I discuss how the "plotting" of Darwin's theory of natural selection in The Origin of Species (1859) could be used to "plot" an alternative narrative trajectory in Lord Jim and to ask what are the implications for the presentation of Jim as a different type of hero: an "evolutionary" hero. Is such a construct possible? If not - what is Jim?

While the chapter on Heart of Darkness considers the textual production of history in its making, the chapter on Under Western Eyes investigates an historical tradition which has been textually produced and which has influenced the contemporary crisis out of which the novel arises. Homi Bhabha has written that "colonialism is the dark side of Enlightenment" and Under Western Eyes, I suggest, uses the figure of Razumov - doubled by that of Haldin - to probe the history of Europe since the Enlightenment in an effort to understand its failure: specifically the failure of a

so-called enlightened Western Europe to prevent an act of "internal" imperialism in the partition of Poland and the subsequent autocratic rule of, especially, Russia. This act is discussed as the first of the displacements of the model of imperialism set up in the first two chapters. This chapter reads Razumov/Haldin with some writings of Rousseau and with Hippolyte Taine's history of the French Revolution (1876-85) in order to focus on the legacy of Enlightenment thinking and revolutionary practice in the making of modern society - a debate to which Under Western Eyes makes its vexed contribution.

A further displacement of the model of imperialism is investigated in Chance, the central focus of the final chapter. It will be argued that within this novel, Conrad effectively re-locates imperialist imperatives, where the contradictory, unequal structures of the imperial ideology in relation to the colonised subject are replicated (and refracted) in the gender inequalities in British society. Chance is first placed in the context of debates about the place of women in the public and private spheres - Olive Schreiner's and Rebecca West's writings are used as exemplary texts here. I then chart the surprising shift it makes from public to private spaces where it sketches the outline of a radical (but still problematic) way of thinking about male/female sexuality and the role of desire in this construction.

Throughout this thesis my purpose is to show Conrad the writer as neither too early or too late, but producing the type of fiction which places him at the "cutting edge" of the modern, of concerns which are still not written out. Conrad wrote in Nostromo: "For life to be large and full, it must contain the care of the past and of the future in every passing moment of the present".[1] In its conceptualisation of time, this citation would seem to reject a linear view of history which posits origin and purpose. Instead it presents an idea of the layering of time (and history), demonstrating an awareness of the co-

presence of temporal categories. Conrad's writing as a whole partakes of this breadth, presenting itself to the reader with an open-ended awareness.

NOTES

1. Joseph Conrad, Nostromo (1904), The Uniform Edition. London: J.M. Dent, 1923, pp520-21.

Chapter One

Heart of Darkness or What Marlow Didn't Know

Joseph Conrad's sojourn in the Congo (from 12 June - 4 December 1890) provides the nucleus of the essay "Geography and Some Explorers" (1924) which was published in the last year of his life. His journey had begun, in fantasy, even earlier, at the moment when the boy encounters the map. The significance of this moment inheres in its repetition in writing. The boy encounters the map in the memoir: "It was in 1868, when nine years old or thereabouts, that while looking at a map of Africa of the time and putting my finger on the blank space then representing the unsolved mystery of that continent, I said to myself with absolute assurance and an amazing audacity which are no longer in my character now: 'When I grow up I shall go **there**'".[1]

He encounters it in fiction: "When I was a little chap I had a passion for maps. I would look for hours at ... Africa ... and lose myself in the glories of exploration. At that time there were many blank spaces on the earth, and when I saw one that looked particularly inviting on a map ... I would put my finger on it and say, When I grow up I will go there".[2]

He encounters it in this late essay: "One day, putting my finger on a spot in the very middle of the then white heart of Africa, I declared that some day I would go there".[3]

In The Location of Culture, Homi Bhabha makes a comment that is pertinent to a reading of this "scene": "What these primal scenes illustrate is that looking/ hearing/reading as sites of subjectification in colonial discourse are evidence of the importance of the visual and auditory imaginary for the **histories** of societies".[4]

The fascination with maps that the young boy - the Joseph Conrad of memoir and essay, the Marlow of Heart of Darkness - displays, incorporates an imaginary mapping of the self onto the "undiscovered" country represented by the blank spot on the map. This stage in a cognitive mapping which plays off the encounter with imperial cartography does not, however, signal the resolution of the question of

subjectivity. On the contrary, it marks the beginning of the problem in that it "forgets" or erases both the colonised "other" and the objective and ideological contexts to which the map refers. A comment by Fredric Jameson, in Modernism and Imperialism, which refers to the displacement of inter-European rivalry onto the "exploitation" of what I call "not-Europe", is also pertinent to the effects of this partial cognitive mapping:

> Its effects are representational effects, which is to say a systematic block on any adequate consciousness of the structure of the imperial system: but these are just as clearly objective effects and will have their most obvious consequences in the aesthetic realm, where the mapping of the new imperial world system becomes impossible, since the colonized other who is its essential other component or opposite number has become invisible. [5]

Conrad's repetition of the moment of the encounter with the map and his repetition of his experiences in Africa as writing could then be "read" as a compulsive need to repeat the attempt at mapping a "consciousness of the structure of the imperial system", as an attempt to chart the epistemological system that constructs a colonised territory. It is an attempt that, according to Jameson, **must** fail because of the way in which that consciousness is "systematic[ally] block[ed]" by the rendering "invisible" of certain aspects of the imperial project and of the colonised subject.

This chapter explores the ways in which the interpenetration of the "visual ... imaginary" and of experience provide a base from which the written text of history/historical knowledge is produced. Heart of Darkness (1899,1902) is the starting point for my thinking and it also provides a (moveable) centre from which my ideas set out - and to which they return. A number of texts circulate around Heart of Darkness and provide a context out of which it is produced. Heart of Darkness itself circulates around these texts and around the other texts on the same subject which Conrad wrote. I have chosen to concentrate on a few

representative texts and to put them into (multi-vocal) conversation with Heart of Darkness. The other texts chosen are: H.M.Stanley's Exploration Diaries (written 1874-1877) and The Congo and the Founding of its Free State (1885) and Roger Casement's Correspondence and Report from His Majesty's Consul at Boma Respecting the Administration of the Independent State of the Congo (1904).

I am interested in investigating these .points in relation to the texts I have chosen: how do different texts construct and produce a version of knowledge? How and why are these texts produced at a particular historical moment? What difference is made when a text employs (or is taken over by) a particular rhetoric? And, with special reference to Heart of Darkness, to think about how - and to some extent why - "history" metamorphoses into "fiction". How does it get situated among the other texts as fiction?

More specifically - and working chronologically - Stanley's writings record some "symptomatic" historical moments in the transition from colonialism to imperialism (see below for a discussion of these terms) when the interior of Africa is "discovered" and conquered; Conrad journeying through the Congo Free State that Stanley had pioneered constructs a "nightmare" "state" or scenario, and Casement produces the official investigation and condemnation of imperialism's excesses. How far does Casement go in his Report? How far can he go?

As I write about Heart of Darkness in relation to the other chosen texts, I hope to be aware of the ways in which the levels of experience, history, ideology are presented as (fictional) writing, but I will not be concerned with the task of re-establishing the "kernal" of fact around which the narrative makes its fiction. In beginning this chapter with "history", the aim is to test the relations between historical and fictional texts by focusing on the ways in which they make use of similar narrative techniques - plotting, use of tropes - in pursuit of avowedly different aims.[6] In Emily Budick's words, my purpose with

regard to Heart of Darkness is to think about "the pressure of the historical on the fictional".[7]

The rest of this introductory section will be divided between a brief historical introduction to late nineteenth-century imperialism and an account of the theoretical position I wish to apply to my primary sources, following some of Michel Foucault's theses as developed in The Archaeology of Knowledge.

Before anything else, a definition of terms: According to Benita Parry,[8] "colonialism" describes the stage of occupation of another territory and the subsequent mercantile and economic development/exploitation of that territory, while "imperialism" entails a more formal governmental system which is grafted onto the colonial pattern. Since this chapter seeks to analyse texts produced in approximately the last quarter of the nineteenth century when colonial rule was taking on a more governmental role, I shall refer, mostly, to "imperialism".

At the end of the nineteenth century in Britain there were, broadly, two main attitudes to imperialism [9]: "For some, like Milner, Curzon and Joseph Chamberlain, imperialism and empire represented the 'white man's burden', an imperial mission, an obligation to spread Western civilisation, European technology and the Christian gospel" (Eldridge,p2). It was David Livingstone, the missionary-explorer, who formulated the "three Cs" slogan that became the sign that accompanied the expansion of empire. "Commerce, Christianity, Civilisation" were the "buzz words" to which the historian Thomas Pakenham, in The Scramble for Africa, adds another: "That was not the way Africans perceived [imperialist expansion]. There was a fourth 'c' - conquest - and it gradually predominated".[10]

Joseph Chamberlain, as Colonial Secretary, explained the purpose of empire in a speech to the Royal Colonial Institute in March 1897, unashamedly referring to the element of violence which underlay the "civilising mission":

> You cannot ... make omelettes without breaking eggs; you cannot destroy the practices of barbarism, of slavery, or superstition ... without the use of force ... We feel that our rule over these territories can only be justified if we can show that it adds to the happiness and prosperity of the people, and I maintain that our rule does, and has, brought security and peace and comparqtive prosperity to countries that never knew their blessings before. In carrying out this work of civilisation we are fulfilling what I believe to be our national mission.
> (quoted in Eldridge,p194)

But "to others ... imperialism meant wars, bloodshed, exploitation and a sordid search for profits. J.A.Hobson in his book Imperialism, A Study (1902), argued that it was the outcome of the need for new outlets for capital investments" (Eldridge, p2). (This aspect is borne out in Stanley's Preface to The Congo and the Founding of its Free State discussed below.) Hobson's thesis was supported by two books: Rosa Luxemburg's The Accumulation of Capital (1913) and Lenin's Imperialism the Highest Stage of Capitalism (1916) which traced and analysed the move from "competitive to monopoly capitialism".[11]

For many historians, it is the issue of slavery that is crucial to the development of nineteenth-century British imperialism. The slave trade had been abolished by Britain in 1807; the Emancipation Act of 1833 outlawed slavery. Both Eldridge and Patrick Brantlinger, in Rule of Darkness, cite Eric Williams' "controversial thesis" (Eldridge,p18) concerning abolition in his book Capitalism and Slavery (1944). In this book Williams argued:

> that the waning of the sugar industry played a more important role in the abolition of slavery than the efforts of hypocritical philanthropists in Great Britain ... once British West Indian sugar could no longer compete on economic terms, the British sponsored an international campaign against slavery in order to ruin their French and Spanish rivals and ensure that British East Indian sugar, not dependent on slave labour, captured the European market.
> (Eldridge,p18)

Whether the weighting is given to economic or philanthropic motivations, abolitionist attitudes and activities probably did contribute, as Brantlinger contends, to Britain setting

itself up as the the exemplar of the anti-slavery tendency and to the British beginning "to see themselves less and less as perpetrators of the slave trade and more and more as the potential saviours of Africa".[12]

Ronald Robinson and John Gallagher, in Africa and the Victorians:The Official Mind of Imperialism, point out how the British Government was pressed on one side by the "embattled humanitarians ... to take more forceful measures of moral regeneration",[13] while "ministers themselves were not unwilling for they had not abolished their own slave trade to make life easier for the slavers of other nations" (Robinson & Gallagher,p34). These two strands combined in Palmerston's statement on British policy in Africa: "to encourage and extend British commerce and thereby to displace the slave trade" (quoted in Robinson & Gallagher,p34). As Mary Louise Pratt puts it: Africans were reconceptualised "as a market rather than a commodity" (Pratt,IE,p71).

The economic basis for imperialist expansion was, according to Eldridge, only one of a number of factors working at the time, among which should be counted the "international rivalry" between the European powers which got displaced onto not-European territory. Eldridge calls this rivalry "a chess game focused on the balance of power in Europe, played out on comparatively safe tournament grounds in Africa and the Pacific" (Eldridge,p137). Fredric Jameson also emphasises this aspect of imperialist expansion, but he gives it a different angle, which points to the complex relations between theory and praxis. He writes:

> From 1884 to World War I, the relationship of domination between First and Third World was masked and displaced by an overriding (and perhaps ideological) consciousness of imperialism as being essentially a relationship between First World powers or the holders of Empire, and this consciousness tended to repress the more basic axis of otherness, and to raise issues of colonial reality only incidentally.
>
> (Jameson,MI,p9)

Broadly speaking, "potential economic rewards" to varying degrees "mask[ed] political and nationalist aims" (Eldridge,p123) which contributed to European imperialist expansion in Africa. Eldridge also points to the role that myth played in this rush to expansion: "Africa ... was optimistically regarded as a new El Dorado. Biblical tales of Ophir, of the lands of King Solomon's mines and the fabulous riches of the Queen of Sheba, excited Victorian minds" (Eldridge,p123-24).

In Dreams of Adventure, Deeds of Empire, Martin Green's thesis concerning the importance of fiction as part of the imperial project is set out:

> The adventure tales that formed the light reading of Englishmen ... were, in fact, the energizing myth of English imperialism. They were, collectively, the story England told itself as it went to sleep at night; and in the form of its dreams, they charged England's will with the energy to go out into the world and explore, conquer, and rule. [14]

Green pinpoints the articulation of myth and history within the imperialist ideological frame: the interaction and the tension between the factual account of events that the historical text seeks to produce and the mythic narrative which explores, re-makes, supplements (in the Derridian sense) that historical version. As I will suggest, the dream trope plays a decisive part in Heart of Darkness, both with regard to its fictional rhetoric and to its need to avow and disavow imperial ideology.

The mythic aspect excited the imaginations of writers like H.R.Haggard, working in the mainstream of the adventure tradition, who incorporated and re-presented these myths - of the riches of Ophir, of the Queen of Sheba. These fabulous tales were supplemented by and echoed the "true life" accounts of the adventures of the explorers: Burton, Livingstone, Stanley.

Part of the aim of this chapter is to consider the reciprocal relation which inheres as the imagination plays its part in the shaping of experience which is then "read back" into the processes of the imagination, and which is

produced in different textual versions: as historical knowledge which comes out of (and itself influences) a particular ideology; as differing accounts of the historical event. It also considers how it is never possible to maintain an absolute division between "fact" and "myth".[15] The failure to maintain an absolute division between these two areas accounts in some measure for the emphases (and absences) in the texts by Stanley, Casement and Conrad.

In his introduction to The Archaeology of Knowledge, Foucault presents a theory of history, "a method of historical analysis",[16] which foregrounds "discontinuity" as "threshold, rupture, break, mutation, transformation" (Foucault,AK,p5). Later he writes of discontinuity as history's "Other" (Foucault,AK,p12). This discontinuity is itself displaced because it is both "an instrument and an object of research" (Foucault,AK,p9). As an "instrument", discontinuity reminds the historian that the "object of research" is not singular - "**a** theory ... **a** concept ... **a** text" - but plural or "diversif[ied]" (Foucault,AK,p5). To apply the idea of discontinuity to the "field of the facts of the discourse" (Foucault,AK,p26) - or the "discursive field" (Foucault,AK,p28) - raises two questions: firstly, "according to what rules has a particular statement been made and consequently according to what rules could other similar statements be made?" (Foucault,AK,p27). And secondly, "how is it that one particular statement appeared rather than another" (Foucault,AK,p27) - or what does the statement exclude? As he writes: "I have undertaken, then, to describe the relations between statements" (Foucault,AK,p31).

These relations are indicated by some more questions that the statement asks as it is read, viz: who speaks and through what authority? (Foucault,AK,p50) From which "institutional sites" does the subject speak? (Foucault,AK,p51) If the "positions of the subject are ... defined by the situation" he occupies "in relation to the

various domains or groups of objects" what are the positions he takes up? Is he "questioning", "listening", "seeing", "observing"? (Foucault,AK,p52) And how are these elements mediated?

These questions will inform the investigation of how a particular kind of knowledge is constructed at a particular historical moment with reference to the chosen texts.

If H.M.Stanley could be construed as one of the emblematic archetypes of the Victorian self-made man as hero-explorer, his two expeditions into the Congo and the texts that came out of these journeys are also typical products of a type of action and its re-presentation as writing. I am going to concentrate here on two of the four large-scale expeditions that Stanley made in Africa between the years 1871 (when he set out to find Livingstone) and 1889 (when he returned to England having "rescued" a not very enthusiastic Emin Pasha), adding up to almost twenty years of activity which brought him both fame and reproach in hefty proportions. The two expeditions which are focused on here are the Congo pioneering expedition of 1874-1877 and the one during which Stanley set up the infrastructure of the Congo Free State (as the personal fiefdom of King Leopold II of the Belgians) between the years 1878-1885.

Stanley produced many written versions of the 1874-1877 expedition: he kept an "exploration" diary written up from day to day; he sent back despatches to the Daily Telegraph and the New York Herald (who were his sponsors) and he published the "official" account in Through the Dark Continent (1878). The two massy volumes which comprise The Congo and the Founding of its Free State were produced in a burst of energy in a few months in 1885 - the year in which the Berlin Conference ended its deliberations, the year after Stanley returned to Europe.

When I decided to concentrate on the two texts - the Exploration Diaries which were not published until 1961 and

The Congo and the Founding of its Free State - my purpose was to look at the way in which the (supposedly) "raw material" of one expedition was modified, worked up, smoothed out into the "official version" of the other, how "one particular statement appeared rather than another" (Foucault,AK,p27). The textual reality proved a little more complex. In the first place, according to Richard Stanley and Alan Neame who edited the diaries, Stanley claimed to be quoting directly from his diaries in the official version of his journey Through the Dark Continent. However, when the editors compared the two versions, they found "a wide divergence between the two texts".[17] Stanley had strictly edited his diary - written on the spot in small notebooks in his neat hand -and even re-written some of it for the published version. What was he changing? What was he censoring? What kind of "resituating" of the subject was being attempted in the transition between the texts?

The Editors of the diaries also state: "most remarkably, in two and a half years of hardship, he only twice committed his low spirits to his note-pads - in the rain forest of Uregga (November 1876), where [an extremely lugubrious] poem was composed, and in the days following Frank Pocock's death (June 1877). [Pocock was Stanley's deputy on the Expedition.] Otherwise, when disasters occured, when the trusted failed, he recorded a motion of impatience and rejection, turning his attention forthwith to the future" (Introduction,ED,pxviii).

Stanley also made no reference in his diary pages to his fiancée, Alice Pike, who was supposed to be waiting for him in America.[18] However, he kept her photograph wrapped in oilcloth next to his heart (shades of Heart of Darkness: Kurtz too keeps a photograph of his Intended, see pps 148, 154). The expedition's rowing boat, which was portaged in sections by native porters along the unnavigable stretches of the Congo, was named by Stanley "The Lady Alice", though no one else on the Expedition knew the reason for this naming. It was in his letters to Alice Pike that he poured

out the misery and despair that were certainly not to be presented in the newspaper despatches or the official version, but, more surprisingly, hardly made an appearance in the diaries either. On 25 December 1874 he wrote to her: "I sit on a bed raised about a foot above the sludge, mournfully reflecting on my misery ... Outside my tent things are worse. The camp is the extreme of misery and the people appear as if they were making up their minds to commit suicide or to sit still inert [sic] until death relieves them" (quoted in Bierman,p163).

Stanley uses the diary form, the form that commonly connotes the personal, the subjective, the private sphere, the secret, as a blueprint for the official versions of his experience. The personal seems to have been displaced from the diary and divided up: among Stanley's letters to Alice Pike, his carefully oilcloth wrapped photograph of her, even among the sections of the rowing boat so publicly, yet so secretly, named "The Lady Alice". So what gets into the Diaries? What was Stanley supposed to be doing on this gruelling endurance test between the years 1874-1877?

The Expedition set out from Zanzibar on 12 November 1874. It comprised Stanley and three British "officers" (all of whom died during the journey) and a "rank and file" (Introduction,ED,pxiii) recruited mostly from Zanzibar. At one point during the Expedition, Stanley mustered over two thousand men. The occasions this small army provided for aggression, desertion, punishment are recorded as a persistent **leit-motif** throughout the Diaries. The areas of mustering, counting up and punishment of native bearers consistently intersect in their written recording, and the relations that are set up between these areas point to Stanley's need to establish a matrix onto which subsequent events could be mapped in a version which suited his requirements.

Thus the counting in and counting out of the native bearers formed a crucial part of keeping the Expedition together, as did the punishments meted out to deserters and

would-be mutineers. These punishments and the self-righteous relish with which Stanley recorded them contributed to the condemnation and controversy that shadowed his fame. The Diaries record that the "ringleaders" of a potential mutiny "were clapped in chains and flogged" (ED,p37). Three recaptured "deserters" are "courtmartialled", their punishment being a "choice" between being hanged or being "chained until the termination of the Expedition and flogged" (ED,p55). Stanley doesn't tell us what choice these "deserters" made. When the natives fought amongst themselves, the ringleader was punished with "200 lashes and to be kept in chains until he could be delivered up to the proper authorities [presumably Stanley means the colonial authorities]; the two drunkards to 100 lashes each, and to be kept in chains for six months" (ED,p87).

If violence towards the native bearers formed a regular part of the daily routine, another sort of aggressive interaction permeates the Diaries. In this latter example the odds are a little more even. The native tribes who inhabited the Congo made a good living from the cultivation of crops, animal-husbandry, fishing. (Stanley was recording a way of life which he and men like him were to render almost obsolete, to which Casement's Report bore witness.) However, the Congolese natives were constantly on the alert against the raids of the slave-traders who were still making a huge profit from the trade despite British activities against them. These natives fought Stanley almost every step of the way downriver - much to his irritation. His recording of these incidents recalls the anthropological term "contact zones" that Pratt uses to designate "social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other often in highly asymetrical relations of domination and subordination - like colonialism, slavery and their aftermaths" (Pratt,IE,p4).

This recording is also amenable to the Foucauldian theory of history as "discontinuity" - history's "Other" - where the "discontinuous" is "integrat[ed] into the discourse of the historian, where it no longer plays the role of an external condition that must be reduced, but that of a working concept" (Foucault,AK,p9). Following this idea, Stanley's object in producing a "statement", a version of imperial history, is continually disrupted by the "process" of the native tribes' attacks - on both the expedition and on the written recording of that expedition. As Stanley tells it, every attack is defeated by the British-led party. However, every attack also serves as a reminder - to Stanley and to his readers - that there is another "statement" which could have been produced with reference to the same event. The "discontinuous" thus establishes itself in relation to the official version; it becomes an integral part of its making.

Emerging from hostile Ugogo territory, Stanley's diary entry of 4 January 1875 very specifically signals conquest as a component of "civilisation", as part of the imperialist project: "A farewell to [Ugogo], a lasting farewell to it, until some generous and opulent philanthropist shall permit me or some other to lead a force for the suppression of this stumbling block to commerce with Central Africa. This pleasant task and none other could ever induce me to return to Ugogo" (ED,p40). Stanley's wish was to come true when he returned to the Congo as the agent of the self-styled philanthropist and avowed abolisher of the slave-trade, Leopold II.

An example of the consequences of this wish-fulfilment was recorded by Conrad in his Congo diary for 1 August 1890: "Chief came with a youth about 13 suffering from gunshot wound in the head. Bullet entered about an inch above the right eyebrow and came out a little inside. The roots of the hair, fairly in the middle of the brow in a line with the bridge of the nose. Bone not damaged apparently".[19] Conrad's Congo Diary is not a long document.

It runs to about ten printed pages. The painstaking way in which the wound the youth received is detailed (without however speculation as to: how he received it, who inflicted it on him), the uncertain syntax, suggest signs of shock on Conrad's part as he is confronted with this "horror". Note the construction of the sentence beginning "Bullet entered ...", which serves to emphasise the metonymic displacement of cause onto its effect in the minute description of the track of the bullet. But however painstaking the detail, it is nothing compared to the glimpse given of what has happened to this youth. (Casement was to detail even more depraved European practices in his 1904 Report).

Words struggle to be adequate in such circumstances, as does Conrad's way of dealing with the situation: "Gave him a little glycerine to put on the wound made by the bullet on coming out" (Congo Diary,p15). Conrad's gesture and the words in which he records it seem to collapse inadequately into each other - and yet, at the level of competing accounts of the imperial project, part of the struggle must be to make the language which records such practices count.

Stanley's diary is permeated by what Mary Louise Pratt, calls the "conquest narrative" (Pratt,IE,p157). Pratt traces a trajectory in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century travel writing (she is discussing travel books about South America but the model holds for Africa) where a "contemplative, estheticizing rhetoric of discovery is often replaced by a goal-orientated rhetoric of conquest and achievement" (Pratt,IE,p148). But looked at in another way, in a polyphonic layering of voice and genre, it is perfectly possible for both "conquest narrative" and the "rhetoric of discovery" to occupy a near-simultaneous space, and this co-existence operates in Stanley's Diaries and in The Congo and the Founding of its Free State.

When Stanley's texts replace an earlier kind of "scientific" travel writing with the writing of

"information, landscape and commercial expansion",[20] he announces himself as part of a "capitalist vanguard" (Pratt,IE,p148) whose account of the exploration and mapping of "unknown territory" for (in the main unacknowledged) commercial purposes collapses the "ideological distinction between knowledge and conquest" (Pratt,IE,p181). For Stanley knowledge is conquest and vice versa.

In order to illustrate this proposition, I'd like now to turn to The Congo and the Founding of its Free State (the "official version") to discuss, first, its Preface. Then I shall make use of descriptions of landscape from this official version to show how the "capitalist vanguard" maps the native landscape, a move whose object is to provide legitimation for the colonial project.

It is in what Pratt calls the "liminal space of the preface" (Pratt,IE,p130) that "the goal of expanding the capitalist world system is, as a rule, acknowledged ... but only there" (Pratt,SFC,p144). Stanley's Preface to The Congo and the Founding of its Free State (which is disingenuously subtitled: "A Story of Work and Exploration") reads like a commercial prospectus, whose dreams of avarice cannot be fully contained in the space of the preface - they seep into the main body of the text.

Before the Preface, though, comes the Dedication: The two volumes are dedicated "most respectfully" to Leopold II the "generous monarch" and "to all those gentlemen who assisted him ... to realise the unique project of forming a free commercial state in equatorial Africa". As the General Act of the Berlin Conference (which was held from 15 November 1884 until 26 February 1885) defined it in Article III, the Congo Free State was called "free" because it was a free trade area, with traders paying no taxes or duties "except such as are an equitable compensation for the necessary expenses of ... trade".[21] Theoretically, these "traders" included the native ones. In practice it all worked out rather differently.

Keep an eye on Leopold II. He is one of the spectres that haunt this chapter. While the dedication and frontispiece portrait of him provide the entry into the official version, there are very few references to him in the main body of Stanley's text. Although this omission can be explained by the taboo against mentioning sovereigns in fiction or literary productions at any length and in any but the most flattering terms (cf Bierman,p132), this relative reticence on Stanley's part also serves to create Leopold II as a shadowy, not to say sinister, presence in this text, a presiding deity, an awful fetish whose greed pervades its pages.

In the Preface Stanley pays lip-service to the importance of the "three Cs": Exploration is a prelude to the successful "civilising" of the natives. Christianity also gets a mention - various mission groups have carried "the banner of peace up the Congo beyond the Equator" (CFFS,I,pvii) - but it is commerce above everything towards which Stanley's rhetoric is directed. The natives of the Congo are presented as so much raw material along with statistics, statuary miles, facts and figures. (Later in this account Stanley discusses the relative pulling power of a team of mules and a team of (presumably black) men under the same heading: "Total man and mule power available" [CFFS,I,p155].)

What Stanley seeks to deliver in his clipped, deceptively lucid prose seems to make wonderful commercial sense. As well as bringing light into the darkness on behalf of Britain (or as it turned out, Belgium) he also turns the spotlight onto the benefit of the enterprise for Britain's economic problems: "when I hear of perpetual lamentations about depression of trade, of the silent spindle, and the cold foundry, I am tempted to ask what has become of all that traditional energy which made Britain so famous in the commercial world" (CFFS,I,pxi). What does capitalism do when its home markets are declining, when the workers are agitating for fair pay and conditions and civil

rights? To adapt Rosa Luxemburg: it exports itself, it "cannibalises" markets which are at a pre-industrial stage and which can provide cheap raw materials and cheap labour in plenty.[22]

Stanley recognises this. On his return from his mapping and exploring expedition in the Congo in 1877, he tried to interest British businessmen in the commercial "development" of the area he had "opened up" to Europe. His efforts met with deprecatory scepticism. Now Stanley sternly admonishes the doubters. His message to them (re-orientating the famous American dictum) could be rendered: "Go South young man!"

British businessmen remained sceptical. Leopold II did not. Working as Leopold's agent, Stanley established Vivi station in October 1879. Isangila station was completed in February 1881, Manyanga station in May 1881 and Leopoldville in August 1882. At Vivi the natives paid tribute to his energy and his willingness to roll up his sleeves and participate in manual labour by giving him an African name, "Bula Matari" - the breaker of rocks. Stanley was touchingly proud of this name, declaring: "It is merely a distinctive title, having no privileges to boast of, but the friend or 'son', or 'brother' of Bula Matari will not be unkindly treated by the Ba-kongo, Bateké, or Ba-yanzi [local tribes] and that is something surely" (CFFS,I,p148). When Roger Casement made his report on Belgian rule in the Congo in 1903, the name Bula Matari had become something more sinister.

In agreeing to act as Leopold II's agent Stanley was to let himself in for some much-deserved criticism. As Brantlinger writes: "The purpose behind [Stanley's] work in the Congo was not far removed from the aims of the Eldorado Exploring Expedition in Heart of Darkness" (Brantlinger, p181). John Bierman, one of Stanley's biographers, concurs: in acting as Leopold's agent, he writes, "Stanley was - it seems unwittingly - a key player in what turned out to be

perhaps the greatest criminal enterprise of the colonial era" (Bierman,p380).

How unwitting was Stanley? He makes a rare and uncharacteristic statement of awareness early on in his official version: "it was well known to those who reflected at all upon the circumstances that the so-called Geographical and Commercial societies were not intended solely to advance geographical knowledge, but also to further the political interests of their Governments" (CFFS,I,p56). Underlying motivation leaks from the Preface into the main body of the text.

Both the Exploration Diaries and The Congo and the Founding of its Free State contain sustained passages of landscape description which are sometimes stunningly beautiful in their (uncharacteristically) lush presentation of the Congo's natural beauty. These passages provide another perspective for Stanley's positioning of himself with respect to a natural world which is then produced via the mediation of the written account. This account has - at least - two aims: the landscape provides the "raw material" which will be transformed by the imperial project, and H.M. Stanley becomes instrumental to, embedded in, this project at its inception. Stanley's bid is nothing less than to write himself into history.

On his first Congo expedition, Stanley describes sailing down the Congo, "down narrow streams, between palmy and spicy islands, whose sweet fragrance and vernal colour cause us to forget for a moment our dangerous life" (ED,p163). However, the landscape trope is a loaded gun in the hands of one of the "capitalist vanguard". The "conquest narrative" peeps out of and then (literally) explodes the romantic reverie. Continuing downriver and continuing the entry just quoted, Stanley notes the profusion of "teak and Cotton-wood, palms, Guinea and the Ware-Palm, the tall cane with its drooping feathery leaves" (ED,p163). Capitalist dreams of the potential of raw material dissolve when the expedition approaches a village:

"... I had just penned the above, inspired to it by a slight sense of enjoyment, when lo! we came in sight of a village, and immediately war drums and horns sounded their defiance" (ED,p163,original ellipsis).

The succession of thoughts and emotions that inform the above passage are linked to the mode that Mary Louise Pratt designates as "reverie". This complex state - commonly employed as a device in romantic poetry - has a specific aim when used in the "conquest narrative". Pratt writes: "commonly, European aspirations are introduced in the form of a reverie that overtakes the seer as he ponders the panorama before him ... In exploration writing ... the reverie convention often very specifically projects the civilizing mission onto the scene" (Pratt,SFC,p145). When the seer indulges in a reverie that begins to map a capitalist infrastructure onto the unspoiled landscape, Pratt calls this trope "industrial reverie" (Pratt,IE,p150).

Pratt identifies three main moves in this colonising gaze: firstly there is the aestheticising of the landscape and its representation through "density of meaning" or a piling on of adjectives, the aim being to familiarise what is strange (Pratt,IE,p204). These loaded descriptions also work to "tie the landscape explicitly to the explorer's home culture" (Pratt,IE,p204), providing the verbal equivalent of taming/conquering both landscape and inhabitants. Lastly there is the "relation of **mastery** predicated between the seer and the scene" (Pratt,IE,p204).

In The Congo and the Founding of its Free State Stanley reproduces the stages of the "industrial reverie" at its most polished and disturbing: First come the familiar raptures about the beauty of the landscape of the middle Congo. "Verduously rich isles" and "rich verdure" ring the (fast-diminishing?) adjectival constructions where "the brightness of the intense sunshine" is reflected "in glistening velvet sheen from frond and leaf" (CFFS,2,p91). Pratt is quite right. Stanley could be describing an

English woody glen. At this stage in the reverie the scene recalls to the seer a "native innocence and grace ... as near Eden's loveliness as anything I shall ever see on this side of Paradise" (CFFS,2,p91). Here the writing functions as a record of what will pass and as a substitute for what will disappear. Twenty years later Casement travelled through a ravaged landscape which had been systematically plundered of its resources.

The plundering move begins as Stanley's gaze modulates and he forgets about the unspoiled Eden. Instead the writing starts to record the palms, the nuts, the "calamas ... useful for flooring", the "caoutchouc plant" (the notorious "red rubber"), the "bark ... good for native cloth and ... the manufacture of paper" (CFFS,2,p92). Startlingly, Eden is transformed into a potential commodity playground, the delight of the "enterprising trader" (CFFS,2,p92) who makes his sudden entrance on the scene. Every element of the landscape becomes a sign of its potential for use value and profit value. The palms will make "the stoutest hawsers", the "soft pale-green moss" gives "a valuable dye" (CFFS,2,p92). Wood from the forests will feed the steamboats navigating the Congo (CFFS,2,p93).

This passage, as a prime example of the colonising **coup de grâce**, reaches its peak when Stanley declares:

> "Whatever interest we may profess, after all, in this many-hued splendour of the tropic bush ... it is but secondary to that which one must feel for the human communities, the muscles of whose members have a more immediate and practical value to us. For without these the flowers, the plants, the gums, the moss, and the dye weeds of the tropical world must ever remain worthless to them and to ourselves. In every cordial-faced aborigine whom I meet I see a promise of assistance to me in the redemption of himself from the state of unproductiveness in which he at present lives ... he is a future recruit to the ranks of soldier-labourers.
>
> (CFFS,2,p93)

The colonialist ideology couldn't be more plainly stated. When Stanley remarks, "we are like children ignorantly playing with diamonds" (CFFS,2,p93), he's being, at best, disingenuous. This highly-manufactured piece of

propaganda shows he knows exactly what he's doing. Pratt's theorising of the progressive dehumanisation of the colonial subject further explains Stanley's construction of the "soldier-labourer": she compares the "creating of a speechless, denuded, biologized body" - Stanley's "cordial-faced aborigine" above, the "savages" and "hands" of the Exploration Diaries - with the "dispossessed, disposable work force European colonists so ruthlessly and tirelessly fought to create in their foothold abroad" (Pratt,IE,p53).

The creation of this work force intersects - and clashes - with the issue of slavery and its abolition. The declared commitment to the abolition of slavery and the slave trade was one of the strongest foundations for the European presence in Africa in the nineteenth century. It was also the foundation of Leopold II's professions of philanthropy and the putative reason for his establishment of a number of anti-slavery committees (see Pakenham, p146).

Given this, Stanley has to make dutiful gestures towards abolition (see for example CFFS,1,pp40,60,90, **passim**). According to him, the horrors of the slave trade will be replaced by the "legitimate trade" that Europe will bring to Africa. This formula provides another way in which his text legitimises the imperialist project: exploration and trade are invariably coupled with philanthropy and the suppression of the slave trade. He sums up his activities and the text they produce as a "gospel of enterprise" (CFFS,2,p377).

Stanley's encounter with the Arab slave caravan is exemplary as a piece of anti-slavery propaganda - on the surface. Passing scenes of devastation and murder on the way to Stanley Falls (the ultimate accolade of imperialist mapping and naming had been awarded Stanley: both a Falls and a Pool were named for him), he realises that he is following in the wake of an Arab raiding party. An "impulse, which was almost overpowering, to avenge these devastations and massacres" comes over him (CFFS,2,p143).

He manages to resist this impulse: "And yet - who am I that I should take the law into my hands and mete out retribution?" (CFFS,2,p143).

Having diplomatically exchanged courtesies with the raiding party, Stanley is shown their "human harvest" (CFFS,2,p145). Out spring the cliches of enslaved misery: natives are "rows upon rows of dark nakedness" (CFFS,2, p146). (The account is obsessed with this nakedness - the word is repeated five times in as many lines.) After the nakedness comes the "fetters", with "youths", "children", "mothers" secured together. At this point Stanley observes: "There is not one adult man-captive amongst them" (CFFS,2,p146). Stanley leaves the reasons for this state of affairs until later in the account, and devotes more space to rendering "the utter and supreme wretchedness" of the enslaved natives (CFFS,2,p147) and to an imaginary account of a raid upon a village - the staple of a good adventure/ abolitionist narrative.

But then he comes to statistics. Stanley is very good at statistics. As part of producing a text which comes out of, and is read back into, imperialist ideology, he also puts together what could be called "The Imperialist's Handbook". Chapter 37 of The Congo and the Founding of its Free State is called "The Kernel of the Argument" (and if it is, it's no wonder that Marlow fights shy of kernels in Heart of Darkness) and is summarised under the headings: "Navigable stretches", "Population", "Areas drained by the rivers", "The products of the land", "Possibilities of trade", "Table of the value of African produce in Liverpool", "Prospects of factories", "Advantages of a railway", "Efforts to civilise Equatorial Africa" (CFFS,2,p339). The **telos** of the colonialist/imperialist enterprise is set out with admirable economy in a chapter replete with required facts and figures: locations of longitude and latitude, tables of mileage and population which complement previous chapters on climate which provide

tables of temperature, cloud cover, rainfall by month and district.

The statistical method can also be (profitably) applied to the slave caravan. Of 2300 females and children captured - who are ellided by the narrative thus: "this scant profit of 2300 females and children, and about 2000 tusks of ivory" (CFFS,2, p148) - he calculates that only one per cent of the raided captives will survive to be sold. If his calculations hold, "the outcome from the territory with its million souls is 5,000 slaves obtained at the cruel expense of 33,000 lives" (CFFS,2,p149). "And such slaves!" Stanley exclaims. For what use are women and children when the "father and perhaps his three stout brothers" have been killed (CFFS,2,p149).

One thing should perhaps be clarified at this point. The account purports to detail the "horrible scene" of enslavement (CFFS,2,p150): "What was the cause of all this vast sacrifice of human life, of all this unspeakable misery? Nothing, but the indulgence of an old Arab's 'wolfish, bloody, starved, and ravenous instincts'" (CFFS,2,p150). The evil of slave-trading, according to this account, is evidence of the depravity of the Arab slave traders, and is produced in this way in order to underline the probity of Europe - especially Britain and Stanley's royal patron - which protests so vigo rously against it.

But the goal of these pious platitudes is not, I would suggest, the abolition of slavery as such; rather it is the elimination of uneconomical methods of gathering labour power as calculated in the citation above. Stanley emphasises the point: "And this naked land, raided, and devastated in this cruel fashion, of what possible use would it be when emptied of its people?" (CFFS,2,p143). Killing ninety per cent of the inhabitants of an area (according to Stanley's calculations) and leaving the area devastated, is a prime example of the "unproductiveness" that Stanley abhorred. If the Arabs kill most of the adult male population, who is going to form the band of "soldier-

labourers" whose potential Stanley sees in the "cordiality of demeanour", the "frankness of expression" of the unwitting natives he meets?

Stanley might have endorsed Conrad's and Casement's accounts of the atrocities committed after the founding of the Congo Free State and its ratification by the European powers at the Berlin Conference. But he would have endorsed their accounts from the point of view of productiveness, not from any ethical standpoint.

In The Congo and the Founding of its Free State, Stanley produces an account that pretends to transparency: he writes clear, seemingly accessible prose in the genre of the "non-fictional quest romance in which the hero-authors struggle through enchanted, bedeviled lands towards an ostensible goal", as Brantlinger writes (Brantlinger,p180). But the text is curiously opaque as well. The Exploration Diaries, ostensibly providing the "raw material", differ little from the "official version" and similarly refuse to be read as other than a public, conventional statement and thus at a superficial level.

This textual perplexity recalls Foucault writing in The Archaeology of Knowledge:

> Although the statement cannot be hidden, it is not visible either; it is not presented to the perception as the manifest bearer of its limits and characteristics. It requires a certain change of viewpoint and attitude to be recognized and examined in itself. Perhaps it is like the over-familiar that constantly eludes one; those familiar transparencies, which although they conceal nothing in their density are nevertheless not entirely clear.
> (Foucault,AK,p110-111)

The transparencies and the obscurities of the language of Stanley's texts could be called the components of the "official version" of history. I have attempted to analyse some of the components of a public rhetoric at its most effective, and, for me, this effectiveness is compounded by the difficulty of this rhetoric's access to unravelling, by its refusal to acknowledge that "language always seems

to be inhabited by the other, the elsewhere, the distant; it is hollowed by absence" (Foucault, AK,p111).

Bearing in mind Foucault's line (or layering) of thought, the questions that I want to think about in the remaining sections of this chapter are: does Casement's Report provide a "change of viewpoint and attitude" in its "statement" of the event? And does Heart of Darkness make what may have become the "over-familiar" strange?

In June 1890 Joseph Conrad and Roger Casement shared a room for two weeks in the Matadi Station of the **Sociétè Anonyme Belge pour le Commerce du Haut-Congo** (the Belgian trading company that Conrad had come to work for).[23] Casement had been in the Congo since 1884 when he arrived as one of "Stanley's boys", volunteers who were to carry on Stanley's "good work" of exploring, "developing" and administering the future Congo Free State. By 1890 Casement was working as a manager for the construction of the railway from Matadi to Kinshassa [24] - the railway which was to make an appearance in Heart of Darkness. Conrad mentions Casement briefly in his Congo Diary - briefly but approvingly, meeting Casement was about the only pleasant thing he records happening to him in Africa: "Made the aquaintance of Mr Roger Casement, which I should consider as a great pleasure under any circumstances and now it becomes a positive piece of luck. Thinks, speaks well, most intelligent and very sympathetic" (Congo Diary,p7).

Casement entered the British Consular Service and in 1901 was appointed Consul in Boma. When public and parliamentary concern about what was happening in the Congo Free State reached a certain point, Casement was told to make an official report about the atrocities reported as being perpetrated on the natives.

Casement's Report must itself be situated in relation to a number of other documents whose co-existence inscribes and erases the levels of "legality" that underpinned the transition from colonialism to imperialism. From this

perspective, the treaties that Stanley drew up with the Congo chiefs and the General Act signed by the European powers present at the Berlin Conference form a basis from which the acts of Leopold II's agents were to deviate, from which the act of interpretation was put "up for grabs", and which Casement's Report was to challenge.

If Stanley's treaties with the Congo chiefs, which were signed on 26 March, 1 April and 19 April 1884 (CFFS,2,pp194-206), are taken as the first level of imperialist encroachment, the most obvious thing to point out is that Stanley was making an agreement in one language with a group of people who spoke another, but further, he was making it in a form that was alien to their culture: the Congo tribes were pre-literate. The practice of imperialism was unwittingly put into process when the Congo chiefs signed up for what they believed was to be a commercial exchange. At the beginning of the first treaty they agreed "to recognise the sovereignty of the Association Internationale Africaine, and in sign thereof adopt its flag (blue with a golden star)" (CFFS,2,p195).

The Congo chiefs believed that signing these treaties would lead to the mutually beneficial exchanges that phrases like "the advancement of civilisation and trade" (CFFS,2,p196) seemed to promise. On at least two occasions the treaties promise the chiefs: "To take from the native of this ceded country no occupied or cultivated lands" (CFFS,2,p196) or not to "purchase ... the soil" from the chiefs, rather to "purchase the suzerainity" (CFFS,2,p205) - or sovereignty. But the chiefs did agree, by signing these treaties, to cede most of their rights to trade and passage through the country to the Association. Over three hundred chiefs made their marks on these treaties, which formed the basis for Leopold II's bid for recognition from Europe and America for his claim to the Congo at the Berlin Conference.

At the Berlin Conference, the word that circulated through its General Act was "free": free states, free

trade, freedom from taxes, freedom of movement - but free for whom? In theory free for everyone who traded there (and that presumably included the natives). It was even thought necessary in Articles V and VI to state that "Foreigners shall therein indiscriminately enjoy the same treatment and rights as the natives [notice which way round it's put] in the protection of their persons and goods ..." (quoted in CFFS,2,p445). Article IX gestures towards the anti-slavery stance which was the keystone of Leopold II's claims to "philanthropy" (and which Casement's Report and the anti-imperialist crusading journalist E.D. Morel's writings were to take apart).

To get from the logical perorations of the treaties and the General Act which established the Congo Free State to what John Bierman calls "perhaps the greatest criminal enterprise of the colonial era" (Bierman,p380) perhaps gives too much credence to the idea that the Belgian atrocities in the Congo were somehow an abberation, a deviation from what was, fundamentally, quite a good idea.[25] The chain of writing that is produced by this act of imperialism, catches the Congolese natives in a web of foreign signifiers which indicate stranger signifieds - and which can be analysed, not as a ghastly exception to the civilised rule, but as part of a process for which it has been impossible to make full reparation.

What Stephen Greenblatt, in Marvellous Possessions, calls "the mechanism of legal recording", becomes part of a repertoire of "legitimating gestures" [26] in which the ideal blueprint for the colonising move receives its imprimatur. As Greenblatt states: "Western European culture require[s] written proofs" in addition to the "linguistic acts" of "declaring, witnessing, recording" which also form part of the legitimating repertoire (Greenblatt,p57).[27] At these moments, he continues, "writing ... fixes a set of public linguistic acts, gives them official standing, makes them 'historical' events" (Greenblatt,p58).

The "linguistic act" inscribed in the treaties made between Stanley and the Congo chiefs is one predicated on the exchange of contracts, on the agreement between two parties of (perceived) equal standing. The treaties then provide the legalistic basis, which the imperial power uses as the "motor" for its actions. The actual inequality of the positions of the signatories to the treaties is "edited out" of the written document, but floods back when the imperial powers begin to act in willed disregard of the relevant clauses of the "founding document".

As a result of what Casement had seen in the Congo in 1903 and the poor publicity that his Report received when it was published in 1904, he founded the Congo Reform Movement in association with E.D.Morel.[28] In 1907 Morel made a publicity tour to the United States and enlisted the help of Mark Twain who wrote a satire called King Leopold's Soliloquy: A Defence of his Congo Rule (1907) to inform an unknowing American public about Leopold II's and his agents' actions in the Congo. 16 pages of photographs authenticated the horrors which provoked the text.

Twain's (characteristic) method was to write in Leopold's "voice", quoting facts and figures about the massacre of the natives and the methods of the agents as if this was fully justified. Here is an example: "They [Leopold's detractors] go shuddering around, brooding over the reduction of that Congo population from 25,000,000 to 15,000,000 in the twenty years of my administration; then they burst out and call me 'the King with Ten Million Murders on his soul'".[29]

Morel provided a Preface and Appendices for the Soliloquy - playing the straight man to Twain's (serious) comic. His introduction sets a few points straight: he exposes Leopold II's role in the undertaking - "King Leopold himself personally has been the real and sole Governor of the Congo territory since 1885" (Preface,KLS, pxiii) - and presents the natives as deprived of "their rights in land, and in the produce of their soil ... [as

well as] their rights as human beings" (Preface,KLS,pxiv), a deprivation which entailed what Morel calls a "holocaust of human victims" (Preface,KLS,pxvi). He estimates the decline in the population of the Congo between 1885 and 1907 to be 3 million people (Preface,KLS,pxvii).

In the Appendices to the Soliloquy, Morel fills in the background to Casement's Report and shows how the European-initiated treaties and acts have become an "empty" piece of paper. For example: the natives were forbidden to sell produce except in the quantities that had been sold before the founding of the Free State; each Station official or agent compelled labour or taxes in kind **in lieu** of monetary taxes from the natives; they were compelled to provide food for 3,000 workmen at Leopoldville (the capital city); they were exhausted to death by excessive portaging of rubber bales; male natives were compelled to leave village and family to gather a fortnightly quota of rubber and deliver it to the nearest station (by the time Casement was appointed Consul at Boma, the obsession with ivory referred to in Heart of Darkness had resulted in the drying-up of the source and the words that now "rang out" were "red rubber"); if the natives didn't fulfil their rubber quota, the women of the village were imprisoned, the chiefs compelled to "servile labour" and the natives were variously flogged, mutilated, killed; native soldiers (forcibly levied from tribes or brought in from Zanzibar) terrorised the populace as the Europeans' proxies (Appendices,KLS,pp74-76). The Congo Free State had not even replaced slavery with wage-slavery using time-honoured capitalist methods; as Brian Inglis says: it "had abolished slavery - only to replace it with forced labour" (Inglis,p49).

This is the territory that Casement's Report traversed between July and September of 1903 on his journey up the Congo River as far as Equator District on the Upper Congo - the Equator Station that Stanley had set up during his mission for Leopold II. At the beginning of the Report,

Casement recalls a former journey up the Congo where he saw the natives living "their own savage lives in anarchic and disorderly communities, uncontrolled by Europeans".[30] He now praises the "intervention" of the Belgians who have established "admirably built and admirably kept stations", run a fleet of steam-ships on the Congo and have built a railway from the Atlantic Ocean to Stanley Pool (CRHMC,p21).

The almost too obvious polarising of savage/civilised is offset by the rest of the Report which tends to put Belgian "achievements" very much in the shade, but it is also an index of the diverse positions from which Casement speaks (writes): quite as much as Stanley, Casement is a man divided among a number of voices. There is the humane exposer of Belgian atrocities; there is the apologist for the British brand of imperialism (and there is the "Irishness" that would later trouble/subvert his assumption of the British consular mask). Casement is equally the white "Englishman" produced by the ideology of his time and the recorder of its savage excesses.[31]

One of the main areas which the Report covers is the detailing of the breaking of what I will call native terms of engagement, and this issue is not just one of native vs. colonialist. In Homi Bhabha's words: "It opens up a space of interpretation and misappropriation that inscribes an ambivalence at the very origins of colonial authority, indeed, within the originary document of ... colonial history itself" (Bhabha,p95).

This originary "ambivalence" that Bhabha locates, can also be thought of in terms of the Foucauldian "discontinuity" which always already inheres in the "particular statement" (Foucault,AK,pp5,27). The treaties made with the Congo chiefs, the General Act of the Berlin Conference, the work contracts made with the natives, all employ what might be termed a rhetoric of promise, a speech act, which is exposed by Casement's subsequent investigations as a sign without a referrent, a signifier

without substance. This failure of rhetoric can be read as evidence of the imperial system's bad faith; equally it can be read as its inability to perform an impossible rhetoric. Is rhetoric then used to conceal an ulterior motive, an "ambivalence"? And at the same time does it (unwittingly) expose its own limitations?

As it progresses, the Report details a sliding scale of contractual labour, which initially set out the mutual obligations of the employer and the employee. Early on his journey, five natives (Casement calls them "Government workpeople") came to him at Leopoldville and "brought me their contracts of engagement with a request that I might tell them how long a period they still had to serve" (CRHMC,p23). As he travelled further up the River, Casement reported that even such inadequate terms of engagement ceased to exist: in an area in the Upper Congo he spoke to natives who were "required compulsorily" to serve as woodcutters and who were "sometimes irregularly detained" though he found them "adequately paid for their services" (CRHMC,p25) - without going into details about what he meant by adequate. Later he mentions native labour as being "only poorly remunerated or not remunerated at all" (CRHMC,p27) and remarks that "the measures employed to obtain recruits for the public services were themselves very often but little removed from the malpractices [i.e. slavery] that service was designed to suppress" (CRHMC,p44).

If Casement is going to insert a statement about slavery it would be as well that he does it early in the Report so that it can be got out of the way before the contradictions between rhetoric and praxis become too painful. This is what he comes up with: "The open selling of slaves and the canoe convoys, which once navigated the Upper Congo, have everywhere disappeared. No act of the Congo State Government has perhaps produced more laudable results than the vigorous suppression of this widespread evil" (CRHMC,p26).

Slavery has been suppressed, except that is for the rubber collectors - compelled to work unwaged - Casement will speak to, and the military levy forced on the tribes. And if the natives are "remunerated", what form does this payment take? Casement notes that "saving some parts of the French Congo ... European money is still quite unknown" (CRHMC,p26). So this aspect of civilisation hadn't yet reached the Congo - though Morel noted that the companies operating in the area were making between 300-400 per cent profit from the rubber (Appendices,KLS,p135). If the natives were paid at all, they were paid "in kind", i.e. in brass wire - the average length of which had diminished during Belgian rule from 18 inches to 8 or 9 inches (CRHMC,p25); even in their own currency the natives were being "short changed". (The cannibals in <u>Heart of Darkness</u> are paid in the same way, see page 104).

The <u>Report</u> also gives prominence to the systematic depopulation of the Congo since the founding of the Free State. In each area he visited, Casement gives the drop in numbers of population (see for example CRHMC, pp25,28, 29, 71). The reason the Belgians gave for this was that the natives had died from "sleeping sickness" (CRHMC,p21). Casement found other causes. I am going to take as an emblematic moment the testimony of the refugees from the "L" area.[32]

The Belgian authorities had denied perpetrating "atrocities" in the Congo (CRHMC,p10). Part of Casement's brief was to investigate the truth of the allegations against the authorities. The unofficial part of his brief was to convince the European governments that these atrocities were not isolated incidents, but part of a systematic practice which accompanied the commercial activities of the Belgian agents. Thus, Casement repeatedly asserts his belief in the natives' testimony in a variety of ways. When he met the refugees from the "L" tribe - they had fled from the Belgian controlled area "and now preferred a species of mild servitude among the K [another

tribe] to remaining in their own country" (CRHMC,p29) - he wrote that their statements were "of such a nature that I could not believe them to be true" (CRHMNC,p29).

Casement's gradual conversion - prior to his seeing incontrovertible evidence of atrocities - is presented as a change of heart: "I cannot think [what the natives told him] can be true, but it seemed to come straight from the heart" (CRHMC,p60). The writing down of the testimony of the natives is offered to the Report's readers as further proof: "I repeatedly asked certain parts to be gone over again while I wrote in my note-book. The fact of my writing down and asking for names, etc. seemed to impress them, and they spoke with what certainly impressed me as being great sincerity" (CRHMC,p60).

The reasons that members of the "L" tribe gave for leaving their village was the levying of a rubber quota (**in lieu** of an illegal tax) and the scant remuneration they received for what they collected. The remuneration was "a fathom of cloth and a little salt for every big basket full" (CRHMC,p60) but this went to the chiefs who "eat up the cloth" (CRHMC,p60). Native women had to leave cultivating their gardens and fields to help gather the levy. The tribe started to starve. If the natives were late bringing in the rubber levy, "we were killed" (CRHMC,p60) or flogged (CRHMC,p32). Soldiers in the Belgians' pay carried out these orders.

A native testifies: "Many were shot, some had their ears cut off; others were tied up with ropes around their necks and bodies and taken away" (quoted in CRHMC,p60). The native witness names "bad and wicked white men" calling them the "white men of Bula Matadi" (CRHMC,p61; see also "bula matadi ... men of the government" p34). In the war between the Belgians and the Congolese Arabs in 1891, the Belgians had told the natives that they must "accept the protection of Bula Matari" (quoted in Pakenham,p406). Thomas Pakenham comments that "Stanley's name had become a synonym for the state" (Packenham,p406). The name which

Stanley had accepted with so much pride had become, some twenty years later, a generic term of abuse for an abusive white administration. By the transposition of a single letter - Stanley gives the name as Bula Mata-**r**-i, Casement as Bula Mata-**d**-i - the signified slips under the signifier and the breaker of stones becomes the breaker of men.

Another native witness told Casement that the soldiers - acting on Belgian orders - cut off the genitals of the men they killed, or the ears, hands or feet of the living to bring them to the Belgian agents as proof that defaulters had been "killed" (CRHMC,p61). Or the Belgian agents themselves shot natives who brought short measures of rubber to the stations (CRHMC,p62).

A photograph in King Leopold's Soliloquy provides the corrective to Casement's equivocation. It displays a tall thin native woman with flattened breasts and wearing only a "modesty apron" looking into the camera's eye. She is supporting herself on a long stick held in her right hand because her right foot has been cut off. Her left side is disfigured by a huge lump (KLS,facing p69). This woman and a number of male children in other photographs display their mutilated limbs to the camera of Mrs Harris, wife of the missionary the Rev. John H. Harris. The photographs are scattered throughout King Leopold's Soliloquy: first one per page, then two, then four, then a page which displays a "kaleidoscope" of some fifteen photographs showing natives with a hand or foot cut off. Mark Twain's King Leopold comments on this incontrovertible evidence:"The kodak has been a sore calamity to us" (KLS,p65).

Casement's evidence for mutilation of the natives moves from native testimony to the evidence of Casement's eyes (CRHMC,pp34,54,55,56,58,72,73,77,**passim**). But there's a further twist to the tale. He has to convince the readers back home that "[mutilation] was not a native custom prior to the coming of the white man; it was not the outcome of the primitive instincts of savages in their fights between village and village; it was the deliberate act of the

soldiers of a European Administration, and these men themselves never made any concealment that in committing these acts they were but obeying the positive orders of their superiors" (CRHMC,p77).

To reiterate the point that the Europeans could behave "like savages" Conrad wrote a letter, at Casement's request when the two men met again in 1903, which drew the same conclusions as the Report - that the cutting off of hands and feet was not a "savage" practice but a European import: "During my sojurn in the interior ... I never heard of the alleged custom of cutting off hands amongst the natives; and I am convinced that no such custom ever existed along the whole course of the main river to which my experience is limited".[33]

The strengths of Casement's Report - the clarity of the official language which doesn't entirely veil the humane purposes of the subject who writes, the painstaking amassing of evidence, eyewitness accounts - are also its weaknesses. As I remarked above, Casement plays up his doubts about native evidence in order to present himself as a reliable mediator of the truth. This isn't the ego-driven Stanley forging an identity as he cuts through the wild undergrowth, but it is a document that is dependent on the postion of a minor government official to speak what, until now, hasn't been (officially) spoken. The Report is further hedged around - or framed - by disqualifiers, justifications, modifications, in the shape of correspondence between British and Belgian ministers, which seeks to obviate or minimise the causes and effects of imperial rule.

In his assiduous adherence to the "rules" that govern the production of an official report, in his scrupulous application of the legal forms of one system to a system where any pretence to legality has completely broken down, Casement produces a report which has incontrovertible merit as a humanitarian document. Practically, however, it did

not accomplish its aims in the short - and some might argue in the long - term.

The Congo came under the rule of the Belgian Government on the death of Leopold II in 1908. The repercussions of colonial rule continue to happen today as the ongoing events in Rwanda bear witness. But how does this history metamorphose into fiction? And can fiction provide its readers with more effective reminders of a reciprocal process of destruction which threatens the oppressor as much as it does the oppressed?

When the Conrad who describes himself in the "Author's Note" of Heart of Darkness as the "spoiled adopted child of Great Britain and even of the Empire" (HOD,px), returned from his six months in the Congo, he was, if we are to believe his later remark to Edward Garnett, a changed man. Garnett recalls: "According to [Conrad's] emphatic declaration to me, in his early years at sea he had 'not a thought in his head'. 'I was a perfect animal' he reiterated, meaning, of course, that he had reasoned and reflected hardly at all over all the varieties of life he had encountered".[34] Garnett was convinced that "Conrad's Congo experiences were the turning point in his mental life and that their effects on him determined his transformation from a sailor to a writer".[35] The Conrad who went to the Congo had started to write Almayer's Folly (1895). While there he kept a diary for the first two months of his sojourn. So one of his earliest pieces of writing in English is prompted by his time in the Congo and is reproduced quite closely in Heart of Darkness as part of the journey from the Company Station to the Central Station (HOD,pp70-72).

Conrad was given to making remarks like the one above, in retrospect, which divide up life into a series of befores and afters with a very definite dividing line between the two. If he wasn't quite as unthinking before he went to Africa as he might have wanted Garnett to believe,

what is indisputable is that Africa stayed with Conrad for the rest of his life. This conclusion can be reached because he never stopped circulating his experiences there through his writings until the year of his death. Garnett's assessment of the "transformation" from sailor to writer is correct. During his time in the Congo, Conrad wrote the Congo Diary and the "UpRiver Book" in which he mapped the navigational route along the River. The writer Conrad produced the short story "An Outpost of Progress" (in Tales of Unrest,[1898]), Heart of Darkness(1899,1902), a fascinating collaboration with Ford Madox Ford, The Inheritors (1901) and the essay "Geography and Some Explorers" (1924).

This repetition in different texts throughout his writing life of his Congo experiences shows that they had stayed with Conrad the writer as much as the fevers he was afflicted with on his Congo journey stayed with him in his body. The metaphor of infection is apt and seems to have worked on the critics of Heart of Darkness as well. When Allon White wrote The Uses of Obscurity in the early eighties he read, on his count, 112 texts about Heart of Darkness.[36] Fifteen-odd years later, the flow hasn't diminished to a trickle. The idea of Heart of Darkness being a fiction about fictions - see for example Tzvetan Todorov's remark that "the story of Kurtz symbolises the act of fiction, a construction based on a hollow centre" [37] - has been reiterated ceaselessly. Michael Levenson's comment that the "darkness" of Heart of Darkness is "almost a dead metaphor" [38] is apt.

There has also been the "is Conrad racist" critical controversy which centred around Heart of Darkness and was initiated by Chinua Achebe's conclusion "that Conrad was a bloody racist".[39] This statement has its supporters and detractors [40] and some who are "in-between" - to recall Homi Bhabha's use of the term in The Location of Culture.[41] Bhabha recalls the "anxiety of influence" that some black writers might feel after encountering Heart of Darkness, a

text which casts "a long shadow ... on the world of postcolonial studies" (Bhabha,p214; and see p272, endnote 1).

And yet we continue to write about it. As Shoshana Felman writes in her essay about "The Turn of the Screw" (another text which has prompted a heavy critical investment): "when the pronouncements of the various sides of the controversy are examined closely, they are found to repeat unwittingly - with a spectacular regularity - all the main lexical motifs of the text".[42] So what "nightmare" scene are we re-writing, re-capitulating, when we "repeat" Heart of Darkness - and why?

To use one of the Freudian terms I will discuss below, Heart of Darkness is one of the most "overdetermined" texts of our time and this maybe accounts for its continuing presence on the lit. crit. and theoretical agenda: the overdetermination, in this case, can indicate both the multiple representation by the dream-content of the dream-thought **and** the critical act of interpretation that needs to re-read the dream/text. I hope to make clearer in this section why I consider Heart of Darkness to be so relevant to us as we try to encounter our postcolonial world. Maybe its repetition as critical reading is part of its relevance.

One way recent critical response to Heart of Darkness has tried to indicate this relevance is by tracing the historical framework that underlies the text and relating that framework to contemporary historical events and to the experiences of the author. Hunt Hawkins has written on these connections, and has been taken to task by Anne McClintock for doing so:

> Over the years, a number of heroic efforts have been made to restore Joseph Conrad's Heart of Darkness to its historical moment. A meticulous unearthing of sources has occupied a good deal of the energy of Conrad scholarship. Much has been made, for example,

of Conrad's claim that '<u>Heart of Darkness</u> is ... experience pushed a little (and only a very little) beyond the actual facts of the case'. Yet, there is equally a highly important sense in which the Congo of <u>Heart of Darkness</u> is not the Congo of any history book.

(McClintock,US,p38)

Patrick Brantlinger echoes this caution: "<u>Heart of Darkness</u> is specifically about what Conrad saw in King Leopold's African empire in 1890; the extent to which his critique can be generalised to imperialism beyond the Congo is unclear" (Brantlinger,p256).

Central to my analysis of <u>Heart of Darkness</u> is an awareness of how it presents and responds to contemporary ideas about race and racial superiority - and the anxieties and ambivalences that attend these ideas. Brantlinger identifies Kurtz's "regression" as part of the "horror" in the text: "For Conrad the ultimate atrocity is not some form of tribal savagery; it is Kurtz's regression" (Brantlinger,p193). In his account of the cultural context out of which <u>Heart of Darkness</u> was written, Ian Watt tracks the genesis and progress of the myth of the fear of the white man "going native".[43]

Watt places Conrad's novel among the first of the writings which connect this idea of regression with the almost unlimited power which was one of the aspects of imperialism. He summarises the process that unfolds when psychic constructions of identity which are embedded in delusions of racial superiority have the opportunity to be "acted out" in circumstances where the accepted checks and balances of "civilisation" no longer operate (Watt,p145). This process is exemplified in the narrative by Kurtz's actions and in the way he seeks to justify these actions.

Nineteenth century ideas about regression can be placed in an evolutionary context which was principally and most popularly formulated by Charles Darwin in <u>The Origin of Species</u> (1859) where "origins" reside in the accidents of natural selection rather that the purposes of God:

The idea of evolution suggested a way in which traditional ideas about the privileged splendour of

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> human destiny could be salvaged: if man had not been put on top to begin with, it was patent that he had already come a long way up the chain of evolutionary being; and there was no limit to what he might later achieve if he worked hard and kept moving.
> (Watt,p156)

But Victorian theories about race and racial superiority left the Victorian male subject in a paradoxical situation: Darwin's theory of the origins of species provided the basis for the suggestion that there might be a direct line of descent from monkey to man. The disturbing element in this theory (that man was descended from the lower primates) was "managed" by noting the closer position of the black native on the line of development to the monkeys. The "positive" element in this theory (that monkeys had evolved into men) was emphasised by pointing to the white races - and especially the white English upper classes - as its triumphant fulfilment. Yet this assurance of superiority was disrupted, troubled when the "superior race" encountered the unknown - here in the form of the African jungle. Here the white subject came to realise that if the black races were nearer to the monkeys than the white ones, the whites were still too close for their own comfort - and were further off from the angels than they'd ever been.[44]

Darwin's ideas about biology were applied by Herbert Spencer in his <u>First Principles</u> (1862) where "natural selection" becomes "survival of the fittest" (a term which Darwin subsequently adopted). Watt writes: this "same mode of evolutionary argument also supported the ideology of colonial expansion" (Watt,p156). As Brantlinger puts it: "Evolutionary thought seems almost calculated to legitimize imperialism" and following on from that: "imperialist discourse is inseparable from racism" (Brantlinger, pp186, 39). Not only could imperialism justify its acts by claiming it was "enlightening" the "benighted" natives, the evolutionary theory it laid claim to as its legitimation also provided a "'scientific' justification for genocide" (Brantlinger,p186).

Brantlinger states that imperialism and genocide were "inseparable ... but while imperialism could be advocated in public, the liquidation of 'inferior' races obviously could not" (Brantlinger,p186). A citation from Ian Watt puts a question mark over how "private" this way of thinking actually was: Watt cites a witness who testified before a Parliamentary Committee on aborigines as early as 1837. This is what he said: "The main point which I would have in view would be trade, commerce, peace, and civilisation. The other alternative is extermination; for you can stop nowhere" (quoted in Watt,p159). An article in the Popular Magazine of Anthropology was even more succinct when it stated: "to colonise and to extirpate are synonymous terms" (quoted in Bolt,p20). With these "alternatives" very much in mind, I will turn to a discussion of Heart of Darkness.

Mary Louise Pratt has written that Heart of Darkness is an "allegory of the failure of Europe" (Pratt,IE,p213). Europe frames the beginning and end of a text whose "heart" is diffused between its two main locations, the metropolis and the colony. So are we presented with Africa's darkness? or Europe's failure? or the implication of one in the other? The locations of Heart of Darkness are expressions of what the colonial subject can or can't know and this in its turn is related to a way of telling. The frame-narrator starts by attempting to situate his space - and the subject within that space - geographically and historically. The "Thames" and "Essex" (HOD,p46,47) are named as markers of a place and time, though once Marlow ventures abroad, generic names - "that river", "a Continental concern" (HOD, p52,53) - rather than precise ones are employed.

It is remarkable though that this process of unknowing or unnaming starts not in the African jungle, but in the "city that always makes me think of a whited sepulchre" (HOD,p55). So the reader is encouraged to map a fictional superstructure onto a factual framework. Conrad might not have located Belgium/Congo explicitly for fear of the

repercussions that might have followed what would have amounted to the indictement of a reigning monarch. But then does Conrad actually need to name all the names? Having provided the English co-ordinates, the other locations could be read quite easily in relation to them.

Or does the breakdown in precise naming indicate a disintegration of the realistic narrative mode when confronted with the disorientating, defamiliarising landscape - both urban and jungle ("unreal city"/ "wilderness"), both Europe and not-Europe - of Marlow's waking nightmare. The dreamlike way of telling is signalled by the trancelike attitude in which Marlow is presented by the frame-narrator: "He had sunken cheeks, a yellow complexion, a straight back, an ascetic aspect, and with his arms dropped, the palms of hands outwards, resembled an idol ... he had the pose of a Buddha" (HOD,pp46,50). It is also signalled by Marlow's reference to his "weary pilgrimage amongst hints for nightmares" (HOD,p62) with its oxymoronic pairing of "pilgrimage" and "nightmares" and in Marlow's reason for remaining loyal to Kurtz: "it was something to have at least a choice of nightmares" (HOD, p138); and again: "it was written I should be loyal to the nightmare of my choice" (HOD,p141).

It is the insistence on the dream-like state, on the nightmare, which makes Heart of Darkness different from the other texts I have discussed in this chapter. The imperative to explore the fantastic terrain that the psyche travels and attempts to construe as part of, and as a response to, the "historical experience" is perhaps most effectively to be "analysed" using Freud's work on dreams in The Interpretation of Dreams (1900). His theorising of the dream as "wish-fulfilment" and the descriptions of the mechanisms of the "dream-work", namely condensation and displacement - which correspond to the literary tropes of metaphor and metonymy - are opportune categories for the discussion of the fictional text.[45]

If Stanley produces variations on the autobiography, adventure and travel genres; if Casement's <u>Report</u> relies on the procedures of gathering evidence to construct a quasi-legal case against an imperial power, what different angle does this fiction, that arises from the same historical background and from the author's personal experiences, present us with? <u>Heart of Darkness</u> asks: What does it mean for Marlow to dream history? And what does it mean when the dream of history is a nightmare?

According to an early formulation, Freud writes that the dream is "the fulfilment of a wish and its motive [is] a wish";[46] the dream is an expression of an "unconscious process of thought" (Freud,ID,p281) or the "transformation of unconscious thoughts into the content of the dream" (Freud,ID,p507). He then queries whether dreams are always wish-fulfilments. Are they sometimes, he asks, "fulfilled fears" (Freud,ID,p123).

In discussing the mechanisms of the dream, Freud calls "dream-displacement" "one of the chief methods by which [dream-] distortion is achieved" (Freud,ID,p308). Earlier he makes a connection between "dream-distortion" and "dream-censorship" (see page 144). One of the ways in which the dream censors uncomfortable content is by the means of "reversal, or, turning a thing into its opposite" (Freud,ID,p327).

Does "extermination", the "uncomfortable content" of the imperialist dream then become its opposite: "civilisation"? This formulation allows us to interpret Kurtz's report to the "International Society for the Suppression of Savage Customs" as betraying its "latent" content when it culminates in the apostrophe: "Exterminate all the Brutes!" (see HOD,pp117-118). Thus Marlow's "nightmare" version of imperial history can be read in (at least) three ways: the genocidal impulse is explored through the dream as wish-fulfil ment; the genocidal impulse is something civilisation represses as shameful and which returns in the dream - where it functions as a

fulfilment of a fear; the dream functions as prophecy, the traditional way of interpreting dreams, and "Buddha"-like Marlow is the figure who warns of the excesses of the imperial project.

Freud presents "overdetermination" as one of the sub-categories of the mechanism of condensation, one of the techniques which expresses the "dream-thought". He writes that "each of the elements of the dream's content turns out to have been 'overdetermined' - to have been represented in the dream-thoughts many times over" (Freud,ID,p283). The representations of the "wilderness" and the cannibal myth, as a way of constructing the savage "other", in Heart of Darkness, fall into this sub-category, as two of the most "overdetermined" metaphors of Western civilisation. A discussion of these metaphors will be followed by a consideration of the presentation of imperialist atrocity in Heart of Darkness as an example of the displacement device. I shall end, as the narrative does, with a lie.

Heart of Darkness is concerned from its beginning to set its scene with historical and geographic specificity - as I observed above. Specifically it starts in an England which defines its impulses toward colonisation as: the "dreams of men, the seed of commonwealths, the germs of empires" (HOD,p47). In this sentence, linguistic indeterminacy operates from the start casting shadows of opposites/negatives, where dreams will turn to nightmares and "germs" aren't life-giving germens or seeds but could be read as the germs that bear the "disease" of empire. The sign slips and doubles up on itself (compare with Derrida's trope for writing, the **pharmakon**, which contains both remedy and poison [47]), the fictional text foregounds the unreliability of metaphor which refuses to mean what it wants to say.

Already - will it, won't it - the text is putting into question, subverting, imperialist ideology, making ready for Marlow's "sudden" remark: "And this also ... has been one of the dark places of the earth" (HOD,p48). Marlow

develops his statement: Western chronological time is struck and erased - "nineteen hundred years ago - the other day ..." (HOD,p49,text's ellipsis) - or time is presented as a flash between spaces: "Light came out of this river ... it is like a running blaze on a plain, like a flash in the clouds. We live in the flicker - may it last as long as the old earth keeps rolling! But darkness was here yesterday" (HOD,p49). The complication of its presentation in the passage cited names England as well as Africa, at some point in time, as "one of the dark places of the earth", "the very end of the world" (HOD,pp48,49).[48]

Further to the discussion above of ideas about race, racial superiority and fear of regression, I would agree (with for example Edward Said and Patrick Brantlinger) that Heart of Darkness does start from an accepted set of ideas which propose a progress from darkness to light, from savagery to civilisation. Yet running parallel with this belief is an ambivalence about the imperialist project which is set up as soon as the text begins - in the narrative that frames Marlow's telling.

Heart of Darkness is a text of its time; that is to say it makes use of ideas of hierarchised binaries which were the currency of contemporary thought, which was itself saturated in a racialised - if not a racist - rhetoric. But the poles of the binaries are not completely secure and sometimes demonstrate a tendency to collapse into each other. Reading the "wilderness" trope in the novel presents a way of reconsidering these dualisms and their attributions.

The "wilderness" is what Marlow calls the Congolese jungle, but it begins its narrative existence by being applied to a pre-civilised England about to be conquered by imperial Rome: "the utter savagery, had closed around [the Roman prefect], - all that mysterious life of the wilderness that stirs in the forest, in the jungles, in the hearts of wild men" (HOD,p50). The wilderness is, as I wrote above, one of the most "overdetermined" metaphors in

Western culture. In "the weary pilgrimage amongst hints for nightmares" (HOD,p21) Marlow uses "wilderness" as a synonymous term for the Congo jungle.[49] As Ian Watt puts it, he creates a "moveable wilderness or darkness" (Watt,pp249-250). However, the definition of "wilderness", according to the meanings given in the OED, is itself ambiguous. It can be "wild or uncultivated land" (according to sense number 1) or a "waste or desolate region of any kind" (according to sense number 2).

These meanings contradict each other: is the wilderness full, uncontrolled, overrunning? Or is it empty, waste, desolation? Is it Africa? Or is it Europe? Is it England at the time of the Roman Conquest? Or is it Africa at the time of imperialist expansion? Does the metaphoric level also contain a metonymic displacement, where the wilderness is a metaphor for what is outside while at the same time it indicates its metonymic inside: so the "wilderness stirs in the forest" as well as "in the hearts of wild men" (HOD,p50). Is this what Homi Bhabha would call a "strategic confusion of the metaphoric and metonymic axes of the cultural production of meaning" (Bhabha,p90)? [50]

The "wilderness" becomes synonymous with "jungle", "woods", "forest", "undergrowth", "the unknown" (HOD,p94). It seems to be displaced from inside to outside or vice versa as it is required: "the silent wilderness ... struck me as something great and invincible, like evil or truth, waiting patiently for the passing away of this fantastic invasion" (HOD,p76). Such symbolic (and anthropomorphic) significance is a heavy burden for a landscape to bear. It is also a heavy burden for the western imagination to load itself with.

Anne McClintock's essay, "Unspeakable Secrets: The Ideology of Landscape in Heart of Darkness", focuses on the ideological instability that is evoked by the unknowability of the African landscape in Heart of Darkness. In initiating a critique of colonialism Conrad also "commits himself to an ideology of interiority which is itself

attended by certain ideological consequences" (McClintock,US,p52). The failure of both "the colonial experience and ... mimesis", and the "landscape of the absurd" which emerges out of that failure are "resisted" according to McClintock in their "full implications ... by a return to interiority and the projection of the irrational onto the Africans", where, (here McClintock cites Francis B.Singh): "the darkness first associated with the West gets reassociated with Africa" (McClintock, US,p52).[51]

And this precisely is my point. Europe and the imperialist angle of vision are always implicit (and implicated) in how Africa is seen. But the ideological (and epistemological) uncertainties suggest yet another way of seeing: the indeterminacy of the use of the word "wilderness" to attempt to fix a space - it's full and it's empty, it's Europe and it's not-Europe, it's civilised and savage - figure it as either or both or neither. I would suggest that the wilderness might be interpreted as a type of "third space":[52] a space produced out of the blurring of the boundaries between the binaries, or what struggles for articulation in the gap between them.

Heart of Darkness, offers an alternative image to the one that emphasises the colonial subject experiencing existential angst: "the silence of the land went home to one's very heart - its mystery, its greatness, the amazing reality of its concealed life" (HOD,p80). The "unhomely" comes "home" in Marlow's realisation of his inability to narrate it or to theorise it.[53] He also evokes a "silent wilderness" (HOD,p76) or a "high stillness" (HOD,p92) that waits "patiently" for the "passing away of a/this fantastic invasion" (HOD,pp76,92). The passing away of the "fantastic invasion" is repeated; the invasion referred to is European imperialism.

Does Marlow glimpse at this point, the possibility of another time and space when the "invasion", which is European imperialism, has passed on? Does he also recognise

the necessity of leaving this space as "mysterious", as "concealed" in its "amazing reality" - precisely as something which cannot be defined by Western ideology and language. What I'm trying to do here is to apply Homi Bhabha's theory of "intersticity", his appeal to think in the "in-between spaces" (Bhabha,p1,**passim**) that can provide a narrative with a "double edge" where "private and public, past and present, the psyche and the social develop an interstitial intimacy" (Bhabha,p13). Bhabha continues: "the inscription of this borderline existence inhabits a stillness of time and a strangeness of framing that creates the discursive 'image' at the crossroads of history and literature bridging the home and the world" (Bhabha,p13).

Heart of Darkness is a narrative fully aware of that very "strangeness of framing" and the provisional status of the colonial subject's enterprise. When both Ancient Britain and the colonised Congo are referred to as the wilderness, Marlow's narrative invokes both the collapse of the terms of the dualism into each other, and a chiasmic reversal which, as Shoshana Felman writes, is subversive too of the "authoritative truth that was supposed to be [the] 'proper' meaning" of the narrative.[54] It is possible, therefore, to read the metaphor of the wilderness as part of a questioning of the very "grounds" and assumptions on which the imperial project is based.

The cannibal myth and its deployment in Heart of Darkness, is the focus of the second of the "overdetermined" metaphors to be analysed. The portrayal of the not-European native as cannibal-savage was an all-too-familiar contemporary represention. W.Arens in The Man Eating Myth: Anthropology and Anthropophagy, convincingly "deconstructs" the myth which defines the act of cannibalism as co-terminous with the state of savagery. His main thesis presents us with the gap that exists between the (European) obsession with (the savage's) cannibalism and the "facts of the matter". Arens' investigations did not uncover any satisfactory first-hand account of

cannibalism. His request soliciting accounts from anyone "who had actually witnessed cannibalism, the act itself" received no responses which fulfilled the criterion of first-hand witness. In addition, a German graduate student who was researching cannibalism in the Amazon informed Arens that he had failed to find one first-hand account in "all the publications from the sixteenth to the twentieth century" that he had read (Arens,p173).[55]

The problem that "intrigues" Arens is why the act of cannibalism among certain groups has been "commonly accepted without adequate documentation" (Arens,p9). He concludes "that for layman and scholar alike the idea of cannibalism exists prior to and thus independent of the evidence" (Arens,p22). The myth of the cannibal savage has existed from the earliest days of the "contact era" when the Spanish conquered the West Indies and South America (Arens,p56). Michel de Montaigne in his essay "On the Cannibals" (1580) recounts myths about Brazilian cannibals with relish, while providing a "relativist" context in which to view the representation of the "practice".[56]

So how does Heart of Darkness handle the cannibals? Despite the references to cannibalism in the text, Marlow never sees them do the deed. Further, he realises that with every circumstance favourable to their indulging their habit - not the least of which is they haven't been allowed adequate food for the journey upriver (HOD,p103) - they don't avail themselves of the perfect opportunity: "Why in the name of all the gnawing devils of hunger they didn't go for us - they were thirty to five - and have a good tuck in for once, amazes me now when I think of it. They were big powerful men" (HOD,p104).

I would argue that instead of presenting us with a traditional cannibal narrative, what Conrad presents us with in Heart of Darkness is an anti-cannibal narrative (compare with Pratt's term "anti-conquest narrative" [Pratt,IE,p7]). It is a twist that many Conrad critics have noted.[57] Homi Bhabha comments: "It is recognizably true

that the chain of stereotypical signification is curiously mixed and split, polymorphous and perverse, an articulation of multiple belief. The black is both savage (cannibal) and yet the most obedient and dignified of servants (the bearer of food)" (Bhabha,p82).

What interests me in this episode is that the narrative takes "on board" the "curiously mixed and split" significations of savage/not savage: the native who announces he would eat the dead enemy (HOD,p103) but who practices "restraint" (HOD,p105) with the white man.[58] What Marlow is faced with - and cannot reconcile - is the "cannibal" who won't cannibalise, who practices more "restraint" than the white men he's surrounded by.

What happens when the cannibal narrative turns into an anti-cannibal narrative? One thing that happens is that the the white colonial subject finds himself questioning the beliefs that enforce a distinction between the "civilised" self and the "savage" "other":

> I looked at [the natives] with a swift quickening of interest - not because it occured to me I might be eaten by them before very long, though I own to you that just then I perceived - in a new light, as it were - how unwholesome the pilgrims looked, and I hoped, yes, I positively hoped, that my aspect was not so - what shall I say? - so - unappetizing.
> (HOD,p104-105)

The reason Marlow gives for this bizarre fantasy (within a nightmare) is framed precisely in those terms: "a touch of fantastic vanity which fitted well with the dream-sensation that pervaded all my days at that time" (HOD,p105). The "dream-sensation" gives rise to a desire to be disassociated from the "unappetizing" subjects so like Marlow and to join with the "other" in the ultimate experience of introjection. No wonder he adds "perhaps I had a little fever" (HOD,p105) and evades further complications by dismissing the episode as "an unfathomable enigma, a mystery" (HOD,p105).

But the narrative can't get away that easily, as is demonstrated by two episodes, one prior to and one after the "exchange" I have just discussed. Marlow gets his job

with the "Continental concern" because his predecessor, a Dane called Fresleven, has been killed in a dispute over two black hens (HOD,p53-54). The incident is presented as farce, but its implications for the narrative are only too serious where it functions as a microcosm of the imperial project. Marlow describes his appointment by saying "I ... stepped into his [i.e. Fresleven's] shoes" (HOD,p54). Marlow comes out to Africa to step into a dead man's shoes, a dead man, furthermore, who is left to be found where he fell: "the grass growing through his ribs was tall enough to hide his bones. They were all there. The supernatural being had not been touched after he fell" (HOD,p54).

This further evidence of anti-cannibalism could be connected to another episode of shoes and death: in the battle below the Inner Station (which takes place just after the anti-cannibal exchange on pages 103-105) the native helmsman is struck by a spear and falls dead at Marlow's feet: "the blade had gone in out of sight, after making a frightful gash; my shoes were full; a pool of blood lay very still, gleaming dark-red under the wheel" (HOD,p112). Not surprisingly Marlow is "morbidly anxious to change my shoes and socks" (HOD,p113). This time, instead of stepping into a dead man's shoes, a dead man has stepped into Marlow's shoes.

The proximity of the signifier "shoes" to the anti-cannibal narrative - and its association with stepping into a dead man's shoes - suggests another way of reading that narrative (through another chiasmic reversal?): is the representation of the native's anti-cannibal narrative, the colonial subject's cannibal narrative? Does the former present another version of the "statement" which must be considered and which thus alters the original meaning? This incident - Marlow standing on the bridge of the steamboat while his shoes fill with the blood of the dead native - is loaded, for me, with symbolic signals. Could it be proleptic of, or since the destruction of the native had already begun, a warning of, the genocidal intentions of

the colonial subject and his imperial project - where the genocidal desire is troped as a type of (white man's) cannibalism?

Heart of Darkness is punctuated by a "chain" of accounts of European atrocities in the treatment of the natives. The narration of these atrocities is effected in a series of brief, disconnected episodes. Here the Freudian technique of "displacement" works as "censorship" - maybe because it is hard for Marlow to speak the atrocities in detail; maybe because at some level he doesn't want to uncover the depths of imperialist depravity. Critics have called Conrad's narrative method "impressionist", [59] where the subjective perception of the outside world is cognated through its assembling as disjointed parts of an enigmatic whole that only sometimes happens to make "sense" or connect up.

With reference to the atrocity episodes and their sparse description, the impressionistic narrative method might be construed in at least two ways: its fragmentary technique might be "read" as the verbal equivalent of the turning away of the head or the shutting of the eyes against the horrors to be seen. Thus it functions as a kind of censorship. Or it could be seen as a narrative **aperçu**, a verbal photograph which is equivalent to the photographs the Reverend and Mrs Harris took of the maimed and shattered natives.

Marlow has to look and doesn't want to look and he has to see the chain gang "toiling up the path. They walked erect and slow, balancing small baskets full of earth on their heads ... I could see every rib ... each had an iron collar on his neck, and all were connected together with a chain whose bights swung between them, rhythmically clinking" (HOD,p64). They are accompanied by a native guard whom Marlow ironically refers to as "one of the reclaimed" (HOD,p64). Marlow frames this account of imperialist oppression with the upside-down railway-truck looking "dead as the carcass of some animal" (HOD,p63) and a memory of

the French gunboat "firing into a continent" (HOD,p64). The subsuming of the animate into the inaminate, the collapse of impressionism into a surrealist nightmare, provide another indication of Marlow's unwillingness to contemplate fully the meaning of the "horror" he sees.

But, will it won't it, the narrative keeps upping the stakes. To theorise the chain that links the chain gang as some sort of Derridean chain of signification along which meaning is forever deferred gets us nowhere. Especially when the next stage of the proceedings is the "grove of death" (HOD,pp66-67). Here Marlow meets the "black shadows of disease and starvation" (HOD,p66) who have crept away or been left to die under the trees. In order to describe, however briefly, what Marlow sees, the narrative has to evoke a classical literary anology: the episode is likened to Dante's "Inferno" (HOD,p66), whose inhabitants are "black shadows" or "moribund shapes" or a "phantom" (HOD,pp66,67).

The inability of perception or language to engage with what it perceives and inscribes recalls the extract from the Congo Diary cited above. The problem that an average liberal humanist grapples with when faced with a sight like this is: what can you do about it? Marlow walks away, but it also provides the material for the narrative which Conrad writes. In this narrative, however, language continues to falter and fail until it reaches the cryptic encodings of Kurtz's "unspeakable rites" (HOD,p118), his "unspeakable secrets" (HOD,p138), the "ceremonies" (HOD,p131), he has enacted and that Marlow positively refuses to hear about: "'I don't want to know anything of the ceremonies used when approaching Mr Kurtz' I shouted" (HOD,p131-32).

But in my reading of Heart of Darkness the partial description of the European atrocities, also recognises the result of the disempowering of the native. When Stanley "pioneered" the Congo River the natives fought him every step of the way. When Casement made his report some twenty

years later he was writing about a people who had been brutally conquered and systematically cheated out of their land, their living, their society. Whether we accept E.D.Morel's figures of 3 million out of 15 million natives dead or the higher estimate of 8 million (see Brantlinger, p384), the attempt at genocide is something that Conrad's text recognises as part of its darkness. Kurtz certainly recogises it: at the end of his civilising tract, all traces of "civilisation" are erased in the verbal screech "Exterminate all the brutes!" (HOD,p118).

To recapitulate at this point: does Heart of Darkness provide a terrible warning against genocide - "The horror! The horror!"? Does it function as "a (disguised) fulfilment of a (supressed or repressed) wish" **for** genocide? Or does it vacillate between the two? I recall the witness before the Parliamentary Committee cited above: "civilisation" or "extermination". Again the binaries bind us.

Heart of Darkness leaves us with an ambiguous signifier - could it do otherwise? - the "lie". When Marlow chooses to stay loyal to Kurtz - "it was written that I should be loyal to the nightmare of my choice" (HOD,p141) - he signals the problem of telling the story and the problem of who it is going to be told to. The story is what gets told to the representative receptive cyphers - the Director of Companies etc. - and the lie is what gets told to the Intended.

It has been my aim throughout this chapter to show how the historical moment is "always already" part of its inscription in the rhetoric it chooses - has chosen for it? - to represent itself. When Stanley writes in his diaries as he is rowed down the Congo, when Casement subdues the atrocities committed on the natives to the balanced, but telling, phrases of the official report, already the "medium is the message". How can a fictional narrative produce its message differently? Heart of Darkness chooses, finally, among its recorded nightmares, to tell its truth as a lie.

Marlow's lie to Kurtz's Intended has inscribed another well-trodden critical path within the text. Jeremy Hawthorn, in Joseph Conrad: Language and Fictional Self-Consciousness, signals the connection between the lie that Marlow tells and Conrad's "suspicion of language in general ... its power ... to build or betray" and his "need to distinguish between writing fiction and telling lies".[60] The episode is also a **locus classicus** for feminist criticism of Conrad with Marlow/Conrad coming off much the worse for the encounter.[61]

Marlow's hatred of lies - he deprecates "a taint of death, a flavour of mortality in lies" (HOD,p82) - is linked to a wish to "forget" this very defect which represents "what I hate and detest in the world" (HOD,p82). From this point of view, the narrative becomes a remembering of what Marlow wants to forget, what he doesn't want to know; for "death" and "mortality" - both components of the "lie" - are what he has had to confront, they are the "germs of empires" that the West has brought to the colonised territory. By extension, it is empire that becomes the lie.

In Rich and Strange: Gender, History, Modernism, Marianne DeKoven has a novel way of reading the lie:

> I would argue that at an important level of the text ... Marlow does not lie. The 'name' of the Intended **is** 'the horror! the horror!'... Marlow's lie is the climax of the text ... because it reinscribes in bourgeois patriarchal imperialist culture the truth of the vaginal passage [DeKoven subjects Heart of Darkness to a Jungian, not to say Irigarayan reading] ... As a horrific representation of what Western culture has made of femininity, she is part of the horror of the Kurtzian phallo-imperialist occupation of the maternal.
>
> (DeKoven,p125,)[62]

While I might dispute the details, I agree with the broad outline of DeKoven's analysis. I'd turn the angle of reading slightly to say that by placing the lie at the end of the narrative, Conrad questions the status of Heart of Darkness itself as part of a (literary) rhetoric and as part of the representation of (historical) experience. He

also, I would suggest, questions the validity of an ideology which attempts to create an epistemology which claims it has a monopoly on the "truth". Heart of Darkness arrives at a point where it has to expose as a "lie" not just the truth itself, but even the search for the truth - does this include Marlow's search? - for the search is just another version of (destructive) solipsism.

So does Heart of Darkness disappear into its own darkness, or is it, paradoxically redeemed (just about) by a lie? Specifically, by Marlow's lie to the Intended? Is it possible to construe the Marlow who lies as still groping (still searching) in the dark, but groping towards an alternative version, the possibility of a new relationship of the subject to its language in a (Wildean) radical questioning and challenge to the status of truth/lie in a - "bourgeois patriarchal imperialist" - world which has capitulated to, has sold out to "the dreams of men, the seed of commonwealths, the germs of empires"?

In Heart of Darkness Marlow compares the Roman "conquerors" unfavourably with the British colonialists. The Roman conquerors "grabbed what they could get for the sake of what was to be got. It was just robbery with violence, aggravated murder on a grand scale ... What redeems it is the idea only" (HOD,p50-51). When Conrad published "Geography and Some Explorers" in 1924, the British (and European) imperialists - and the language in which they are described - had come much closer to the Roman conquerors and nineteenth-century European imperialist expansion had become - in a much quoted phrase - "the vilest scramble for loot that ever disfigured the history of human conscience" (GSE,p17).

Stanley dreams the Congo landscape into a stage of the imperial project and places himself stage-centre as pioneer hero. Conrad partially endorses but mostly questions both the validity of that project and its production as/in various forms of writing. His re-writing of certain key

moments in his African experiences indicates an unease about their definitive status while pointing to the more provisional nature of the self in the space that the imperial project constructs. This textual re-circulation brings Conrad, at the end of his life, to this essay where the attempt to trace the "history" of imperialist geography becomes bound up with the "history" of the writer and his journey from childhood to old age. It is a process which incorporates what might be called the "double mapping" of self onto empire, with which I began this chapter.

Conrad observes, at the beginning of the essay, the perennial fascination "for the majority of mankind" of geography and maps (GSE,p1) and the "stage" that the world provides for explorers to go forth and map unknown territories (GSE,p2). For Conrad, geographical "progress" is also a rhetorical "progress" beginning with the "fabulous geography" (GSE,p4) which comprised the traveller's tales and the maps filled with "strange pageants ... strange beasts" (GSE,p2) of the early explorers.

From the "fabulous geography" of the medieval explorers, Conrad arrives at the "militant geography" practiced by the "single-minded explorers of the nineteenth century ... whose only object was the search for the truth" (GSE,p10). Initially Conrad contrasts the early explorers (compare with the Roman conquerors), whose motivation is the "desire [for] loot" (GSE,p10) with the modern explorers (compare with Marlow's imperial Englishmen who follow an "idea") whose motivating search for truth is underpinned by a geography which is "a science of facts" (GSE,p10). But this rather facile teleology is set up, only to be rigorously questioned.

The teleology is first unsettled by the writing "going backwards". Conrad goes back to himself as a boy aged about ten, reading a French translation of Sir Leopold McClintock's account of Sir John Franklin's Polar expeditions. The young Conrad is superimposed onto a

"memory" of the young Marlow: "The great spirit of the realities of the story sent me off on the romantic explorations of my inner self; to the discovery of the taste of pouring over maps" (GSE,p12). Note the double trajectory of this voyage: inward to "the romantic explorations of my inner self" and outward to the "pouring over maps" - and the life lived in the service of the British Merchant Marine. The juxtaposition of the seemingly separate spaces of inner and outer is the occasion of their blurring, their overlapping, their superimposition.

However the blurring of categories does not, at this stage, seem to trouble the author. His "map-gazing" is to be put firmly(?) in its place:

> map-gazing, to which I became addicted so early, brings the problems of the great spaces of the earth into stimulating and directing contact with sane curiosity and gives an honest precision to one's imaginative faculty. And the honest maps of the nineteenth century nourished in me a passionate interest in the truth of geographical facts and a desire for precise knowledge.
>
> (GSE,p13)

The language of the above cited passage is calculated to reveal its "double bind": the young Conrad is "addicted" to the "map-gazing" which provides a solution to "the problems of the great spaces of the earth" which gives rise to a "sane curiosity". This same map-gazing provides an "honest precision" to the "imaginative faculty". It is notable too that the "interest" which the "truth of geographical facts" awakes is a "passionate" one and that the wish for "precise knowledge" is expressed by the word "desire". The categories are already being troubled with a will and this is a process which will continue as Conrad produces his different versions of his African journey, when the boy's dreams had been translated into the male subject's experiences and perceptions and his need, some thirty years later, to try to make sense of these perceptions and the historical context in which he had lived them.

The Conrad we meet first in this essay is the young boy whose lonely imagination is stirred by the adventure

narratives he reads, and not the confused and feverish ship's officer who writes the Congo Diary and the "UpRiver Book" out of which will come the Marlow who tells Heart of Darkness. The "truth" of Conrad's perceptions lies for me in his retrospective realisation that the inspiration for the epistemological quest, that "desire for precise knowledge" with which to know "the problems of the great spaces of the earth", comes out of a "passionate interest" that fires the imaginative faculty. It's when the imagination steps onto the geographic reality of another person's terrain that the trouble starts - as this essay recognises.

Some twenty years after the child's romantic enthusiasm for far-flung places, the adult Conrad stands on the deck of a steamboat moored below the Stanley Falls on the Upper Congo and reminds himself: "'This is the very spot of my boyish boast'" (GSE,p17). Standing (just about) on the very spot, what does the even older Conrad remember of the adult Conrad:

> A great melancholy descended on me. Yes, this was the very spot. But there was ... only the unholy recollection of a prosaic newspaper 'stunt' and the distasteful knowledge of the vilest scramble for loot that ever disfigured the history of human conscience and geographical exploration. What an end to the idealized realities of a boy's daydreams!
> (GSE,p17)

The "boy's daydreams" have been purged of their "idealised realities" and it is in this oxymoronic mixing of the rhetoric of fiction and fact - what might be called Conrad's own voyage from a "fabulous" to a "militant" geography - and in an awareness of the complexities of the subject in (his) history that Conrad, arrives at the realisation that the failure of one young boy's idealised realities, his "romantic explorations of my inner self" (GSE,p12), can simultaneously, in the representations of lived experience, render the consciousness of the tragedy of a continent's virtual enslavement.

I would further suggest that this realisation is not a solipsistic collapse of different categories into the

self, rather that Conrad's consideration in this essay of the categories of "inner" and "outer" and their subjection to blurring, dissolving, demonstrates his acute awareness of how the constructions of inner and outer, the language of fact and myth, continually act and re-act on each other, and of the imperative need to be alert to this process.

Maybe this is a case of Conrad partially getting over what Jameson calls the "systematic block on any adequate consciousness of the structure of the imperial system", but not going far enough. It also recalls the translation that Hélène Cixous maps in her essay "From the Scene of the Unconscious to the Scene of History". In Cixous' mapping of the country "where the poets live ... the people who have in common the saving of the almost imperceptible keys to the world of survival", boundaries, "the spatial terrestrial geographic frontiers and also the time frontiers are erased".[63] This erasure is enacted in writing as a way of reaching another place (cf. the discussion of the "wilderness" in Heart of Darkness above). For Cixous the purpose is "to reach the point of writing not in order to mourn the past, but to become a prophet of the present" (Cixous,p7).

Do these words recall Conrad's/Marlow's dilemma: a writing which can only "mourn a past" which has made the present a "nightmare"? I recall at this point my discussion of the passage from the Congo Diary, where Conrad ineffectually "treats" the bullet wound that a native youth has received from a European or a European's agent. I remarked then on the inadequacy both of Conrad's action and of the language in which he struggles to "remember" the event. Cixous' essay contemplates the elements of experience, memory, history and the need for a form of writing which will provide a connection between the first two terms and the third. She leaves us with an important question (a question which I believe is equally relevant to

Conrad's writing): Can some writing as the "act of reminding" (Cixous,p7) enact a translation of the "scene of the unconscious" to "the scene of the other, which is more specifically the scene of history?" (Cixous,p10)?

NOTES

1. Joseph Conrad, The Mirror of the Sea: Memories and Impressions and A Personal Record - Some Reminiscences (1906, 1912), The Uniform Edition, London: J.M. Dent, 1923, p13.

2. Joseph Conrad, Youth: A Narrative and Two Other Stories (1902), The Uniform Edition, London: J.M. Dent, 1923, p52. All further references to Heart of Darkness, abbreviated HOD, will be included in the text.

3. Joseph Conrad, Tales of Hearsay and Last Essays (1925,1926), The Uniform Edition, London: J.M. Dent, 1928, p16. All further references to "Geography and Some Explorers", abbreviated GSE, will be included in the text.

4. Homi K. Bhabha, The Location of Culture, London and New York: Routledge, 1994, p76. All further references to this work, abbreviated Bhabha, will be included in the text.

5. Fredric Jameson, Nationalism, Colonialism and Literature: Modernism and Imperialism, A Field Day Pamphlet No 14, Derry: Field Day Theatre Co. Ltd, 1988, pp10-11. All further references to this work, abbreviated Jameson, MI, will be included in the text.

6. See Hayden White on this subject, for example, in "Interpretation in History" in Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism, Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978, where he writes: "The difference between a historical and a fictional account of the world is formal not substantive; it resides in the relative weights given to the constructive elements in them" (p58). These elements are named as modes of emplotment, modes of explanation, and the ideological frame, all of which are presented "in terms of the linguistic strategy of prefiguration represented by ... various tropes" (p74).

7. Emily Budick, Fiction and Historical Consciousness: The American Romance Tradition, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989, p205.

8. Benita Parry, "Nostromo and Narrative", Paper Delivered at the 20th Annual International Conference of the Joseph Conrad Society, 7-9th July 1994.

9. This section relies mainly on C.C. Eldridge's clear and conscise account given in Victorian Imperialism, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1978. All references to this work, abbreviated Eldridge, will be included in the text.

10. Thomas Pakenham, The Scramble for Africa: 1876-1912 (1991), London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1992, pxvii. All further references to this work, abbreviated Pakenham, will be included in the text.

11. Hunt Hawkins, "Conrad's Critique of Imperialism", PMLA, 94:2 (March 1979), p288.

12. Patrick Brantlinger, Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism 1830-1914, Ithaca and London: Ithaca University Press, 1988, p177. All further references to this work, abbreviated Brantlinger, will be included in the text.

The commitment to abolition also contributed to the interest in Africa and the presence there of British explorers like Richard Burton, J.H. Speke, Mungo Park, Livingstone - and Stanley. See Mary Louise Pratt's analysis of the travel writing of explorers in Africa (and South America) in her book Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation, London: Routledge, 1992. All further references to this work, abbreviated Pratt, IE, will be included in the text.

13. Ronald Robinson, John Gallagher, Alice Denny, Africa and the Victorians: The Official Mind of Imperialism (1961), London: The Macmillan Press, 1981, p34. All further references to this work, abbreviated Robinson & Gallagher, will be included in the text.

14. Martin Green, Dreams of Adventure, Deeds of Empire, London and Henley: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980, p3.

15. See Hayden White's essay "The Fictions of Factual Representation", in **op. cit.**, where he proposes (following Northrope Frye) that history is a "displacement" of myth (p127).

16. Michel Foucault, The Archaeology of Knowledge (1969), Trans. A.M. Sheridan Smith, London and New York: Tavistock Publications, 1986, p16. All further references to this work, abbreviated Foucault, AK, will be included in the text.

17. Henry Morton Stanley, The Exploration Diaries (written 1874-77), ed Richard Stanley and Alan Neame, London: William Kimber, 1961, pxv. All further references to this work, abbreviated ED, will be included in the text.

18. Alice Pike's father was a German Jewish immigrant to America who made a fortune in whisky. For an account of the episode see John Bierman, Dark Safari: The Life Behind the

Legend of Henry Morton Stanley (1990), London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1991, pp151-157. All further references to this work, abbreviated Bierman, will be included in the text.

19. Joseph Conrad, _Congo Diary and Other Uncollected Pieces_, Ed with comments by Zdzislaw Najder, New York: Doubleday & Co. Ltd, 1978, p15. All further references to this work, abbreviated _Congo Diary_, will be included in the text.

20. Mary Louise Pratt, "Scratches on the Face of the Country or What Mr Barrow Saw in the Land of the Bushmen", in ed Henry Louis Gates Jr, _"Race", Writing and Difference_, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1986, p144. All further references to this work, abbreviated Pratt, SFC, will be included in the text.

21. Henry Morton Stanley, _The Congo and the Founding of its Free State: A Story of Work and Exploration_, 2 volumes, London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington, 1885, p445. All further references to this work, abbreviated CFFS and followed by volume number, will be included in the text.

22. Britain had already been doing this in India for over a hundred years. See Eldridge's fascinating account of its economic and political exploitation of the sub-continent, pp62-64.

23. See Jeffrey Meyers, "Conrad and Roger Casement", _Conradiana_ 5:3 (1973) and Hunt Hawkins, "Joseph Conrad, Roger Casement and the Congo Reform Movement", _Journal of Modern Literature_ 9:1 (1981-82).

24. See Brian Inglis, _Roger Casement_, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1973, pp 24-31. All further references to this work, abbreviated Inglis, will be included in the text.

25. See Marlow in _Heart of Darkness_: "The conquest of the earth, which mostly means taking it away from those who have a different complexion or slightly flatter noses than ourselves, is not a pretty thing when you look into it too much. What redeems it is the idea only" (HOD,p51).

26. Stephen Greenblatt, _Marvellous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World_, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991, p56. All further references to this work, abbreviated Greenblatt, will be included in the text.

27. Greenblatt writes in the context of fifteenth and sixteenth century Spanish exploration and colonialism/ imperialism; his observations hold for the process of nineteenth century British colonialism/imperialism.

28. See the account in Inglis's biography of Casement, pp54-55, 91-93.

29. Mark Twain, *King Leopold's Soliloquy: A Defense of his Congo Rule*, with a Preface and Appendices by E.D. Morel and Sixteen illustrations, London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1907, p41. All further references to this work, abbreviated KLS, will be included in the text.

Cecil Rhodes' comment after meeting Leopold II is of interest in this context: "Satan! I tell you that man is Satan!" (quoted in Inglis, p391).

30. Roger Casement, *Correspondence and Report from His Majesty's Consul at Boma respecting the Administration of the Independent State of the Congo*, Presented to Both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty February 1904, London: HMSO, 1904, p21. All further references to this work, abbreviated CRHMC, will be included in the text.

31. Casement's *Report* from the Congo and his 1913 report on atrocities in the Putomayo district in the Amazon basin - where a British-based company ran the rubber collecting - made decisive contributions to his later decision to support the Irish Nationalist cause. His activites in favour of this cause during the First World War led to his execution in 1916. See Inglis for a detailed account. See also Roger Casement *The Amazon Journal* (written 1910), edited Angus Mitchell, London: Anaconda, 1997. Mitchell addresses the vexed issue of the forgery of Casement's diaries in his introduction.

32. At the suggestion of Lord Salisbury, all native names and most of the areas Casement visited were replaced by letters, ostensibly to protect "those wretched blacks". Casement protested these omissions fearing they would lead to the questioning of the veracity of his *Report* (see Inglis, p85). The omissions stood.

33. Joseph Conrad, *The Collected Letters*, Volume Three 1903-1907, ed Frederick R. Karl and Laurence Davies, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988, p95.

34. Quoted in Jeremy Hawthorn, *Joseph Conrad: Narrative Technique and Ideological Commmitment*, London: Edward Arnold, 1990, p159.

35. Quoted in Hunt Hawkins, "Conrad and Congolese Exlorations", *Conradiana* 13:2 (1981), p94.

36. Allon White, *The Uses of Obscurity: The Fiction of Early Modernism*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981, p175.

37. Tzvetan Todorov, "Knowledge in the Void: *Heart of Darkness*", trans. Walter C. Putnam, *Conradiana* 21:3 (Autumn 1989), p172.

38. Michael Levenson, "The Value of Facts in *Heart of Darkness*" in ed Robert Kimbrough, Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness: An Authoritative Text, Backgrounds, Sources and Criticism*, 3rd edition, New York and London: W.W. Norton & Co. Inc., 1988, p405.

39. Chinua Achebe, "An Image of Africa" (1977) in ed Robert D. Hamner, *Joseph Conrad: Third World Perspectives*, Washington DC: Three Continents Press, 1990, p128.

40. See for example: Ponnuthurai Sarvan, "Under African Eyes"; Wilson Harris, "The Frontier on which *Heart of Darkness* Stands"; Peter Nazereth, "Out of Darkness: Conrad and Other Third World Writers", all in ed Robert D. Hamner, **op. cit**.

41. See for example: Patrick Brantlinger, **op. cit**, chapter 9; Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), London: Vintage, 1994, chapter 1 part 3; Anne McClintock, "'Unspeakable Secrets': The Ideology of Landscape in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*", *Journal of the Midwest Modern Language Association* 7:1 (Spring 1984). All further references to this work, abbreviated McClintock, US, will be included in the text.

42. Shoshana Felman, "Turning the Screw of Interpretation", *Yale French Studies* 55/56 (1977), p98.

43. Ian Watt, *Conrad in the Nineteenth Century*, London: Chatto and Windus, 1980, p144. All further references to this work, abbreviated Watt, will be included in the text.

44. See Christine Bolt, *Victorian Attitudes to Race*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1971, for further general discussion of the subject. All further references to this work, abbreviated Bolt, will be included in the text.

See Daniel Pick, *Faces of Degeneration: A European Disorder c1848-c1918*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1989, page 39, on the white fear of regression. See my chapter two for a fuller consideration of Darwin's theories and their appropriation by the thinkers associated with Social Darwinism.

45. Critics have more usually made use of Jung's theory of archetypes to produce readings of *Heart of Darkness*. See Albert J.Guerard, *Conrad the Novelist*, Cambridge Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1958, pp33-48 and Frederick R. Karl, "Introduction to the Danse macabre: Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*" in ed Ross C. Murfin, *Heart of Darkness: A Case Study in Contemporary Criticism*, New York: St Martin's Press Inc., 1989.

Marianne DeKoven has used Jung's theory in conjunction with contemporary feminist theories to produce a distinctive and thought-provoking reading. See Marianne DeKoven, *Rich and Strange: Gender, History, Modernity*, Princeton New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1991,

chapter 4. All further references to this work, abbreviated DeKoven, will be included in the text.

46. Sigmund Freud, The Interpretation of Dreams (1900), Standard Edition Vols IV & V, p119. All further references to this work, abbreviated Freud, ID, will be included in the text.

47. Jacques Derrida, "Plato's Pharmacy", Dissemination (1972), Trans. Barbara Johnson, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1976, p98.

48. Many critics have noted the way in which the distinctions between Europe and Africa "collapse" in Heart of Darkness. See for example, Jonah Raskin, The Mythology of Imperialism, New York: Random House, 1971, p154; Allon White, **op. cit.**, p189; Suresh Raval, The Art of Failure: Conrad's Fiction, Boston: Allen & Unwin Inc. 1986, pp20-23. Joseph Bristow's point is that Britain too, is a place of darkness, though "Africa, inevitably, must remain the defining ground of darkness so that the machinations of imperialism can be exposed", in Empire Boys: Adventures in a Man's World, London: Harper Collins Academic, 1991, p162. This still leaves Africa as the archetypal "Dark Continent", see Brantlinger, p262.

49. So do some critics, see for example Michael P.Jones, Conrad's Heroism: A Paradise Lost, Ann Arbor Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1985,1974, p68, and Anne McClintock, **op. cit.**, p50.

50. See above for my discussion of Stanley's description of the colonial subject in the landscape.

51. See also on this point Edward Said, **op. cit.**, especially pages 20-35.

52. See Bhabha on this idea, pages 36-39.

53. Freud characterises the "unhomely" or "**unheimlich**" in his essay "The 'Uncanny'" as "that class of the frightening which leads back to what is known of old and long familiar", "which has become alienated ... through the process of repression", Sigmund Freud, "The 'Uncanny'" (1919), Standard Edition Volume XVII, pp220, 241.

54. Shosana Felman, What Does a Woman Want? Reading and Sexual Difference, Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993, p62.

55. W. Arens, The Man Eating Myth: Anthropology and Anthropophagy, New York: Oxford University Press, 1979, p173. All further references to this work, abbreviated Arens, will be included in the text.

56. See Michel de Montaigne, "On the Cannibals" (1580), Essays, trans. and ed M.A. Screech, London: Allen Lane The Penguin Press, 1991.

57. Most of these critics make mention of the cannibals' "restraint". See for example Jeffrey Meyers, **op. cit.**, p65; Ian Watt, **op. cit.**, p227; Jacques Berthoud, Joseph Conrad: The Major Phase, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978, pp47-48; Daniel R. Schwarz, Conrad: Almayer's Folly to Under Western Eyes, London: The Macmillan Press, 1980, p67.

See also Anthony Fothergill, "Cannibalising Traditions: Representation and Critique in Heart of Darkness" in ed Gail Fincham and Myrtle Hooper, Under Postcolonial Eyes: Joseph Conrad After Empire, Cape: UCT Press, 1996. Fothergill's essay examines the construction of the cannibal myth as part of a Western European rhetoric of self-legitimation, and then shows how Heart of Darkness questions these assumptions.

58. The most famous example of cannibalism in Conrad's **oeuvre** is practised, for survival purposes, by a white man, the Scandinavian Falk, in the eponymous short story, whom Tony Tanner has called the "gentleman cannibal" in "Joseph Conrad and the Last Gentleman", Critical Quarterly 28: 1-2 (Spring-Summer 1986), p116. Falk's action produces a startling and effective fissuring of the "rival romance" trajectory the narrative had followed until Falk's revelation. It's a love story - with a difference. ("Falk" in The Nigger of the "Narcissus": A Tale of the Sea and Typhoon and Other Stories (1897,1903), The Uniform Edition, London: J.M. Dent, 1923.)

59. Most famously Ian Watt, **op. cit.**, pps 169-180.

60. Jeremy Hawthorn, Joseph Conrad: Language and Fictional Self-Consciousness, London: Edward Arnold (Publishers) Ltd, 1979, p7.

61. See for example the essays by Johanna M. Smith, "'Too Beautiful Altogether': Patriarchal Ideology in Heart of Darkness" in ed Ross C. Murfin, **op. cit.**, and Nina Pelikan Strauss, "The Exclusion of the Intended from Secret Sharing in Conrad's Heart of Darkness", Novel 20:2 (Winter 1987).

62. Fred L. Milne writes: "The lie in the story is not Marlow's last statement to the Intended but [to] civilisation itself" in "Marlow's Lie and the Intended: Civilisation as the Lie in Heart of Darkness", The Arizona Quarterly 44:1 (Spring 1988 , p108.

Homi Bhabha's comment echoes both Milne's and DeKoven's readings: "As he replaces the words of horror for the name of the Intended we read in that palimpsest, neither one nor the other, something of the awkward, ambivalent, unwelcome truth of empire's lie" (Bhabha,p138).

63. Hélène Cixous, "From the Scene of the Unconscious to the Scene of History" in ed Ralph Cohen, The Future of Literary Theory, London: Routledge, 1989, p5. All further references to this work, abbreviated Cixous, will be included in the text.

Chapter Two

Lord Jim Under a Darwinian Lens: A Novel Without a Hero

The problems and pleasures of Lord Jim (1900) begin for me in the area of genre. Conrad focused on this problem area when he wrote to Edward Garnett: "Yes! you've put your finger on the plague spot. The division of the book into two parts".[1] The division of the text between the sea story and searching anatomising of Jim and the adventure/romance in Patusan was registered by one contemporary reviewer, who called Lord Jim "a very broken-backed narrative".[2] But for most of the contemporary critics, uneasiness about genre was displaced onto cavils about the text's structure. When the Polish writer Wiktor Gomulicki reviewed the book in 1905, the difficulties of structure (in Polish translation) made for some comic observations:

> I have seen Polish readers picking up his book time and again, and putting it down protesting their inability to 'get the hang' of it. Indeed, reading it one sometimes gets the impression that the printer mixed up the pages of the manuscript and that what was supposed to be at the end, he placed in the middle, and moved the middle to the beginning.[3]

Likewise the mystification of another English reviewer produced this: "If Mr Henry James had a consummate knowledge of life at sea and in the Pacific Coast towns and settlements, he would write a novel very like Lord Jim. Is this praise or blame?" (CCH,p126).

While some reviewers got out their calculators to prove the impossibility, according to the laws of verisimilitude, of Marlow's marathon feat of narration (chapters five through thirty five) - one reviewer called him "a tiresome, garrulous, philosophising bore" (CCH,p118) - most critics conceded the originality and fascination of the novel. One far-sighted American reviewer wrote: "Mr Conrad works it out ... in his own peculiar fashion. If he keeps on writing the same sort, he may arrive at the unique

distinction of having few readers in his own generation, and a fair chance of several in the next" (CCH,p128).

More recently, F.R.Leavis derided the "romance that follows" the first part of Lord Jim [4] and literary critics still line up for the division [5] or against it.[6] In The Political Unconscious, Fredric Jameson "reads" the break as "a shift between two distinct cultural spaces, that of 'high' culture and that of mass culture".[7] The narrative is divided, according to Jameson, between "the story of the **Patna** and the intricate and protextual search for the 'truth' of the scandal of the abandoned ship" and the Patusan section "which, a virtual paradigm of romance as such, comes before us as the prototype of the various 'degraded' sub-genres into which mass culture will be articulated" (Jameson,PU,p207). For Jameson, this shift is symptomatic of a political repressed, "the repressed space of a world of work and history and of protopolitical conflict which may in this respect be seen as the trace and the remnant of the content of an older realism, now displaced and effectively marginalised by the emergent modernist discourse" (Jameson,PU,p207).

I would like to suggest that if the "space of a world of work and history" is "marginalised by the emergent modernist discourse", it is also in some measure re-thought in the terms of yet another rhetoric. A citation from Gillian Beer's Darwin's Plots provides my starting point:

> The **effort** of empire can be seen in the later-nineteenth-century preoccupation with fear, in a culture which set so much store by courage, or 'pluck'. It is a preoccupation which then fuels much

Edwardian writing, particularly Conrad's works. For example, in Lord Jim the atavistic emotion of fear leads Jim to jump overboard abandoning ship and passengers.[8]

In The Descent of Man (1871) Darwin makes an opposition between the "instinct of self-preservation" [9] and that of bravery or the "social instincts" (DM I,p97), the point being that, as Beer writes, the instinct of fear which leads to self-preservation is designated "atavistic". I would propose, therefore, that Lord Jim can also be read as an adventure narrative which becomes an evolutionary narrative when it is fissured by the moment of Jim's leap from the **Patna**. For it is at this moment, I suggest, that the adventure narrative is disturbed by the "atavistic" intrusion of another, an evolutionary narrative.

When Jim leaps, the narrative encounters an aporia, it is baffled, it can't find its way, for according to the conventions of the nineteenth-century adventure story, Jim wouldn't leap or, if he did, he would do the "noble thing" afterwards, which, as he tells Marlow, he refuses to do.[10] Thus the narrative is obliged to take a turn of direction, to provide another paradigm and another set of concepts with which to re-think Jim as would-be white hero.

I would like to think about the way in which the character called Lord Jim embodies the fissuring of the adventure genre and its metamorphosis, as part of the white hero's failed attempt to perform in his role as the representative of empire and the imperial ideology. So the white hero becomes the object of dissection where, as Griselda Pollock puts it, whiteness rather that blackness

becomes "the object of a critical reading of its 'cultural/historical construction, achieved through white domination'".[11] Jim's failed attempt is also Marlow's failure to tell his narrative - or at least it makes up the difficulty he has in telling it.

The "faultline" in the text which Jim's leap exposes can also be read theoretically, following Pierre Macherey, as the gap in the work, when it indicates "what it does not say". And this faultline could also be read, following M.M. Bakhtin, as the text doubling itself, engaging in dialogism. This reading is strengthened by the many narratives which are incorporated into Marlow's narrative producing what Jacques Berthoud calls "a collage of verdicts" [12] or what Benita Parry terms "the interlocution of narrative voices".[13] (The limitations of the multiple narrative form in Lord Jim will also be discussed below.)

If it is possible to read Lord Jim as a divided, unsuccessful narrative - unsuccessful because of its divisions -would it be possible to "read the split" as an attempt at dialogic or polyphonic narrative? And how would this different angle of reading alter our perceptions? What does it mean if, as well as analysing the text as split between an adventure and what I have called an evolutionary narrative, it is also analysed in terms of an intersection between or transformation of the two paradigms?

Both the sea story on one side of Jim's first leap and the Patusan story on the other side of it are aspects of the

adventure genre. "Adventure ... is the energizing myth of empire", as Martin Green argues in Dreams of Adventure, Deeds of Empire.[14] The time of the adventure story is, implicitly, part of colonial/imperial time. It is also narrative as teleology - where the designated hero performs brave deeds which bring their due rewards at the end of the tale. This form of narrative is from its beginning in Lord Jim being subtly probed and questioned and, according to Andrea White, regretted. "From within the genre that had constructed the imperial subject" she writes in Joseph Conrad and the Adventure Tradition "[Conrad] wrote a fiction at odds with the traditional assumptions of the genre that was being increasingly used in the service of imperial expansion".[15] She adds: "Choosing to write from within the fiction that had traditionally celebrated an unqualified kind of heroism, Conrad achieved a critical irony but also announced his own regret that the dream of pure, disinterested adventure was no longer possible" (White,JCAT,p5).

Conrad's regret for this impossible condition is "announced" and qualified in a passage in a late essay called "Well Done" (1918): "The mere love of adventure is no saving grace. It is no grace at all ... The successive generations that went out to sea from these Isles went out to toil desperately in adventurous conditions. A man is a worker. If he is not that he is nothing. Just nothing - like a mere adventurer".[16] Jim's failure can be partially but precisely located in his failure to make this

distinction: to separate "the love of adventure" from "toil[ing] desperately in adventurous conditions".

Jim's flaw, as far as embodying the heroic figure goes, is indicated in the first sentence of the novel: "He was an inch, perhaps two, under six feet" (LJ,p3). As many critics have pointed out, six feet is the accepted height for the traditional hero.[17] John Batchelor in his monograph on Lord Jim indicates an interesting pentimento on Conrad's part: "Initially the manuscript had presented a stock heroic figure - 'He was over six feet in height and stared downwards at one with an overbearing air'".[18]

If, to some extent, appearances are against Jim, then so is his introduction to and his take-up of the topic of adventure. For, as a figure in a novel which questions the genre as it uses and extends it, Jim's introduction to the life of adventure (and the genesis of his desire to act the hero) is prompted by the conventional adventure narratives he consumes while on holiday: "When after a course of light holiday literature his vocation for the sea had declared itself, he was sent at once to a 'training-ship for officers of the mercantile marine'" (LJ,p5).

Jim hopes for "a stirring life in the world of adventure" (LJ,p6) and his role-models are drawn from "the sea life of light literature" (LJ,p6). But there is an observable disjunction between Jim imagining a life of adventure where courage will bring its due reward and the contingent world of the retrospectively historicised event in which the courageous act is supposed to "happen". As

Marlow's narrative remarks, adventure for Jim, up to and including his leap from the **Patna**, has been part of his "inner life" (LJ,p95) rather than the "existence... based upon honest faith, and upon the instinct of courage" (LJ,p43) which is recognised as part of the everyday "fidelity" professed by members of the "Service", as Conrad writes in his essay "Tales of the Sea" (1898).[19]

What are the tales which so inflame Jim's imagination? And what are the connections between the adventure stories and the colonialist/imperialist ideology they so implacably, if sometimes uneasily, serve? When Conrad evokes those faithful to traditions of the "Service", he is referring to Captain James Marryat who had served in the Royal Navy before he became a writer of best-selling adventure stories. When Marlow evokes traditions of hard work, faith and courage, he is referring to the Merchant Marine, which Conrad had "faithfully" served for some fifteen years of his adult life. Superior fire power at sea, which depended on naval superiority, and supremacy in trade, based on an efficient merchant navy, were the basis of Britain's imperialist hegemony, more or less up to the First World War, and the literature of the time celebrated this assumed superiority. Martin Green emphasises the point that the adventure tales that inspired English youth to "serve" their country belonged to the category of "light reading" (Green,p3; cf LJ,p5-6 cited above).

For Green then, the adventure story is populist - it must appeal to large numbers of impressionable young men

like Jim - and it functions overtly as propaganda for a set of ideas concerning English superiority. Thus, in the adventure fiction of the nineteenth century the components of a version of English superiority were invested in the figure of the white hero. Tony Tanner in his study of Lord Jim sketches a geneaology and a typology for this hero:

> Neitzsche's Superman and Carlyle's Great Man can be seen as summarising the interest of the century in the hero: the great and lonely individual elevated above the common herd of society by the scope of his imagination, his dedication to dreams and Ideals ... The hero may summarise the values and ideals of the tribe ... or he may epitomise various anti-social dreams of revolt.[20]

The conventional adventure narrative was not concerned with the revolting hero (who was more suited to a romantic tradition of the alienated anti-hero, for example Byron's Cain). In constructing suitable role-models for eager, would-be colonialists, it applied itself to playing up and modifying certain earlier variants on the theme.

Green categorises three types of "culture hero" of the nineteenth century as "variants on the adventurer theme" (Green,p204) who foregrounded practical and civilian virtues rather than chivalric or military ones. The spotlight falls on the self-made working man (especially the engineer), the colonial administrator and the missionary (see Green, pp204-213). The emphasis rests on the need to consolidate colonial conquest when it has arrived at an economic or bureaucratic stage, rather than the earlier stages of exploration and conquest.[21] This later stage in the development of the adventure narrative is exemplified for Green in Captain Marryat's Masterman

Ready (1841) which he calls "an evangelical adventure tale" (Green,p215) in which "aristomilitary values are largely repudiated" (Green,p216). (Marryat was one of Conrad's favourite authors along with James Fenimore Cooper. See his essay "Tales of the Sea".)

The "misfit" between the "dreams of adventure" and the "deeds of empire" which I discussed above in relation to Jim's inability to enact a continuum between the "inner life" of reading adventure stories and the outer life of toil in "adventurous conditions" is theorised by Jeremy Hawthorn as a fundamental fissure in imperialist ideology:

> Imperialism relied on an ability to escape from the concrete, an ability effectively to manipulate the physical world and some of its inhabitants, by the development of productive forces not possible without that displacement from the immediate afforded by language and intellectual effort. But that same displacement also threatened imperialism ... Imperialism, like capitalism, needs an accurate knowledge of nature, but cannot afford such a knowledge of itself.[22]

The white hero needs to possess the "ability to escape from the concrete" while remaining in full possession of his version of the "facts". It is an impossible balancing act (as Brierly realises when he commits suicide shortly after the inquiry on the **Patna** - see LJ, pp58-64) and it's exactly this "escape from the concrete" in the "displacement" that "language" affords in the writing and reading of adventure fiction that forms the staple of Jim's heroic aspirations.

In Empire Boys: Adventures in a Man's World, Joseph Bristow identifies a cluster of adventure fictions which he calls "island stories".[23] Taking the "**urtext**" of Robinson

Crusoe (1719), Bristow groups texts such as Masterman Ready (1841), R.M. Ballantyne's Coral Island (1857) and R.L. Stevenson's Treasure Island (1883) into this category. These texts provide as sound a guide as any as to what might have influenced Jim's ready imagination. Perhaps I might add to Jim's "reading list" Kipling's Captain's Courageous (1897)[24] where the "island story" is located on the ship itself (rather like Umberto Eco's latest novel The Island of the Day Before which shipwrecks its protagonist on a ship in sight of an island located in another "time-space"). Captains Courageous moves between the norms appropriate to the genre and a sense of the "other", the "uncanny", which coexists with the familiar in a way typical of Kipling's oeuvre. He is never entirely predictable - a trait he shares with Conrad.

According to Bristow, the island adventure story is a self-enclosed, self-justifying trope which exists in order to "locate ... a 'world' where colonial discourse can justify its existence" (Bristow,p99). Bristow's comment that "the reasons for colonialism are by no means self-evident" (Bristow,p99) links to Hawthorn's insight (cited above) that "imperialism ... cannot afford [an accurate] knowledge of itself". Maybe this accounts for the curiously "makeshift" effect of these island stories and their piece by piece reconstruction of a recognisable society on unmapped terrain. Thus the writing of the story becomes the construction of the "Ballantyne boys'" or the "Marryat family's" "new" world - which is a necessity if they are to

survive and which is also a vindication of colonial superiority.

As Bristow writes, what is produced is "a piece of fiction" which has "no self-sustaining value independent from colonialism - the history shaping its moral purpose" (Bristow,p99). Bristow's analysis thus alters the conventional view of the adventure narrative as teleological; here it becomes circular, repetitive.

After Jim leaps from the **Patna**, the story bumps up against an impasse. It hasn't, seemingly, anywhere left to go, because Jim won't behave like a story book hero. Having done the dishonourable thing by abandoning the passengers of the **Patna**, he won't do the "text-book" honourable act that is commit suicide: "I was confoundedly cut up" he says to Marlow. "Sick of life - to tell you the truth; but what would have been the good to shirk it - in - in - that way. That was not the way" (LJ, p132). Suicide is Brierly's way out. Jim decides to "face it out - alone for myself - wait for another chance" (LJ,p132).

So if Jim won't act according to the code, then the story has to go somewhere else. An alternative story is offered the Jim who stays to "face out" the **Patna** inquiry, which ends with him losing his Mate's Certificate (LJ,p160). The Australian adventurer Chester offers via Marlow to put Jim in charge of a guano-gathering operation on a remote island with no fresh water supply and subject to fatal storms (LJ,pp161-169). This is the island story as dystopic nightmare. It would indeed, as Marlow comments,

write a premature "Finis" (LJ,p176) under the story. If Jim is to approach the lineaments of the white hero, then it must be done not only in a different setting but, as I wish to argue, in a different time-frame too.

If the time of the adventure story strives for **telos** but ends up as an aporia (or goes round in circles), the evolutionary narrative - stemming from Charles Darwin's The Origin of Species (1859) - offers a time altogether otherwise.[25] It is one of Gillian Beer's main claims in Darwin's Plots that Darwin's theory of evolution was influential both in what it said and in how it is said: "Evolutionary theory had particular implications for narrative and for the composition of fiction. Because of its preoccupation with time and with change evolutionary theory has inherent affinities with the problems and processes of narrative" (Beer,DP,p7).

I would like to discuss just how Darwin in The Origin made a bid to re-think the time-scale of human and other species' existence, then to make a case for reading Lord Jim as an evolutionary narrative through the pivotal character of Stein and through the presentation of Patusan as an exemplar of a pre-civilised and therefore an "evolutionary" - but still historicised - space.

Darwin's theory of evolution through natural selection as presented in The Origin of Species was the culmination of a succession of texts, produced by many authors, whose purpose was to challenge and replace the belief in "natural

theology" - which stated, using the book of Genesis as its source, that God was the creator of the world and its inhabitants, that he had created each species separately and that each species was immutable. The texts which outlined and reinforced this belief included William Paley's Natural Theology (or Evidences of the Existence and Attributes of the Deity Collected from the Appearances of Nature) (1802) and The Bridgewater Treatises (On the Power, Wisdom and Goodness of God as manifested in Creation) (1833-36). These were "set books" in as much as they were required reading at the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge.[26]

The Origin rejected the idea of a religious interpretation of creation through the introduction of the mechanism of natural selection and furthermore, it completely overturned the idea of historical and pre-historical time that had held sway until the beginning of the nineteenth century. John Burrows, in his introduction to The Origin, summarises traditional ideas of time/creation (some of which were characterised by an obsessional precision):

> Most men at the beginning of the nineteenth century thought the world had been created only some six thousand years before, though perhaps few would have cared to be so specific as the famous pronouncement of [James Ussher] a seventeenth-century vice chancellor of Cambridge University according to whom 'man was created by the Trinity on October 23 4004 B.C. at nine o'clock in the morning'.[27]

The absurdity of this pronouncement is equalled by its pathos, in the need it shows for man to think himself within a managable time-frame. It was a time-frame that

Darwin could not accept after the voyage he made on the **Beagle** (1831-1836). He was also familiar with the geologist Charles Lyell's Principles of Geology (1830-33) which presented geological changes in terms of gradual evolution rather than what Robert M. Young calls "more or less interventionist catastrophism".[28] (Darwin himself reminds his readers in The Origin: **"Natura non facit saltum"**.)

As he develops his theory in The Origin, Darwin proposes an attenuation of the time-scale available for the mutation of species which will account for the pace and detail of the changes taking place:

> Natural selection can act only by the preservation and accumulation of infinitesimally small inherited modifications, each profitable to the preserved being ... natural selection [will], if it be a true principle, banish the belief of the continued creation of new organic beings, or of any great and sudden modification in their structure.
> (OS,p142)

Darwin is fully aware of the mental adjustment needed to incorporate this shift of paradigms. The reader who accepts the theory of natural selection will have to admit "how incomprehensibly vast have been the past periods of time" (OS, p293) necessary for the cumulative changes to the species, while also admitting "the mind cannot possibly grasp the full meaning of the term of a hundred million years" (OS,p453), with "term" functioning here as linguistic marker and as designation of a certain period of time.

The attenuation of the time-scale is more suited to the pace of change and type of evidence - geological, paleontological - that Darwin proposes in support of his

theory. He is also helped by what he calls the "Imperfection of the Geological Record" (see chapter nine of The Origin). In discussing the process of geological sedimentation (OS,pp300-301), Darwin notes that the process that preserves some of the fossil evidence also erodes other layers: "Thus the geological record will almost necessarily be rendered intermittent" (OS,p301). So part of the reassembling of the fossil record must necessarily include a reading or a rendering of what happened in the gaps. Both the re-thinking of the time-scale of creation and conjecturing through gaps have implications for Lord Jim which I will develop below.

In proposing a time-scale suitable to what Derek Freeman calls "a non-teleological mode of evolutionary change" [29] and which the mind of man might find difficult if not impossible to grasp, Darwin was also gesturing to man's position in the hierarchy of the natural world. In her essay "The Face of Nature", Gillian Beer writes: "In later editions [of The Origin] Darwin makes it clear that man can neither originate nor obliterate selection. He is disqualified from observing the great movements of natural law by the shortness of his life-span".[30] Beer cites Darwin: "How fleeting are the wishes and efforts of man! how short his time! and consequently how poor will his products be, compared with those accumulated by nature during whole geological periods" (OS,p133). In Darwin's re-thinking of the time-scale of evolution, man is being "scaled-down" to a size which does not admit of his

measuring time according to human generations; he is to be relegated to existing as one of a number of species developing according to a time-frame counted in hundreds of millions of years.

Stein, the man of many nineteenth century parts, whom Fredric Jameson calls "a pivotal figure from the narrative point of view" (Jameson,PU,p237), would agree with Darwin's comment. While showing Marlow his prize butterfly, he enthuses about it in a language which while it does not replicate exactly the language of natural selection, yet gestures towards its terms and frames of reference - especially in the designation of "Nature" as the motivating force and the equivocal position of man in nature:

> "Marvellous ... Look! The beauty - but that is nothing - look at the accuracy, the harmony ... This is Nature - the balance of colossal forces. Every star is so - and every blade of grass stands **so** - and the mighty Kosmos in perfect equilibrium produces - this. This wonder; this masterpiece of Nature - the great artist ... Man is amazing, but he is not a masterpiece ... Perhaps the artist was a little mad ... Sometimes it seems to me that man is come where he is not wanted, where there is no place for him; for if not, why should he want all the place?"
> (LJ,pp207-208)

In his book on Conrad and Darwin which concentrates mainly on Lord Jim, Redmond O'Hanlon reads Stein according to the evolutionary signifiers, but he reads him negatively. The story of Stein's life replicates the economic, intellectual and political stages of nineteenth-century Europe. He has been revolutionary, radical watch-maker, naturalist, merchant, colonialist - what Jonah Raskin calls "the whole man of the nineteenth-century bourgeoisie".[31] O'Hanlon interprets Stein's collecting as

a retreat (or regression) into a Linnean system of classification as a way of ordering and explaining that which speaks of disorder or mystery. Stein's words cited above are a:

> romantic celebration of nature belong[ing] to an earlier time, to 1848, to mystical belief in the absolute Truth and Beauty which Marlow imagines in Stein's cavernous rooms, or even to Natural Theology and God the master-artist, creator of unchanging perfection in the wings of each of his immutable species of butterfly.[32]

A close reading of Stein's words show that "Beauty" - absolute or otherwise - is rejected by Stein as a descriptive term - "but that is nothing". Furthermore, for Stein the "great artist" is not God, it is "Nature".

Stein sitting in his light and dark collecting room, full of specimens of coleoptera and lepidoptera is, according to O'Hanlon "deep [in] the new Dark Ages of evolutionary prehistory" (O'Hanlon,p118). In O'Hanlon's version Stein is a hopeless throwback stuck in "the deepening gloom of the past" (O'Hanlon, p119) rather than the old man with "a student's face" (LJ,p202) that Marlow describes.

As I read him, Stein is a figure of both light and shade with an intelligence that is more active than O'Hanlon allows.[33] Stein understands his natural and social environment in evolutionary terms and, I would emphasise, he is not, as O'Hanlon would have it, sunk in the gloom of "evolutionary prehistory", rather he is in the vanguard of intellectual and natural-scientific thinking in analysing nineteenth-century European man and his environment

according to current models. In addition, as he is himself a representative nineteenth-century European male, he incorporates into his "world view" the rhetoric of the romantic movement which influenced ideas about subjectivity in the first half of the century, as when he quotes Goethe to Marlow (see LJ, p211).

Thus he is well equipped to understand Jim as would-be hero of the first part of the novel and to send him to the different environment of Patusan so that he can attempt to "follow the dream ... **ewig - usque ad finem**" (LJ,p215). It is in Patusan that Jim seems, at first, to become the storybook hero he aspired to be. His ultimate failure is, I will argue at the end of this chapter, linked to two ideas developed by Darwin: one follows on from the "evolutionary" time-frame I sketched out above and the other connects Stein's butterflies with the animal behaviour called "mimicry".

The terrain on which Jim acts out his heroic dreams is Patusan, "a remote district of a native-ruled State ... about forty miles from the sea" (LJ,p220). Many critical texts have referred to Patusan as a mythic space: Daphna Erdinast-Vulcan defines it as one of those "exotic settings away from modern Western civilisation" (Erdinast-Vulcan, p27), while Jacques Darras writes: "Patusan is like a tomb. Geographically speaking it is as quiet as a grave because the stream of civilisation, branching east and south east bypasses it completely".[34] In these versions Patusan is presented as an Edenic alternative to historicised

capitalist Europe out of which Jim comes. In contradistinction to these versions Marlow's truncated history of the state places it briefly at the centre of the British and Dutch pepper trade in the seventeenth century (LJ,p226), inscribing it as a little-known but relevant part of early capitalist/colonialist history.

Patusan the fictional space, is geographically modelled on Borneo, an island in the Malay Archepelago. Contemporary writing (for example Alfred Russel Wallace's two volume work The Malay Archepelago [1869] [35]) quite disingenuously presents the area as a naturalist's and hunter's playground peopled by a racially diverse population who possess some quaint social/cultural customs.[36] In Wallace's text, history or the politics of colonisation appear in brief isolated asides with reference to the Dutch colonial government or James Brooke, who annexed the area of Borneo called Sarawak and styled himself its White Rajah.[37] These references are absorbed into the main de-historicised, naturalised area covered by Wallace's account.

When I suggest that the Patusan section of Lord Jim be thought through in terms of the evolutionary narrative, I do not intend to acquiese in its removal from the space of colonialism/ capitalism by designating it part of a natural science fairy story (if that's possible) instead of a mythic one. On the contrary, evolutionary theory from 1859 (first edition of The Origin) and it's "take up" by Social Darwinism (which I discuss below) is fully implicated in

the ideology of its time, with particular reference to the "scientific" aspect of the "races of man" theories which played their part in the attempt to legitimate a colonialist/imperialist hegemony.

When theorising Patusan as an evolutionary space it is important to concentrate on how this place impacts on the white subject (Jim) and his negotiations with the heroic ideal as a sub-set of beliefs in the category of national identity. Putting evolutionary theory into Patusan does not simply construct it as pre-lapsarian, pre-historical or pre-capitalist in the sense that it offers a type of mythic alternative to the colonised sea and ports of the first part of Lord Jim. The evolutionary narrative colonises Patusan as fully as the adventure narrative presents a version of "the energizing myth of empire".

According to Allan Hunter (in Joseph Conrad and the Ethics of Darwinism), Patusan is "an adventure playground" for Jim (Hunter,p43) where he "lives out his adventure story" (Hunter, p45). It is also, according to Hunter, an "evolutionary backwater" (Hunter,p38) where Jim who "is not a degenerate, but rather has failed to evolve fully" (Hunter,p41) can hold sway over a people who have not developed to a perceived "European level" (Hunter,p41). I agree with Hunter that we can be fairly precise about the terms of the "experiment": Stein's formula is to put the would-be hero into a setting constructed by the adventure fiction he has read, along with elements of the travel

narrative and the new-ish theories of evolution, and wait to see what happens.

Hunter reads Marlow's comment about Dain Waris - that he has a "European mind" (LJ,p262) - as an "imperialist cliche", "with all its tacitly assumed value-judgements of imperialist superiority" (Hunter,p41). O'Hanlon also summarises the Patusan episode as "a nature which matches [Jim's] own depth of reversion with its primitive peoples and jungles" (O'Hanlon,p80). While the presentation of the natives of Patusan may contain elements of stereotype, what is being tested, what is being "put into question", is not primarily the environment and its inhabitants, it is the white subject who inserts himself into the native society. And what Marlow's narrative wrestles with continually (as it did in Heart of Darkness) is a persistent doubt as to the superiority of the "European mind". Jim ultimately fails in his responsibilities to his adopted community, while the Europeans who are the officers on board the Patna don't exactly fulfil any criteria of racial superiority. (When the German captain refers to the pilgrims as "dese cattle" [LJ,p15] his remark is more apt to his own motley crew.)

What figure of a hero does Jim cut in Patusan? Marianne DeKoven comments on the text's insistence on Jim's whiteness - see for example Jim "white from head to foot" (LJ,p336) - as "the dazzling white of an exaggerated version of his racial identity ... Conrad is presenting for critique the hegemonic alliance of whiteness and maleness

embodied (exaggerated and therefore undermined) in Jim. (Critique, of course, is in equipoise with sympathy ... Jim is, after all, 'one of us')" (DeKoven,pp149-50).

At first, Jim seems to become the story book hero he wants to be in Patusan. "I affirm" Marlow declares, "he had achieved greatness" (LJ,p225). The use of the pluperfect tense echoes Jim's tentative admission to Marlow of his leap from the **Patna**: "I had jumped ... it seems" (LJ,p111, text's ellipsis). The linguist Emile Benveniste makes a distinction between language that assumes a speaker and a hearer ("discourse") and language that attempts to erase the speaker ("histoire").[38] The "utterance" of "histoire" "characterizes the narration of past events" and one of the tenses employed in this narration is the pluperfect (Benveniste,p206) which both Jim and Marlow make use of in the citations above. "No one speaks here" Benveniste writes, "the events seem to narrate themselves" (Benveniste, p208).

Thus, Jim the subject is seemingly erased from Marlow's statement of his greatness in the same moment that the status is attributed to him. He attempts the same linguistic sleight in his own statement about his leap: it was he/it wasn't he. What Benveniste calls "an absence of person" (Benveniste, p209) is a repeated characteristic of Marlow's narrative and Jim's embedded narrative. The question of presence/absence functions at the linguistic as well as the structural and semantic level. Lord Jim asks, perhaps, as part of its problematic, what does it mean to

write or to narrate an event without an actor? Or to write a "novel without a hero"?

The Jim who takes Marlow to visit Rajah Allang at the height of his (Jim's) powers "appeared like a creature not only of another kind but of another essence. Had they not seen him come up in a canoe they might have thought he had descended upon them from the clouds" (LJ,p229). Here Jim "appears" to have achieved the status of an imperialist icon confirming the superiority of the European male. And the catalogue of his heroic achievements is long and impressive and very much in the mould of the hero of the adventure narrative: he dispenses justice via Rajah Allang at imminent risk of being poisoned (LJ,p250); he leaps to freedom over the Rajah's stockade (LJ,pp251-55) - this time the leap is the required heroic act; he leads the fight against Sherif Ali (LJ,pp264-272); he annexes the "excessive, almost fanatical ... devotion" of Tamb'Itam (LJ,p270) and the love of Jewel (LJ,p275 **et seq**), with whose help he defeats the assassins sent by his enemies, so earning himself the title "Tuan Jim" (LJ,pp295-302).

His comment on Doramin and his dependents - "They are like people in a book, aren't they" (LJ,p260) - shows Jim has not grasped that he is as much a person in a book as they are. He exists in what Marlow calls "a sort of sublimated, idealized selfishness" (LJ,p177), an "exalted egoism" (LJ,p416) which renders him and his whiteness "always mute, dark - under a cloud" (LJ,p342).

Patusan is the final testing ground against which Jim is tried and failed as emblematic white hero, a failure which the text that is Lord Jim struggles to come to terms with. After his leap from the **Patna**, Jim as white subject is still in thrall to "a shadowy ideal of conduct" (LJ,p416) which renders the statement that he is "one of us" (LJ,pp43,78,93,**passim**) unclear. If the "ideal of conduct" is "shadowy" how do we know what it is that constitutes "one of us"? As Suresh Raval writes in The Art of Failure, the text vacillates between Jim as "inscrutable" (LJ,p416) (and note here that Marlow employs the adjective usually reserved to represent the "other" as strange and undecipherable) and "one of us", creating "an unresolvable textual ambiguity".[39]

Placing Jim in the setting of Patusan doesn't solve the problem of a slightly regressive Jim, now able to play the hero in an even more regressive setting - it presents the reader with a complication of terms that renders the difference between civilised/primitive more difficult rather than less, where the white hero has become as shadowy as the native "other".

When Jim's leap divides the narrative that is called Lord Jim, it also proposes the theoretical models through which the text can be read. What would it mean to read Lord Jim through the gap that Jim's leap creates? In A Theory of Literary Production, Pierre Macherey theorises the gap as

an inextricable part of the structure of a narrative and as part of the hermenutic enterprise:

> The structure of the work, which makes it available to knowledge, is this internal displacement, this caesura, by which it corresponds to a reality that is also incomplete, which it shows without reflecting. The literary work gives the measure of a difference, reveals a determinate absence, resorts to an eloquent silence.[40]

Thus "it seems useful and legitimate to ask of every production what it tacitly implies, what it does not say" (Macherey,p85). The literary work "in its every particle ... **manifests**, uncovers, what it cannot say. This silence gives it life" (Macherey,p84). The object of "critical discourse" is not to "resolve" or "absorb" the juxtaposition and conflict of the several meanings which produce the radical otherness which shapes the work, but "simply" to display it (Macherey,p84). Alan Sinfield emphasises the ideological implications of Macherey's theory: "As Pierre Macherey proposes, the point at which the text falls silent is the point at which its ideological project may be disclosed. What may there be discerned is both necessary and necessarily absent; it manifests breaking points of the text, moments at which its ideological project is under special strain".[41]

If Lord Jim breaks down at the point where Jim is supposed to display his heroic colours/colour, then this suggests that a version of white subjectivity is being doubted and questioned. This makes Marlow's narrative task virtually impossible, the ideological equivalent of the curate's egg. Marlow upholds traditions of fidelity and

soundness while being made painfully aware that these traditions are deeply flawed. The conflict is configured in the stalwart form of Jim. No wonder he averts his eyes "before the subtle unsoundness of the man" (LJ,p89). Meeting and narrating Jim means that Marlow is attempting to "comprehend the Inconceivable" (LJ,p93).

It is around the "Inconceivable", around the emptiness of ideological beliefs that Jim's leap exposes, that Marlow's narrative, as one of many narratives about Jim, shapes itself. Following from Macherey's idea of the text "manifest[ing]" what it "does not say ... what ... [it] **cannot say**" (Macherey,p87), I'd like to juxtapose M.M. Bakhtin's ideas about the dialogic resources of the novel. For, I suggest, the gap created by Jim's leap can be read **both** as the place where the text breaks down, where it is fissured **and** where it doubles itself, where it summons the resources of a number of voices in an effort to understand Jim's story.

In Nomadic Voices: Conrad and the Subject of Narrative, Bruce Henricksen reads Conrad through Bakhtin's paradigms, where "the novel becomes the genre that is the shared space of society's competing voices and accents". This, according to Bakhtin, indicates the novel's "dialogic potential".[42] He adds: "Marlow's story is made of many stories that he gathers in diverse places and times, and each element of Jim's story is also someone else's story ... Marlow's discourse and point of view are dialogically inhabited by the words ... and by the points of view of

these others" (Henricksen, p85-86). But granting the dialogicity of Marlow's and the inserted narratives, the danger remains that in being able only to record - mostly - European males' narratives, the dialogic aspect might lean a little heavily to one side of the encounter. (Even the Malay helmsmen's evidence at the inquiry is given through an interpreter and written as reported speech [LJ,pp98-99].)

However, when the novel as a genre is defined by, structured through, dialogism, this presents another way of "reading the gap" that Jim's leap makes "visible": for if the gap can be read as a breakdown of the novel's ideological project - the adventure story breaks down at its weak point - it is also the space in which dialogism inheres. Structurally, it's the space where the voice of the omniscient narrator gives place to Marlow's narrative and the narratives which are embedded within it. As in Marlow's encounter with the alcoholic Chief Engineer of the Patna, the reader is constrained to disentangle "that thread of logic in such a delirium" (LJ,p55).[43]

The oxymoronic juxtaposition of "logic" and "delirium" in the above citation points to another aspect of the Bakhtinian reading. According to Lynne Pearce, in Bakhtin's theory: "all verbal/textual meaning is ultimately determined by a word's relationship to 'a future answer word'".[44] Bakhtin calls this potential the "internal dialogism of the word ... [which] encounters an alien word not only in the object itself: every word is directed

toward an **answer** and cannot escape the profound influence of the answering word that it anticipates" (Bakhtin,p280). The use of the word "alien" in this translation, is pertinent to Marlow's narrative. For how far is the response his narrative expects already "colonised" by the terms of that narrative itself? How "alien" can the response be?

Bakhtin emphasises this point: "All rhetorical forms, monologic in their compositional structure, are oriented toward the listener and his answer", and this "provoking" of an answer can itself be monologic, not a response but a continuation of what went before (Bakhtin,p280). Thus an awareness of both the monologic continuation and the dialogic potential of the novel means that: "Discourse lives, as it were, on the boundary between its own context and another, alien, context" (Bakhtin,p284).

I propose that it is precisely this simultaneous awareness of "its own context and another alien context" that informs both Lord Jim and Darwin's Origin of Species, as well as the wider debate that was joined after the latter's publication. The debate about man's place in nature and society - and more specifically about the white man's place in a well-established but constantly contested hierarchy - used Darwin's theories as one of its points of departure. I would like to trace a particular geneological line which leads through a discussion of a specific area of Darwin's theory and rhetoric to the "take up" of his ideas with

reference to theories about race which were developed as part of imperialist ideology during the nineteenth century in Britain.

Bakhtin's theories of polyphony and dialogism in the novel might be said to find their natural science analogue in The Origin's reiteration of the richness, variability and interconnectedness of the species.[45] The proliferation of nature and the mechanisms for generation and development of species finds its figurative analogue in Darwin's use of metaphor. The term "natural selection" is itself a metaphor and the use of metaphor as part of scientific rhetoric has provided ample material for theoretical debate up to the present.

Darwin illustrates his theory of the evolution of species by natural selection with a branching diagram (OS,pp160-61) which he later refers to as "the great Tree of Life" (OS,p172). Harriet Ritvo observes that Darwin is developing the "ancient metaphor" of the chain of being derived from Aristotle, and at the same time displacing man from his cumulative/culminative position at the top of the tree or the end of the chain.[46] When Gillian Beer writes: "Man is a determining absence in the argument of The Origin of Species" (Beer,FN,p212), she is indicating one aspect of an argument in which claim and counter-claim are made at a number of levels: within The Origin itself; among the contemporary scientists, theologians and intellectuals who discussed the text at the time of its publication and through the subsequent five editions.[47] This debate

continues to the present day in the anxious interventions concerning developments in genetic engineering and genetic blueprinting.[48]

For the purposes of my discussion, I wish to concentrate on Gillian Beer's Darwin's Plots and her later essay "The Face of Nature" and Robert M. Young's chapter "Darwin's Metaphor" in the book of that name. I am seeking to use aspects of these texts to argue an interpretation of The Origin which I take to be applicable to the literary text, Lord Jim. I concentrate therefore on the determining metaphors of The Origin - both natural selection and the Tree of Life - as well as recalling at this point, Darwin's theory about the intermittent geological record which allows interpretation to "read the gaps" of this record as a way of constructing a theory which will take into account both what has been lost or eroded with time as well as what is present in "every geological formation and every stratum" (OS,p292).

Gillian Beer makes a connection between "the absence of man from the text of The Origin" and Darwin's extensive use of metaphor in that text (Beer,DP,p61): man is absent as "the crowning achievement of the natural and supernatural order ... Throughout The Origin Darwin attempts to subdue the hierarchical nature of man's thought which places himself always at the pinnacle or centre" (Beer,DP,p60). It is this displacement that, Beer comments, "made the text subversive: it was - as at some level it

must have been known to be - deeply disquieting" (Beer,DP,p60).

But if man is absent from Darwin's "Tree of Life", he is present as "a point of reference or a point of conclusion" (Beer,DP,p62). The presence of man at the "point of conclusion" is literally signalled in The Origin some pages before its conclusion, when Darwin makes predictions for the future of his theory, promising that "light will be thrown on the origin of man and his history" (OS,p458). (Here though, prolepsis can also be read as ellipsis: the title of the text holds out the promise of providing an account of the "Origin of Species" - which presumably includes man. This account is deferred through the text and displaced by the conclusion to "the distant future" [OS,p458].) According to Beer, the presence of man in The Origin is suggested through the use of metaphor; he is, in addition, "concealed in its interstices" (Beer,DP, p61). Through the process of metaphorical figuration - for example the "Tree of Life" or nature gendered female - the "subtext of The Origin [is] ... unavoidably full of human reference" (Beer,FN,p214).

The question for Beer is, has Darwin deployed these metaphors "knowingly ... strategically" (Beer,FN,p214)? Are they being used in an attempt to reposition man in the "Great Chain of Being" where the paradigm has shifted from the idea of the Chain as a qualitative progression to Darwin's "Tree of Life" diagram (see OS,pp159-69) where progress has become process mapped as a "web of affinities"

(Beer,FN,p215)? Beer observes that this rethinking of man's place in nature forms a significant part of the argument against natural theology that Darwin contributed to when he decided, eventually, to go into print with his theory.

Two of the basic tenets of natural theology - the creation of man as the pinnacle of god's achievement and the separate creation and immutability of the species - are denied by the tree diagram. Beer writes: "Darwin rejected the pervasive anthropocentrism of natural theology with its assumption of special providence and creation. Instead he imaged a world of infinite interconnection, an 'inextricable web of affinities'. He refused to set man over against the rest of the natural world" (Beer,FN,p215). According to Beer, some of Darwin's contemporary readers had great difficulty in coming to terms with a model of kinship rather than a hierarchical one:

> In Darwinian myth, the history of man is of a difficult and extensive family network which takes in barnacles as well as bears, an extended family which will never permit the aspiring climber - man - to forget his lowly origins. In terms of the class organisation of his time this is clearly a deeply unpalatable view.
>
> (Beer,FN,p222)

What "Darwin emphasized [were] the problems of relationship" (Beer,FN,p224). (Darwin the Structuralist just about **avant la lettre**?!)

The problems which Darwin's theory exposed inhere both in the restructuring of the discipline the theory implies and in the terms he uses to describe this remaking. We are still with the difficulties of the use of metaphor, difficulties which are given a different emphasis by

Gillian Beer (as literary theorist) and by Robert M. Young (as historian of science) and which Jeff Wallace succinctly summarises in his introduction to a collection of essays on The Origin: "The Origin reveals tensions in its assumed relationship between language and scientific knowledge which often hinge on the role of metaphor".[49]

Part of Darwin's problem, as analysed by Beer, was that in The Origin he was opposing the natural theology of, for example, William Paley while still having to work in a relational, albeit oppositional, stance to these established ideas. Darwin proposes the mechanism of natural selection as the motor of evolution.[50] As Beer remarks, Darwin is substituting nature for god (as I suggest Stein does) when he thinks about and writes "natural selection". He struggles "to expand the material order rather than ... leave a metaphysical void. He has to put something in the space left by God" (Beer,FN,p231).

What is for Beer the difficulty of metaphor, its "tendency to become more concrete than was intended - for the second term to achieve a dominant position in meaning" (Beer,FN,p237), is for Harriet Ritvo (in her essay "Classification and Continuity in The Origin of Species") the danger of analogy: "If the things compared are not identical, they must differ from as well as resemble each other, and these differences can distract attention from, or even completely undermine, the focal similarity" (Ritvo,p60-61).

The difficulties of signification work out at a referential level as well, bringing Darwinian theory into contact with the world of (historical) events. Referring to Darwin's "Tree of Life" diagram Beer notes: "the tree is both geneological, the tree of man, and the great tree of nature which has no particular regard for man. It is also both an oppressive colonial image and an organic image" (Beer,FN,p239). What Beer emphasises here in her juxtaposition of the image as both "oppressive[ly] colonial" and "organic", is that difficulties with metaphor are implacably linked with the difficulties of the relations between the races of man in the cross-cultural encounter which makes imperialist history (and which might, given the following citation, be called the origins of The Origin of Species): "Darwin, watching the oppression of the Indians by the Spaniards and recording it in the voyage of the **Beagle**, had also seen the implications of 'natural' selection in the human world" (Beer,1986,p239).[51] The overt incorporation of imperialist and racist ideas into Darwin's theory made for that particularly contentious intellectual and active movement called Social Darwinism.

In his essay "Darwin's Metaphor", Robert M. Young emphasises the scientific aspect of Darwin's theory. For him the question is: how scientific is this theory? In this context, metaphor becomes a problem for Young too, but in a different way than it is for Gillian Beer. He takes issue with the terms in which the theory was expressed, taking as a baseline the analogy Darwin began with "between the

unlimited changes which could be produced by breeders of domesticated varieties on the one hand and a similar process occurring in nature on the other" (Young,DM,p85; and see OS, chapters 1 and 2). Young is right to warn against the dangers of analogy (see Beer and Ritvo above) but his main disagreement focuses on the "mechanism of natural selection" (Young,DM,p90) and the language in which that mechanism is formulated: "In moving from artificial to natural [selection], Darwin retains the anthropomorphic conception of **selection**, with all its voluntarist overtones" (Young,DM,p87).

In addressing the complex relationship between scientific theory and the language which is available for its expression, Young seems to be simplifying these complexities by attempting to reassert the linguistic boundaries and "rules" that obtain both between science and not-science and within the sciences themselves. In this Linnean attempt at a fairly rigid classification, biology - and specifically Darwin's theory - comes rather low down in the hierarchy:

> The rules of scientific explanation which were developed in the seventeenth century banished purposes, intentions, and anthropomorphic expressions from scientific explanations. Biologists, however, had never been very good at confining their explanations to matter, motion, and number. They had persisted in employing powers and faculties and had moved on to slightly less septic categories such as biological properties (e.g., irritability, contractility, sensibility) in spite of the official paradigm. But even by the loose standards of biological explanation, it is surprising to find such **rank** anthropomorphism at the heart of the most celebrated unifying theory in biology.
>
> (Young,DM,p93,emphasis added)

Darwin himself provides the corrective to Young's attempt at the rigid policing of the linguistic boundaries of the scientific disciplines (complete with an anthrpomorphic slip) in the third edition of The Origin:

> In the literal sense of the word, no doubt, natural selection is a misnomer; but whoever objected to chemists speaking of the elective affinities of the various elements? and yet an acid cannot strictly be said to elect the base with which it will in preference combine ... Who objects to an author speaking of the attraction of gravity as ruling the movements of the planets?
> (ed Peckham,OS,p165)

So why do the demonstrated anthropomorphisms of chemistry and physics escape the sharp criticisms heaped on Darwin's use of them in a biological context? Young provides part of an answer although, significantly, he concentrates here on the reception of the theory rather than the linguistic terms in which it is formulated: "Of course, much of the basis for reservations about evolution can be traced back to the special status of man, and the battlefields of geology and biology were given special meaning because of their location as outposts of the crucial central issue" (Young,DM,p103).

This comment leads back to the beginning of this section where I discussed Gillian Beer's perception that the absence of man in The Origin is underlined/undermined by the anthropomorphism of language and a writer's inability to entirely expunge metaphor from a text. What The Origin returns to through its use of anthropomorphic metaphor is what Young calls "the crucial central issue": man's place in nature.

Darwin's view of the natural world as (sometimes) multiple, various, might be said to find its literary analogue in Bakhtin's theory of dialogism in the novel, and the gap, the disjunction which fissures Lord Jim might find its analogue in the attempt to "fit" Darwin's evolutionary theory with Social Darwinism, a move which intersects with imperialist ideology and its attempts to theorise "race" and ideas about progress/regression. In Faces of Degeneration, Daniel Pick remarks a shift of emphasis which is summed up by Darwin's two major productions: "Somewhere in the passage from Darwin's The Origin of Species (1859) through The Descent of Man (1871) to the end of the century, the dominant social implications of evolution, in the eyes of the evolutionists, alter markedly".[52]

The debate about man's place in nature as taken up by the Social Darwinists concentrated part of its energies on the terminology which is used to describe man's development from his simian forbears: is it an ascent or a descent? For Gillian Beer this is the double edge

> which can serve as a metaphorical basis for more than one reading of experience: ... the 'ascent' or 'descent' of man may follow the same route but the terms suggest very diverse evaluations of experience. The optimistic 'progressive' reading of development can never expunge that other insistence that extinction is more probable than progress.
> (Beer,DP,p9)

This contradiction produces "a double contrary story". Is "descent" man's "fall from his Adamic myth or his genetic descent (ascent) from his primate forbears". She adds: "The ideas of development and of retrogression or degeneration were complimentary in many minds" (Beer,DP,pp116,139).

Allan Hunter writes that Henry Drummond, an anthropologist, published The Ascent of Man (1894) as a corrective to Darwin's Descent of Man "because he wished to put right what he thought were shortcomings of Darwin's work" (Hunter,p80). (Hunter surmises that Conrad had read Drummond.)

Ideas about man's ascent/descent are deeply implicated in the theorising of race and racial superiority. The Descent of Man marks Darwin's intervention in the debate, crossing from the complex terrain of the animal, vegetable and geological to the even more controversial space of the human. It was Darwin's wisdom to leave aside any overt discussion of man in The Origin of Species; it was his misfortune that the subject had to be broached in the course of the next ten years. For in suturing Darwin's name to the word "social" it meant that, as Raymond Williams writes in his essay "Social Darwinism", "the theory of natural selection" (and as Williams points out "biology itself has from the beginning a strong social component") was extended "to social and political theory".[53]

Williams explains that though Darwin adopted Herbert Spencer's phrase "survival of the fittest" in the fifth edition of The Origin, the emphases that the two authors gave the phrase were different: in Spencer's sense "fittest" meant "best"; in Darwin's sense it meant "those most adapted to their environment" (Williams,p699). T.H. Huxley wrote in his 1893 essay "Evolution and Ethics": "The whole confusion has arisen from identifying fittest

with best".[54] This confusion didn't stop theorists of race and imperialism from adopting Spenser's phrase in the sense which emphasised the connection between "fittest" and "best".

Greta Jones states (in Social Darwinism and English Thought): "To a large extent the history of Social Darwinism is the history of how the **problems** - rather than the achievements -in Darwinism were put to work in the interest of social thought" working as part of the ideology which "'naturalised' the social order".[55] Darwin's work was written and read

> in the context of the debate which took place in the late [eighteen] sixties, in the British Association and elsewhere, between the progressionists and the degenerationists. Briefly it revolved around whether 'savage' tribes could be treated as exemplifying the past of 'modern' social systems or whether they were ... the barbaric remnants of previous civilisations.
> (Jones,SDET,p18)

In The Descent of Man, Darwin discusses the race question in the terms Jones outlines above, questioning whether there might be a hierarchy of race: "whether man, like so many animals, has given rise to varieties and sub-races" (DM1,p9).[56] The point at issue here is not just how far man has developed from his primate forbears, but how near the "savage" is to these forbears and how far he is - or how near - to the white man. This anxiety surfaces at the end of the second volume of The Descent where Darwin attempts to sum up (white) man's achievement:

> Man may be excused for feeling some pride at having risen, though not through his own exertions, to the very summit of the organic scale; and the fact of his having thus risen, instead of having been aboriginally placed there, may give him hopes for a still higher

> destiny in the distant future ... we must acknowledge ... that man with all his noble qualities ... with benevolence which extends not only to other men but to the humblest living creature, with his god-like intellect which has penetrated into the movements and constitution of the solar system - with all these exalted powers - Man still bears in his bodily frame the indelible stamp of his lowly origins.
> (DM2,p405)

Has Darwin been struck by doubt at the end of this "praisesong" or is he offering a timely warning? Darwin the scientist had to admit the common descent of the different races of man rather than siding with the scientists (for example Robert Knox in The Races of Man [1850]) who argued for a hierarchy of race, for "sub-races": "Those naturalists ... who admit the principle of evolution ... will feel no doubt that all the races of man are descended from a single primitive stock" (DM1,p229). Darwin here backs his idea of the species tree or the "Tree of Life". But other scientists and anthropologists were not so scrupulous in discussing their doubts and in separating out what can be proved scientifically from the extravagant claims that a particular ideology makes.

Thus the "privileged" reader in Lord Jim opens Marlow's packet secure in the "firm conviction [of] the truth of ideas racially our own, in whose name are established the order, the morality of an ethical progress" (LJ,p339). It is this belief that Marlow questions when he asks whether Jim "at the last ... had not confessed to a faith mightier than the laws of order and progress" (LJ,p339). Whether he has found this faith or not, Jim's mysterious "message to the impeccable world" (LJ,p339), as

framed by Marlow, continually vacillates between the need to affirm Jim as a model "one of us", that is a superior white man, one who has conquered fear and cowardice, and the knowledge that he is unclassifiable, always "under a cloud ... impossible to see ... clearly" (LJ,p339). I'd like now to concentrate on the aspect of the unsuccessful appropriation of Jim to the "species" of hero.

In the introduction to Darwin's Plots, Gillian Beer observes that "evolutionary theory has been assimilated and resisted by novelists, who within the subtle enregisterment of narrative, have assayed its powers. With varying degrees of self awareness they have tested the extent to which it can provide a determining fiction by which to read the world" (Beer,DP,p4). Following the idea of evolutionary theory providing a "determining fiction" or a narrative structural model, what model might suggest itself for Jim's heroic construction? Stein's butterflies provide an intriguing starting point.

In 1939 Florence Clemens published an article called "Conrad's Favourite Bedside Book".[57] This book was Alfred Russel Wallace's The Malay Archepelago (1869). Wallace was the naturalist who co-discovered the theory of natural selection independently of Darwin and who wrote to him about this discovery. Darwin was pushed to publish his theory by Wallace's communication, after vacillating for over ten years, worrying that he would be condemned by the orthodox scientific community and by the clergy. After a

joint Darwin-Wallace paper was read to the Linnean Society on 1 July 1858, Wallace agreed that Darwin could publish his theory under his (Darwin's) name.[58] When Wallace published The Malay Archepelago it was dedicated: "To Charles Darwin/Author of 'The Origin of Species'/I dedicate this book/not only/as a token of personal esteem and friendship/but also/to express my deep admiration/for/his genius and his works" (MA1,pv).

At the time of the publication of The Origin Wallace was undertaking his voyage through the Malay Archepelago collecting and classifying specimens (and shooting orang-utans by the dozen). When he returned from his research trip in 1862 his "Eastern collection" comprised:

310	specimens	Mammalia
100	---------	Reptiles
8,050	---------	Birds
7,500	---------	Shells
13,100	---------	Lepidoptera
83,200	---------	Coleoptera
13,400	---------	other Insects

making a grand total of "125,660 specimens of natural history" (MA1,pxiv).

Florence Clemens cites The Malay Archepelago as Conrad's main source book for Malaysia when writing Lord Jim. She calls it "a rich quarry which yielded him much constructive material for the foundation of his tales" (Clemens,p306). The material yielded focuses at one point round the episode where Stein chases and captures the prize butterfly of his collection: "a butterfly in solitary grandeur spread out dark bronze wings, seven inches or more across, with exquisitely white veining and a gorgeous

border of yellow spots" (LJ,p205). Stein has come across the butterfly by chance after being ambushed and managing to kill all of his assailants. Checking if one of them is dead or shamming:

> "I observed something like a faint shadow pass over his forehead. It was the shadow of this butterfly. Look at the form of the wing. This species fly high with a strong flight. I raised my eyes and I saw him fluttering away. I think - Can it be possible? And then I lost him ... At last I saw him sitting on a small heap of dirt ten feet away. At once my heart began to beat quick. I let go my horse, keep my revolver in one hand and with the other snatch my soft felt hat off my head. One step. Steady. Another step. Flop! I got him! When I got up I shook like a leaf with excitement, and when I opened these beautiful wings and made sure what a rare and so extraordinary perfect specimen I had, my head went round and my legs became so weak with emotion that I had to sit on the ground". (LJ,p210)

Marianne DeKoven reads the story of Stein's butterfly capture as "a parable of the impossible dialectic of death and life, immanence and transcendence" (Dekoven,p159), while Tony Tanner emphasises the dualism of butterfly and beetle (not inconsiderable features of both Stein's and Wallace's collections - see the figures above) as a major structural trope in Lord Jim: Stein has "uncanny knowledge of the qualitative extremes of humanity: man as butterfly, man as beetle, he knows them both ... In fact one could describe the logic of Jim's continual flight as an attempt to escape from the beetles of mankind" (Tanner,BB, pp447,450).

Wallace's adventures in Malaysia provide a striking pair of episodes analagous to Stein's capture.[59] In the first episode Wallace writes:

> I was one afternoon walking along a favourite road through the forest, with my gun, when I saw a butterfly on the ground. It was large, handsome, and quite new to me, and I got close to it before it flew away. I then observed that it had been settling on the dung of some carnivorous animal. Thinking it might return to the same spot, I next day after breakfast took my net, and as I approached the place was delighted to see the same butterfly sitting on the same piece of dung, and succeeded in capturing it. It was an entirely new species of great beauty and has been named ... Nymphalis calydona.
> (MA1,p45)

In the second episode Wallace is after "the female of a new species of Ornithoptera or 'bird-winged butterfly', the pride of the Eastern tropics" (MA2,p50). The male of the species is "more than seven inches across the wings, which are velvety black and fiery orange, the latter colour replacing the green of the allied species. The beauty and brilliancy of this insect are indescribable" (MA2,p51). (Stein's butterfly is of a different colour but has the same wing-span as Wallace's specimen.) Wallace details the physical reactions he experienced when he caught this butterfly:

> None but a naturalist can understand the intense excitement I experienced when I at length captured it. On taking it out of my net and opening the glorious wings, my heart began to beat violently, the blood rushed to my head, and I felt much more like fainting than I have done when in apprehension of immediate death. I had a headache the rest of the day.
> (MA2,p51)

Conrad has incorporated his "favourite" author's experiences into those of his fictional analogue in a process to which literary theory gives the name "intertextuality" and which would, in the natural world, be called "mimicry". Both Darwin (in The Descent) and Wallace note this behavioural trait in butterflies.

A large proportion of The Descent is given over to a discussion of the way sexual selection functions in the species. Sexual selection is a "sub-set" of natural selection where success is not a matter of life and death as it is ultimately in the latter process. Rather the emphasis in sexual selection is on the number of offspring and the quality of the female the fittest male manages "to obtain" (DM1,p278) in the animal kingdom - with specific parallels and digressions in the human kingdom.[60] Darwin examines the "order lepidoptera", one of the insect sub-species, in Chapter eleven of The Descent, describing the process of mimicry that butterflies sometimes adopt. He notes that certain "quite distinct families" of butterflies imitate the colourings of another family as a way of protecting themselves from birds and other predators (DM1,p411). These characteristics are acquired "through variation and natural selection" (DM1,p411).

Darwin cites Wallace as a butterfly expert (DM1,pp411-417) and Wallace's text corroborates this behavioural trait in certain butterflies, for example when he writes about two species of butterfly: Papilio memnon and Papilio coôn. The female of the former species :

> closely resembles (when flying) another butterfly of the same genus but of a different group (Papilio coôn) ... we have here a case of mimicry ... The use and reason of this resemblance appears to be, that the butterflies imitated belong to a section of the genus Papilio which from some cause or other are not attacked by birds, and by so closely resembling these in form and colour the female of memnon and its ally, also escape persecution.
>
> (MA1,pp201-202)

Mimicry among butterflies is undertaken as camouflage, as protective covering, but remaining within the sense of mimicry as "imitation", I suggest that Jim as would-be hero could be further connected to the evolutionary narrative, if he could be constructed as attempting to "mimic" the myth of the hero.[61]

Jim's (unsuccessful) attempt at mimicry crosses from the rhetoric of the natural sciences into the space of ideology. In The Location of Culture, Homi Bhabha writes that mimicry in "the discourse of post-Enlightenment English colonialism", "problematises the signs of racial and cultural priority, so that 'national' is no longer naturalizable".[62] He adds:

> Colonial mimicry is the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, **as a subject of difference that is almost the same, but not quite**. Which is to say, that the discourse of mimicry is constructed around an **ambivalence**; in order to be effective, mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference.
> (Bhabha,p86).

The problem with mimicry when applied to the colonised "Other" is that it wants that "Other" to adopt the culture of the coloniser to the extent that the "Other" acknowledges the superiority of the colonising culture, but doesn't seek to put himself in the place of the coloniser. Thus the power struggle (or in evolutionary terms the "struggle for existence") is critically split between an idea of sameness, what Bhabha calls "mimesis", and the "almost the same but not white" (Bhabha, pp87,89) of mimicry where "Mimicry **repeats** rather than **re-presents**" (Bhabha,p88).

When Jim tries to imitate the white hero, the unresolved split between self/"Other" (i.e. the "Other" "out there") is replicated (or "repeat[ed]") in the originary split within the (colonial) self/"Other" - that "Other" who is "one of us". Thus Jim's attempt slips between the gap(s) and is irretrievable. The failure of Jim's attempted mimicry is also replicated - "through a process of writing and repetition" (Bhabha,p88) - in the failure of Marlow's narrative to "find" Jim. Jim as hero would seem to fall into the **mise-en-abîme** of these confusing repetitions, producing not a consolidation, but an unravelling of being.

Earlier in this chapter I asked what it meant for a novel, which takes as its ostensible matter the meaning of heroism, to be event without actor. Gillian Beer focuses on the absence of man in The Origin as the locus of an attempt to re-think the hierarchichal classifications of the natural and human world - an attempt which cannot succeed when the anthropomorphic character of language is taken into account. In this last section, I'd like to think further about the implications of an "absent" or indefinable hero, referring back to Darwin's restatement of the time-scale of existence.

In Marianne DeKoven's opinion "Jim dies following a bankrupt Western masculine code of honour" (DeKoven,p175). In following the evolutionary aspect of Lord Jim, I would further suggest that Jim's unsuccessful mimicry of the

hero has something to do with him being "belated" or being after his ("heroic") time. He might be said to be "out of step" or caught in the gap, in a "time-lag" between two time-frames.

The idea of Jim as a "belated" hero who does not "add up" (cf. Bhabha,p155), suggests that he is caught up in the "time-lag" between an adventure narrative which attempts to turn the raw acts of empire-making into normative historical practice and an evolutionary narrative. This evolutionary narrative on the one hand tries to re-make these norms according to so-called "scientific" formulae concerned with statements about race which seek to arrange different racial groups in a Linnean system of hierarchical classification. On the other hand it registers a scale of development as process, and not necessarily progress, stretching into a past and a future well beyond the span of man's biblical threescore years and ten. What does it mean for Jim to "lag" in this way?

Jim is "too late" for the adventure story, in that he has missed the time of myth-making when the James Brookes of legend were constructing themselves and being constructed. These are the would-be empire-builders of whom Conrad writes they were "ahead of civilisation" (LJ,p13) - in the sense that they are the pioneering vanguard, the Burtons, Spekes, Stanleys of my previous chapter, and the "unknowns" like "Gentleman" Brown in Lord Jim.

The stories that Jim reads have already passed into the past, hence the ambiguous use of "beforehand" in the

following citation: "On the lower deck in the babel of two hundred voices [Jim] would forget himself, and beforehand live in his mind the sea-life of light literature" (LJ,p6). Does the "beforehand" indicate that Jim lives imaginatively in the historic past of the stories he reads? Or in the "before" which prefaces his own future triumphs - as he imagines they will be? Whichever way, this adverbial use of the word signifies Jim's dislocation in time with reference to the self he wishes to make. He is already caught in the gap, oscillating between fantasy, the life of the imagination and the practicalities of action that Conrad writes about in his essay "Well Done". Maybe it is this dislocation that Stein is referring to when he says that Jim is "the youngest human being now in existence" (LJ,p219).

For "Gentleman" Brown, Jim is simple, he's a "Fraud", a "hollow sham" (LJ,p344), someone who amasses the "plunder" of empire and then overlays these actions with heroic-moral rationalisation or with myths: the myth of the superior white hero. Brown refuses the "veilings" of ideological justification and Marlow attributes to him "a sort of virile sincerity in accepting the morality and the consequences of his acts" as well as an "almost inconceivable egoism" (LJ,p394). As a "latter-day buccaneer" Brown is also an atavistic figure, someone who has stepped out of the past, out of an adventure story which doesn't "veil" the brutalities of conquest with the moralistic lies of perceived national exigency.

As Redmond O'Hanlon remarks, in some ways Brown is the hero Jim has failed to be. Referring to the episode where Brown abducts the missionary's wife (LJ,pp353,384), O'Hanlon writes: "Brown's conduct is exemplary in one sense in Conrad's world: his passionate fidelity is far from egotistical abandonment, betrayal, of his chosen mate; Brown's curious history in love is no digression, but highlights the terrible failure of Jim" (O'Hanlon,p139). Jim's failure as hero includes a betrayal of personal and public commitments: Jewel, Dain Waris and the community he has pledged loyalty to are sacrificed to his "exalted egoism" (LJ,p416). (In "egoism", it seems, "Gentleman" Brown and Lord Jim are equals but at ostensibly opposite poles.)

If Jim is "too late" for the adventure story, he is "too early" for the "evolutionary" time-frame that Stein might be proposing when he advises Marlow "to the destructive element submit yourself" (LJ,p214). In this much-discussed speech,[63] I suggest that Stein presents the idea of man existing out of his element - both biologically and metaphysically: "A man who is born falls into a dream like a man who falls into the sea" (LJ, p214). The analogy he makes between "dream" and "sea" disturbs the assumption that man is fitted to his environment. Stein's words suggest the opposite: that the element into which man falls when he begins existence is a "destructive", an alien one. Yet Stein's man does not perish in this element; rather he is exhorted to adapt himself to it, to reach some kind of

balance within it: "With the exertions of your hands and feet in the water make the deep, deep sea keep you up" (LJ,p214).

Within the context of a continuing evolutionary time-frame, Stein might be suggesting that man has yet to reach a further stage of development - whatever that may be. He might be proposing that the species man as he stands in the nineteenth century is still at an intermediate stage, still potentially mutable. And if so, what are the implications for Jim?

When Jim sees Marlow for the first time at the inquiry on the abandonment of the **Patna**, the moment is recorded by the omniscient narrator who uses Jim as focaliser: "Jim between two questions forgot himself so far as to find leisure for a thought. This fellow [ie Marlow] - ran the thought - looks at me as though he could see somebody or something past my shoulder" (LJ,p33). Looking at Marlow looking at him, Jim registers a moment of doubleness, a rare insight into a split subjectivity which might gesture towards the idea of "another" Jim.

Marlow's attempt to construct a Jim who is "one of us" could be read, more radically, as an attempted redefinition of the idea of the hero, where the traditional hero figure has become redundant (or could it be extinct?), as Marlow's narrative demonstrates through what might be called a series of (Jim's) failures. Jacques Darras has commented: "What dies in Lord Jim is the identifiable hero" (Darras,p7); for Jonah Raskin, Jim is "anti-hero"

(Raskin,p162). Both comments pick up on the impossibility of this subject position. The extinction of the traditional hero-figure raises the question of what might come next.

Writing about Victory, in his essay "Joseph Conrad and the Last Gentleman", Tony Tanner focuses on the "evolutionary" aspect of these speculations. Tanner refers to "the animal references and comparisons" in Victory [64] of which Lord Jim too is full: for example Jim as "cur" or not (LJ,p70); the pilgrims in the words of the German skipper as "dese cattle" (LJ,p15); the skipper as "a trained baby elephant walking on hind-legs" (LJ,p37). Tanner asks a pertinent question: "how on earth - and never mind off it - are we to 'place' such human-animals, animal-humans, in any coherent scale of ascent? All are co-present: there is variety; there are species - there is no eliminatory, discriminatory 'progress'" (Tanner,JCLG,p121).

What Tanner writes about the "last gentleman" (who, in his essay, is Axel Heyst) is equally relevant to my questions about the hero and Jim:

> The idea that evolution might produce a ... perfect gentleman, who would also be useless when it came to action - by design or chance, luck or cunning - he was a possible phenomenon, or 'sport' to use Darwin's term, that the various theories of evolution did not take into account ... Is Heyst a freak, a 'sport', a 'monster' - or an unanticipated evolutionary product? (Tanner,JCLG,p141)

The "unanticipated" hero as "evolutionary product" is undefinable in terms of what has gone before. He is, in terms of the Darwinian time-scale, always deferred, potentially variable. What might he become? Might he be "hybrid" (to use Bhabha's term)? Ambiguous? Doubting?

"Residual" and "emerging" (in Raymond Williams's terms)? Is Jim's lack of clarity - "He was not - if I may say so - clear to me" (LJ,p177) - his resistance, as he is narrated, to classification, a sign of his transitional status, a figure caught between one adventure/historical time-frame and another one which I have called evolutionary? This Jim cannot be fixed on a pin, or projected into a future in which he emerges as a perfected superman. This Jim's potential remains always ultimately unknowable, unreadable.

Victory - and I would add Lord Jim - are, Tony Tanner writes, "about non-survival" (Tanner,JCLG,p142) and the pathos of Marlow's narrative inheres in the fact that it must always remain unfinished. Applying the revised, evolutionary time-scale, we can piece together a version of the past which has produced a present time, but we will never be able to coincide with its issue in the future.

NOTES

1. Joseph Conrad, The Collected Letters Volume 2 1898-1902, ed Frederick R. Karl and Laurence Davies, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986, p302.

2. Ed Norman Sherry, Conrad: The Critical Heritage, London and Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd, 1973, p123. All further references to this work, abbreviated CCH, will be included in the text.

3. Ed Zdzislaw Najder, Conrad Under Familial Eyes, Trans. Halina Carroll-Najder, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983, p195-96.

4. F.R. Leavis, The Great Tradition (1948), London: Chatto and Windus, 1955, p190.

5. See for example Albert J. Guerard, Conrad the Novelist, Cambridge Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1958, pp166-167.

6. See for example Daphna Erdinast-Vulcan, Joseph Conrad and the Modern Temper, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991, pp34-47. All further references to this work, abbreviated Erdinast-Vulcan, will be included in the text.

7. Fredric Jameson, The Political Unconscious: Narrative as Socially Symbolic Act (1981), London and New York: Routledge, 1989, p207. All further references to this work, abbreviated Jameson, PU, will be included in the text.

8. Gillian Beer, Darwin's Plots: Evolutionary Narrative in Darwin, George Eliot and Nineteenth Century Fiction, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983, p236. All further references to this work, abbreviated Beer, DP, will be included in the text.

9. Charles Darwin, The Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex, 2 Volumes, London: John Murray, 1871, volume 1, p90. All further references to this work, abbreviated DM and followed by volume number, will be included in the text.

10. See Joseph Conrad, Lord Jim (1900), The Uniform Edition, London: J.M. Dent, 1923, p132. All further references to this work, abbreviated LJ, will be included in the text.

11. Griselda Pollock, Avant-Garde Gambits 1888-1893: Gender and the Colour of Art History, London: Thames and Hudson, 1992, p7.

12. Jacques Berthoud, Joseph Conrad: The Major Phase, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978, p66.

13. Benita Parry, Conrad and Imperialism: Ideological Boundaries and Visionary Frontiers, London: The Macmillan Press, 1983, p77.

14. Martin Green, Dreams of Adventure, Deeds of Empire, London and Henley: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980, pix. All further references to this work, abbreviated Green, will be included in the text.

See chapter one for further discussion of this point.

15. Andrea White, Joseph Conrad and the Adventure Tradition: Constructing and Deconstructing the Imperial Subject, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p5. All further references to this work, abbreviated White, JCAT, will be included in the text.

16. Joseph Conrad, Notes on Life and Letters (1921), The Uniform Edition, London: J.M. Dent, 1924, pp189, 190.

17. See for example: Tony Tanner, "Butterflies and Beetles: Conrad's Two Truths" in ed Norman Sherry and Thomas Moser, Lord Jim: An Authoritative Text, Backgrounds,

Sources, Essays in Criticism, New York: W.W. Norton & Co. Inc., 1968, p449. (All further references to this work, abbreviated Tanner, BB, will be included in the text.) Marianne DeKoven, Rich and Strange: Gender, History, Modernity, Princeton New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1991, p149. (All further references to this work, abbreviated DeKoven, will be included in the text). Allan Hunter, Joseph Conrad and the Ethics of Darwinism: The Challenge of Science, Kent: Croom Helm Ltd, 1983 p34. (All further references to this work, abbreviated Hunter, will be included in the text.)

18. John Batchelor, Lord Jim, London: Unwin Hyman Ltd, 1988, p53.

19. Joseph Conrad, Notes on Life and Letters (1921), The Uniform Edition, London: J.M. Dent, 1924, p54.

20. Tony Tanner, Conrad: Lord Jim, London: Edward Arnold (Publishers) Ltd, 1963, pp7-8.

21. In these terms "Gentleman" Brown is an atavistic type, a throwback to the stories of marauding buccaneers and pirates (see LJ, p352). I shall return to "Gentleman" Brown.

22. Jeremy Hawthorn, Joseph Conrad: Language and Fictional Self-Consciousness, London: Edward Arnold (Publishers) Ltd, 1979, p42.

23. Joseph Bristow, Empire Boys: Adventures in a Man's World, London: Harper Collins Academic, 1991, chapter 3. All further references to this work, abbreviated Bristow, will be included in the text.

24. Rudyard Kipling, Captains Courageous: A Story of the Grand Banks (1897), London: Macmillan and Co. Ltd, 1932.

25. Conrad had read The Origin of Species and The Descent of Man according to David Tutein's listing of his reading. See Joseph Conrad's Reading: An Annotated Bibliography, West Cornwall CT: Locust Hill Press, 1990, p24.

26. Aileen Fyfe's essay, "The Reception of William Paley's Natural Theology in the University of Cambridge", The British Journal for the History of Science 30:3:106 (September 1997), "uses the misapprehension" that Paley's Natural Theology was an **official** set text at Cambridge University as a "starting point to investigate the role of natural theology in a Cambridge education in the first three decades of the nineteenth century" (p321).

27. J.W. Burrow, "Introduction", Charles Darwin, The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection or The Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life (1859), ed and introduction, J.W.Burrow, London: Penguin

Books, 1985, p20. All further references to this work, abbreviated OS, will be included in the text.

28. Robert M. Young, Darwin's Metaphor: Nature's Place in Victorian Culture, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985, p85. All further references to this work, abbreviated Young, DM, will be included in the text.

29. Derek Freeman, "The Evolutionary Theories of Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer", Current Anthropology 15:3 (September 1974), p215.

30. Gillian Beer, "'The Face of Nature': Anthropomorphic Elements in the Language of The Origin of Species" in ed L.J. Jordanova, Languages of Nature: Critical Essays on Science and Literature, London: Free Association Books, 1986, p217. All further references to this work, abbreviated Beer, FN, will be included in the text.

31. Jonah Raskin, The Mythology of Imperialism, New York: Random House, 1971, p167. All further references to this work, abbreviated Raskin, will be included in the text.

32. Redmond O'Hanlon, Joseph Conrad and Charles Darwin: The Influence of Scientific Thought on Conrad's Fiction, Edinburgh: The Salamander Press, 1984, p125. All further references to this work, abbreviated O'Hanlon, will be included in the text.

33. See DeKoven on Stein where she gives more equal weighting to the **chiaroscuro** in his portrayal. According to her reading "the novel's simplist positive version of Stein ... is put under erasure ... by his association with death [the rare specimen collection], reification, eeriness, and the macabre" (DeKoven, pp158-59).

34. Jacques Darras, Joseph Conrad and the West: Signs of Empire, trans. Anne Luyat and Jacques Darras, London and Basingstoke: The Macmillan Press, 1982, p27. All further references to this work, abbreviated Darras, will be included in the text.

35. Alfred Russel Wallace, The Malay Archepelago: The Land of the Orang Utan, and the Bird of Paradise. A Narrative of Travel with Studies of Man and Nature, 2 volumes, London: Macmillan and Co., 1869. All further references to this work, abbreviated MA and followed by volume number, will be included in the text.

36. Wallace was co-discoverer, but not collaborator, with Darwin of the theory of evolution by natural selection. For the long gestation period Darwin needed before he went into print with his theory and the agonies he suffered when he thought Wallace was going to beat him to the post, see the biographies by John Bowlby, Charles Darwin: A Biography, London: Hutchinson, 1990, chapters 14-22 and Adrian Desmond

and James Moore, Darwin (1991), London: Penguin Books, 1992, chapters 16-32.

37. Jim is supposed to be based to some degree on this English adventurer. See Green, pp304-06.

38. Emile Benveniste, "The Correlations of Tense in the French Verb", Problems in General Linguistics (1966), trans. Marry Elizabeth Meek, Coral Gables Florida: University of Miami Press, 1971, pp206, 208. All further references to this work, abbreviated Benveniste, will be included in the text.

39. Suresh Raval, The Art of Failure: Conrad's Fiction, Boston: Allwn & Unwin Inc., 1986, p66.

40. Pierre Macheray, A Theory of Literary Production (1966), trans. Geoffrey Wall, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978, p79. All further references to this work, abbreviated Macheray, will be included in the text.

41. Alan Sinfield, The Wilde Century: Effeminacy, Oscar Wilde and the Queer Moment, London: Cassel, 1994, p9.

42. Bruce Henricksen, Nomadic Voices: Conrad and the Subject of Narrative, Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1992, p 11. All further references to this work, abbreviated Henricksen, will be included in the text.

In his edition of Bakhtin's essays, Michael Holquist defines "dialogism" and "heteroglossia" in terms of each other, where "dialogism" is "the characteristic epistemological mode of a world dominated by heteroglossia" where "everything means, is understood as part of a greater whole - there is a constant interaction between meanings, all of which have the potential of conditioning others", "Glossary", M.M. Bakhtin, The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays, ed Michael Holquist, Trans. Caryl Emersen and Michael Holquist, Austin: Univeristy of Texas, 1981, p426. All further references to this work, abbreviated Bakhtin, will be included in the text.

43. J. Hillis Miller has called this encounter a "parody" of the attempt to interpret the text" in "The Interpretation of Lord Jim in ed Morton W. Bloomfield, The Interpretation of Narrative: Theory and Practice, Cambridge Massachusetts: Harvard University Press 1970, p222.

44. Lynne Pearce, Reading Dialogics, London: Edward Arnold, 1994, p36.

45. I concentrate here on one aspect of Darwin's theory. See Gillian Beer's introduction to the Oxford University Press edition of The Origin where she emphasises the "doubleness" of Darwin's theory which involved "extinction" as well as "proliferation", The Origin of Species (1859), Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1996, pvii.

46. Harriet Ritvo, "Classification and Continuity in *The Origin of Species*" in ed David Amigoni and Jeff Wallace, *Charles Darwin's The Origin of Species: New Interdisciplinary Essays*, Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1995, p55. All further references to this work, abbreviated Ritvo, will be included in the text.

47. See the variorum text edited by Morse Peckham for details of the publishing history of *The Origin*, Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species* (1859), A Variorum Text, ed Morse Peckham, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1959. All further references to this work, abbreviated ed Peckham, OS, will be included in the text.

48. See Steve Jones's *The Language of the Genes: Biology History and the Evolutionary Future* (1993), London: Flamingo, 1994, for a balanced over-view of these developments and their implications.

49. Jeff Wallace, "Introduction: difficulty and defamiliarisation - language and process in *The Origin of Species*" in ed David Amigoni and Jeff Wallace, **op. cit.**, p24.

50. It is to be noted, however, that "evolution" is not the term Darwin used in the first edition of *The Origin* where the preferred formulation is "the theory of descent through modification through natural selection" (OS,p453). The word "evolution" was not used in *The Origin* until the sixth edition was published in 1872, one year after *The Descent of Man*.

51. See Desmond and Moore, **op. cit.**, chapter 9, for an account of these events in a biographical context.

52. Daniel Pick, *Faces of Degeneration: A European Disorder c1848-c1918*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989, p158.

53. Raymond Williams, "Social Darwinism", *The Listener* 88:2278 (23 November 1972), p696. All further references to this work, abbreviated Williams, will be included in the text.

54. T.H. Huxley, "Evolution and Ethics" (Romanes Lecture 1893), T.H. Huxley and Julian Huxley, *Evolution and Ethics 1893-1943*, London: The Pilot Press Ltd, 1947, p81.

55. Greta Jones, *Social Darwinism and English Thought: the Interaction between Biological and Social Theory*, Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1980, pxiii. All futher references to this work, abbreviated Jones, SDET, will be included in the text.

56. See also on this subject Robert J.C. Young in Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race, London and New York: Routledge, 1995, especially on ideas of "monogenesis" and "polygenesis" in nineteenth-century theories of "race", pp9-13, **passim**.

57. Florence Clemens, "Conrad's Favourite Bedside Book", The South Atlantic Quarterly 38:3 (1939). All further references to this work, abbreviated Clemens, will be included in the text.

58. See Desmond and Moore, **op. cit.**, pp466-471.

59. This analogy has been noted by Clemens, pp314-315 and Batchelor **op. cit.**, p65.

60. A.S. Byatt traces these parallels and digressions which, in man-made society, can be construed as deviant in "Morpho Eugenia", the first of a pair of short novels that make up Angels and Insects, an exploration of scientific and supernatural spaces in nineteenth-century England.

61. Tony Tanner refers to him as "beautiful butterfly-Jim", Tanner, BB, p452.

62. Homi K. Bhabha, The Location of Culture, London and New York: Routledge, 1994, pp85, 87. All further references to this work, abbreviated Bhabha, will be included in the text.

63. Albert Guerard warns that, hermeneutically, this "ambiguous" phrase - "to the destructive element submit yourself" - has "regrettably come to mean anything any casual reader wants it to mean", Guerard, **op. cit.**, p165.
See also DeKoven on this speech, pp160-61. In her version Stein "rewrites the parable of Plato's cave".

64. Tony Tanner, "Joseph Conrad and the Last Gentleman", Critical Quarterly 28:1-2 (Spring-Summer 1986), p121. All further references to this work, abbreviated Tanner, JCLG, will be included in the text.

Chapter Three

Under Western Eyes or What Is To Be Done?

This chapter sets out from the premise that the split that was set up between Europe/not-Europe (see Chapter One on Heart of Darkness) in the construction of an imperialist hegemony was replicated internally as a split between Western Europe and Eastern Europe. With specific reference to Under Western Eyes (1911), I read the Russian domination of Poland as displaced by Conrad in this novel onto an internal struggle within Russia, and then geographically projected past Poland to Geneva where the Russian revolutionary exiles gather.

Thus a geographical and conceptual split between Europe and not-Europe which (precedes and) legitimates imperialist intervention in foreign territory, the oppression of native peoples and the suppression of indigenous political systems, is replicated and modified within Europe as a geographical/conceptual split between Western and Eastern Europe and within certain Eastern European states (Poland, Russia), where one country (Poland) all but disappears from the map when partitioned between three European powers in an act of imperialist aggression. (In the three partitions of 1772, 1793 and 1795, Poland was divided between Russia, Prussia and Austro-Hungary. The Republic of Poland ceased to exist between 1795-1918.)

In the essay "Autocracy and War" (1905), Conrad cites the French statesman Adolphe Thiers who "disconsolately exclaimed" after the French were defeated by the Prussians in 1870: "'**Il n'y a plus d'Europe!**'".[1] Conrad extends this exclamation retrospectively to include the reaction of Western Europe with reference to Russia's act of imperialism in occupying Poland. At the Congress of Vienna (1815), the Western European participants chose "the doctrine of nationalities" over the "doctrines of solidarity" (AW,p103), refusing then to condemn and oppose the partition of Poland as they would later ignore the Prussian invasion of France.

Christopher GoGwilt (in The Invention of the West: Joseph Conrad and the Double-Mapping of Europe and Empire) is concerned to chart "the transformation in the nature of cultural hegemony ... the shift from a European to a Western identity". He locates the shift "at the turn of the nineteenth to the twentieth century".[2] In this shift which brings about what GoGwilt calls "the double-mapping of Europe over Empire", "the changing map of Empire is consistently explained in terms of a crisis of European political representation" (GoGwilt,p109). I accept this formulation, but would add that this "transformation", which I have called a split between Western and Eastern Europe, can be placed earlier than the turn of the nineteenth to the twentieth century and, as far as Conrad's writing is concerned, could be pinpointed to the last partition of Poland in 1795 when Western Europe refused to confront the implications of the disintegration of Poland as a national entity.

I will also argue that this failure on the part of Western Europe is entwined with two other cultural and historical events which can be situated at the turn of the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, viz. the Enlightenment and the French Revolution (which cannot be simply linked as cause and effect). I suggest that the texts by Conrad that I will discuss in this chapter - the novel Under Western Eyes, the essay "Autocracy and War" and the short story "Prince Roman" (begun 1908; finished 1910) - engage both directly and indirectly with the legacy of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution and with the implications of this legacy for Western and Eastern Europe (and specifically for Poland).

Razumov, the protagonist of Under Western Eyes is sent by Councillor Mikulin, a functionary in the Russian government, to Geneva to spy on the exiled revolutionaries. Geneva is also the birthplace of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, self-styled "citizen of Geneva" and self-exile. Razumov writes a part of his "confessions" sitting on an island in

the middle of Lake Geneva near a bronze statue of Rousseau. In the Confessions (written 1766-70) and the Reveries of the Solitary Walker (written 1776-78), Rousseau writes about the idyllic time he spent living on the Isle de Sainte Pierre in the middle of Lake Bienne.[3] (Rousseau also made a direct textual contribution to the situation of Poland just prior to the First Partition). I believe that these generic and geographical correspondences between the two writers and their texts are not entirely accidental. Conrad employs them both overtly and covertly in his text in order to probe and question certain events and ideas which had both personal and political resonances for him.

For it is not only Rousseau and Razumov who are exiled from their country of birth. Conrad too was writing as an exile and engaging with the disenabling and enabling aspects of writing in exile. When Rousseau writes in his Confessions "If one wishes to devote one's books to the true benefit of one's country, one must write them abroad" (C,p378), he gestures towards one example of the enabling aspects of exile with reference to writing. When a writer wishes to criticise a country which practises political oppression, it is evidently safer to write a critique abroad; the citation could also refer to the overlaying of a textual distancing onto a geographical distancing. So, the geographical distancing that occurs when someone leaves their country of origin could also be said to provide a space for reflection and writing, a perspective from which to view that which could not be seen up close.

In addition, the confessional form raises questions of genre - specifically about the role and value of fiction and the act of fictionalising. The different forms of novel - Under Western Eyes - short story - "Prince Roman" - and essay - "Autocracy and War" - address different aspects of Conrad's past and chart the painful and circuitous route he took into his personal past and into a history that had both shaped and deformed his nation and his family.

The geographical displacement that Conrad practices when he substitutes political struggle within Russia for the Russia/Poland struggle could also be said to be repeated at a temporal level where historical retrospect can be read as another aspect of displacement. Is it possible then, to interpret Under Western Eyes both as a critique of the consequences of the failure of the Enlightenment heritage for **all** of Europe and as a vexed anti-revolutionary polemic whose reference point is the French Revolution? As Sophia Antonovna says to Razumov: "'The Revolution has its history by this time. You are in it and yet you don't seem to know it'".[4] (The text's capitalisation of the first letter of "Revolution" indicates its historical referrent.)

Under Western Eyes is haunted by a variety of "spectres" or phantoms. Razumov is repeatedly haunted by his idea of Russia, "the land of spectral ideas and disembodied aspirations (UWE,p34; see also pp37,84). It might be argued that Haldin haunts Razumov as the spectre of revolution, reminding the latter of what he wants to forget but cannot.

Another "spectre" that haunts the novel is Rousseau. It might seem strange given Conrad's recorded hostility to Rousseau - in both Under Western Eyes and A Personal Record (1912) - to use Rousseau's texts to explicate and question the construction and deployment of Rauzumov and Haldin. However, I believe that as an emblematic figure of Enlightenment and anti-Enlightenment thinking, Rousseau's influence is deeply felt even if Conrad's reactions to him are negative. Whether he likes him or not, Jean-Jacques Rousseau is not a figure Conrad can ignore.

According to David Tutein, Conrad had read Rousseau (though how thoroughly remains in doubt). Tutein lists him as having read Emile, The Social Contract and the Confessions.[5] As part of the purpose of Under Western Eyes is to present Razumov's moral and political education, a

possible model for this process could be sketched using Rousseau's ideas as set out in the Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality Among Men (1755), Emile (1762) and The Social Contract (1762).

In his essay on Rousseau, Claude Lévi-Strauss makes a bold statement with particular reference to a long footnote in the Discourse on Inequality: "Rousseau did not restrict himself to anticipating ethnology: he founded it".[6] And as the "Founder of the Science of Man", Rousseau, according to Lévi-Strauss proposes a basic and "paradoxical" methodological rule of ethnography: "Throughout [Rousseau's] work, the systematic will to identify with the other goes hand in hand with an obstinate refusal to identify with the self" (Lévi-Strauss,p35). The complexity and contradiction of the process of separation and identification that Lévi-Strauss indicates in the latter citation is made more rather that less difficult through the structural antithesis of the quoted sentence which presents its complex thought as an elegantly compressed simplicity (in translation at least). The difficulty could be put like this: is a precondition of identifying with the "other" a refusal to identify with the self? Is a refusal to identify with the self part of a "systematic" move to make an "other" of the self? Thus the only way that we can ever arrive at self-identity is to make that self an "other"? Lévi-Strauss's presentation of an important truth of Rousseau's thought - the coexistence of identity and estrangement - links itself to his forceful reiteration of the split between man in nature and man in society. Rousseau's **oeuvre** recognises and laments the fraught - and never completely successful - passage that man must make from nature to culture.[7]

The difficulty of the passage from nature to culture has a parallel in the difficulty of the transition from (functionally) self-sufficient man to citizen. With regard to the first half of the equation the Tutor/first-person narrator of Emile declares: "We are born, so to speak,

twice over; born into existence, and born into life; born a human being, and born a man" (E,p206). It is in the Discourse on Inequality that Rousseau grapples with the nature-culture model and in Emile that he takes on the man-citizen model. As if things weren't already sufficiently complicated, the Preface to the Discourse on Inequality adds another twist: the retrospectively applied construction of the passage from nature to society.

This Preface arises out of, and ultimately departs from, what Mark Hulliung, in The Autocritique of Enlightenment: Rousseau and the Philosophes, calls the practice of "philosophical history".[8] In the Discourse on Inequality, Rousseau, the "philosophe and antiphilosophe" (Hulliung,p2), extends the term "philosophical history" to present a philosophical speculation, an imaginative or "conjectural" history which rejects, amongst others, one of the **philosophes'** deeply-held beliefs: that the passage from nature to culture is a progress "when applied to mankind" (Hulliung,p57).

The Discourse on Inequality presents an imaginative history, or pre-history, of what social man could never have experienced: presocial man in the state of nature. Natural man pared down to the essentials which are "the source of all the rules of natural right"[10] is essentially solitary man who operates according to "two principles that are prior to reason, one of which makes us passionately interested in our well-being and self-preservation [**amour de soi-meme**], and the other of which inspires in us a natural repugnance for seeing any sentient creature, especially our fellow man, suffer or die [lat S compassion, **pitié**]" (DI,p17).

In naming compassion for others as one of the sources of natural right, in emphasising man's natural goodness in the state of nature (DI,p94), Rousseau is, as he reminds us, differing from previous theorists of natural man (particularly Thomas Hobbes) for whom man's existence in this state was "miserable" (DI,p43) and a constant

"struggle for existence" (to adopt a later phrase). Looked at from one angle, the need for natural man to use aggression against other members of the species might arise from what Rousseau calls "the principle of sociability" (DI,p17). The natural man who regularly associates with his fellows might be tempted into the vices which beset men who group together in (a) society.

Thus, Rousseau rejects the "principle of sociability". His natural man is first and foremost "solitary" (DI,pp32, 48). He mingles with the female of the species only to the extent needed to propagate the species (DI,p38). His non-social existence will extend to the non-recognition of his children (DI,p51). In sketching out the attributes of natural man, Rousseau managed, as he frequently did, to disagree with both pre-Enlightenment and Enlightenment orthodoxy: he refuted the Hobbesian view "that man is naturally wicked because he has no idea of goodness or vice-ridden because he has no knowledge of virtue" (DI,p44) as any mainstream **philosophe** might; but in rejecting man's social aspect as a pre-condition of man's state of virtue and, further, in attributing to that social aspect the beginning of man's fall from grace (DI,p55), he repudiated another of the **philosophes'** founding statements: perfectible man is always man in society.[11]

If natural man is as many miles and ages distant from social or civilised man as Rousseau can possibly make him, how is he going to make the leap from one state to the other - however undesirable this movement might be considered? He will make this quantum leap because natural man is only man **in posse** rather that man **in esse**. Natural man possesses - though in the state of nature he doesn't make use of - the "faculty of self-improvement" (DI,p33) or perfectibility. And, it is because he possesses this faculty, Rousseau argues, that all man's difficulties begin.

In the transition from savage to civilised, man learns to differentiate one from another in a move which supplies the (corrupt) basis of society: "The true founder of civil

society was the first man who, having enclosed a piece of land, thought of saying, 'This is mine', and came across people simple enough to believe him" (DI,p55). From this angle, differentiation is the root of all ensuing evil, in that natural man exchanges his state of equality for "inequality" which "derives its strength and growth from the development of our faculties and the progress of the human mind, and eventually becomes stable and legitimate through the institution of property and laws" (DI,p85). Thus, the philosophe-ical idea of perfectibility which encompasses this "development" and "progress" does not, according to Rousseau, equate with "virtue" but with the state of "inequality".

In one of the Footnotes to the Discourse on Inequality however, the angle of vision is altered: when (so-called) civilised man journeys to the lands inhabited by "savage" men he is not making a reverse journey from civilised to natural man, since the "savages" are already social. However, they are less than civilised, according to contemporary definitions, and therefore, maybe, closer to the state of nature than civilised man. They are, at any rate, different in the way they live from civilised men. It is this difference which travel writers and early ethnographers fail, according to Rousseau, to give its full due: "Despite the two or three hundred years since the inhabitants of Europe have been pouring into other parts of the world and constantly publishing new collections of voyages and travel, I am persuaded that the only men we know are the Europeans" (DI,p106). No matter how far European man travels he can reach but one conclusion:

> that men are the same everywhere, and since they all have the same passions and vices, it is rather pointless to seek to characterise different peoples - which is just about as well thought-out as to say that Pierre and Jacques are indistinguishable, since they both have a nose, a mouth, and two eyes.
> (DI,p107)

To me, Rousseau is asking: what is the reason we travel? Is it in order to distinguish differences or to

perpetuate presumed similarities? I began this section with Lévi-Strauss's statement about identification and differentiation which Rousseau's oeuvre examines in all its complexity. And I believe that the problems he poses - in what circumstances do we apply the criteria of differentiation and similarity; what are the results of these designations; and can some situations require elements of both -have reverberations through this chapter when I turn to Revolution, Enlightenment and their manifestations in Under Western Eyes.

A discussion of Rousseau's ideas about the education of the individual who will take up his place in his society, may enable us to view Conrad's Kirylo Sidorovitch Razumov as an unsuccessful Emile. For Razumov's dilemma - which is, to use Stein's words: "How to be" (LJ,p213) - is sketched in the division between parts one and two of the Discourse on Inequality. Part one asks how can man be free as man, while part two asks how can man be free as citizen. In Emile, this question is in part answered: "Obliged to combat either nature or social institutions, we must choose between creating a man or a citizen, for one cannot create both at the same time" (E,p7,translation amended). Rousseau doesn't reject out of hand the possibility of creating a man who is both man **and** citizen; it is circumstance (living as a man in society) that makes for the impossibility of doing both at once.

Rousseau begins Emile by placing natural and social in an uneasy juxtaposition: "God makes all things good; man meddles with them and they become evil" (E,p5). The correct system of education will play a positive role, ensuring that the pupil - here Emile - retains all that he can of what is best in him as a man while fitting him to take his part in society: "a natural education should fit a man for any position" (E,p22).

Conveniently, "Emile is an orphan" (E,p23). He is invented to be taught by the author in the role of tutor,

without what might be inconvenient interruptions from his biological parents. Rousseau chooses to exploit the advantages of the fiction genre and to present what is an educational and political tract (sections of The Social Contract are re-presented in section five of Emile, pp505-516) as the "story" of a boy's growth and development. (The term **bildungsroman** might be - just about - retrospectively applied here.)

The use of the fictive genre has other advantages for its author. Bereft of natural mother and father, Emile finds the dedication of both united in the lineaments of his Tutor. In a self-consciously literary gesture, Rousseau has "form[ed]" and "create[d]" his pupil "out of his own head" (E,p334). As he explicitly states later on, Emile is more than just the orphan pupil of his creator's fancy: "it is I who am really Emile's father" (E,p442; see also p533). Rousseau as Tutor has placed himself **in loco parentis**: when Emile's natural father "entrusted his son to my care he gave up his place to me" (E,p442).

Rousseau might be making the point that, since man lives in a corrupted and inequal society, in these circumstances the natural father may be rendered redundant after he has performed his biological role, and Emile is better off with a tutor/adoptive father who understands the mechanisms of modern living and can educate his pupil/"son" (E,p533) more effectively. Emile's sudden orphaning will then be compensated for if he looks on his tutor as his father. (In addition, I don't think it is a coincidence that the man who, on his own admission, abandoned his five children to the Foundling Hospital, should write at such length and in such detail about bringing up a child. Act of atonement? Imaginative compensation?)[12] Lack of parental presence and supervision - even of a surrogate kind - is a decisive factor in Razumov's un-sentimental education.

Rousseau writes: "Our Passions are the chief means of self-preservation" (E,p207). In distinguishing "our natural passions [which] are few in number" from those "which

enslave and destroy us" (E,p208) and which are aquired through acculturation, Rousseau brings us back to that section of the Discourse on Inequality where he has indicated self-love (**"amour de soi-meme"**) as "the origin of our passions, the root and spring of all the rest" (E,p208; see DI,pp47-48). Self-love is linked to self-preservation: "Self-preservation requires ... that we shall love ourselves" (E,p208). Deriving from this sentiment which is born with the child "is love of those about him" (E,p209) - those who ensure his survival and comfort. The nurse, the governess, are regarded with "affection" at the beginning as a result of "mere habit" (E,p209). Love follows on the discovery "not merely that they are useful to him, but that they desire to be useful to him" (E,p209).

It is when he is "awakened" to a wider world which includes "the consciousness of his relations to others ... the sense of duties and preferences" (E,p209), that the child can become "masterful, jealous, deceitful and vindictive" (E,p209) and a prey not to self-love but to "selfishness" which is another aspect of what the Discourse on Inequality calls "vanity" (**"amour-propre"**) (E,p209; DIpp115-16). Rousseau makes a distinction between the two terms:

> Self-love, which concerns itself only with ourselves, is content to satisfy our needs; but selfishness, which is always comparing self with others, is never satisfied ... Thus the tender and gentle passions spring from self-love, while the hateful and angry passions spring from selfishness.
> (E,p209).

Social man is, **per se**, not solitary man, and the "well-trained youth" (E,p217) will find that the love he feels towards those who care for him underpins "the habit of a kindly feeling towards his species" (E,p209). It is this "kindly feeling towards his species" that propells him - provided he is "well-trained" - towards his "first sentiment" which is not "love but friendship" (E,p217).

In due course, Emile will be "stir[red]" to compassion by "the groans and cries" of the afflicted (E,p220) and it

is the awakening of this "sentiment" which complements the self-love of which he has had previous experience (see also DI,pp45-46). For it is when we are "stirred by pity" that "we go beyond ourselves, and identify ourselves with the suffering animal, by leaving, so to speak our own nature and taking his" (E,p220). It is in this capacity for imaginary identification - what Lévi-Strauss designates the "will" to "identify with the other" by "refusing to identify with the self" - that we encounter the counter-balance to self-love (which is only concerned with the self) and the corrective to vanity (which places the self above everyone else). What then "becomes clear [is] that [the young man] must force his own way to happiness, without interfering with the happiness of others" (E,p221). (Compare with the "general will" which "forces" us "to be free" in The Social Contract.[13])

Rousseau summarises this section, beginning with a rejection of a quietist or stoic position that all are equally happy or miserable and that to act to change this state is superfluous. His call to Emile is to "observe" those around him and to "have respect then for your species" (E,p224). His call to the teacher is "teach your pupil to love all men, even those who fail to appreciate him ... speak in his hearing of the human race with tenderness, and even with pity, but never with scorn. You are a man; do not dishonour mankind" (E,p224). Emile's education begins by concentrating on the individual subject, but it is not complete until he has applied what he has learned to those around him.

When Emile first becomes aware of his equals he "compare[s] himself with them; and the first feeling excited by this comparison is the desire to be first" (E,p236). Is "self-love" to be permanently "transformed" into "selfishness"? The time has come for Emile to make use of his cognitive faculties and with the guidance of his Tutor he must learn the inter-dependence of society and the individual: "Society must be studied in the individual and

the individual in society; those who desire to treat politics and morals apart from one another will never understand either" (E,p236).

At the end of the fifth section of Emile, Rousseau has accomplished a philosophical tract (even though he did not like philosophers) and practical educational handbook which details the ways in which we can obtain the best from the naturally good child as he grows to manhood in a corrupt society. Unfortunately, Razumov is not raised according to this agenda.

In attempting to read Razumov in relation to Rousseau's ideas, the first point to be made is that Razumov has been deprived of one of the most fundamental requirements - one could almost call it a "natural right" - which provides the foundation for a happy and useful citizen. Razumov is, to all intents and purposes, an illegitimate orphan. The full implications of his orphaned state are not immediately presented in the narrative, but must be gathered up by the reader as she proceeds, in an act of what Ian Watt has called "delayed decoding". Emile is orphaned for Rousseau's purposes - one of which is for the author to be enabled to play the surrogate father. Razumov is not so lucky.

Even in his name, Razumov is misnamed. In Russian, **razum** is a philosophic term which means reason.[14] But reason does not play a part in the unfolding of his full name and the associations that trail in its wake. As the narrating teacher of languages very precisely tells the reader, Razumov has "called himself, after the Russian custom, Cyril Son of Isidor - Kirylo Sidorovitch - Razumov" (UWE,p3). The preciseness of "called himself" is pointed to in one of the conversations Razumov has with Peter Ivanovitch when the former declares: "'The very patronymic you are so civil to use when addressing me I have no legal right to ... I have no father ... my mother's grandfather was a peasant - a serf'" (UWE,p208).

The uncertainty of Razumov's parentage provides for the circulation of rumours among his fellow students at St Petersburg University: "Mr Razumov was supposed to be the son of an Archpriest and to be protected by a distinguished nobleman ... It was, indeed, suggested that Mr Razumov was the son of an Archpriest's pretty daughter ... This theory also rendered intelligible the protection of the distinguished nobleman" (UWE, p6). Razumov receives "a modest but very sufficient allowance" administered by an attorney (UWE,p6), in whose office he meets Prince K---. This is the only time before his betrayal of Haldin that Razumov meets his father. When they shake hands, Prince K-- applies "a light pressure like a secret sign" (UWE,p12) and Razumov feels "the emotion of it was terrible. [His] heart seemed to leap into his throat" (UWE,p12). This rush of emotion manifesting itself in a physical reaction which overtakes the usually impassive Razumov, serves to emphasise his former neglect. He is the son of a mother, but as he tells Haldin: "'I have been brought up in an educational institute where they did not give us enough to eat'" (UWE,p60).

Razumov has been denied the "basic home comforts" and his name, as the narrator observes "was the mere label of a solitary individuality. There were no Razumovs belonging to him anywhere" (UWE,p10). Both the "Author's Note" to Under Western Eyes and the narrating teacher of languages concur that Razumov is nothing if he is not Russian: "Being nobody's child he feels rather more keenly than another would that he is a Russian - or he is nothing. He is perfectly right in looking on all Russia as his heritage" ("Author's Note",UWE,pix). And: "his closest parentage was defined in the statement that he was a Russian" (UWE,pp10-11).

If nature as parental nurture has failed Razumov, he looks to conceptual and social formations in order to justify his existence. Lacking the particular of a named individual to provide a heritage for him, he claims

identity with the vast generalisation of the Russian state. Here we run into the Rousseauian problem of identity and differentiation. When talking with Peter Ivanovitch in Geneva, Razumov's need to state himself overcomes the caution he has imposed on himself and he bursts out: "'Russia **can't** disown me. She cannot!' Razumov struck his breast with his fist. 'I am **it**!'" (UWE,p209).

The slide from "I am a Russian" to "I am Russia" provokes the question what does it mean to identify oneself as Russian? Or as Russia? Being "Russian" means living in the context of a certain ideology and specific material conditions. So what does it mean to identify as a Russian in a state whose form of government is that of autocracy? If the conditions are those imposed by autocracy, then Razumov's courses of action are limited. He can serve the state as its functionary or oppose it as a revolutionary. His identification as a Russian cannot be left as an abstract concept or a speech act.

Razumov's identification with Russia, however, partakes of the abstract personified as an element of his past. Razumov as Russia is the son of the myth of a Mother Russia, a mother lost to him and to the oppressed people. After beating the drunken Ziemianitch, Razumov wanders the streets of St Petersburg feeling the want of a confidant and stamps his foot on the ground: "and under the soft carpet of snow [he] felt the hard ground of Russia, inanimate, cold, inert, like a sullen and tragic mother hiding her face under a winding-sheet - his native soil! - his very own - without a fireside, without a heart" (UWE,pp32-33). This mother who is at the most dead and at the least unresponsive is of no use to Razumov of whom we are told: "no home influences had shaped his opinions or his feelings" (UWE,p10).

Bereft of the beginnings of a moral and emotional education - in Rousseau's terms he is deprived of an education which will teach the interdependence of the emotions and the faculty of reason, of the individual and

society, of politics and morals (see Emile, p236) - the intellectually successful Razumov attempts a separation between the private and the public, between the political (event) and the quotidian, his recipe for a workable **modus vivendi**: "Razumov was one of those men who, living in a period of mental and political unrest, keep an instinctive hold on normal, practical, everyday life" (UWE,p10). This is not the last time that Razumov's uneducated instincts will lead him astray. (It is also "instinct" that sends him to his father when he decides to betray Haldin [UWE,p42].) But having made this separation between the political and the everyday, he concentrates his mental energies on the personal: "his main concern was with his work, his studies, and with his own future" (UWE,p10).

At this stage in his career, Razumov's ambitions are centred on writing an essay that he hopes will win a silver medal (see UWE, p11). The typescript of Under Western Eyes shows that the title of Razumov's essay is "The Civil Reform of Peter the Great". Living in a time of what might be called absolute despotism, Razumov is writing about an enlightened despot who, according to Keith Carabine, "look[ed] to the West" for inspiration.[15] Western Europe had the Enlightenment - for what it was worth. All Russia could manage was Peter the Great.[16]

Razumov's essay subject might be unobjectionable as far as the influential are concerned, but in trying to separate politics and the individual - or to use Rousseau's terms: the **"moi humaine"** and the **"moi commun"** - he is unaware that the division he makes is false - in the sense that it is not compatible with prevailing conditions: "The student Razumov in an access of elation forgot the dangers menacing the stability of the institutions which give rewards and appointments" (UWE,p11).

The deletion of the title of Razumov's essay from the printed text of Under Western Eyes is of interest when considered in juxtaposition to this citation. To know the essay title helps the reader to contextualise Razumov's

present situation in relation to the historical past of his country; but its omission works to erase the idea of historical causality, of history as possible progress (or decline), rendering the power of the autocratic government both more mysterious and more sinister.

And if Razumov in his elated moment forgets these dangers, he is reminded of them when he returns to his lodgings to find that Haldin has taken refuge with him after assassinating the Minister of State. His decision to betray Haldin to the authorities is the result of an accumulation of circumstances (starting when he finds Ziemianitch drunk and incapable of responding to Haldin's message, see pp27-31) and painful emotional memories and material frustration. Two of the precipitating elements which lead to the betrayal are Razumov's vivid imagination allied to his lack of family. He begins to imagine the consequences of what he supposes is Haldin's inevitable capture:

> Razumov saw himself shut up in a fortress ... He saw himself deported by an administrative order ... He saw himself - at best - leading a miserable existence under police supervision, in some small, far-away provincial town, without friends to assist his necessities or even take any steps to alleviate his lot - as others had. Others had fathers, mothers, brothers, relations ... to move heaven and earth on their behalf - he had no one. He saw himself ... dying unattended in some filthy hole of a room.
>
> (UWE,p21)

Razumov is reacting to a perceived threat against his existence: "Razumov, of course, felt the safety of his lonely existence to be permanently endangered" (UWE,p21). Emotionally, he has been existing on the "bread line" with no opportunity for "**amour de soi-meme**" to be leavened by that compassion for others, which prevents the self-love of man in society from turning into "**amour propre**". In such circumstances, Razumov is thrown back on his untutored instinct - "'I have trusted my instinct'" (UWE, p42) he tells his father when he presents himself to him.

Thus the impulse to betray is also, for Razumov, the need to confide in someone, "to be understood" (UWE,p39).

It provides an opportunity for contact with his father that Razumov takes, and then attributes to instinct. The consequences suggest that Razumov, in trusting his "instinct", has allowed what might be called compassion for himself, rather than towards another, to rule him. His "instinct", in the singular, has lead him astray. The passions, according to Rousseau, are an essential component of "self-preservation", but they are also in need of education. Razumov's inability to make use of another instinct in this case - that of compassion - bears witness to his stunted emotional and moral growth, to the dearth of the lessons which teach the young man that the fulfilment of his own happiness must not interfere with that of others (cf. Emile, pp207, 221).

Indeed, the same psychological triggers are activated in Razumov's progress from betrayer of his peer to informer on the exile community. It is the Machiavellian Councillor Mikulin - though even his Machiavellianism encounters its limit when he is proleptically tried and sentenced (see p305) - who identifies and sets to work with Razumov's particular character traits: "his peculiar temperament, his unsettled mind and shaken conscience, a struggling in the toils of a false position" (UWE,p307). Prince K--- who is "agitated by his loyalty to the throne and by suppressed paternal affection" (UWE,p308) is also required to play his part in the entrapment of Razumov and gives way "to a manly emotion which, all unexpected as it was, quite upset Mr Razumov" (UWE,p308). The Prince's ready tears also evoke Razumov's "contemptuous tenderness" (UWE,p308) for his father in his (Razumov's) "moment of great moral loneliness" (UWE,p307). This latter phrase can be read as the effect of Razumov's action: his betrayal of Haldin. It can also be read, with the Rousseauian model in mind, as a state which reacts on Razumov, where Razumov the passive receptor, rather than agent, is the effect of his lack of a parental figure who could act the role of moral preceptor.

Firmly placed in his geographical-historical-political context though he is, it is at moments like these that Razumov is situated in an almost existential context, as blank and empty as the Russia which, in Free Indirect Speech, he or the narrator figures as "a monstrous blank page awaiting the record of an inconceivable history" (UWE,p33). And if Razumov has difficulty in conceiving his history, there are others only too ready to do it for him. For the Revolution has indeed - in the person of Haldin - "sought him out to put to a sudden test his dormant instincts, his half-conscious thoughts and almost wholly unconscious ambitions" (UWE,p294).

Part of Razumov's tragedy is that, unable to remain detached, uneducated in the duties of citizenship, he falls into the hands of the autocrats. The trick of leaving until Part Four of the novel the information that Razumov has been spying on the exiles - another act of "delayed decoding" - renders Razumov's role in the exile community uncertain on first reading. The point is that, on first reading, the reader does not know that Razumov is a state informer, and is presented with the image of Razumov, the betrayer of Haldin, as reluctant revolutionary, drawn to the community with which Haldin made common cause. The ambiguity of Razumov's situation, the double role that he plays until the moment of his verbal confession to the revolutionaries signal that only half of the story can be told by concentrating on him. It might be put this way: If Razumov fails as a man (the "**moi humaine**") does Haldin succeed as a citizen (the "**moi commun**")?

If Razumov fails, for the reasons discussed above, to fulfill the criteria for man to act as man, then Haldin, man as social being and would-be citizen of a free state, might be placed as the antithesis to Razumov. But as Under Western Eyes progresses, the shadowing of Razumov by his memory of Haldin merges into the doubling of one by the other, and this process is aided by the exiles in Geneva

who continually slide the revolutionary Haldin into the informer Razumov. Before I discuss Haldin as revolutionary and as Razumov's "secret sharer", I turn to The Social Contract in order to examine the account it gives of the state and of the citizen's role within the state.

The Rousseau who writes The Social Contract has, to a great extent, put away the regrets that he expressed in the Discourse on Inequality about man's "fall" from the state of nature to the state of society. To this end he proposes a redefinition of the "rights" that he discussed in the Discourse on Inequality: "The social order is a sacred right which serves as a basis for all other rights. And as it is not a natural right, it must be founded on covenants. The problem is to determine what those covenants are" (SC,p50). In the translation of "natural right" into "social order" the important point is that this social order "must be founded on covenants" or agreements.

In view of the criticism that The Social Contract has provoked, with some historians interpreting it as a blueprint for totalitarianism and the basis of the Terror (1793-94) during the French Revolution,[17] and given the difficulty in interpreting some of Rousseau's ideas - for example the "general will"; the citizen "forced to be free" (SC,pp61,64) - it is important to remember that Rousseau's starting point for the consitution of the state is a contract between the people who will make up its polity.

In the clear-sighted confrontation of the problems raised by its theorising, The Social Contract faces up to its difficulties - but doesn't completely solve them - by reiterating the point that man gains "civil freedom" only by giving up "his natural freedom" (SC,p60). The precondition for the assumption of civil freedom is a state of "total alienation by each associate of himself and his rights to the whole community" (SC,p60). In giving up his individual rights man "recovers the equivalent of everything he loses" in the "social pact" (SC,p61). This collective is called the "general will" (SC,p61) where each

man is at once a citizen "in that they share in the sovereign power" and a subject "in that they put themselves under the laws of the state " (SC,p62; see also p138).

The will to equality and liberty are "the two main objects" "wherein lies precisely the greatest good of all, which ought to be the goal of every system of law" (SC,p96). Rousseau is clear about the interdependence of liberty and equality: "liberty because any individual dependence means that much strength withdrawn from the body of the state and equality because liberty cannot survive without it" (SC,p96,translation amended).

The positioning of man in society is down to a series of manoeuvres which negotiate a number of oppositions, between man/citizen, natural rights/civil freedom, citizen/subject. If a selective "alienation" (SC,p67) is the condition of the social contract, Rousseau presents this in a positive light, as the only course available for social man to live the best possible life given the circumstances: man has already alienated himself from nature by becoming social man.[18]

Rousseau sums up his contract at the end of Book One: "the social pact, far from destroying natural equality, substitutes, on the contrary, a moral and lawful equality for whatever physical inequality that nature may have imposed on mankind; so that however unequal in strength and intelligence, men become equal by covenant and by right" (SC,p68). A metonymic substitution functions, according to Rousseau, as a replacement for what has been lost. Does the citizen retain any vestige of natural man? And if so, under what conditions will these traces come into play?

The Social Contract was enthusiastically adopted by the Jacobin faction of the National Convention, and when the history of the ensuing period of the Terror was written, Rousseau's name was included in the condemnation of the perpetrators of rhetorical frenzy and mass execution. Hippolyte Taine, writing in the nineteenth century, tends towards a view of the French Revolution as

leading up to, culminating and failing in the Terror - which as a matter of record is usually dated 1793-1794: from the summer of 1793 to the arrest of Robespierre on the 9 Thermidor.[19] For the revisionist historians of the French Revolution, there is more than a trace of "natural man" retained within the citizen and, in this version, natural man **en masse** becomes the howling mob, a spectre which terrified the conservative liberals of nineteenth-century Europe.

However, if Rousseau himself designates Machiavelli's Prince as "a handbook for republicans" (SC,p118) - writing at once wittily and perceptively about Machiavelli's compromises between political expediency and personal inclination - The Social Contract could not equally be termed a handbook for revolutionaries. As Thomas Paine comments in The Rights of Man (1791,1792): "We find in the writings of Rousseau ... a loveliness of sentiment in favour of Liberty, that excites respect, and elevates the human faculties; but having raised this animation, [he does] not direct its operations, and leaves the mind in love with an object, without describing the means of possessing it".[20]

The Social Contract does not tell its readers "how to" change the oppressive state; what it does do is present a programme for what Rousseau thinks is the best possible state in a given set of circumstances. Certainly, the text discusses elements which were to become part of the French Revolution's "Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen" (1789), notably the ideas of liberty and equality and the contractual nature of the "social pact".

Rousseau writes that "the citizens being all equal by the social contract, all may prescribe what all must do, instead of nobody having a right to demand that another shall do what he does not do himself", defining this "act of institution" as a "contract between the people and the magistrates it sets over itself" (SC,p144). I would suggest that this definition does not constitute a formula for

"totalitarian democracy",[21] but on the contrary floats the possibility that if the representatives of the people do not adhere to the articles of the contract, which in its enactment becomes a "law" (SC,p146), then the people have a right to remove those representatives:

> the act which institutes the government is not a contract but a law, and ... the holders of the executive power are not the people's masters but its officers; and ... the people can appoint them and dismiss them as it pleases; and ... there is no question of their contracting, but of obeying; and ... in discharging the functions which the state imposes on them, they are only doing their duty as citizens, without having any sort of right to argue terms.
> (SC,p146;see also DI,p76)

Circumstances determine the ways in which the people can attempt to dismiss corrupt or contract-breaking officials. Danton and Desmoulins opposed Robespierre's absolutism with hours of fiery oppositional rhetoric. They were executed. In Under Western Eyes Haldin decides that the only plausible response to the autocratic state is to attempt to overthrow it by revolutionary - or according to the term used in Under Western Eyes "terrorist" (p19) - means.

Haldin explains his decision to commit himself to a course of action in a would-be dialogue that he forces on a reluctant Razumov when he takes refuge in the latter's room. His opening statement divides down a line, one side of which takes in the open-endedness of a theory while the other takes account of the messy nature of practice. Haldin's reason for the murder of the Minister comes straight out of the Rousseau model of **"amour de soi-meme"** which is tempered with compassion for the sufferings of others: "'You have enough heart'" says Haldin to Razumov - while it is Haldin who has the heart - "'to have heard the sound of weeping and gnashing of teeth this man [i.e. Mr de P---] raised in the land ... He was uprooting the tender plant. He had to be stopped ... Three more years of his work would have put us back fifty years into bondage'"

(UWE,p16). Haldin's survival and the survival of others is perceived to be under threat by this particular representative of the autocracy.

But the bomb which kills Mr de P--- also kills a number of "innocent victims" (UWE,p10) and Haldin remarks: "'Yes, brother, I have killed him. It's weary work'" (UWE, p16). Haldin gestures to the paradox of a revolutionary act which must double the originary violence in a grotesque imitation of the oppressive authority. Conrad's uneasiness about the oppressive state and the means used to "remedy" the problem are expressed at the end of the "Author's Note" to Under Western Eyes: "The ferocity and imbecility of an autocratic rule rejecting all legality and in fact basing itself upon complete moral anarchism provokes the no less imbecile and atrocious answer of a purely Utopian revolutionism encompassing destruction by the first means to hand" ("Author's Note", UWE,px). The "ferocity" and "imbecility", the "moral anarchism" of autocracy is syntactically balanced by the "imbecile" and "atrocious answer" of "Utopian revoltionism". Does this mean that one side cancels the other out?

I would not go so far as Terry Eagleton's assessment in Exiles and Emigrés: "This essentially, is the political equation which the novel presents, and it cancels itself out into a void".[22] Eagleton contends that in focusing, as the "Author's Note" confirms, on the psychology rather that the politics of Russia and on "the isolated, suffering individual trapped within its terms" (Eagleton,p23), Under Western Eyes disqualifies itself as a political novel. However, there are more ways than one of writing a political novel. Conrad's presentation of Razumov's psychology is firmly placed in its historical-geographical context and Razumov is not presented in isolation from his environment; his attempt to isolate **himself** from his surroundings is part of his denial of a growing awareness of the world outside himself. (After all, Conrad isn't writing Crime and Punishment.) So is the "political

equation" cancelled out or are we left with a thin crack into which a wedge might be inserted? One way of following the trail is to examine how, as the narrative progresses, Razumov comes to be increasingly identified with, shadowed by, Haldin.

Haldin is as engaged with what it means to be a Russian as Razumov is. His mystic interpretation of his actions takes in the belief that his corporeal being is dispensible while "'My spirit shall go on warring in some Russian body till all falsehood is swept out of the world'" (UWE,p22).[23] Razumov's encounter with Haldin's "spirit" or rather Haldin's phantom takes shape as an hallucination, when he tries to justify his betrayal of the revolutionary: "Suddenly on the snow, stretched on his back right across his path, he saw Haldin, solid, distinct, real ... He was lying out of the way a little, as though he had selected that place on purpose. The snow around him was untrodden" (UWE,pp36-37). Placed as he is at Razumov's feet, Haldin could be read as Razumov's shadow-self, and in his act of betrayal, far from ridding himself of the ideas and acts of revolution, Razumov finds that he is closely entangled with them, a prey as much to the wisdom and folly of the exiles as he is to the machinations of Councillor Mikulin. Thus Razumov's painful political education begins.

The connection that Mrs Haldin and Nathalia make between Haldin and Razumov, because of the mention of a "young man" in Haldin's letter (UWE,p135), provides Razumov's passport into the exile community. When Razumov goes to visit Peter Ivanovitch in the mansion, he experiences a moment of subjective separation, not just as a moment of alienation, rather as a doubling of that self who has known "true loneliness" (UWE,p39): "He felt, bizarre as it may seem, as though another self, an independent sharer of his mind, had been able to view his whole person very distinctly indeed" (UWE,p230). "Disgust" at this reaction "vanish[es] before a marked uneasiness" (UWE,p230). Razumov attributes his mental state to

"'hav[ing] been unconscious as I walked'" (UWE,p231). If Razumov has tried to repress not only his betrayal of Haldin, but also what Haldin stood for, then is it Haldin the revolutionary who repeatedly returns as the "independent sharer of his mind"?

Bruce Henricksen takes up the allusion to the short story "The Secret Sharer" (1909,1912) as it links to the slowly unfolding extension of Razumov's moral map: "Just as Leggatt ... emerges from the sea to share a space and ultimately an identity with the young captain of 'The Secret Sharer', so Haldin's appearance in Razumov's room initiates Razumov's experience of selfhood as a shared phenomenon".[24] Sophia Antonovna assumes a connection between the two when she presumes that both Razumov and Haldin carried out the attack on Mr de P--- (UWE,p246). This insistence on the identification of Razumov and Haldin by the exiles in Geneva, the persistence of the memory of the man who under torture refused to betray anyone (UWE,pp92-93), has its effect on the solitary and selfish Razumov. The measure of this effect must be left to be estimated in the following sections culminating in the section on writing confessions where Razumov's verbal semi-confession to Nathalia Haldin is doubled and augmented by his fuller written confession.

The theory and practice of revolution is seriously debated at various narrative levels - both diagetic and extra-diagetic - in Under Western Eyes and the spectre of revolution (the "mother" of all revolutions?) that haunts the pages is that of the French Revolution. Eric Hobsbawm, in Echoes of the Marseillaise, writes that the French Revolution served as a point of reference throughout the nineteenth century: "as an inspiration, a rhetoric ... a vocabulary, a model, and a standard of comparison".[25] And, it might be added, for those of conservative tendencies, as a "monster" to be slain by whatever means possible. In 1848 Marx suggested an unbroken tradition when he declared: "The

Jacobin of 1793 has become the Communist of today" (Marx quoted in Hobsbawm,p49). Hobsbawm adds: "Russian intellectuals, most of whom were necessarily revolutionaries under the Tsar, were steeped in the history of the French Revolution" (Hobsbawm,p49).

Under Western Eyes is deeply and agonisingly ambivalent about revolution. This ambivalence is presented in the multi-vocal debate that is articulated by different characters in the text, and which takes up certain aspects of the heritage of the French Revolution as it was expressed in nineteenth-century histories of the event. Under Western Eyes is also "steeped" in the language of Enlightenment and Revolution. It is this "vocabulary" that provides the lexical structure for debate, while the bronze statue of Rousseau casts its symbolic presence over the arguments and activities of the exiled revolutionary community in Geneva. An analysis of this language precedes an account of an emblematic nineteeth-century history of the French Revolution: Hippolyte Adolphe Taine's The Origins of Contemporary France: The Revolution (1878-1884).

Although there is no record of Conrad having read Taine,[26] a remarkable correspondence of phrasing occurs in the "Author's Note" to Under Western Eyes (written 1920). Referring specifically to Peter Ivanovitch and Madame de S---, Conrad designates them the "apes of a sinister jungle" ("Author's Note",UWE,pix) in a familiar move of dehumanising revolutionary figures, with its reverse evolutionary or degenerate associations. The revolutionaries in Under Western Eyes taken **in toto** present the author with some cause for concern: "The most terrifying reflection (I am speaking now for myself) is that all these people are not the product of the exceptional but of the general - of the normality of their place, and time, and race" ("Author's Note",UWE,px). This phrase - "place ... time ... race" - is a word for word translation from Taine where **"la race; le milieu; le moment"** [27] were to provide the historian with a pseudo-

scientific basis for his examination of a society at a particular time and in a particular place.

As I have indicated, Conrad inherited a tradition and a certain way of thinking and writing about that tradition, so there is nothing mysterious about the incorporation of Taine's phrase in the "Author's Note". I hope to show that although Taine and Conrad think in similar ways about the same subject their conclusions diverge to the point where Taine's repeated obsessions strive for closure, a way of containing the perceived chaos that Revolution brings; while Conrad's painful ambivalence leaves the questions still open as they are posed and debated in Under Western Eyes.

Conrad's formulation of autocracy and revolution as cancelling each other out - "senseless desperation provoked by senseless tyranny" which only results in "a change of names" ("Author's Note",UWE,ppviii,x) - resembles the summary of Taine's history of the Revolution which appears under his entry in the Encyclopedia Britannica (Eleventh Edition). According to this entry, Taine's Revolution "expose[s] the Error underlying two prevalent ideas":

> 1. That the Revolution destroyed absolutism and set up liberty; the Revolution, [Taine] points out, merely caused absolutism to change hands.
> 2. That the Revolution destroyed liberty instead of establishing it; that France was less centralised before 1789 than after 1800. This also he shows to be untrue.[28]

It is this double-sidedness of the revolutionary enterprise that disturbs the teacher of language's calculations. His meditations on Razumov's journal designate "the assassination of a prominent statesman" as "the origin of Mr Razumov's record" (UWE,p7). When despotic rule provokes a violent retaliation "the noblest aspirations of humanity" are "prostituted to the lusts of hate and fear" (UWE,p7). We are back with the problem I discussed via the writings of Rousseau on the extension of ideas of similarity and difference. But if revolutionary acts of terror equate with despotic acts of oppression, is

there any way in which they are different? And what makes that difference?

In a text that recalls a layer of the historic past, semiotic traces of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution are scattered throughout its pages. Nathalia and Mrs Haldin live on the Boulevard des Philosophes (UWE,pp105,116,**passim**). Enlightenment figures (the **philosophe**, the despot) are evoked in the names of Voltaire (UWE,p125) and Catherine the Great (UWE,p220) as well as the Italian inheritor of Revolutionary ideas - Mazzini (UWE,p214). (Jean-Jacques Rousseau of course makes a bronzed appearance.) However, these allusions to a past tradition are heavily ironised when placed in the novel's geograpical setting. Rousseau and Voltaire - the one born in Geneva, the other resident there when exiled from France - might lend their celebrated names to the civic monuments and topography of the city, but this is a city which has attained "the very perfection of mediocrity ... after centuries of toil and culture" (UWE,p203). The city of Geneva is described as "the heart of democracy ... no bigger than a parched pea and about as much value" (UWE,p205-206). The names of Voltaire and Mme de Staël are placed in ironic juxtaposition to those of Peter Ivanovitch and his rich lover Madame de S---.

It is Razumov who ironically declares that (the heart of) democracy is the size of a parched pea, and his remark indicates his own confusion about himself and his place in his society. He is Russia (UWE,p215) but he is also a Russian who has existed in - and has sought to profit by - a particular political regime. Part of Razumov's self-justification for the betrayal of Haldin is to construct an apologia for autocracy. When he writes his defiant manifesto:

> History not Theory.
> Patriotism not Internationalism.
> Evolution not Revolution.
> Direction not Destruction.
> Unity not Disruption.
> (UWE,p66)

he is in the process of trying to elaborate a credo which will absolve him of responsibility for any (further) action. But neither the servants of autocracy nor those of revolution will let him off so easily. To both sides Razumov is a subject ripe for conversion and annexation.

The autocrats in the Russia of Under Western Eyes have not only declared war on the principles and practices of liberal democracy but on its rhetoric as well. Mr de P--- is "bent on extirpating from the land every vestige of anything that resembled freedom in public institutions" and this includes "the destruction of the very hope of liberty itself" (UWE,p7-8). Mr de P---'s credo puts into place a God who "was the autocrat of the Universe", and an earth where it was "not Reason but Authority which expressed the Divine Intention" (UWE,p8). The capitalisation of "Reason" and "Authority" indicates a geneology which recalls both the language of Enlightenment and the rhetoric of the Terror which dominated a period of the French Revolution.[29] The difficulty of distinguishing between autocracy and revolution is partly a difficulty of separating out the meanings which attach to a particular signifier, where the signified continually slides unreliably under the signifier.

One of the moves that Razumov makes in his effort to repudiate both Haldin and Haldin's beliefs is to classify revolutionary ideas as "'French or German thought - devil knows what foreign notions'" (UWE,pp89-90) and to dismiss the "'intellectual fellows'" (this includes Haldin) who "'get drunk on foreign ideas'" as victims of "'debauchery'" (UWE,p96). These condemnations are produced for the benefit of Councillor Mikulin and tailored to fit his audience. Razumov still has a long way to go until he reaches his moment of truth. And it is Councillor Mikulin, the intelligent servant of autocracry, who summarises his times, not as Mr de P--- does in the debasement of the language of Enlightenment, but like this: "'We live in difficult times, in times of monstrous chimeras and evil

dreams and criminal follies'" (UWE,p297). Councillor Mikulin probably knows that, as the title to one of Goya's etchings states: "The Sleep/Dream of Reason Produces Monsters".

The conversation that Razumov has with Peter Ivanovitch when he visits him at Mme de S---'s villa does not really clarify the issue. To Razumov the "people" are "brutes", for Peter Ivanovitch they are "children" (UWE,p227), but either description evokes doubts about the ability of people so described to play their part in a democratic society. Razumov expresses this sentiment in a characteristic mixture of despair and cynicism: "'You just try to give these children the power and stature of men and see what they will be like'" (UWE,p227). "Brutes" or "children", there is only one solution for people so described: they must be ruled by leaders. Peter Ivanovitch, in Tekla's description of him "'is an awful despot'" (UWE,p232). Having reached this point, it seems as if the argument has run full circle. Between the despots of autocracy and the despots of the revolution there seems little to choose.

What will make a difference? The women will, and one woman in particular: Sophia Antonovna. But before presenting a reading of the key scene of revolutionary debate in Under Western Eyes (between Razumov and Sophia Antonovna), it is useful to discuss the Enlightenment and its nineteenth-century heritage, beginning with an analysis of Taine's interpretation of the French Revolution. This interpretation, in its excess concerning the perceived excess of the Revolution, makes Conrad's term "apes of a sinister jungle", seem like the most muted and restrained remonstrance.

In focusing on Hippolyte Adolphe Taine as the significant nineteenth-century historian of the French Revolution (rather than, for example, Jules Michelet), I am following Daniel Pick's remarks in Faces of Degeneration, which

discusses the particular contemporary angle which Taine deployed. According to Pick, Taine "had offered a 'psychopathology of history'"[30] which emerged from a specific set of historical and political circumstances, and which attempted to apply the methods of scientific analysis to the documents and memories of the past.

Taine's history was written after a specific contemporary event: "Taine's history of the Revolution is used to consider the deployment of **dégénérescence** in an explicitly counter-revolutionary historiography after the crisis of France's military defeat in 1870-1871" (Pick,p4). In the face of this defeat liberal or positivist ideologies were being reassessed, partly through the rewriting of the history of the last century. Focusing on the "degeneration" aspect of this rewriting Pick comments: "My argument is that the credibility of the conception of degeneration owed a great deal to the broad crisis of liberal social optimism in the face of revolution. It constituted, in part, an attempt to conceptualise the morbid passage of history itself" (Pick,p67).

Taine "used science to look through the veil of a flawed and fatal idealism which had emanated disastrously from the Enlightenment" and this gave him his "special status in the later-nineteenth century as the modern historian and critic par excellence" (Pick,p67). (How "scientific" Taine's history was remains to be proved.) In the mid-1850s, Taine had "attended courses ... in medicine and phychiatry in Paris" and his "<u>Revolution</u> developed a commonplace of nineteenth-century medicine, the view that social revolt could gravely disturb the body and mind, and indeed set off an epidemic of insanity" (Pick,p69). These concerns were linked to "an intense new concern with the hereditary consequences of social upheaval" (Pick,p70).

The morbid psychopathology which intersects with ideas of evolutionary degeneration and which provides the "analytical" base for Taine's history of the Revolution - and what can only be termed an obsession with the mob - are

implicated as much in how the text says what it says as in what it says. In an introduction to a selection from The Revolution, Edward Gargan underlines "Taine's fear of the mob which would so dominate and unbalance his history of the French Revolution" (Ed Gargan,OCS,pxix). Both Pick and Gargan signal Taine's work on the Revolution as foregrounding and embodying a symptomatic unease with regard to "France's ability to adjust to modernity" (Ed Gargan,OCS,pxxix; and see Pick,p73).

Taine's obsession with the mob and its destructive activities can be charted in the plethora of nouns and adjectives he deploys to characterise it, terms which cross the spectrum of class, racial and national phobias. In the first volume of The Revolution (to give just a representative sample), the mob is variously constituted by: "foreigners", "vagrants", "strangers", "vagabonds, beggars", "brigands", "ruffians", the "lowest of the low", "barbarian", the "human herd", "rabble".[31] Government during the Revolution, according to Taine, is in the hands of the "peasant", the "labourer" and the "bourgeois" once "pacified and tamed by an old civilisation", and now reverting to type: "we see all of a sudden spring forth the barbarian, and, still worse, the primitive animal, the grinning, sanguinary, wanton baboon, who chuckles while he slays, and gambols over the ruin he has accomplished" (R,1,p53). The enemy, Taine concludes, "are in our very midst" (R,1,p53). "Something of Darwin's ape" writes Daniel Pick, "informed this representation of revolution" (Pick,p71).

This image of the degenerate - and degenerating - mob is mapped onto the events of the Revolution. The "agitators" "flock" in a "tumultuous buzzing swarm" (R,1,pp30-31) (in his agitation Taine is getting his metaphors mixed) to the scene of dissolution - designated by Taine as the Palais-Royale - to be harangued by the demagogues. The Palais-Royale as revolutionary space is, for Taine - as it was for other eighteenth-century

conservatives - a place where boundaries are blurred and distinctions of class, of sexual "respectability", break down:

> The Palais-Royale is an open-air club where, all day and even far into the night, one excites the other and urges on the crowd to blows. In this enclosure, protected by the privileges of the House of Orléans, the police dare not enter. Speech is free, and the public who avail themselves of this freedom seem purposely chosen [by whom?] to abuse it ... The Palais-Royale, the centre of prostitution, of play, of idleness, and of pamphlets [note the juxtaposition], attracts the whole of that unrooted population which floats about in the great city.
> (R,1,p30)

Whipped up by the demagogues, mob activities infiltrate and constitute in this version: the Oath of the Tennis Court (20 June 1789) (R,1,p35), the storming of the Bastille (14 July 1789) (R,1,p38), the defence of the Hôtel-de-Ville (12-17 July 1789) (R,1,p41) and the march of the women to Versailles (5-6 October 1789) (R,1,pp97-98).

By the time he reaches the September Massacres (2-7 September 1792) the mob have become "political savage[s]" (R,2,p223) and Taine is about to up the atavistic ante. First we are presented with the familiar cast-list: "Among [the "recruits" for the Massacre] we find beasts of prey, murderers by instinct, or simply robbers ... Others ... who, coming with good intentions are seized with vertigo in contact with the bloody whirl, and, through a sudden stroke of revolutionary grace, are converted to the religion of slaughter" (R,2,p220). The slide from the composition of such a crowd to the actions they perform is predictable: "From the Iroquois to the cannibal, the interval is narrow, and some of [the mob] spring across it" (R,2,p226). (We are back with the cannibal myth questioned in chapter one on <u>Heart of Darkness</u>.)

Working from eye-witness accounts, Taine details one among many of the "mob's" depredations: "At the Abbaye, an old soldier named Damiens, buries his sabre in the side of the adjutant-general Laleu, thrusts his hand into the opening, tears out the heart 'and puts it to his mouth as

if to eat it'; 'the blood', says an eye-witness 'trickled from his mouth and formed a sort of moustache for him'" (R,2,p226). Not pleasant under any circumstances but, one page later, the eye-witness's careful "as if" has been dispensed with and the "mob" are simply described as "butchers and cannibals" (R,2,p227).

In her essay "The Authoritarian Response", Ludmilla Jordanova comments on an account that Chateaubriand gives in the Génie du Christianisme (1802) of a similar episode in the French Revolution. Her comments on this account are applicable to Taine's method: "He deploys two main strategies; the use of a specific vocabulary that generates an emotional response and the selection of episodes in the Revolution as emblematic of the process as a whole".[32] The accumulation, in both Chateaubriand and Taine, of images of heads on pikes, of dismemberment and consumption of human corpses works as a trope, "allowing us to move from bodily mutilation to political chaos. The chaos, which is specifically associated with the mob, has a quite particular set of characteristics: it is criminal, bestial, sexual ... And, the ultimate accusation is that of cannibalism ... The mob ... is no longer human" (Jordanova,p211).

The "mob" is savage and dangerous, in Taine's account, but it is also imbecile. It has been encouraged in its reversion, it is a monstrous puppet, and the hands that work it belong to members of the Jacobin faction. Taine's epithets as applied to the demagogues lose none of their hysterical power: "petty provincial judges and attorneys", "second and third-rate literary characters", "badly-cultivated minds sown with poor seed", "charlatans", "the visionary and morbid of all sorts", "foul remnants of every popular insurrection", "beasts of prey", "women ... who have unsexed themselves" (R,2,pp26-28). The familiar brew is stirred. Singled out for especial mention are those men designated the heroes or villans (depending on who's

writing the history) of the Revolution: Marat, Danton, Robespierre.

Taine's most scathing epithets are reserved for Marat whose character "borders on the lunatic" (R,3,p121). Taine reads the sign of Marat's skin disease as the symptom of a diseased mental state, while his "propensity for scribbling" is glossed as "that mental automism and tetanus of the will under the constraint and rule of a fixed idea" (R,3,p121). Marat's mixed-race descent provides occasion for this "diagnosis". (In a footnote Marat is revealed to be of Spanish-Swiss descent [R,3,p122], so presumably Taine is hinting that there is Moorish blood on the Father's side.) "Issuing from incongruous races, born of a mixed blood and tainted with serious moral commotions, he harbours within him a singular germ: physically, he is an abortion, morally a pretender" (R,3,p122). The next stage of the process is to map Marat's physical and mental/moral degeneracy onto the events and ideology of the Revolution: "From first to last, he was in the right line of the Revolution ... thanks to the concordance of his personal malady with the public malady" (R,3,p133).

Danton fares a little better than Marat, while the language of class division is reserved for Robespierre (see R,3, pp133-145). In constructing this anti-pantheon of the Revolution, Taine presents a psychopathology of the individual and the general mass which runs across the spectrum of racial, mental and class degeneration.

Taine's impassioned and intemperate history takes its place in the histories of the Revolution, where the ground which is contested circulates around the question: which French Revolution? If Taine emerges from a milieu which fears the progress of liberal democracy, he belongs to a school of historians who, as Ludmilla Jordanova writes, were "concerned to reimpose authority" and who "saw the shadows of the Enlightenment only too clearly ... A monstrous Enlightenment was fabricated in order to achieve [the reimposition of authority]" (Jordanova, p202). One

move in fabricating this version was to take "the Terror as emblematic of '1789'" (Jordanova,p202).

Under Western Eyes demonstrates its awareness of the positions taken by Enlightenment thought, revolutionary practice and their nineteenth-century critique [33] in its concern with the extremism of both autocratic and revolutionary actions and the way events "shape" the novel's characters, who act or re-act according to the (historical) circumstances they find themselves in. Connected to this issue is a concern with the intersection/separation of reason and the emotions and the part they play in this shaping, which is linked in turn to their relegation to a public or private sphere. When Under Western Eyes examines and questions the strict separation of the mental faculties and their segregation to one sphere or another - in the separate but converging positions of Razumov and Haldin, in the presentation of Sophia Antonovna's revolutionary credo - it recalls a debate to which Enlightenment thinkers such as Rousseau and Kant had made their contribution.

Kant's essay "An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?" (1784) asked this key question: "If it is now asked whether we at present live in an **enlightened** age, the answer is: No, but we do live in an age of **enlightenment**".[34] Dorinda Outram, in The Enlightenment, writes that "Kant was clear that 'Enlightenment' was a process, not a completed project".[35]

This aspect of the Enlightenment project as uncompleted, stressing the element of process, is first stated in the opening sentence of Kant's essay which presents man as he moves intellectually from child to adult and, in a parallel move, from being a private to a public subject: **"Enlightenment is man's emergence from his self-incurred immaturity"** (WE,p54). One of the aims of Enlightenment is to "produce a true reform in ways of thinking ... For enlightenment of this kind, all that is

needed is **freedom**. And the freedom in question is the most innocuous form of all - freedom to make **public use** of one's reason in all matters" (WE,p55).

Kant's categorical definition of freedom in this citation recalls Rousseau's formulations in The Social Contract, where in order to be a citizen man must give up his individual right, and if he refuses to, he must be "forced to be free". It is not that Kant denies man as private subject with an ability to exercise reason, but he places all the emphasis on the public use of man's reason: "and [this public use] alone can bring about enlightenment among men" (WE,p55).

When Theodore Adorno and Max Horkheimer perform their withering critique of the legacy of the Enlightenment in Dialectic of Enlightenment, the over-valuation of the faculty of reason is one of their main targets, and the belief that this faculty can influence the conduct of others to the good is an implied object of criticism. Their summary of the agenda of the Enlightenment is brief: "The program [sic] of the Enlightenment was the disenchantment of the world, the dissolution of myths and the substitution of knowledge for fancy".[36]

As I have indicated in my discussion of Emile, at no point did Rousseau dissociate reason from feeling, or present the sentiments as a form of debased or undeveloped reason. In his debates and disagreements with the mainstream **philosophes**, Rousseau was already questioning the values that the Enlightenment endorsed and submitting them to a rigorous scrutiny that certainly did not leave him with many friends among the **philosophes**. Diderot too, in Rameau's Nephew, dramatises the contradictions inherent in the subject, and in the construct of a unified subjectivity, as a dialogue between "Moi" and "Lui", by turns satirical and inclining to pathos. Diderot, as Hulme and Jordanova write, "could be solemn and didactic, excited by science and moved by the moral potential of art, yet, at the same time, playful, mischevious, and completely

sceptical about settled notions of human nature" (Hulme&Jordanova,p2).

Sabina Lovibond's response to Kant's conceptualising of reason and its role in the perfecting of society, in her essay ""The End of Morality?", is more positive than that of Adorno and Horkheimer. She writes:

> Kantian 'morality' consists ... as is well known, in submission to the categorical imperative as a constraint on possible courses of **action**. But it consists also in submission to another requirement, namely that our **thinking** too (in so far as it is of more than merely personal interest, and therefore in so far as it matters, what or how we think) should be of a kind in which all can share.[37]

Lovibond goes on to set out the objections of the critics of Enlightenment to what she calls "the modernist constructive project" (Lovibond,p67). She discusses Foucault's opposition to the "regime of truth", his "ironically distanced term for the humanly created rational order which Kant pictured as a 'kingdom of ends'" (Lovibond,p67). Yet, as she notes, Foucault concludes his essay "What is Enlightenment?" - a response to Kant's essay -"by speaking of 'our impatience for liberty'" (Lovibond,p71 [38]).

In this essay, Foucault admits the influence of the Enlightenment in contemporary assessments of modernity: "We must try to proceed with the analysis of ourselves as beings who are historically determined, to a certain extent, by the Enlightenment" (Foucault,WE,p43). He wisely councils: "We must free ourselves from the intellectual blackmail of 'being for or against the Enlightenment'" (Foucault,WE,p45). Foucault focuses on what, for me, is the crux of the matter when he poses this question:

> But if the Kantian question was that of knowing what limits knowledge has to renounce transgressing, it seems to me that the critical question today has to be turned back into a positive one: in what is given to us as universal, necessary, obligatory, what place is

occupied by whatever is singular, contingent, and the product of arbitrary constraints? The point, in brief, is to transform the critique conducted in the form of a necessary limitation into a practical critique that takes the form of a possible transgression.
(Foucault,WE,p45)

I would suggest that what Foucault presents in the last sentence of this citation as a transformation - of the "critique conducted in the form of a necessary limitation" into "a practical critique that takes the form of a possible transgression" - needs to be addressed as a double critique in which we pay attention to both "necessary limitation[s]" and "possible transgressions". Could this present a way in which what Jay Bernstein calls "the **opacity** of reason to itself" [39] might be made more self-critical?

Foucault's comments on the limits and transgressions of Enlightenment ideas about knowledge encapsulate this point for me: The history of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, the weighty critiques that, for example, Adorno and Horkheimer have made against the repressions of Enlightenment, and the arguments that a historian like Taine deployed against the excesses of Revolutionary Terror, all show a horror of ideas which are said to influence events which trangress certain limits. This is also the way in which I have been thinking about how Under Western Eyes responds to the various strands of thought and the actions they might be said to promote.

The tutor-narrator (who is a persona of Rousseau) states in Emile: "The one thing we do not know is the limit of the knowable" (E,p276). Enlightenment thinking pushed hard at the boundaries of knowledge and in doing so encountered the problem that Foucault formulates and that I have put a little differently: for I would ask, in seeking to push the established boundaries, what is the difference - or is there a difference - between pushing the limits of knowledge and transgressing these limits? I suggest that this is something of the question that Conrad raises in Under Western Eyes: The autocratic state in its

assumption of absolutist powers has been guilty of transgressing (contested) boundaries which pertain to ideas of civil and political liberty. In trying to overthrow this state - how far should we go? (This response could be simply classified as "conservative", but I think that this does not take account of Conrad's personal investment - via his parents' activities - in the attempts of Poland to rebel against Russian imperialism and the costs to the young Conrad who was left an orphan at age eleven, both his parents having died in exile.)

At the end of his essay on Adorno and Habermas, Jay Bernstein makes a pertinent comment about modernity, postmodernity and limits: "For Adorno, post-modernity is just modernity at the limit. Because that limit has still to be trespassed beyond, and yet we are unable to rest within modernity, we balance at the limit" (Bernstein,AAE, p65). The idea that modernity is always at its limit is, I think, the burden that weighs down Under Western Eyes, the fear that it struggles with: When we are at the limit, how do we balance there? Or do we overbalance?

One of the important scenes in Under Western Eyes occurs when Razumov meets and talks with Sophia Antonovna in the grounds of the villa by Lake Geneva (see pp237-264). Under Conrad's piercing "eye", the exiled revolutionaries are displayed in a range of characteristics and behaviour which take in Nikita "the perfect flower of the terroristic wilderness" ("Author's Note",UWE,pix), the (pseudo) "feminist" Peter Ivanovitch and the "wrong headed" Sophia Antonovna ("Author's Note",UWE,pix). This epithet is applied by Conrad to Sophia Antonovna in the "Author's Note" which was written nine years after the publication of Under Western Eyes. The detail in which she is presented in the narrative proper, the complexities of thought and feeling which her direct speech reveal, call for a closer reading of this pivotal revolutionary figure which might

modify the rather dismissive adjective which is applied to her by the Conrad who wrote the "Note".

For it is through the figure of Sophia Antonovna that Conrad presents his most balanced and positive readings not only of revolution but of the forces which impel people to take up the ideas and actions which a revolutionary stance implies. In juxtaposing the believing Sophia Antonovna with the sceptical and despairing Razumov we are presented with what I would go so far as to call **the** key scene of revolutionary debate in Under Western Eyes.

The description of Sophia Antonovna which precedes her greeting to Razumov strikes the keynote for what will follow: the "blouse of crimson silk" which "made her noticeable at a distance"; her complexion which "was the colour of coffee and milk, but very clear"; "her eyes black and glittering, her figure erect" and the mass "of thick hair, nearly white" (UWE,p238). Everything about her is calculated to disturb Razumov, to bring home to him just how much he is not "the right sort" (UWE,p241) - another version of "one of us"? - and even more how much he doesn't even seem the right sort. Razumov is made so uncomfortable by Sophia Antonovna's presence (and by Nathalia Haldin's but for different reasons) that he is impelled to "act up" his role as a dedicated revolutionary, a move which Sophia Antonovna remarks on: "'Perhaps you are only playing a part'" (UWE,p251). Thus he is unwillingly led into a discussion about the impulses and the material conditions that lead the private individual to become a revolutionary subject.

The basis of Sophia Antonovna's revolutionary belief is faith: "'Everything is bound to come right in the end'" she tells Razumov. "'You think so?'" he questions; "'I don't think, young man. I just simply believe it'" she tells him (UWE,p245). It is this faith that has sustained "'twenty years ... [of] coming and going, looking neither to the left nor to the right'" (UWE,p245). Razumov notices that Sophia Antonovna "was treated with quiet regard" by

the other exiles (UWE,p242) and he discovers "that he could not despise her as he despised all the others" (UWE,p242).

For the polemical purposes of this scene of debate Sophia Antonovna is cast as the representative pro-revolutionary figure while Razumov takes the part of the anti-revolutionary figure. Razumov's anti-revolutionary stance is complicated by his ambiguity **vis à vis** his thoughts and emotions which are in a permanent state of oscillation between contempt and fearful remorse. Razumov knows and we know too (on a second reading) what Sophia Antonovna does not: that Razumov stands in front of her as a double betrayer. He has betrayed Haldin and is about to report to Councillor Mikulin on the activities of the revolutionary exiles. As if this were not enough, Razumov is beset by another danger - which the presence of Sophia Antonovna might be said to augment.

Razumov reminds himself that "The only condition of success and safety was indomitable will-power" (UWE,p248). The danger he fears is this: "At any instant, in the visionary and criminal babble of revolutionists, some momentous words might fall on his ear; from her lips, from anybody's lips" (UWE,p248). In this characterisation of revolutionary rhetoric then, a distinction is being made between "visionary and criminal babble" and "momentous words", and one of the tasks that instinct and reason must take on is to distinguish between the two. Reluctantly, Razumov is being submitted to a political education which he resists but cannot escape.

Immediately prior to the above citation, Razumov's state of thought is expressed thus: "He was inexpressibly weary, weary in every fibre of his body, but he had a reason for not being the first to break off the conversation" (UWE,p248). The juxtaposition of these two sentences creates confusion. Why should the sceptical Razumov wish to continue a conversation in which he might distinguish "momentous words" out of "the visionary and criminal babble of revolutionists"? Of course, the

"momentous words" might also refer to some clue that Sophia Antonovna might drop as to Razumov's safety and the degree of trust accorded to him from the revolutionaries, but this is not clarified. And what Razumov does get to hear are some "momentous words" about revolutionary ideas and actions.

During the course of their conversation, Razumov finds that Sophia Antonovna is hard to pin down using the cliches that can be applied to revolutionary activists. When Razumov tries to fix her with regard to revolutionary ideology by asking: "'You're a materialist, aren't you?'", she replies out of her experience: "'Eh! My dear soul, I have outlived all that nonsense'" (UWE,p251).

Sophia Antonovna puts the choice between submitting to autocracy and opposing it in stark terms. First she contrasts male/female attitudes to revolutionary action as those, respectively, of passion which is connected to an empirical stimulus (or a sign which is attached to a referrent) and passion for its own sake (the free play of the signifier?). "'But we women are in love with love, and with hate, with these very things I tell you, and with desire itself'" (UWE,p250). However, she is by no means devaluing what she designates the woman's part: "'That's why we can't be bribed off so easily as you men. [And who if not Razumov better knows the truth of this comment.] In life, you see, there is not much choice. You have either to rot or to burn. And there is not one of us, painted or unpainted, that would not rather burn than rot'" (UWE,p250).

As she presents it, the male/female dyad is not contradictory but rather complimentary, the one being a condition of the other. It could be argued that it leaves men doing and women feeling in a traditional stereotypical representation of male/female roles, but in the context of Under Western Eyes one has only to contrast Razumov's actions with Sophia Antonovna's articulated passions to realise the dubious value of some actions. Sophia

Antonovna's burn/rot choice is echoed in her later passionate outburst to Razumov: "'Life ... not to be vile must be a revolt - a pitiless protest - all the time'" (UWE, p260). "Instantly", following this remark, the "heat of her passion" is exchanged for "her capable, business like manner" (UWE,p260). What Sophia Antonovna knows is the necessity of both the emotions and the faculty of reason; even more important she knows when to apply either (or both?).

It is at this point that she chooses to tell Razumov her personal history and focuses on the moment of her revolutionary conversion as she stands at the side of her artisan father's grave. She assesses his life - "she saw it whole" (UWE,p262) - in relation to the demands of the absolutist state: "She reckoned the simple joys of life, the birthright of the humblest, of which his gentle heart had been robbed by the crime of a society which nothing can absolve" (UWE,p262). It might be said that she is thinking of her Father's "natural rights". And it is this love and regret for her Father's loss that provides the basis for a revolutionary career where, in a textbook Rousseauian move, the feelings and sentiments influence and inform the reasoned and judicious choices which lead to a certain public course of action. (A similar impulse works in the short story "Prince Roman".)

Sophia Antonovna's sincere and impassioned statements to Razumov work upon him. When he reflects on her "un-Russian" appearance (faced with the "coffee and milk" complexion) he characterises her mother as a "Jewess or an Armenian or - devil knew what" (UWE,p264). This reflection could be a further instance of Razumov's reflexive anti-Semitism - see his remark on Julius Laspara: "'Cursed Jew'" (UWE,p287) - but it can also be read as a further stage in his rational-sentimental education. Earlier in their conversation Razumov himself has asked Sophia Antonovna: "'And don't you think ... that you and I come from the same cradle?'" "'You mean - Russia?'" she replies (UWE,p253).

Razumov is in the process of crystallising a realisation that there are as many Russias as there are individuals to claim alliegence to the country. The Russia of Prince K--- and Councillor Mikulin is also the Russia of the Armenians and the Jews who live there. He also realises something about the falseness - or at least the narrow range - of the stereotyping of revolutionaries: "He reflected that a revolutionist is seldom true to the settled type. All revolt is the expression of strong individualism - ran his thought vaguely" (UWE,p264).

Razumov's dawning wisdom produces Sophia Antonovna both as individual and as ~~the~~ personification of revolutionary theory and practice. Through his focalisation, she sums up both their negative and their positive aspects: "She was much more representative than the great Peter Ivanovitch. Stripped of rhetoric, mysticism, and theories, she was the true spirit of destructive revolution" (UWE,p261). But later:

> Razumov looked at her white hair: and this mark of so many uneasy years seemed nothing but a testimony to the invincible vigour of revolt. It threw out into an astonishing relief the unwrinkled face, the brilliant black glance ... the simple, brisk self-possession of the mature personality - as though in her revolutionary pilgrimage she had discovered the secret, not of everlasting youth, but of everlasting endurance.
>
> (UWE,p263-264)

(If Conrad had been writing as an unequivocal pro-revolutionary rather than a perplexed anti-revolutionary he could not have paid a finer tribute to his woman revolutionary character.)

Sophia Antonovna is not as "stripped" of revolutionary rhetoric - of the "visionary and criminal babble of revolutionists" - as Razumov at first makes out. Towards the end of their conversation she speaks to him as if she were a revolutionary textbook collapsing nuances and degrees into the blast of the revolutionary slogan: "'Crush the Infamy! A fine watchword! I would placard it on the walls of prisons and palaces, carve it on hard rocks, hang

it out in letters of fire on that empty sky for a sign of hope and terror - a portent of the end'" (UWE,p263). Razumov's rejoinder to this apocalyptic speech is characteristically dampening: "'You are eloquent, Sophia Antonovna,' Razumov interrupted suddenly. 'Only, so far you seem to have been writing it in water ...'" (UWE,p263). If, for Razumov, "speech has been given to us for the purpose of concealing our thoughts" (UWE,p261), it has been given to Sophia Antonovna for the very opposite purpose.[40]

In this scene, revolutionary "babble" is juxtaposed against "momentous words" to produce a dialogic play which, in context, foregrounds the extent to which revolutionary activity arises out of and is bound up with the language(s) it speaks. The scene of revolutionary debate dramatises the war of words as part of the novel's self-conscious representation of the role of linguistic signification in the telling of its characters' actions and reactions. Thus it is significant that the scene of revolutionary debate precedes, for Razumov, the scene of (confessional) writing.

The narrator of Under Western Eyes draws attention to the narrative as self-consciously textual at a number of levels. Having "disclaim[ed]" the "possession of those high gifts of imagination and expression" (UWE,p3) which would enable him to "create" the personality of Razumov, the "teacher of languages" is ostensibly the editor of a number of "documents" which have come into his possession. One of these documents provides the base for the narrative: "The document, of course is something in the nature of a journal, a diary, yet not exactly that in its actual form" (UWE,p4). The document is "not exactly" a diary because it has not consistently been written up day to day. The inexactness of the term as applied to Razumov's written recording of his thoughts and actions points towards the hybrid characteristics, the difficulty of pinpointing exactly the shape that this textual production will take. This difficulty of "shaping" or classifying reflects on the

intractability of the material that Razumov is wrestling with.

According to Bruce Henricksen: "As a text upon other fictive texts, [Under Western Eyes] foregrounds the scene of writing and recording ... because of the central role of writing in Razumov's own self-fashioning" (Henricksen, p137). Christopher GoGwilt comments on the proliferation of possible texts that Razumov might produce: "The plot suspends Razumov's act of writing between various possibilities. Directed to write revolutionary propaganda, he might be writing a journal for himself, a set of Rousseauistic confessions, or (as is the case) his report on revolutionary activity to the head of Autocracy's secret police" (GoGwilt,p155).

Razumov's fragmented textual production (which also includes his would-be prize winning essay) can also be "read" as a palimpsestic attempt at the writing and rewriting of the accretion of contradictory and confusing experiences that plot the text of Under Western Eyes. Zdzislaw Najder has gathered them under the rubric of "confessions". Under this generic term he includes Razumov's journal, his report to Mikulin and the verbal confession to Nathalia Haldin (Najder,pp79-81).

Under Western Eyes as "confessional" narrative incorporates both the (self-consciously) textual and intertextual aspects of the confessional mode. The teacher of languages metaphorically compares Razumov's journal to a mirror: "Mr Razumov looked at it, I suppose, as a man looks at himself in a mirror ... as a threatened man may look fearfully at his own face in the glass" (UWE,p214). More explicitly the journal is a "self-confession" (UWE,p167), "the mental and psychological self-confession, [the] self-analysis of Mr Razumov's written journal" (UWE,p308). The impulse to self-confession is provided by Razumov's betrayal of Haldin. The act of betrayal itself is not finite; it brings Razumov to the attention of Councillor Mikulin and preciptates his "career" as a

government spy. The gaps in the accounts of his actions to Councillor Mikulin prompt an urge to verbal confession (UWE,pp91,297,302) and the repression of this urge leads to its displacement into writing, an unending activity which must attempt to fill the gap of silence that Razumov has so often to impose upon himself in the presence of the servants of autocracy and those of the Revolution.

The letter that Sophia Antonovna receives which recounts the suicide of Ziemianitch (see pp270-278) guarantees Razumov's safety, his reputation as a dedicated revolutionary, in what that letter does not know and therefore cannot say. Yet, paradoxically, it is when Razumov knows that he is safe from discovery (UWE,pp282, 284) that he walks to the island in Lake Geneva and starts to write his report to Councillor Mikulin (which Najder has classified as part of his confessional oeuvre). For it is precisely what the letter does not say, the gaps that it leaves in the telling of the story, that function as a blank page for Razumov - a page that he must fill. (Cf. Razumov's simile of Russia "like a monstrous blank page awaiting the record of an inconceivable history" [UWE,p33].) In responding to Julius Laspara's request that he write something for the revolutionaries (UWE,p287), Razumov does not choose to contribute to a public debate but to use the inner, confessional mode, offering to the public that which has been designated as private. In this he follows in the footsteps of another writer of confessions, pointing towards the intertextual aspect of his confessional writing.

It is on the "absurd island" (UWE,p290) that Razumov finds the "solitude" which for him is connected to safety: "'There can be no doubt that now I am safe'" (UWE,p291). The only company that he has on the island is the woman in the refreshment chalet "and a bronze effigy of Jean-Jacques Rousseau seated on its pedestal" (UWE,p290). The implied author's judgement on Rousseau could be diagnosed, at this point, as being metonymically displaced onto the adjectives

which are applied to the island: "There was something of naive, odious, and inane simplicity about that unfrequented tiny crumb of earth named after Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Something pretentious and shabby, too" (UWE,p290).

In a fairly notorious passage in his autobiographical memoir A Personal Record, Conrad considers the confessional mode "a form of literary activity discredited by Jean-Jacques Rousseau".[41] Conrad takes issue with Rousseau on a matter of literary form: Rousseau is not "a writer of fiction" but "an artless moralist" (PR,p95) whose influence has been moral rather than political. Rousseau's failings include a lack of "imagination, as the most casual perusal of Emile will prove. He was no novelist, whose first virtue is the exact understanding of the limits traced by the reality of his time to the play of his invention" (PR,p95).

Conrad's quarrel with Rousseau is ostensibly conducted on the site of aesthetics, rather than politics. In accusing Rousseau of not understanding the "limits traced by the reality of his time", I can only conclude that Conrad's "perusal" of Emile was, as he himself writes, "most casual". And I suggest that Conrad's anxiety here is concerned with how Rousseau has used the fictional form to present himself and his ideas to his readership. In its confusion of categories, Emile is fiction, educational tract, philosophy. And in blurring these (aesthetic) boundaries, in overstepping the limits, Rousseau is either (according to Conrad's view) an incompetent or failed novelist or he is challenging the accepted generic divisions, which also pertain to ideas about how we construct the world around us, how we classify and evaluate certain types of knowledge.

When Conrad calls Rousseau "an artless moralist", a failed writer of fiction, he is replicating the criticisms that have been made of Rousseau's political writing - criticisms which allege he could only write political philosophy in the form of a fiction. For Jay Bernstein this is not a question of the failure of one Jean-Jacques

Rousseau, it is precisely his understanding of the self in society. He writes: if Rousseau's

> original state of nature ... no longer exists ... perhaps never existed, and ... probably never will exist; might not the same be said for the ideal state Rousseau outlines in The Social Contract? Are not both the state of nature and the ideal state fictions? ... Is not the self created in Rousseau's Confessions ... a fiction? Fictionality is for Rousseau the consequence of historical failure.[42]

Perhaps when Conrad questions Rousseau's credentials as a writer, he is also questioning the integrity of a fiction such as his own, which represents and investigates political philosophy and revolutionary activism and may itself appear to "moralise" - or is it politicise? - the (ostensibly) aesthetic agenda in its pushing of the autocratic and revolutionary rhetorics to their limits, asking whether there is a (practical) difference between them?

I never really thought that Conrad would leave his readers abandoned on a deserted plain on which the opposing armies of autocracy and revolution have wiped each other out and there's nothing left to say. At the site of the fictional, Under Western Eyes "create[s] for the reader the personality of the man who called himself, after the Russian custom, Cyril son of Isidor - Kirylo Sidorovitch - Razumov" (UWE,p3). It engages, through its characters, in philosophical and political debates, but in the end it comes back to the character whose actions provide the motor for the plot and who relives these actions through the medium of the fictionalised confession, a medium which provides a "third term", a different way in which to read the rhetorics of revolution and autocracy.

Razumov writes his confessions "all alone with the bronze statue of Rousseau" (UWE,p316). For both Razumov and Rousseau a moment of betrayal provides a powerful impetus to the activity of writing a confession. Writing on Rousseau, Paul de Man focuses on an episode in the Confessions. In this episode Rousseau steals a pink and silver ribbon belonging to a woman who lives in the house

where he has entered into service. The ribbon is discovered on Rousseau's person and he says that it had been given to him by the cook Marion. Marion pleads with him to tell the truth. He refuses. She is dismissed (see C, pp86-89).

Paul de Man reads this passage as "a truly primal scene of lie and deception strategically placed in the narrative".[43] Rousseau identifies this episode as the one which provided the impulse to confession: "The burden, therefore, has rested till this day on my conscience without any relief; and I can affirm that the desire to some extent to rid myself of it has greatly contributed to my resolution of writing these Confessions" (C,p88). The confession functions at this point as a catharsis and displays a tension between, in de Man's words, "the confession stated in the mode of revealed truth and the confession stated in the mode of excuse". This tension also inheres linguistically where the "evidence for the former is referential (the ribbon) whereas the evidence for the latter can only be verbal" (deMan,AR,p280). De Man highlights the "performative" aspect of a confessional text where a textual self is created through a "performative rhetoric" (see p282).

Mark Hulliung tracks the process of confessing the self from the Confessions to the Reveries of the Solitary Walker in a section of his book headed: "Rousseau judges Jean-Jacques". According to Hulliung, the autobiographical Rousseau presents a "self as if it had always been there, preformed, waiting to display the essence that bound together all the moments of his existence into a unified whole" (Hulliung,p232). The autobiographical Rousseau denies the changing model of human nature that the author of the Discourse on Inequality presented: "Speaking of the species, he held that the onset of its vices radically altered human nature; speaking of himself, he held that his immoral actions were temporary lapses, errors, externally induced aberrations that had no lasting effect on his impermeable and petrified self" (Hulliung, p232). However,

this "splitting off" of the negative self is not something that Rousseau can perpetuate through the different versions that make up a textual account of the self. As Hulliung writes, if the earlier confessional Rousseau had "frequently stated" "one must be oneself", the Rousseau of the Reveries "was not so certain he had a self to be. The Reveries opens with the question 'What am I'" (Hulliung, p237; see RSW, p27).

The self that performs through this rhetoric also presents what de Man calls "the problematics of hiding and revealing, which are clearly the problematics of cognition" (deMan,AR,p286). The problems of hiding and revealing the self are also linked to the issue of truth and lie. Rousseau will return to the episode of the ribbon in the fourth of his Reveries, when his excuses in the Confessions have not successfully vindicated "his claim to have lived for the sake of truth", when this claim "is being contested from the outside" (deMan,AR,p286; see RSW,pp63-80).

During his discussion of truth/lie in the fourth reverie, Rousseau attempts a taxonomy of degrees of lying. One of his classifications is of especial interest: "To lie without advangage or disadvantage to oneself or others is not to lie; it is not falsehood but fiction" (RSW,p69). The fiction "which has a moral end in view" is particularly noted by Rousseau as being able "to present useful truths in a form which is pleasing to the senses" where the fictional form "is merely the disguise of truth" (RSW,p69).

Again, I am reminded of Conrad's "dispute" with Rousseau in A Personal Record where the point at issue could be said to be one of balance between the "moralist" and the "writer of fiction". It is also one of truth and lie and the status of fiction. In Razumov's confessions (as in Rousseau's) the truth/lie distinction is put into process by an act of betrayal. If Rousseau's "primal scene" is the lie which betrays Marion, then Under Western Eye's "primal scene" is Razumov's betrayal of Haldin, which is the beginning of the realisation that Razumov is living a

lie: he lies to the autocrats, he lies to the revolutionaries and he lies to himself. Part of the purpose of Razumov's diary is to write down his version of the truth or, as he puts in the only language he can use: to "betray myself back into truth and peace" (UWE,p358).

It is to Haldin's sister Nathalia that the confessional Razumov turns: "'Simply because there is no one anywhere in the whole great world I could go to'" (UWE,p354). However, his verbal confession is not complete. He breaks off as if overwhelmed by Nathalia Haldin's presence. When Paul de Man writes about Derrida writing about Rousseau, he recapitulates an aspect of Western metaphysics which privileges the spoken over the written, the literal over the figurative, "the unmediated presence of the self to its own voice as opposed to the reflective distance that separates this self from the written word".[44] De Man's argument in this essay is that Rousseau's texts are as aware as Derrida's commentary on them that "a vocabulary of substance and presence is no longer used declaratively but rhetorically" (deMan,RB,p138). For the purposes of my reading of this part of Under Western Eyes, it might be argued that the mode of verbal confession which is attempted in the perceived plenitude of the presence of Nathalia Haldin proves too much for the "vile wretch" Razumov (UWE,p36). Seeking the "reflective difference that separates [the] self from the written word", Razumov retires to his room to write the account of his reaching the place of self-knowledge.

The narrator's sympathetic exegesis of this passage of Razumov's journal serves as a guide to the levels of awareness at which this section functions. Firstly, it makes its addresses to Nathalia Haldin, not to some imagined aspect of Razumov's self, and in recalling Nathalia through her brother's words - "the most trustful eyes in the world" (UWE,p358) - it gestures towards the realisation that self-knowledge can only be of value - can only occur - when it includes awareness of the other, of an

inter-subjective dimension. (Recalling Razumov's words to Nathalia - "'Do you know why I came to you? It is simply because there is no one anywhere in the whole great world I could go to'" - it could be argued that Under Western Eyes also presents Razumov's search for someone to communicate with.) Secondly, this section of the journal includes "a page and a half of incoherent writing where [Razumov's] expression is baffled by the novelty and mysteriousness of that side of our emotional life to which his solitary existence had been a stranger" (UWE,p357-58). Razumov the man of reason - given that his "rational" reflections prior to his betrayal of Haldin have been haunted by various phantoms (see pp33,37) - has in "incoherent writing" and "baffled expression" realised, through Nathalia, "the sovereign ... power of her person over his imagination, in which lay dormant the seed of her brother's words" (UWE,p358).

Leaving aside for the moment how the metaphors deployed in this citation are gendered, I will concentrate on Razumov's acknowledgment of the "missing term" in his deliberations. It is this term "imagination" that provides the source for Razumov's sentimental and moral education. As Haldin has haunted his reason, Nathalia Haldin has haunted his imagination. It is in his imagination that he has plotted his second and, according to Razumov, even greater betrayal: "And do you know what I said to myself? I shall steal his sister's soul from her" (UWE,p359). And it is through the power of imaginative identification with Nathalia that Razumov's "coming to writing" has been a coming to the truth (rather than a move towards a further betrayal). This moment, as Razumov writes, intricately entwines the sentiment of love and the need to confess the truth to the loved one:

> I felt that I must tell you that I had ended by loving you. And to tell you that I must first confess ...

> Suddenly you stood before me! You alone in all the world to whom I must confess. You fascinated me - you have freed me from the blindness of anger and hate - the truth shining in you drew the truth out of me.
> (UWE,p361)

The truth that has been revealed to Razumov is this: "In giving Victor Haldin up, it was myself, after all, whom I have betrayed most basely" (UWE,p361). I suggest that the realisation that Razumov has formulated could be read in two ways: firstly, as realising the difficulty of constructing a self within which identity and estrangement must of necessity co-exist, to summarise Lévi-Strauss on Rousseau; and secondly, as a variation on the Hegelian moment of self-recognition as predicated on the mutual recognition of self and other: "Because I am a person ... my only realisation is in the Being of other persons, and I am an actual person for myself exclusively in the Being of others".[45] In betraying Haldin, Razumov realises that he has refused this moment of mutual recognition and (self) knowledge. The moment is extended too to the aspirations of the revolutionaries, for I presume it is to this group that Razumov refers when he writes: "After all, it is they and not I who have right on their side! - theirs is the strength of invisible powers" (UWE,p361).

Razumov's textual journey has brought him to the point where he knows that in order to live any sort of relevant life, the individual must always be aware of the self as it inhabits its society; that the individual must begin but cannot end with the self, and that reason or imagination deployed on their own to negotiate our mental relation to the material world are inadequate until we find some way of utilising both faculties. It is this double action of reason and imagination which recognises that the construction of a self is also the construction of the contradictory, incoherant versions of subjectivity, the "others", or "secret sharers" that co-exist in all their identity and estrangement.

In 1771, one year before the first partition of Poland, Rousseau was commissioned to write an essay which would consider the constitution of the Republic and give the benefit of his advice to a Poland threatened with dissolution from without and hampered from within by the contradictions set up by its political system of partial democracy. A probably unofficial Polish Convention sitting at Balia in 1769 deputed a Count Wielhorski to approach well known political theorists to give their views on the Polish situation.[46] When Count Weilhorski asked Rousseau to contribute his thoughts on the subject, Polish politics met the (alternative) Enlightenment. Here we see Rousseau making a direct intervention into the debate about the place of Poland (as part of Eastern Europe) in Enlightenment thinking.

Willmoore Kendall, in his introduction to his translation of the Government of Poland, writes that Rousseau is aware that Poland's chances of remaining free from Russian domination are small and he therefore addresses himself to this question: "How can the Poles remain 'free' even under a Russian occupation?" (GP,pxiii) Kendall then goes on to compare The Social Contract with the Government of Poland in a move which provides one answer to the critics who accuse Rousseau of producing, in The Social Contract, a blueprint for "totalitarian democracy". It might be suspected that given Poland to "practice on", Rousseau would use the society as an case for application of the theory proposed in The Social Contract. This does not happen. The Social Contract proposes that all men should be free through surrendering the "**moi humaine**" to the general will, but the Government of Poland does not recommend instant abolition of aristocratic power and freedom for the serfs (GP,p30). The Social Contract proposes the republic as the most effective version of the state, but the "theme reiterated" in the Government of Poland is "Change nothing" ("Introduction", GP,ppxiv-xv). Rousseau makes a distinction in the two texts

between the "fictional"/theoretical representation of the "ideal state" and what might be called the politics of the real, when faced with the material conditions of a Poland whose continued existence as a nation-state is under threat.

Thus Rousseau concentrates on the specificities of Polish government and the need for reform in areas such as military power, Parliamentary procedure and the elective monarchy (see chapters 7-9, 12 and 14). The text treads a delicate line between the need for gradual practical reform and the realisation that soon there may not be a Poland in existence which could effect these reforms. (Rousseau appears to be recommending "Evolution not Revolution".) So Rousseau counsels: "Correct the abuses of your constitution if you can; but do not think poorly of it. It has made you what you are" (GP,p3). He is realistic about the possibility of continuing Polish independence and the fact of Russian domination, which he expresses in a telling metaphor: "You cannot possibly keep them from swallowing you; see to it, at least, that they shall not be able to digest you" (GP,p11).

In his exhortation to the Poles, Rousseau moves away from the requirements of public duty that the civil state expects of its citizens-subjects and seeks to relocate the about-to-be vaporised Polish state. Contrary to all the valorisations of public vs. private that he endorses in <u>The Social Contract</u>, he now tells the Poles that it is precisely in this private domain that their nation must be constituted: "As matters now stand, I see only one means of giving Poland the stability it lacks, namely ... to establish the Republic in the Pole's own hearts, so that it will live on in them despite anything your oppressors may do" (GP,p10).

When Conrad wrote the essay "Autocracy and War" (1905), the Republic had lived on in the Poles' hearts for one hundred and ten years. As Conrad wrote in another essay, "The Crime of Partition" (1919), Poland had become

"a mere geographical expression" deprived as it was of "its independence, of its historical continuity, with its religion and language persecuted and repressed".[47] It was this attempted dismantling of its traditions and institutions and the consequent need for it to be remembered by its conquered people that made Poland a prime site for its reconstruction and perpetuation as a specifically textual entity. As Norman Davies writes in the second volume of his history of Poland, without "concrete existence" Poland had become an "abstraction", an "Idea".[48] He continues:

> It had not merely been broken into three parts; it had been vaporized, transposed into thin air, fragmented into millions of invisible particles. There were as many different Polands as there were people who cared to perceive it ... Its essentially spiritual nature has been underlined by all the most sensitive foreign observers of the nineteenth century ... Its attributes could best be described by poetry, by metaphor and by parable.
>
> (Davies,2,p8)

Conrad's contribution to the textual perpetuation of Poland came later in a writing career that slowly took on the attempts by others to define his Polish characteristics and the degree of his commitment to the occupied nation.[49] Christopher GoGwilt states that "Autocracy and War" "constitutes a sort of hinge text in Conrad's literary work as a whole, marking the turn, in the subject of his fiction from the map of Empire to the map of Europe" (GoGwilt,p27).

The anti-Russian rhetoric of the essay is even more striking than its pro-Polish stance. Russia is labelled, using Bismark's words, as "le **Néant**" (AW,p94; GoGwilt translates the term as "nothingness", GoGwilt,p31) and is submitted to a further textual erasure by Conrad's gloss on the term:

> There is an awe-inspiring idea of infinity conveyed in the word **Néant** - and in Russia there is no idea. She is not a **Néant**, she is and has been simply the negation of everything worth living for. She is not an empty void, she is a yawning chasm open between East and West; a bottomless abyss that has swallowed up every hope of mercy, every aspiration towards personal dignity, towards freedom, towards knowledge, every

> ennobling desire of the heart, every redeeming whisper of conscience.
>
> (AW,p100)

It is in this polemical piece that Conrad strikes his blow against Russian autocracy, producing a text, that as Bruce Henricksen writes, is "monologic" in its effect and which contrasts with the polyphonic aspect of the novel Under Western Eyes (see Henricksen, p152) whose conflicting voices continually debate the possibilities and pitfalls of the situation through a dialogic exchange about autocracy and revolution. Henricksen also places the vehement tone of Conrad's essay when he comments: "The essay speaks at once of the necessity and impossibility of political thought about Russia" (Henricksen,p174).

When Conrad turns to the present situation of Poland (as it stood in 1905), he explicitly makes it coextensive with the future of (Western) Europe. Thus he has to consider what GoGwilt might call a "double-mapping": firstly, the spatial situating of Poland in relation to the map of Europe and secondly the temporal links that connect the present "political community" with the "inheritance of revolution" (GoGwilt,p28). The nominal originary point for this inheritance is the French Revolution which Conrad predictably characterises as "the degradation of the ideas of freedom and justice as [its] root"; this degradation "is made manifest in the person of its heir" - who is Napoleon (AW,p86). (Napoleon will appear in a slightly different guise below.)

The positive lesson to be taken from the Revolutionary inheritance poses the problem of how to transcend the boundaries of the nation-state and the "errors of national selfishness" in order to bring about "the solidarity of Europeanism, which must be the next step towards the advent of Concord and Justice" (AW,p97). Conrad's solution to the particularities of the situation of Poland seeks to place it as a secure part of a United Europe: "creating close-knit communities possessing the ability, the will, and the power to create a common ideal" (AW,p97).

The temptation to claim Conrad as a pre-Delors, socialist pro-European must be resisted, for his ideal of a United Europe revolves around a "conservative argument for monarchy" (GoGwilt, p28) to provide its basis, rather than a more republican/democratic idea. He imagines "that wider [European] solidarity grouping together around the standards of monarchial power" (AW, pp96-97). GoGwilt interprets what is generally viewed as Conrad's "conservative standpoint" in this essay in a way which takes on the wider issues under discussion. In this text, GoGwilt argues, Conrad "poses a key turn-of-the-century question: how to imagine an international community beyond the limits of European concepts of nation and race" (GoGwilt,p29).

I would agree with this analysis and add - bearing in mind the discussion of the Enlightenment heritage and the question of limits above - that Conrad is also seeking to delimit, or to find a secure base from which to consider how traditional ideas and practices which constitute the (Western) European nations might be revised and extended. That this secure base should be provided by "the old monarchial principle" (AW,p96) might be Conrad's conservative attempt to anchor what are also quite radical proposals for Europe's future.

The Poles certainly kept their Republic alive in their hearts, but they also turned to the armed struggle in order to try and liberate their country from Russian imperialism. The Insurrections of 1830-31 and 1863-64 are famous episodes in Polish history. In the Government of Poland, Rousseau sets out a stark choice for the Poles at the beginning of this period of their history: "Peace in my opinion, is incompatible with freedom. One must choose. This is not to say things must be left as they are; but it is to say that you must lay hands on them only with extreme caution" (GP,p3).

It was the choice some Poles made with regard to the armed conflict that kept alive both the hope of Polish

independence and the idea of Poland as part of a Europe that behaved mostly as if it would rather forget the problem of its eastern neighbour. Before the time of the Insurrections, the Army of the Duchy of Warsaw (which existed under the overall rule of Russia) fought with Napoleon in his campaigns in Europe and especially in the army that invaded Russia in 1812. For the Poles, Napoleon's invasion of Russia "was a war of liberation" (see Davies,2, pp17,302). After Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo, the Congress of Vienna (1814-1815) confirmed the partition of Poland. The Congress Kingdom "created by way of a compromise, had nothing but a paper guarantee to protect it from Russia" (Davies,2,p17). Further than this, Western Europe was not prepared to intervene.

The armed uprising as a response to Russian occupation was one aspect of the manifestation of Polish nationalism. The idea of what it meant to be "Polish" was debated under various ideological labels which encompassed aspects of the contemporary debates and traditions inherited from the past. According to Davies:

> one branch of opinion began to imagine the nation to be a distinct ethnic group, biologically unique. The other branch held to the older view whereby the nation was seen to be made up of all those individuals who shared the same political, social, and cultural traditions.
>
> (Davies,2,p25)

As Davies points out, the former belief, which contributed to the "messianic" idea of Polish nationalism, found sympathetic echoes in Russia.[50] The latter belief was constitutive of Polish democracy which extended (in theory) rights and duties to all citizens of the state, and was enthusiastically adopted by assimilated Jews who "were noted for their tendency to become more Polish that the Poles" (Davies,2,p25).

During the nineteenth century the insurrectionist Poles were complemented and opposed by what Davies calls the "conciliators" who tried to work with the Russians in order to effect reforms - for example, land reforms,

abolition of serfdom - in both territories (see Davies,2,pp33-35). Writing about a memoir by Conrad's father, Apollo Korzeniowski, Addison Bross presents a detailed examination of the insurrectionist and conciliator camps and analyses how these tendencies affected Conrad's family. His father and mother were sent into exile in 1862 for their role in the preparations for the 1863-64 Uprising - Apollo Korzeniowski was a founder of a secret Municiple Committee which became the provisional government of the Insurrectionists during the Uprising.[51] Conrad's maternal uncle, Tadeusz Bobrowski, belonged to the "conciliating reformers" camps (see Bross,p79).

Through a reading of a "Note" to Korzeniowski's memoir Poland and Muscovy (1864), Bross traces the contradictions and confusions between the insurrectionist version and the conciliating reformers' version of the Polish Nation. He emphasises the mystic Christian (/anti-semitic) aspect of Conrad's father's version of nationalism, which mostly ignored the need for Poland to think about internal reforms. Romantic nationalists like Korzeniowski constructed an idealised patriotic peasant, ignoring the internal class conflict within Poland which undermined the idea of a Poland united against a common agressor. In this case it was the agressor who extended emancipation of Russian serfs (1861) to the Polish serfs (1864). (See Bross, pp80-82.)[52]

Bross suggests that Conrad's departure from Poland and the Polish problem may have been a rejection of "the undeniably flawed version of the Polish liberation movement that Apollo Korzeniowski represented in his final years" (Bross,p95). He continues: "What aroused Conrad's ambivalence towards his Polish past may have been a genuine discomfort with the tradition as his father represented it to him" (Bross,p95).

Conrad's eventual "return" to Poland in the genre of fiction was accomplished via the essay "Autocracy and War" and the novel Under Western Eyes, which deals at length

with Russia, but bypasses Poland. (I suggest that the subject was simply too personally painful for Conrad to address in the longer novel form. As it was, on completing Under Western Eyes he suffered a severe breakdown.)[53] When he did reach Poland, it was in the short story "Prince Roman". The story is collected in Tales of Hearsay and Last Essays (1928) and Conrad's close friend R.B. Cunninghame Graham who introduces the stories notes in the Preface: "The story ... is laid in Poland, the only one of his tales in which he deals directly with the country of his birth, or touches politics".[54]

For this story, Conrad uses a "speaker of Polish nationality" (PR,p29) who tells the story of Prince Roman Sanguszko who participated in the Uprising of 1830-31. GoGwilt comments on the use of this speaker: "This draws attention to the fact that, whenever Conrad approaches something like a declaration of Polish identity, he depends on the fiction of a speaking subject separate from himself" (GoGwilt,pp117-118). Although the "fiction of a speaking subject separate from himself" is a device Conrad uses elsewhere - most obviously, Marlow - the point still holds. Conrad both approaches and defers the question of his Polish identity in "Prince Roman". In addition to the device of a focaliser, the narrative is presented in a series of time-frames which reach back to the Uprising prior to the one in which his parents took part. At this distance Conrad retells a story whose effect is both moving and thought-provoking.

The historical Prince Roman Sanguszko was "a prince of the blood" (Davies,2,p331), who resigned his commission in the Russian Army in order to join the Polish partisans (PR,p40). After the Uprising was defeated, he was condemned to be deported to Siberia and the "Tsar personally insisted that he should make the whole of the terrible journey on foot" (Davies,2,p331). So Prince Roman walked the 4,000 odd miles to Siberia.

The narrative that maps Prince Roman's path to the Uprising carefully takes account of the private and public events that work upon one subject and which provide the stimuli for certain choices. The young Prince Roman is completely content in the domestic sphere as a devoted husband and father. Politics do not impinge upon the consciousness of the subject as private man. When his wife dies, his only consolation is to ride through the countryside of his youth, which his occluded perception depopulates of its peasant occupants. Noticing, one day, a detachment of soldiers escorted by mounted Cossacks, he stops at the village inn to ask the innkeeper what is happening: "The innkeeper, a portly, dignified Jew, clad in a black satin coat reaching down to his heels and girt with a red sash, stood at the door stroking his long silvery beard" (PR,p39). The Jewish innkeeper, Yankel, is a "Polish patriot" who was a supporter of Napoleon when he marched through Poland on his way to Russia (PR,p39). It is he who tells Prince Roman that what he has witnessed are Russian reinforcements going south to fight the Insurrectionists. Yankel has provided a guide for a saddler and his two apprentices to join the partisans (PR,p39).

When Prince Roman discusses the Uprising with his father, Prince John, the older man expresses distrust of "the popular origins of the movement", he "regretted its democratic tendencies, and did not believe in its success" (PR,p40). The old Prince represents "the aristocratic point of view", the mistrust of democratic reforms as part of the resurrected Poland. He is also typical of another strand of Polish reaction to partition -the loyalists, or those Poles who were loyal to Russia (see Davies,2,pp29-33).

Prince Roman has reached the point where private grief intersects with a sense of public loss. He begins to overlay, palimpsestically, the loss of his wife and the loss of his country:

> He remembered that ... he had seen a reptile-like convoy of soldiery, bristling with bayonets, crawling over the face of that land which was his. The woman he had loved had been his, too. Death had robbed him of her. Her loss had been to him a moral shock. It had opened his heart to a greater sorrow, his mind to a vaster thought, his eyes to all the past and to the existence of another love fraught with pain but as mysteriously imperative as that lost one to which he had entrusted his happiness.
> (PR,p41)

In this version the personal act of mourning a loved one is constitutive of subsequent actions in the public sphere. The death of his wife provides the emotional catalyst for Prince Roman's coming to consciousness of himself as a public subject, as a "**moi commun**". The giving up of the private self to a civic duty is described by the narrator in an image which echoes the idea of coming to knowledge through the **via negativa**: "Thus humbly and in accord with the simplicity of the vision of duty he saw when death had removed the brilliant bandage of happiness from his eyes, did Prince Roman bring his offering to his country" (PR,p44).

There is another component, another catalyst that sparks off Prince Roman's commitment to his country. He turns to one of "a family of small nobles who for generations had been adherents, servants, and friends of the Princes S---" (PR,p42). These impoverished members of the **szlachta** (loosely translated as "land-owning nobility") led lives that in economic terms differed little from those of the peasants (see Davies,1, chapter 7). By attaching themselves to a family whose wealth matched its status, they ensured the perpetuation of their status. The old man who comes to Prince Roman offers his son, Peter, for a companion at arms, even when he hears that Prince Roman will join the partisans anonymously and fight in the ranks (PR,pp42-43). But this is not the end of the story. Prince Roman and Peter have to be guided to the partisan lines and it is to the Jewish innkeeper that the Prince turns: "The only other trusted person, besides the old man and his son Peter, was the Jew Yankel" (PR,p44). Yankel's grandson, "a

lanky youth", guides the two men to within sight of the partisans' camp-fire and then "departed hurridly, explaining that he must make haste home to be in time for keeping the Sabbath" (PR,p44).

The history of the Jews in Poland is almost as long as the history of Poland itself, and as tormented.[55] It is notable that when, in the Government of Poland, Rousseau recommends societies of the past for contemporary Poland to study, he names Moses as one of the "legislators" who "made bold to transform [a] herd of servile emigrants into a political society, a free people; at a moment when it was still wandering about in the wilderness" (GP,p6). Rousseau points to the Jews as a "nation" who have been scattered around the world, yet have still preserved a collective identity. When he exhorts the about-to-be colonised Poles "to establish the republic in the Poles' own hearts, so that it will live on in them despite anything your oppressors will do" (GP,p10), he is suggesting a course parallel to that in which the Jews pray each day to remember the land they have left. In the words of the "Song of Songs", they must set this land as "a seal upon their hearts".[56] For both Pole and diaspora Jew, the land as material entity becomes the land as spiritual and textual entity (which in turn raises other problems).

On a practical level, Norman Davies notes that Jews participated in both the Uprisings (Davies,2,p68). Under Russian occupation the movement of the Jews was progressively restricted to a pale of settlement "finally defined in 1835 [which] coincided very largely with the lands annexed by Russia from Poland-Lithuania" (Davies,2,p241). Many Jews lived, like Yankel, on noblemen's estates and Yankel's Polish patriotism can partially - but only partially - be explained by the imposition of a liquor tax that the Russian administration required and which "struck especially hard at Jewish licensees" (Davies,2,pp242,244).

It is the Jew Yankel who acts as a political catalyst for Prince Roman, when the latter makes his public statement about his Polish indentity by joining the Insurrection. First Yankel provides information for the Prince about the Uprising, speaking out of the context of his own Polish patriotism; secondly he is active in collecting information about Russian troop movements which is provided by a network of Jewish travellers or pedlars: "'You know, your Serenity'" he says to Prince Roman, "'our people they travel a lot and they see all that's going on, and they know all the roads'" (PR,p39). Then, as "the only other trusted person", he provides the guide who takes Prince Roman to his public role.

After his deportation, Prince Roman worked in the Siberian mines until his release, "stone deaf", in the amnesty of 1856 (PR,p53). It might be argued that if the likes of Lord Jim and Tom Lingard fail the narrative criteria for heroism, then it is the Polish Prince who fulfils them. To the boy who meets him later in life (and who as an adult is the narrator of the story) Prince Roman is "utterly unlike a Prince in a fairy tale" (PR,p54). Reading from the vantage point of the printed text, though, maybe that's just what we are given: Prince Roman as a fairy-tale hero who also happens to be drawn from life.

In "Prince Roman", Conrad writes a narrative about the attempted liberation of his country which envisages a version of Polish nationalism where those at the margins - the peasants who provide the populist base for the Uprising and who so disturb Prince Roman's father, the Jews - are brought into the centre of the story. This democratic version of the liberated Polish republic inclines more to Tadeusz Bobrowski's hopes for democratic reform than it does to Apollo Korzeniowski's romantic reading of the Polish nationalist myth. If Conrad at times subscribes to the anti-semitism of his compatriots, he also realises - both in Under Western Eyes and "Prince Roman" - that the idea of the nation-state is one that must include the

variety of peoples which the geographical entity encompasses rather than perpetuating the divisions and exclusions that imperialisms of all types practice. In this, Conrad participates in what is the best of the Enlightenment tradition.

Kant wrote his 1783 essay "What is Enlightenment?" in response to the question posed by the Berlin newspaper the Berlinische Monatsschrift. Another response came from the Jewish philosopher Moses Mendelssohn. Both Kant and Mendelssohn, according to Dorinda Outram, posed "in different words, the same problem ... What happens if men think without limits: Does such thought necessarily have a positive outcome?" (Outram,p2; see also chapter one) Questions about the limits of knowledge also point to questions about who participates in the debates? Who is excluded from them? In the writing of "Prince Roman", Conrad provides some thoughtful, and perhaps surprising, answers to these questions.

The question of who is included and who is excluded in Enlightenment debate, its take-up in the French Revolution and its historiography, and its rewriting in Under Western Eyes, is of especial importance in the area of gender. Nina Pelikan Strauss says that in Under Western Eyes, "the feminist is poised against the feminine".[57] Received ideas and representations of femininity are constantly probed, questioned, subverted by the first-person narratives provided by the female characters in the novel. The text presents, through these characters, a wide range of femininity/feminism. Nathalia Haldin, Tekla, Sophia Antonovna, the blacksmith's wife, provide infinite variations on the essentialist thinking about the sign "woman" as it is inscribed in, for example, the writings of Peter Ivanovitch. Peter Ivanovitch the feminist is a bad joke, as even the straight-faced teacher of languages realises. In conversation with Nathalia Haldin he hears how Peter Ivanovitch attacked the secretary Tekla: "'Do you

mean to say that the great feminist allowed himself to be abusive to a woman?' I asked" (UWE,p166).

Peter Ivanovitch's elaboration of the "cult of woman" (UWE,p125) can be traced to the moment when as an escaped and fettered convict, he is liberated from his chains when the blacksmith's wife persuades her husband to help him (UWE,pp122-25). Stylistically, Peter Ivanovitch can be criticised in that he turns this episode,. which is extraordinary even in a straightforward narrating (and I suspect it is based on a factual account Conrad heard or read), into something "symbolic" (UWE, p124). Peter Ivanovitch's textual self-constitution is achieved at the expense of the acknowledgment of the materiality and corporeality of female subjecthood. He "doubles" the reification of women: first as feminine, then as feminist.

Would it be fair to trace this attempt to define and fix women, back as far as Rousseau - specifically to the essence of the feminine woman that he creates in Sophy, the female protagonist of Emile? In fairness to Rousseau it must be emphasised that Sophy is as much of a textual construct as Emile: "It is not good that man should be alone. Emile is now a man and we must give him his promised helpmeet. That helpmeet is Sophy" (E,p384). The differences arise when the reader comes to weigh up the parts that Rousseau allots to the male and the female: "The man should be strong and active; the woman should be weak and passive; the one must have both the power and the will; it is enough that the other should offer little resistence" (E,p385).

Emile as a man - albeit man fallen from nature into society - is given the opportunity for education as man and then as citizen. Sophy is always to be identified with her female body and its biological capacities, thereby perpetuating a nature/culture split. Rousseau aims for balance in his coupling of Emile and Sophy, but the weight always inclines to the male side: "Nature teaches us that they should work together, but that each has its own share of the work; the end is the same but the means are

different" (E,p391). Time after time Rousseau reiterates the mind/body split (see for example pp386,387,388, 389, 399,**passim**).

Penny Weiss - in Gendered Community: Rousseau, Sex and Politics - is quite right when she points out that "Rousseau's political theory acknowledges that social differentiation of the sexes is not a given but something that can be created in varying degrees and forms".[58] Weiss also points to Rousseau's insight about the central position of sex roles in both the private and public spheres. But his relegation of the sexes to separate education and separate spheres results in the exclusion of women from a body politic. Weiss comments: "In The Social Contract Rousseau asserts that one necessary condition of political legitimacy is that laws be made by all; yet female citizens are excluded from direct participation in the assembly" (Weiss,p4). (I would even dispute whether Rousseau went so far as to impute citizenship to women, despite his admiration of the republic of Sparta. At the best women are very second class citizens.)

Again, Weiss reads woman's role, as given by Rousseau, the "guardian of moral values and educational practices" (Weiss cites Keohane,p82) as part of a broadening of the political base which will include women's moral input: "If women control mores, they surely also affect politics" (Weiss,p83). When, however, Rousseau leaves the law-making capabilities to one half of the population and gives men rights and duties in both the domestic and public spheres, whereas women function only in the former sphere, then the stage is set for the perpetuation of inequality which, as Rousseau warns in The Social Contract, will lead to the loss of liberty (SC,p96).

The Enlightenment debates about gender reproduce aspects of a general debate which, again, asks questions about who is to be included and excluded in the definitions that the Enlightenment seeks to establish. And these questions can also be posed in the terms of sameness/

difference that Rousseau deliberated in the Discourse on Inequality (and that become an integral part of Razumov's self-questioning). Once again, what is emphasised is the difficulty of Enlightenment categories such as "universal" and "nature". For if "universal" designates that which is held in common, then "nature" contains ideas of sameness (in the idea of human nature being universal) and of difference (because nature precedes civilisation and is always placed in juxtaposition to civilisation whether it is valorised or criticised). As Outram writes:

> So 'gender' was not simply a difficult topic for reflection by the Enlightenment, it was also a theme which affected who and what the Enlightenment thought it was. Was it genuinely a movement of autonomous, rational, objective, hence legitimate, and hence also male thinkers, whose right to criticise the order of society lay in the very characteristics which also defined their male gender; or did it also include woman, the reverse of masculine?
>
> (Outram, p89)

And if these "autonomous, rational, objective" characteristics compose the ideal self-portrait of the male Enlightenment thinker and the French Revolutionary activist, what does happen to those characteristics which are repressed: the irrational, the uncontrolled, the unfixable? I'd like to suggest an answer to this question by tracing a path from a reading of a key term of the French Revolution - the term "Liberty" - to the representation of Madame de S--- in Under Western Eyes.

At the end of Book I Chapter Two ("Spontaneous Anarchy") of The Revolution, Hippolyte Taine evokes the term "Liberty" and its personification in the female figure.[59] The mob, according to Taine, has been engendered by its "mother" Liberty who sits "howling and mis-shapen" "at the threshold of the Revolution like Milton's two spectres [Sin and Death] at the gates of Hell" (R,1,p50). Taine helpfully cites his allusion. These are the lines from Milton's Paradise Lost that he reproduces as a further gloss on the figure of Liberty:

> The one seemed woman to the waist, and fair,
> But ended foul in many a scaly fold,
> Voluminous and vast, a serpent armed
> With mortal sting. About her middle round
> A cry of hell-hounds never ceasing bark'd
> With wide Cerberean mouths full loud, and rung
> A hideous peal: and yet, when they list, would creep,
> If aught disturbed their noise, into her womb,
> And kennel there; yet still there bark'd and howl'd
> Within unseen ...
>
> (R,1,p50; see Paradise Lost,2:650-659)

In making use of this citation to extend his allegory of Liberty as mother to the Revolutionary mob, Taine encapsulates the fear and horror of unrational elements and the blurring of designated boundaries that underlays the metaphors he applies to the Revolutionary crowd. In yet another haunting manifestation, Milton's spectre (Sin)/ Taine's Liberty is specifically gendered female - following a well-established tradition - but contains elements of the human and the animal, while her beautiful/monstrous body is the repository of death in life.

While Taine's horror of the unrational focuses on the mob and its propensity to violence, the point of focus for Conrad's uneasiness is language. Revolutionary dissent which may arise from a rational cause or need is undermined by the language of pseudo-mysticism and the rhetoric of spiritualism. While the positively inflected revolutionary language of "faith" is, notably, attributed to the woman protagonist, Sophia Antonovna, the writing of the character Madame de S--- partakes of the more unsettling aspects of the allegorising of the female form characteristic of Taine's Liberty.

In a similar figural move, she plays Egeria (an ancient Italian goddess of springs and a prophet) to Peter Ivanovitch's "Russian Mazzini" (UWE,p214). She is described as a "witch" whose "obviously painted face" possesses "a death-like immobility" and whose smile makes Razumov "think of a grinning skull" (UWE,p214-15). Subsequently, she is an "ancient, painted mummy" (UWE,p215); she shows "the rigour of a corpse galvanised into harsh speech" (UWE,p222) and is later called "a crazy old harridan" (UWE,p247).

The delineation of Madame de S--- recalls the stereotype that equates a monstrous female body with a rhetoric of spiritualism which provides the reverse side of the coin to a dominant rhetoric - here that of enlightened reason. This rhetoric is perceived to be profoudly threatened by a "debased" one that appeals to extreme sensationalism or the unrational. The female type of "harridan" is used here to generate the fear of an unnatural perversion: Madame de S--- substitutes spiritualism for belief. (In Taine it is expressed through the substitution of violence/anarchy for a female-gendered Liberty). The representation of this essentialised female figure who "embodies" the irrational and feared aspects of revolutionary rhetoric is, perhaps, one of the more unexamined aspects of Under Western Eyes.

However, Madame de S--- represents but one of the variety of female characters who people the fictional world of Under Western Eyes and whose words are used to question and probe the would-be male-dominated debates on freedom, equality and the re-evaluation of public/private spaces. Indeed Conrad continues to think about these issues in the novel he published after Under Western Eyes. In Chance the gender angle of the questions discussed in this chapter is given centre stage.

NOTES

1. Joseph Conrad, in Notes on Life and Letters (1921), The Uniform Edition, London: J.M. Dent, 1924, p103. All further references to "Autocracy and War", abbreviated AW, will be included in the text.

2. Christopher GoGwilt, The Invention of the West: Joseph Conrad and the Double-Mapping of Europe and Empire, Stanford California: Stanford University Press, 1995, p1. All further references to this work, abbreviated GoGwilt, will be included in the text.

3. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Confessions (1781), trans. and introduction, J.M. Cohen, London: Penguin Books, 1953, pp587-597. All further references to this work, abbreviated C, will be included in the text.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Reveries of the Solitary Walker (1782), trans. and introduction, Peter France, London: Penguin Books, 1979, pp82-87. All further references to this work, abbreviated RSW, will be included in the text.

4. Joseph Conrad, Under Western Eyes (1911), The Uniform Edition, London: J.M. Dent, 1923. All further references to this work, abbreviated UWE, will be included in the text.

5. David Tutein, Joseph Conrad's Reading: An Annotated Bibliography, West Cornwell CT: Locust Hill Press, 1990, p85.

6. Claude Lévi-Strauss, "Jean-Jacques Rousseau: Founder of the Sciences of Man", Structural Anthropology (1973), Volume 2, trans. Monique Layton, London: Allen Lane Penguin Books Ltd, 1977, p35. All further references to this work, abbreviated Lévi-Strauss, will be included in the text.

7. I follow Rousseau's use of "man" in my discussion of his writing - unless I dispute it. I suggest that for Rousseau "mankind" quite often means just that and not "humankind". Women are often discussed as almost a separate species - see part five of Emile (1762), trans. Barbara Foxley, introduction P.D. Jimack, London: Everyman, 1995. All further references to this work, abbreviated E, will be included in the text.

See Judith Still, Justice and Difference in the Works of Rousseau: Bienfaisance and Pudeur, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993, on this question. The thesis her book argues is "that Rousseau's thinking on inequality is to a large degree unified, but breaks down on one point, that of sexual difference" (p5).

8. Mark Hulliung, The Autocritique of Enlightenment: Rousseau and the Philosophes, Cambridge Massachusetts and London: Harvard University Press, 1994, p38. All further references to this work, abbreviated Hulliung, will be included in the text.

9. See Hulliung on philosophe-ical "conjectural history", pp52-69. J.W. Burrow considers Social Darwinism as a nineteenth-century example of "conjectural history" in Evolution and Society: A Study in Victorian Social Theory, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966, pp16-18. Darwin's plotting of natural history in The Origin of Species could also be included under this term (see OS, chapter 2).

10. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Discourse on the Origin of Inequality (1755), trans. Franklin Philip, introduction Patrick Coleman, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1994, p17. All further references to this work, abbreviated DI, will be included in the text.

11. See Hulliung, chapter 1, for a detailed account of the **philosophes**' attempts to "fit" together often contradictory ideas about virtue and self-interest. Hulliung comically summarises the **philosophes**' idea that man is perfectible only in society: "Ever the spokesmen of citified prejudices, philosophes ridicule[d] the village dweller on the grounds that if he had a thought it would surely die of loneliness" (Hulliung, p145).

12. Rousseau couldn't be a father, he could only write about it. Diderot managed to do both. See Hulliung, pp99-100, on this subject with reference to Rameau's Nephew (written 1761-1776), trans. and introduction, Leonard Tancock, London: Penguin Books, 1966; and on Diderot providing his daughter's dowry by selling his library to Catherine the Great thus compromising his intellectual integrity, see Hulliung, p106.
See Confessions for Rousseau's admission about his children, pp322, 332-333; and Peter France in his introduction to the Reveries of the Solitary Walker doubting this admission, p17.

13. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, The Social Contract (1762), trans. and introduction, Maurice Cranston, London: Penguin Books, 1968, p64. All further references to this work, abbreviated SC, will be included in the text.

14. See Roderick Davis, "Crossing the Dark Roadway: Razumov on the Boulevard des Philosophes", in ed David R. Smith, Joseph Conrad's Under Western Eyes: Beginnings, Revisions, Final Forms, Hamden: Archon Books, 1991, p156, for the philosophical calibrations of the term.

15. Keith Carabine, "'The Figure Behind the Veil': Conrad and Razumov in Under Western Eyes" in ed David R. Smith, **op. cit.**, p29.

16. See The Social Contract for Rousseau's estimation of the negative effect that Peter the Great's Western affiliations had on Russia: "He tried to turn [the Russian people] into Germans or Englishmen instead of making them Russians. He urged his subjects to be what they were not and so prevented them from becoming what they might have been" (SC,p90). And see Zdzislaw Najder, "Conrad and Rousseau: Concepts of Man and Society" in ed Norman Sherry, Joseph Conrad: A Commemmoration, London: The Macmillan Press, 1976, on this comment, p85. All further references to this work, abbreviated Najder, will be included in the text.
See Under Western Eyes commenting on oppositions between Western liberalism and Russian mysticism in the revolutionary movements, pp134, 151.

17. Some of these criticisms are rehearsed in Maurice Cranston's introduction to The Social Contract, pp38-43. See also Najder, p82.

18. Old Testament psalm and New Testament parable also teach the lesson that you must cast away in order to receive again. Most notably for me in Psalm 126: "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy; He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall come again with rejoicing, bearing his sheaves aloft" (Verses 5-6; King James Version, translation amended).

19. See for example Christopher Hibbert, The French Revolution (1980), London: Penguin Books, 1982, chapters 7-9.

20. Thomas Paine, The Rights of Man (1791,1792), introduction, Eric Foner, London: Penguin Books, 1985, p94.

21. See for example Najder, p82.

22. Terry Eagleton, Exiles and Emigrés: Studies in Modern Literature, London: Chatto and Windus, 1970, p23. All further references to this work, abbreviated Eagleton, will be included in the text.

23. The "messianic" aspect of Polish and Russian nationalism and its connection to revolutionary or reactionary ideas is discussed in GoGwilt, pp149-155.

24. Bruce Henricksen, Nomadic Voices: Conrad and the Subject of Narrative, Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1992, p155. All further references to this work, abbreviated Henricksen, will be included in the text.

25. Eric J. Hobsbawm, Echoes of the Marseillaise: Two Centuries Look Back at the French Revolution, London and New York: Verso, 1990, p36. All further references to this work, abbreviated Hobsbawm, will be included in the text.

26. See Tutein, **op. cit**.

27. In the "Introduction" to Hippolyte Adolphe Taine, The Origins of Contemporary France, Selected Chapters, ed and introduction, Edward T. Gargan, trans. John Durand, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1974, pxvii. All further references to this work, abbreviated ed Gargan, OCS, will be included in the text.

28. The Hon. Maurice Baring, "Hippolyte Adolphe Taine (1828-1893)", The Encyclopedia Britannica: A Dictionary of the Arts, Sciences, Literature and General Information, Eleventh Edition, Volume 26: Submarine Mines to Tom-Tom, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1911, p362.

29. Simon Schama, in Citizens: A Chronicle of the French Revolution, London: Viking, 1989, chapter 15, provides a detailed discussion of the diverse rhetorical deployment of this language at the time of the Revolution. And see below on Taine.

30. Pick quotes René Gibaudan in Faces of Degeneration: A European Disorder c1848-c1918, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989, p91. All further references to this work, abbreviated Pick, will be included in the text.

31. Hippolyte Adolphe Taine, The Revolution (1878-85), 3 volumes, trans. John Durand, London: Daldy Isbister and Co., 1878-1885, volume 1, pp12, 14, 24, 28, 40, 41, 53, 58, 61, **passim**. All further references to this work, abbreviated R and followed by volume number, will be included in the text.

32. Ludmilla Jordanova, "The Authoritarian Response" in ed Peter Hulme and Ludmilla Jordanova, The Enlightenment and its Shadows, London and New York: Routledge, 1990, p211. All further references to this work, abbreviated Jordanova, will be included in the text.

33. See Peter Hulme and Ludmilla Jordanova's "Introduction" to the collection of essays ed Hulme and Jordanova, **op. cit.**, for a discussion of the connections and disconnections between Enlightenment theory and revolutionary practice and the related problem of dating. All further references to this work, abbreviated Hulme and Jordanova, will be included in the text.

34. Immanuel Kant, "An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?" (1784), Political Writings, ed and introduction. Hans Reiss, trans. H.B. Nisbett, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991, p58. Further references to this work, abbreviated WE, will be included in the text.

35. Dorinda Outram, The Enlightenment, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995, p2. All further references to this work, abbreviated Outram, will be included in the text.

36. Theodore W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer, Dialectic of Enlightenment (1944,1947), trans. John Cumming, London: Verso Edition, 1979, p3.

37. Sabina Lovibond, "The Endof Morality?" in ed Kathleen Lennon and Margaret Whitford, Knowing the Difference: Feminist Perspectives in Epistemology, London and New York: Routledge, 1994, p66. All further references to this work, abbreviated Lovibond, will be included in the text.

38. See Michel Foucault, "What is Enlightenment?", The Foucault Reader, Ed Paul Rabinow, London: Penguin Books, 1986, p50. All further references to this work, abbreviated Foucault, WE, will be included in the text.

39. J.M. Bernstein, "Art Against Enlightenment: Adorno's Critique of Habermas", in ed Andrew Benjamin, The Problems of Modernity: Adorno and Benjamin (1989), London and New York: Routledge, 1991, p54. All further references to this

work, abbreviated Bernstein, AAE, will be included in the text.

40. The ur-text reads: "Speech was given to the ordinary sort of men whereby to communicate their mind, but to wise men whereby to conceal it". Robert South, Sermon preached in Westminster Abbey, 30 April 1676. (H.L. Menken's New Dictionary of Quotations, 1982). Razumov's remembering of this epigram is, I presume, reported ironically.

41. Joseph Conrad, The Mirror of the Sea: Memories and Impressions and A Personal Record: Some Reminiscences (1906,1912). The Uniform Edition. London: J.M. Dent, 1923, p95. All further references to this work, abbreviated PR, will be included in the text.

42. J.M. Bernstein, "Difficult Difference: Rousseau's Fictions of Identity" in ed Hulme and Jordanova, **op. cit.**, p73.

43. Paul de Man, Allegories of Reading: Figural Language in Rousseau, Nietzsche, Rilke and Proust, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1979, p278. All further references to this work, abbreviated de Man, AR, will be included in the text.

44. Paul de Man, "The Rhetoric of Blindness: Jacques Derrida's Reading of Rousseau" in Blindness and Insight: Essays in the Rhetoric of Contemporary Criticism (1971), London: Methuen and Co. Ltd, 1983, p114. All further references to this work, abbreviated de Man, RB, will be included in the text.

45. J.M. Bernstein, "From self-consciousness to community: act and recognition in the master-slave relationship" in ed Z.A. Pelczynski, The State and Civil Society: Studies in Hegel's Political Philosophy, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984, p14.

And cf. G.W.F. Hegel, Phenomenology of Spirit (1807), trans. A.V. Miller, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977, pp111-112.

46. See "Introduction" to Jean-Jacques Rousseau, The Government of Poland (1772), trans. and introduction, Willmoore Kendall, Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 1985. px. All further references to this work, abbreviated GP, will be included in the text.

47. Joseph Conrad, "The Crime of Partition" (1919) in Notes on Life and Letters (1921), The Uniform Edition. London: J.M. Dent, 1924. p118.

48. Norman Davies, God's Playground: A History of Poland (1981), 2 volumes, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982, pp6,8,9. All further references to this work, abbreviated Davies and followed by volume number, will be included in the text.

49. GoGwilt, chapter 6, gives a detailed account of Conrad's attempts to negotiate a writing position between the Scylla of Slavism and the Charybdis of Polishness, as a result of a move by both British critics and Polish writers to place him in and out of a tradition of English Letters.

50. See Razumov's comments about who is Russian and who is excluded, specifically his anti-semitism, pp78-9, 215, 258, 277.

51. Addison Bross, "Apollo Korzeniowski's Mythic Vision: Poland and Muscovy 'Note A'", The Conradian 20:1-2 (Spring-Autumn 1995), p79. All further references to this work, abbreviated Bross, will be included in the text.

52. For a dissenting view which reverses the labels that Bross attaches to Korzeniowski's and Bobrowski's politics, see John Batchelor, The Life of Joseph Conrad: A Critical Biography, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1994, p11.

53. See Jessie Conrad's memoirs Joseph Conrad as I Knew Him, London: William Heinemann Ltd, 1926 pp59, 135-38 and Joseph Conrad and his Circle, London: Jarrolds Publishers, 1935, pp141-49, for her descriptions of this episode.

54. Joseph Conrad, Tales of Hearsay and Last Essays (1925,1926), The Uniform Edition, London: J.M. Dent, 1928. All further references to "Prince Roman", abbreviated PR, will be included in the text.

55. See Davies, volume 1, chapter 9 and especially volume 2, chapter 9.

56. NB: In the "Song of Songs" this phrase doesn't refer directly to the land of Israel.

57. Nina Pelikan Strauss, "Conrad Under Dostoevsky's Eyes", Paper delivered at the 22nd Annual International Conference of the Joseph Conrad Society, 4-6 July 1996.

58. Penny A. Weiss, Gendered Community: Rousseau, Sex and Politics, New York and London: New York University Press, 1993, p75. All further references to this work, abbreviated Weiss, will be included in the text.

59. See Schama, **op. cit.**, pp15, 768-771, for an account of the development of the female figure of Liberty into Marianne, emblem of Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary France.

Chapter Four

Bringing Empire Home in _Chance_

Chance (1914) is the novel that focuses on a different aspect of the relations between the imperial ideology and its "others". In this novel, the intersection between colonialism, commerce and the subordination of other nations is symbolised by the **Ferndale**, one of the ships of Britain's merchant fleet. But the narrative turns on the gender/sexual relations between and among men and women. "Race" returns at a particularly important point in these relations, as will be seen.

The intertwining of the categories of "race" and "sex", as they were theorised in nineteenth-century Britain, is traced in an essay by Joanna de Groot who writes that concepts of "race" and "sex" "existed within a framework of relations of domination and subordination" and that "these concepts also involved interaction, reciprocity, and mutual need".[1] Ideas about dominant/ subordinate groups underpin the systems and practices of the imperial ideology. In addition, these ideas are internalised and become part of the imperial subject's unconscious, playing an important role in the production of fantasy, in the constitution of a "fantasmatic" - defined by Laplanche and Pontalis as "the unconscious prototype for all dreams and fantasies".[2]

It is this movement from the social to the psychic and vice versa and its implications for the modalities of social and sexual "being", the establishment and transgression of gendered boundaries, that provide the theoretical basis for this chapter.

Chance has been read as a mysogynist novel, as a popular romance, as a sub-set of the imperialist adventure story. Its representations of femininity and masculinity have been criticised for the way in which they reproduce and endorse the polarised and unequal positions and relations of the sexes. While many critics have commented on the homosocial/(veiled) homosexual contexts of the all-male society on shipboard,[3] this formulation of male-male

desiring tends to the occlusion of Flora de Barral as a participant in the economy of desiring.

It is my aim in this chapter to shift the grounds of discussion of Chance and to explore other ways of analysing the rich material that this text provides. I propose a reading of Chance which reinstates Flora in the desiring economy and emphasises her importance in the novel's elaborate narrative patterning. The tendency of many readings has been to replicate the dualist model of gender relations and imperialist domination/subordination that the text is criticised for endorsing.

As an alternative to the dualist model, I will suggest that Chance traces a number of triangular figurings in which the protagonists - Flora, Captain Anthony, Powell, de Barral, and Marlow himself - are caught up. The triangular pattern incorporates the romance genre, the chivalric-romance, the melodrama, among its varied configurations of desire, and introduces another dimension into the debate - in which the text also participates - about women's social position and ideas about the gendering of desire/desiring positions at the turn of the century.

The Marlow who narrates Chance dominates the narrative to an even greater extent, it might be argued, than the Marlow who tells the other tales. In "Youth" (1902) and Heart of Darkness he recalls experiences from his younger days and strives, with varying degrees of success, to create (narrative) order out of the chaos, out of the precariousness of immediate experience. In Lord Jim the main part of the narrative comes from Jim himself, while subsidiary narrators or "doubles" are used to "fill in the blanks" in Jim's narrative - the French Lieutenant, Captain Brierly - or to reflect with Marlow on the meaning of the story he is trying to assemble - Stein most especially fits this role.

I don't want to play down the complexities of construction, the slippages, the recalcitrance of language

in these narratives to mean what Marlow aims at - and misses. Rather I want to emphasise the extent to which Chance insists upon the fragmentary nature of its construction through a number of devices. First, its use of multiple narrators, and the role Marlow plays in orchestrating these narratives and narratives within narratives, as part of its textual fabric. Chance is the novel, as Martin Ray points out, where Marlow "collates" the narratives of six or more narrators which cover seven temporal levels and a seventeen year time span.[4] As Ray indicates, chronological complexity, the alinearity of the narrative, also contributes to the unsettling of both the story and conventional expectations of what a story should do. Thirdly, Marlow's presentation of the other narrators' stories employs various modes of representing speech - a point that has particular importance in the scene where he talks to Flora "on the pavement" - which serves to underline the provisional status of the events narrated, and questions the conventional construction of character as a sign of individual subjectivity.

A substantial part of Marlow's narration is taken up by his comments on women and feminism, arising out of plot and character - the emerging story of Flora de Barral - and out of the process of the narration. Specifically, Mrs Fyne's contribution to this process engages him in a debate about women's place in society and what it means to exist as a woman (and by implication as a man). Marlow's interventions into the narratives of the intra-diegetic narrators, his exchanges with the frame-narrator, make up the text's intervention in the "Woman Question", one of the most pressing and wide-ranging contemporary questions which was being debated in the public sphere.[5]

Marlow as narrator, delivering himself of choice epithets on women's difference, has all too often been quoted out of context in order to make a case for Marlow the bitter misogynist, the implacable foe to changes in society's gender arrangements. Certainly, "soundbites"

like: "A man can struggle to get a place for himself or perish. But a woman's part is passive ...";[6] or: "As to honour - you know - it's a very fine mediaeval inheritance which women never got hold of" (C,p63); or: "For myself it's towards women that I feel vindictive mostly, in my small way" (C,p150) - make very good copy for those critics who would label Marlow a misogynist and stop there.[7]

One of the main reasons for resisting the Marlow-misogynist equation, which stops short at that attribution, is that it leaves out so much that complicates and enlivens the text. Marlow's reflections, his asides to the frame-narrator, his ambivalent position towards his subject, repeatedly draw attention to the provisional position of this "thinking aloud". To return to one example of Marlow's misogynist speech: "As to honour ... it's a very fine medieval inheritance which women never got hold of". He continues: "Since it may be laid as a general principle that women always get what they want, we must suppose they didn't want it" (C,p63). This comment can be read both as a further criticism of women and as questioning the value of the sign "honour". The more Marlow talks, the more he complicates his statements and the values they imply. His very "heavy footedness", his insistence on qualifying and extending each statement, works to undermine and shift the ground on which these statements are built, as well as the language in which they are spoken.

Daphna Erdinast-Vulcan, in Joseph Conrad and the Modern Temper, proposes a double role for the Marlow who inhabits Chance. By designating him both narrator and protagonist of the text, she provides a frame in which the contradictions he embodies, the **volte faces** he performs can be set out and analysed - with the proviso that there are no definite answers to the complexities posed. Erdinast-Vulcan writes: "Marlow ... I would argue, is the real protagonist of Chance" and "is persistently calling attention to the interpretative nature of his enterprise" (Erdinast-Vulcan,p146).

Marlow narrating and participating in the text he narrates gives an edge to his "misogyny" that, from this angle, hinges on his progressive (reluctant?) awareness that woman's refusal of male-constructed codes of behaviour puts those codes into question, puts them (and the men who "frame" them) at risk. He admits: "We could not stand women speaking the truth" (C,p144). Throughout Chance, I would argue, Marlow is being pushed, and pushing himself - while at the same time he is resisting every step of the way - to frame a critique of the system of "patriarchy".[8]

When the frame-narrator attempts to sketch the parametres within which Marlow will tell his story, he finds himself stressing that which is imprecise, difficult to grasp in the very tone of Marlow's narration. The frame-narrator refers to Marlow's "habit of pursuing general ideas in a peculiar manner, between jest and earnest" (C,p23 and cf. Marlow's "tone between grim jest and grim earnest", p150). He also questions what he thinks is the comic "spin" that Marlow puts on Flora de Barral's "history". Marlow has to spell out to the literal-minded frame-narrator (here a stand-in for the reader) that "people laugh at absurdities that are very far from being comic" (C,p283). The slippage in tone, within and between episodes, indicates Marlow's difficulty in finding a consistent "voice" in which to tell his narrative; this in turn poses questions about the status of the narrative itself.

Recalling Daphna Erdinast-Vulcan's distinction between Marlow as narrator and protagonist, I suggest that the uncertainty about tone that the frame-narrator and Marlow debate is replicated in Marlow's relation to women and the "Woman Question". Put broadly, Marlow as narrator engages with feminism while Marlow as protagonist engages with the feminine, specifically with Flora as the main representative of femininity in Chance. Marlow's ambivalence with regard to feminism and femininity produces a split between theory and practice as he attempts to

analyse feminism and the construction of subjectivity in sexual difference - a construction which implicates Marlow's subjectivity as well. Andrew Roberts comments on this aspect of Marlow's engagement: "What Marlow is exploring is ... the nature and psychological significance of his own ideas of the feminine; hence he is exploring the divided and unstable constitution of masculinity" (Roberts,p96).

Marlow's contradictory statements concerning women and femininity imply a corresponding doubt about the components of (his) masculinity. The inappropriately jocular aspect he gives to the episodes he narrates suggests that he is attempting to distance himself from the convolutions of the story he tells, but at many points in the text he stops to reflect on his story-telling and on himself as narrator and protagonist. It is in these pauses for reflection that he reluctantly concedes his investment in the story he tells and the moments of uneasy self-awareness that this investment gives rise to.

Typically, Marlow trips himself up, attempting to cancel out a former statement by contradicting it (by placing it "under erasure"): "There is enough of the woman in my nature ..." (C,p53) he admits to the frame narrator. Later he acknowledges "that small portion of 'femininity', that drop of superior essence of which I am myself aware" as constitutive of "my composite temperament" (C,p146). Identification is undermined by opposition when he also admits: "It's towards women that I feel vindictive mostly, in my small way" (C,p150). Marlow is here demonstrating a classic instance of ambivalence and it is this contradiction that he affirms and applies in one of his (frequent) moments of wisdom: "Dark and, so to speak, inscrutable spaces being met with in life, there must be such places in any statement dealing with life" (C,p101). And it is as protagonist in the tale he tells that Marlow comes to grips with what is dark and inscrutable.

Marlow as narrator is entwined with the thematic of his narrative, his investment - which is at once reluctant and fearful - in feminism, the "Woman Question". Marlow as protagonist is intimately linked to Flora de Barral - the site of representation and object of desire. Consequently the representation of Flora is productive of multiple readings both complimentary and contradictory, which attempt to describe and characterise her. On the ground of an appearance which includes "fine, arched eyebrows ... hair ... nearly black, her eyes blue, deeply shaded by long dark eyelashes" (C,p45), these traits are supperadded: She is a "phantom-like girl" (C,p50) and "that minx" (C,p53); she has the "air of an angry victim" (C,p58); she is "the girl born to be a victim" (C,p309) while she is also "a foolish and inconsiderate little person" (C,p68), not to mention "look[ing] like a foresaken elf" (C,p424). To say that Flora resists representation is an understatement and it is in direct proportion to this (passive) resistance that Marlow needs to describe her, to become involved with her and her story.

Marlow is one of the characters in the novel who desires Flora. When he first meets and describes her (see p45) he explicitly couples Flora as victim and Flora as attractive: "She looked unhappy. And - I don't know how to say it - well - it suited her. The clouded brow, the pained mouth ... A victim. And this characteristic aspect made her attractive" (C,pp45-46). (Later, Captain Anthony will experience the same constituents as components of his desire for Flora.)

Marlow's desire for Flora, his need to "fix" her in his description of her, and his failure to do so, promote his insertion of himself into the narrative that he organises and tells. The mechanics of his insertion comprise an imaginary projection of himself - as auditor of the intra-diegetic narrators' stories and as narrator - into the stories that circulate around the figure of Flora. As he listens to Mrs Fyne's version of events, he remarks:

"As is my habit, or my weakness, or my gift, I don't know which, I visualized the story for myself" (C,p177).

Visualizing Flora's story, projecting himself imaginatively into the space she has with difficulty inhabited, leads to another aspect of the attempt to construct Flora: Marlow's empathetic identification with the woman he places as heroine of his tale. The contradictions of Marlow's move to insert himself into Flora's narrative reflect and thereby repeat Flora's own desperate experiences and her attempts to make some sense of them. These attempts are readily undermined by those who want to mould her to their purposes, their narratives: her father, the governess, Captain Anthony - and Marlow himself.

At some points in his narrative, Marlow adopts what might be called an attitude of epistemological totalitarianism with regard to Flora, which flatly contradicts his equivocal recognition of his own provisional subjectivity with its shifting mixture of masculine and feminine elements - the latter of which he alternately avows and disavows. Catching a last sight of Flora outside the Eastern Hotel, he is flooded by the fears and questions that, he tells the reader, must have overwhelmed her as the day for her father's release approached. These fears are given in a mixture of questions and short statements, to which this comment is appended: "I won't say I was thinking these thoughts [ie Flora's fears]. It was not necessary. The **complete knowledge** was in my head while I stared hard across the ... road" (C,p246,emphasis added).

By what authority can Marlow claim such a "complete knowledge" of a woman he has met just twice? Leaving aside the matter of Marlow being Conrad's substitute and Conrad being able to write whatever he wants about "his" characters (in this way he **is** an omniscient author), the assertion demonstrates an oscillation between the need to empathise imaginatively with Flora, to experience what she

experiences, and the need to assert a narrative mastery over those experiences.

If these positions are gendered and essentialised with regard to Marlow's problematic subjectivity, we could say that a move to dissolve his masculinity, to blur the boundaries and indulge his female side by empathising with Flora inevitably evokes a compensatory re-assertion of his risky masculinity. Hence his "vindictiveness" towards women; if empathy is also read as indentification with the feminine, then the vindictiveness in Marlow's make-up can be read as a reflex reaction of his masculine side which makes an attempt to recuperate a masculinity threatened by dissolution.

The "inner" shifts, dissolutions and reconfigurations of subjectivity and sexuality that Marlow doggedly attempts to chart are reflected in the "outer" world where women's rights and women's roles are being fiercely stated, re-stated and contested. These debates, questioning the dominant ideology with regard to sex/gender roles, provide the "public sphere" within which Chance is produced and read, within which it takes up its position(s).

The permeability of the "inner"/"outer" spheres, gestures towards the multiplicity of connotations that clustered round what came to be called the "New Woman".[9] The instability of the "New Woman as a category" is indicated, according to Sally Ledger, by the "complex" relationship "between the New Woman as discursive construct and the New Woman as representative of the women's movement of the **fin de siècle**" (Ledger,p23).[10] Within the term itself a number of mutually challenging positions obtained: for example, the endorsement of and the attack on motherhood; sexual purity and sexual radicalism; female suffrage; women's work; separate spheres ideology. The debate **among** women about women's rights in its feminine/feminist duality, replicated the gendered terms of the debate **between** women and men.

Both Ledger and Linda Dowling (in "The Decadent and the New Woman in the 1890s") observe how in some contemporary fiction, the New Woman was associated with the "Decadent" or "the decadent Dandy" (Ledger,pp24-30),[11] most particularly with regard to contemporary feminism's attempt "to reinterpret the sexual relationship" (Dowling,p441). As the territory on which a pervasive anxiety was both declared and sublimated, the sexuality of the New Woman evoked a range of reactions which were reflected in fictional and polemical productions.[12]

Jane E. Miller (in Rebel Women: Feminism Modernism and the Edwardian Novel) addresses the difference between the female and male writers who took up issues raised by the feminism of the time in a novelistic form that still used structures established through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. She proposes the term "modernism of content" which will exemplify "an antecedent stage to the more familiar, canonised modernism of form".[13] She is also interested to trace how this "modernism of content" itself pushes at the limits of traditional novelistic structures, creating the need for experimentation, the remaking and redirecting of these very forms.[14] Indeed this is what Conrad will do with the romance form of Chance.

As a "male-authored" contribution to the "Woman Question" debate, Chance would have been read as one among many texts - a large proportion of which were written by women. Schreiner's Woman and Labour (1911)[15] and West's journalism written between 1911-1913, collected in The Young Rebecca,[16] reflect and refract the discussion about women's place in the private and public spheres, while at the same time they probe the psychic making and re-making of the female subject **vis-à-vis** these two arenas. These discussions have relevance to Flora's story, particularly when they discuss the "problem" of waged work for women and the relations between men and women inside and outside the institution of marriage.

Woman and Labour is uneasily poised between what Elaine Showalter defines as an attempt "to work out [Schreiner's] vision of a sexual evolution, rather than a revolution, that would bring men and women closer together" (Showalter,p56). The revolution/evolution opposition gestures towards Razumov's famous manifesto in Under Western Eyes, and more purposively towards the evolutionary context which subtends Schreiner's text and which provides its motivating force. Darwin's theory of natural selection was (as I have discussed in chapter two) applied by social theorists - especially Herbert Spencer - to the social sphere and in the form of "Social Darwinism", provided a "grand narrative", a legitimating model for the imperialist ideology of racial superiority and for the unequal gender relations that obtained in the "mother country".

In the introduction to Woman and Labour, Schreiner is careful to place the issue of "women's domestic labour at the present day" as "something quite distinct from, though indirectly connected with, the sexual relation between man and woman" (WL,p22). The first three chapters of Woman and Labour (comprising about a half of the whole book) make out a case for the condition of the contemporary middle-class woman as one of "sex parasitism" (WL,p22,**passim**).

In a sweeping narrative of the gendered division of labour from "savage" to "modern" ages (see WL,pp33-49), Schreiner presents a "conjectural history" of woman's place and displacement in developing social structures. The analysis of the changing conditions and emphases of gendered labour that Woman and Labour presents is powerful and telling. In focusing on the right to work as the "keynote" of the "modern woman" (WL,p33), Schreiner addresses the class aspect of the "women's movement" pointing up the heterogeneity of the movement and pointing to the different interests within the term, as well as male opposition to female "demands" (see for example pp121-124). The "battle cry" of Woman and Labour is: **"We take all labour for our province"** (WL,p167).

Yet for all this Schreiner, as Anne McClintock puts it in Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Context, "never fully threw off the evolutionist mantle".[17] Evolutionary essentialism underpins the agenda for social change and the analysis of the class "variable" in the women's movement, as it does the heterosexual relationship. The prognosis for the sexual relations between men and women sketches a movement from a necessary but "barbarous and semi-savage condition" - Schreiner is referring to sexual reproduction - to a "higher" condition where "sex and the sexual relation between man and woman [will] have distinct aesthetic, intellectual, and spiritual functions and ends, apart entirely from physical reproduction" (WL,pp26-27).

The trajectory Schreiner traces from the barbarous to the higher condition in sexual relations replicates the hierarchical dualisms that were applied to race relations. As I remarked in my discussion of Heart of Darkness, contemporary writers worked with a rhetoric that was both explicitly and implicitly racialised. In Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race, Robert Young states that nineteenth-century "theories of race were ... also theories of desire".[18] And presumably the opposite also held.

The point that Schreiner makes in the passage cited, that the sexual relation can be more than the sum of its sexual parts is crucial to the emancipation of women. But the racial-evolutionary terms within which she constructs her argument leaves some of its apsects in the realm of unexamined and troublesome assumptions. Schreiner's reproduction of the terms of the debate about gender within the frame of a racialised biology, reinforce the imbrication of the theorising of "sex" and "race".[19]

Rebecca West's journalism provides a wider context in which to place the polemical aspect of feminism which in Chance is more narrowly represented by Mrs Fyne and Marlow's

rather biased comments on her. West's writing for The Freewoman, The New Freewoman and The Clarion between 1911-1913, ranges among a broad-based agenda of feminism and socialism. Her book reviews cover novels, plays, literary criticism, social and political analysis. Her articles for The Clarion cover political meetings, the class variable in the feminist movement relating to women's work, the reporting of the Divorce Commission on a New Divorce Bill (1912), Christmas shopping. As Jane Marcus writes in the introduction to The Young Rebecca, The Freewoman "was concerned to develop its own philosophy of free love and individualism" (YR,p6) **contra** the hardline suffragette ideology summed up in the slogan "Votes for Women, Chastity for Men".[20]

West's developing range of responses to the theories and tactics of what might be called radical feminist reform is signalled throughout these essays and is allied to a talent for phrasemaking. A review of The Position of Women in Indian Life by the Maharani of Boroda and S.M Mitra famously starts: "There are two kind of imperialists - imperialists and bloody imperialists" (YR,p12). Her comments on female celibacy - a.k.a. "spinsterhood" (YR,p48) - wages for housework, equal work for equal pay, journalism as a career for women form part of a position on the role of women in modern society which gives equal weighting to their sexual and political freedom.

Contemporary anxieties about the changing roles of men and women - in both the social and sexual spheres - and about the sexuality of the "new woman" within the institution of marriage provide the basis for a short story - "Indissoluble Matrimony" - which West wrote in 1914 (it was published in Blast). The narrative - and the tone is ostensibly one of comic excess - is focalised through this exemplary woman's husband. Perceiving his masculinity to be in danger of annihilation from his wife's overwhelming physical and intellectual presence, he batters her to death and drowns her in a lonely pond - or so he thinks.

Returning home, he finds his wife peacefully asleep in the marital bed: "He was beaten. He undressed and got into bed, as he had done every night for ten years, and as he would do every night until he died. Still sleeping, Evadne caressed him with warm arms" (YR,p289)

As Jane Marcus remarks: "Part of [the story's] power is perhaps derived from the projection of [West's] own fears" (YR,p266). Evadne's bursting physicality is conveyed in familiar animal terms - she strokes her hair "as a cat licks its fur" (YR,p267) - and a racialised rhetoric - she hums tunes "in that uncanny, Negro way of hers" (YR,p268). As with Schreiner, the use of this terminology is an index of the anxiety that is evoked - in both women and men - by the questioning of the dominant ideology. Rebecca West's journalism encompasses both the pleasures and the dangers that are implicit in the process of women's emancipation.

Jeremy Hawthorn calls Chance "Conrad's anti-feminine feminist novel.[21] It's a catchy chapter title, which, however, begs most of the question. Hawthorn reduces what he calls the "narrative hesitations" of Chance to Conrad's "inability to decide what he believes" (Hawthorn,JCNT, pp140-141) concerning the issue of women's rights. As the previous sections of this chapter have tried to show, I don't believe this to be the problem of one individual writer.

For the record, Conrad's public record on women's issues is (surprisingly?) fairly positive. He was one of 43 writers who signed a Memorial - published in The Times on 15 June 1910 - to the Prime Minister H. H. Asquith encouraging him to back the cross-party Women's Suffrage Bill. In a letter to Laurence Houseman written in May of that year, Conrad expressed a characteristic pessimism with regard to the success of the Bill, while stating it was a step "with which I associate myself unreservedly".[22] In a further letter to the same correspondent, he reiterates with a mixture of sincerity and sly humour (another

"trademark"): "I want the women to have the vote and generally their own way in anything and everything under heaven. It will please them and certainly it won't hurt me" (CL4,p344).

The feminist debate that unfolds in Chance, its examination of the "Woman Question", is conducted under the narrative auspices of Marlow in a tone which places considerable emphasis on the difficulties and disjunctions which, in his opinion, the debate attracts. In setting up Mrs Fyne as a cariacature of the contemporary feminist, Marlow is to a great extent setting up a straw target.[23] She wears "blouses with a starched front like a man's shirt, a stand-up collar and a long necktie" as well as "a ruddy out-of-doors complexion" (C,p39). The masculinity of her dress style and manner are reiterated at various points in the text (see pp59,137).

Marlow's suspicion of Mrs Fyne's motives is most emphatically stated in his restatement of her "feminist doctrine" (C,p58). The reader/frame-narrator are told that it is neither "political" nor "social" but "a knock-me-down-doctrine" (a knock-Marlow-down-doctrine?), "a practical individualistic doctrine" that Marlow doesn't take the trouble to "expound ... to you at large" (C,pp58-59). We have to take his word for its "naïve atrociousness", its elaboration of a belief that since women have suffered so much under the male yoke, it is their right to secure their advantage by the use of any possible means (see p59).

Mrs Fyne's doctrine rejects the would-be humanist one (which Marlow subscribes to) that believes "it was a sort of duty to show elementary consideration, not only for the natural feelings, but even for the prejudices of one's fellow-creatures" (C,p58). Marlow is trying to present himself as the apostle of reason and decency, but he is arguing within a narrow frame which presupposes there is a consensus about the terms "elementary consideration", "natural feelings".

Marlow accuses Mrs Fyne of playing with words as a child plays with marbles (C,p61), of framing a theory that begins and ends with an appeal to a constrained and constraining individualism. In a characteristic move, he slides from discussing Mrs Fyne, representative woman, to "women" in the collective sense and their rejection of the masculine tradition of "honour" (C,p63). In the move from the particular to the general, Marlow attempts to theorise women's "femininity" which he characterises oxymoronically as both "precise" and "mysterious".

In the oscillation between gender and sexuality, between social construction and biological essentialism, Marlow enacts a slippage between rhetorics - and not for the first or last time. He starts out talking about feminism and (inevitably?) ends up speculating about the feminine, trying, and failing, to fix it, for all his nautical bluster. Is this entirely Marlow's failure? Or the "failure" of his subject? Later in the text, he makes a clear distinction between the conditions of material existence and the attempt to effect what might be called a "sea change" in the dominant ideology. This distinction is illustrated in the example he gives: "You won't maintain that a woman who, say, enlisted for instance, (there have been cases) has conquered her place in the world. She has only got her living in it - which is quite meritorious, but not quite the same thing" (C,p282).

If Marlow errs, he partly errs on the side of caution. He has experienced the pitfalls and power struggles of a male-dominated world and he is sceptical of womens' efforts - or anyone's efforts? - to produce effective change. Marlow the narrator convicts Mrs Fyne's feminist "hand-book" of a mismatch between theory and practice. Too much theory, not enough experience. However, Marlow's narrative **is** aware of Mrs Fyne's "experience" of domestic tyranny under her father, of her egalitarian marriage and motherhood. This narrative - in contradistinction to Marlow's narration - bears witness to women's experience as

traditionally underpinned by, and mostly limited to, the domestic sphere and all these elements are implicit and ready to be put into the telling as crucial components in the story of Flora de Barral.

Scott McCracken, in his essay "Postmodernism, a Chance to reread?", explicitly identifies Flora, Mrs Fyne and Flora's governess as "New Women" [24] and states that "the construction of Flora's disruptive femininity cannot be separated from the history of the woman's movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century" (McCracken,p276).

Quite as disruptive in her femininity is Flora's governess who occupies her anomalous position in the domestic-social hierarchy.[25] In Marlow's words, the governess has "the trick of a 'perfect lady' manner (severely conventional) and the soul of a remorseless brigand" (C,p93). Marlow's narration recognises the passions and desires that shift beneath the governess surface of required competence, the pretence of asexuality: "Why shouldn't a governess have passions, all the passions, even that of libertinage, and even ungovernable passions; yet supressed ... till there comes ... a time when the restraint of years becomes intolerable - and infatuation irresistible" (C,p103).

The governess's infatuation with the young man Charley and her jealousy of Flora precipitate the scene in which she abuses Flora verbally (see C,pp116-121). Thus Flora's entry into knowledge of the adult world is achieved through the governess's use of abusive language to and about her, and this language becomes a problematic constituent of her female subjectivity and the way she relates to the people around her. If Mrs Fyne is a satirically inflected representation of a feminist theorist, Flora is the representative of "becoming a woman" on hostile terrain.

Marlow's narrative of Flora's life until she marries Captain Anthony lays emphasis on two (almost) mutually exclusive categories: Flora's need to work and Flora's

unemployability. Her father is imprisoned for financial fraud when Flora is sixteen. Her "education" seems to have consisted, up to this age, of painting lessons and riding "lessons" with the young man Charley. She is almost completely unequipped to face the practical business of earning a living; as Marlow says, she is "a woman for whom there is no clear place in the world" (C,p281).[26] The unclarity of Flora's social positioning is inflected by gender and class considerations, and this class aspect is glossed quite explicitly by Marlow: "It isn't so easy for a girl like Flora de Barral to become a factory hand, a pathetic seamstress or even a barmaid. She wouldn't have known how to begin" (C,p175). (Marlow's assessment of Flora's position provides the fictional analogue to the writings of Schreiner and West.)

Flora's precarious position is reinforced by the work she finds - for she does work. With the practical help of Mrs Fyne she fills the position of lady's companion (C,p179), nursery governess in Germany (C,p180) and kindergarten assistant (C,p197). All Flora's work constitutes an extension of women's domestic role. It is work that pays badly - as a kindergarten assistant she earns "a mere pittance" (C,p197). It is also work that exposes her to the unequal distribution of power in contemporary gender arrangements: In Germany she is nursery governess to two little boys to whom she is "very attentive" (C,p180). This work comes to an end when the "man of the house" makes sexual advances to her (C,p181). (Flora is in the position of the working-class working woman - the domestic worker, the factory hand, the shopworker - who is perceived by the men around her as unprotected and therefore as "fair game" sexually.) Dismissed by an hysterical mistress, herself on the edge of an hysterical breakdown and another suicide attempt, she is only saved by the practicality and kindness of the homeward-bound ship's stewardess (see pp181-183).

As one of the "odd women", ostensibly middle class but needing to earn her living, Flora is a target for financial, sexual and emotional exploitation. In her timid forays into the world of work she is perceived as a disturbing and disruptive influence.

Flora's disastrous experiences in the job market leave her despairing not only of securing her own subsistence, but that of her father as well. As the date of his release from prison comes near, her lack of resources throws her back onto the suicide attempts that invariably accompany these crises. It is at this point that the "marriage question" comes into play in the shape of Captain Anthony. And the alternatives for Flora are very starkly put: there is the "sinister solution" of suicide (C,p189), or marriage to a man who will keep her and her father. It is de Barral, the obsessively jealous father, bringing into the reckoning the polarised attitude to women, who points to the obverse of the institution of marriage, as it is perceived at the time: "'You've sold yourself'" he tells her. "'I have called you an unfortunate girl. You are that as much as if you had gone on the streets'" (C,pp379,384).

In The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State (1884), Friedrich Engels theorises and traces the progress of a "materialistic conception" of "the production and reproduction of immediate life".[27] On the one hand there is "the production of the means of existence, of food, clothing and shelter and the tools necessary for that production" and "on the other side, the production of human beings themselves, the propagation of the species" (Engels, p36). Engels is concerned to trace historically how the specific conditions of production at a certain time produce a certain type of familial organisation. Thus, the institution of monogamous marriage, which obtains in Europe during the nineteenth century, has come about as a result of the acquisition of private property and the need to establish the paternal line so that property can be inherited through primogeniture (see p102).

Engels is in no doubt as to the consequences for women of this system: "monogamous marriage comes on the scene as the subjugation of the one sex by the other; it announces a struggle between the sexes" (Engels,p96). His proposal for the "freeing up" of the patriarchal model of the modern family is entwined with the emancipation of women from the domestic sphere: "Then it will be plain that the first condition for the liberation of the wife is to bring the whole female sex back into public industry, and that this in turn demands that the ... monogamous family as the economic unit of society be abolished" (Engels,p105).

Contemporary feminists echoed the connections that Engels made when writing about marriage. In "The Truth About Women" (1913), Catherine G. Hartley famously declared: "Marriage is itself in many cases a legalised form of prostitution" (quoted in Kent,p80). In marriage, as Mona Caird wryly observed "father and mother are to share pleasantly between them the rights and duties of parenthood - the father having the rights, the mother the duties" (quoted in Kent,p88).

Flora's feminine and feminist agency is blocked by the limited material opportunities that are available to her and by the ideological web that interacts with these material conditions. The web that contains her is also a rhetorical one which tries to pin down "the essence of woman's visible, tangible power" (C,p310).

In the pivotal scene that unfolds in chapter seven of Chance - "On the Pavement" - the hazards of the representation of women and their attempts at self-representation are probed deeply. Here is Flora on the pavement poised between marriage (Captain Anthony awaits her in the hotel) and a life "on the streets". As she stands, Flora becomes the site on which competing discourses of femininity/feminism, of gender and sexuality, of class and imperialism are played out.

Flora is, in this chapter, representative of the burring of these boundaries. She is literally a liminal figure, as she stands outside the Eastern Hotel (C,p197) in Liverpool Street, at the junction of the East/West metropolitan split and "at the junction of ... two thoroughfares" (C,p200; see also pp206,245). She is also a locus for the intersection of a complex of ideas and fantasies which are mobilised by Marlow's "telling" of her and amongst which she endeavours to find a voice to speak her own experience.

The "modernity" of this placing of Flora inheres in the conjunction of the female figure and the urban setting. In City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian Britain, Judith Walkowitz theorises and describes the woman's body as it moves through the metropolitan scene - analysing events such as W.T. Stead's **exposé** of child-prostitution - in order to examine how women were constructed as "spectacle" in public spaces. "In fact and fantasy" Walkowitz states, "London had become a contested terrain".[28] London as the centre of imperial and domestic institutions of power becomes an expression of a certain ideology, where the boundaries which demarcate divisions between capital and labour, male and female space are being disputed by the dispossessed, the "underclass".

Walkowitz focuses on an historical moment in which the masculine construction of an identity in a metropolitan setting was under seige:

> Throughout the Victorian period, it had been the prerogative of privileged men to move ... as urban explorers across the divided social spaces of the nineteenth-century city, to see the city whole, and thereby to construct their own identity in relation to that diversity. However ... in the 1880s, the prevailing imaginary landscape of London shifted from one that was geographically bounded to one whose boundaries were indiscriminately and dangerously transgressed.
>
> (Walkowitz,CDD,p11).

The "prosperity" of the West End of London was contrasted with the "perceived" "urban crisis" situated in the East End (Walkowitz,CDD,p29).

The rhetoric of crisis used racial and class terms interchangeably, yet again recalling the imbrication of imperialist ideology within the domestic scene. Anne McClintock reminds us that: "Imperialism cannot be understood without a theory of domestic space and its relation to the market" (McClintock,IL,p17). Contemporary sociological and popular studies relating to the East End and its inhabitants often employed the terms and methodologies of the discipline of anthropology, relegating the working class and the unemployed, Jewish and Irish, to the category of half-tamed "savage". The title of William Booth's book about the East End In Darkest England (1890) echoed that of H.M. Stanley's In Darkest Africa (1890).

Flora's relation to the underclass which comprises the real and imagined population of the East End is underlined by the repeated rhythm of Marlow's perception of her. In this scene he juxtaposes her against a group of beggars who frequent the street where she stands. She is stared at by "three abominable, drink-sodden loafers" (C,p230; see also p248). She is "like a beggar" (C,p208) in a world that "existed only for selling and buying and [where] those who had nothing to do with the movement of merchandise were of no account" (C,pp209-210). In a world where everything is commodified, Flora herself, through Marlow's narration, becomes a potential commodity where the female body in the urban space is "read" as available for male consumption. In positioning Flora as potential prostitute, does Marlow position himself as potential client?

The perception of Flora which blurs the boundary between the "respectable" woman and the prostitute, is discussed by Judith Walkowitz in an earlier book on prostitution, where she emphasises the "fluid social identity of prostitutes" [29] who moved between the categories of poorly paid/seasonal work and prostitution (Walkowitz,PVS,p15; see also Kent, chapter two). The anxiety about the visibility of the prostitute, the need to divide her from the "proper" female reflects, according to

Lyn Pykett, the need to establish certain "moral and behavioural categories" as well as "an anxiety about the instability of these categories themselves" (Pykett,IF, p63). Both the "New Woman" and the prostitute challenged the stability of categories relating to women's sexuality. Ideas about purity/impurity, disease and contagion, what Michael Mason calls "pro-sensual"/"anti-sensual" thought,[30] and the fear of the permeability of these boundaries converged upon the perception of the woman's body and its presentation in public space.

The presentation of Flora on the pavement marks her as available for Marlow's visual consumption: "Her little head with its deep blue eyes ... The mouth looked very red in the white face peeping from under the veil ... Slight and even angular in her modest black dress she was an appealing and - yes - she was a desirable little figure" (C,p201). In this chapter the representation of Flora is rendered through the shifting functions of Marlow as narrator and as protagonist. When Marlow remarks "I myself had played my part" (C,p309), we recognise that he has not only thoughtfully prevented Flora from meeting Captain Anthony while he is engaged with Mr Fyne, but more significantly, by playing his narrator's part in the "telling" of Flora, he has produced her as both the object of desire and the object of his sympathy.

The mechanics of Marlow's telling of Flora enacts a blurring of representational boundaries through linguistic slippage, which is shown most clearly in the representation of her speech. Marlow's narrative mostly employs two categories of represented speech in dialogue with Flora: Direct Discourse and Free Indirect Discourse (FID) (see Hawthorn,JCNT,p3). In direct discourse, Flora tells of her courtship by Captain Anthony, a courtship which is punctuated by and inextricable from her suicide attempts: "'I had left the cottage ... I had made up my mind I was not coming back ... when suddenly Captain Anthony came through a gate out of a field'" (C,p215). Flora's deeply

contradictory telling of herself is juxtaposed with Marlow's reactions to this telling. Her reference to the suicide attempt, Marlow relates, "gave me a thrill; for indeed I had never doubted her sincerity" (C,p215). The equivocal semi-colon that divides and qualifies his remark leaves room for speculation. Is Marlow "thrilled" because Flora's admission, her "sincerity", proves his suspicions correct? Probably, but in addition the word "thrill", as used by Marlow with reference to Flora, has a perversely erotic connotation. Both Marlow and Captain Anthony are attracted to Flora as victim. Part of her attraction for them resides in her vulnerability.

The movement between direct speech and FID is marked by a scale of indecidability when applied to the narrator/third person speaker. In this example of FID it is possible to separate Flora's speech and Marlow's narration: "No doubt Mrs Fyne had told me the truth, Flora said brusquely with an unexpected hoarseness of tone. This very dress she was wearing had been given her by Mrs Fyne. Of course I looked at it" (C,p205). (Of course Marlow did.)

In this next example the separation between the voices is more difficult to place. "'You must be tired' I [Marlow] said ... She raised her eyes for a moment. No, she was not. Not very. She had not walked all the way" (C,p210). These words are identifiably Flora's. But what about the next sentence but one (at the beginning of the next paragraph): "She had had an ugly pilgrimage; but whether of love or of necessity who could tell?" (C,p210). Probably, these are Marlow's words, but it is difficult to tell. The difficulty of attributing a single speaker to a statement produces, yet again, an ambiguity with reference to Marlow's telling of Flora. Does his conversion of her speech into FID indicate an understanding of her situation - even an identification with her? Does it constitute a usurpation of her thoughts? Or a shuttling between the two?

Marlow's sympathy for Flora can be deduced from the evidence that she confides in him, giving him a detailed

account of her courtship by Captain Anthony. But Marlow's response to Flora's story is both more needy and more fearful: "The trouble was that I could not imagine anything about Flora de Barral and the brother of Mrs Fyne. Or if you like, I could imagine **anything** which comes practically to the same thing" (C,p210). The ability to imagine anything indicates the fictional pretext, the extra-diegetical level at which the fiction unfolds - Marlow in place of the omniscient author. But at the intra-diegetic level, I suggest that the play between the levels of Flora's speech indicates, yet again, Marlow's desire for indentification with Flora's constructed femininity as well as a fear of the dissolution of his unsettled masculinity. Part of Marlow's epistemological quest in this text is framed by the question: what is it to be a woman? Specifically: what is it to be Flora? These questions indicate a trajectory inwards to the psyche. This direction will be taken up via a discussion of Chance and the problems of generic classification that some of its critics have indicated.

Marlow shuttles between the desire and the fear of merging/ asserting his sexual (and by extension his gender) identity, thus replicating the dilemma of a text which explores the attempted repositioning of women as social/sexual subjects. In the chapter on Lord Jim, I suggested that Conrad takes Jim as would-be hero of the adventure narrative as far as he can go, reaches an impasse, and then deploys the evolutionary narrative to continue the probing of the hero-construct. I suggest that in Chance, Conrad reaches a similar impasse with the women's rights subject and, yet again, changes course. Broadly, the new direction signals a shift from a thematics of gender to a thematics of sexuality.

More specifically, I think the problems that Chance negotiates as part of its agenda, have been designated by some critics problems of which the text and its author are

unaware. Therefore, runs this argument, the place of Chance in the canon - of Conrad's works and as a text to be included in the modernist canon - is doubtful. This critical approach would have it that Chance founders on the rock of genre; the romance frame which conveys Conrad's appeal to a popular readership, his aspiration to write a "best-seller" - he called Chance "my bid for popularity" [31] - excludes it from consideration in the category of "high art".[32]

The romance genre provides the frame and matrix for Conrad to explore the limitations of conventional ideas about gender/sexuality; in addition it provides the starting point for a quite radical reworking of sexual roles and relations as they are experienced through fantasy. His experiment with fictional form in general and with the romance in particular provides versions of subjectivity that push beyond the conventional expectations that the generic boundaries set up.

As far as form goes, Chance would seem to announce itself quite unashamedly as typical of its genre. In Reading the Romance, Janice Radway provides a description and tabulation of what she calls "the Narrative Logic of the Romance".[33] The narrative trajectory of Chance replicates Radway's table almost stage by stage: Flora and Captain Anthony's story is mapped from Stage 1 - "the heroine's social identity is thrown into question" - through Stage 5 - "the heroine responds to the hero's behaviour with anger and coldness" - and Stage 6 - "the hero retaliates by punishing the heroine" - to Stage 12 - "the heroine responds sexually and emotionally to the hero" (Radway, p150).[34]

In some ways typical of its genre, Chance accomplishes even more. The tabulated narrative logic provides the **histoire** or overall structure of Chance, but it does not provide its **récit**, the order in which the events are narrated. The "jagged" telling of Flora's story - what Robert Hudspeth calls the "temporal imbalance" in Chance [35]

- its dissemination through at least six narrators (see Ray,px), constitutes a probing of the particular sub-set of the genre that structures Chance: the chivalric-romance.[36] The most explicit aspect of the chivalric-romance is the pattern alluded to in the titles of Parts I and II of the novel: "The Damsel" and "The Knight", referring respectively to Flora and Captain Anthony. Following the shape of the chivalric-romance, this dyad is triangularised within the story by Powell and in its telling by Marlow who, following the generical conventions, thus take up the position of squire.

Georges Duby links the chivalric triangle to what has been theorised as "triangular" desire.[37] According to Duby, in the essay "On Courtly Love":

> It is legitimate to wonder whether, in this triangular relationship between the 'young man', the lady and the lord, the major vector which, openly, goes from the young lover towards the lady, does not indeed rebound off the lady herself so as to reach the third person - its true goal - and even whether it does not project towards him without a detour.)[38]

More explicitly Duby asks: "In this military society [12th century France - the all-male shipboard community in Chance provides an analogue], was courtly love not, in reality, love between men?" (Duby,p63).

After setting up this model of "triangulated desire" in which versions of social power relations are replicated by desiring subjects, I'd like to consider various aspects of two triangles which Chance sets up, which I have called the "melodramatic" triangle and the "desiring" triangle. In both these versions Flora is an important component, in contradisctinction to the model described above. If the melodramatic triangle exaggerates normalised gender roles and the lack of "fit" in the relations between the elements/sexes, the desiring triangle, it will be argued, is part of the text's attempt to rethink conventional models of gendered identity and desire.

The two primary examples of the melodramatic triangle are: Flora-Captain Anthony-de Barral and Flora-governess-Charley. This first type of triangle could also be called the "primal triangle" since it replicates the coordinates of Freud's Oedipal triangle in its familial shape. In the first example, Flora and Captain Anthony take on respectively the mother and the son role. In the second example, the governess-mother substitute rivals Flora-daughter substitute for Charley-father substitute's attentions in a variation of the classic Freudian model.[39]

The second type of triangle, "desiring triangle", also comprises two examples: Flora-Captain Anthony-Powell (in a combination which replicates and also departs from the chivalric- triangular model theorised by Duby) and Flora-Captain Anthony-Marlow (where Marlow takes Powell's place as "squire" or "young man"). Before a more detailed examination of how the two types of triangles "work out" in Chance, an analysis of the thwarted coming to adulthood of two of their main constituents - Flora and Captain Anthony - might be useful. Their difficult arrival at a functional subjectivity is intertwined with the triangular model - for Flora in particular, since this is where one version of the "melodramatic triangle" is deployed.

Marlow's narrative about Flora devotes one long chapter to her childhood and her shattering coming to adulthood. The psychic construction of Flora and Captain Anthony from their traumatised childhoods provides a parallel to their representation in the material spaces of work and the domestic.[40] As Cora Kaplan reminds us: "Social life is ordered through psychic structures that to some extent organise its meanings [and] that psychic life in turn is only ever lived through specific social histories and political and economic possibilities".[41] Flora's nominal arrival at the point of psychic adulthood is effected through a variant of the Oedipal triangle which is itself deployed in what I will call a (primal) scene of betrayal.

We are told very little about Flora's relations with her biological mother except that she always takes her walks with her daughter (C,p71) and dies when Flora is still called a "child" (C,p73). After her mother's death, Flora is mostly left in the company of her governess who "play[s] with cold, distinguished exclusiveness the part of mother" (C,p96). This governess is herself "governed" by two desires: a desire for the young man Charley is combined with one for material gain. In a plot between these two, he is to marry Flora so that they can gain control of de Barral's money. The failure of the governess's plans after de Barral's disgrace and her jealousy of Flora provide the motivation for the scene of betrayal.

At the beginning of the scene Flora is struck by "an emanation of evil from [the governess's] eyes" (C,p116) which warns her not only "of danger" but confirms "a sense of ... security being gone" (C,p117). In both senses of the word, Flora's material and emotional "security" have vanished, the latter being an illusory condition of the former. Having lived until this moment "a mere life of sensations" (C,p119), she is not even minimally prepared (at c. age sixteen) for the governess's verbal assault: "She stood, a frail and passive vessel into which the other went on pouring all the accumulated dislike for all her pupils" (C,p119).[42] Flora lapses into a fit of hysteria only when the governess starts to abuse her father (see p121). According to Marlow's commentry on this scene, Flora suffers "the worst shocks of life" (C,p120) going through "all the possible phases of that sort of anguish" (C,p121).

In psychoanalytic terms, what Flora has undergone is "trauma", the somatic manifestation of which inheres thus: "Mrs Fyne told me [Marlow], that she who as a child had a rather pretty delicate colouring, showed a white bloodless face for a couple of years afterwards, and remained always liable at the slightest emotion to an extraordinary ghost-like whiteness" (C,p122). So, the origin of Flora's attractiveness to men, of the "phantom-like girl" (C,p50),

is shown to be entwined with her abuse by the mother-substitute, by her positioning as a "victim".

Flora eventually puts an end to the governess's abuse by crying out to Charley (father-substitute) for help, almost when it is too late. For at this psychological moment of the passage from child to adult, Flora has experienced not only a moment of splitting, but of extreme rupture; she has, as Marlow remarks, been "matured by ... shock" (C,p138). When Marlow says that this scene "remained like a mark on her soul, a sort of mystic wound" (C,p118), he designates what in Freudian terms is called the "imago", that which becomes constitutive of the subject's coming to consciousness of self as subject **and** as separate/split from the maternal body.[43]

The most visible sign of Flora's traumatic entry into a fragile female subjecthood is her repeated suicide attempts. These are dotted through Marlow's narrative and so circumscribed by his facetious comments and fragmented narration, that their full force is only effected when they are ennumerated chronologically. On the one hand, these repeated attempts could be read as a typically "feminine", that is weak, response to her situation. Flora embraces her victimhood. One could say that her female agency is reduced to a psychic state which can only produce the type of action which will put an end to all action. On the other hand, the frequency of the attempts is a measure both of circumstances that Flora is completely unequipped to cope with in any other way, and of just how determined she is to try to go on living after each attempt. With "a little help from her friends" Flora survives her crises, including the end of a marriage which turns out happy against all the odds.

The list of the suicide attempts begins immediately after the scene of betrayal. Flora leaves the Fynes' care with her relative, hinting at suicide C,p166); she turns up on Mrs Fyne's doorstep some time later and Mrs Fyne prevents her keeping what Marlow calls "I don't know what

tragic tryst" (C,p177); when dismissed by the Hamburg family, it is the steamboat stewardess who prevents her throwing herself into the water (C,pp182-83). Not knowing how to respond to her father's imminent release, Flora is deflected from two further attempts by Marlow, Mr and Mrs Fyne and Captain Anthony (see pp43-57; p215). When she brings her reluctant father on board the **Ferndale**, her response to his distaste for her marriage is predictable: "'If he bolts away ... I shall jump into the dock'" (C,p370).

In Flora's version, which she tells tells to Marlow while they are "on the pavement", what stopped the attempt when Marlow first saw her was her imaginary projection onto the Fynes' dog of an empathetic state: she imagined that if she threw herself into the quarry the dog would leap after her or mourn her death (C,p202-203). As she hesitates "the suicide poise of her mind" is "destroyed" by Marlow's shout of warning (C,p203). It is in this abject state, both physically and mentally poised on the edge, that Flora meets Captain Anthony. Given her previous experience, it's not surprising that at first she experiences his courtship as another form of "abuse" (C,p226).

Before tracing the stages of Flora and Captain Anthony's unusual courtship, I'd like to bring Captain Anthony "up to date" with Flora by examining what the reader is told about his childhood and reflecting on how he is shaped by an unloving upbringing as much as she is. It is my contention that the sexual and gender difference which marks Flora and Captain Anthony as male/masculine and female/feminine, overlays something they both hold in common: they were both traumatised children and Captain Anthony also carries the "mark" or "mystic wound" of his past. Of course, as sexually differentiated adults, they encounter diverse material conditions of existence. Most obviously Captain Anthony has assumed an identity in the world of commercial enterprise (as a subset of the colonialist/imperialist

project) which, as we have seen, is denied to Flora. However, to label him "immature" (Guerard,p258) or "narcissistic",[44] and his behaviour to Flora as "passive-aggressive" (Jones,TTC,p64) in the context of the non-consummation of the marriage, only takes us some of the way.

Captain Anthony - and Mrs Fyne - are the children of a famous poet, Carleon Anthony, who is variously described as a writer of "unexciting but fascinating verse" (C,p39), "a savage sentimentalist who had his own decided views of his paternal prerogatives", "a terror" (C,p38), "the poet-tyrant" (C,p148), "the domestic autocrat" (C,p228). There is a distinct split between what might be called his linguistic abilities and his emotional capabilities. The public poet of delicate sentiments - "You felt as if you were being taken out for a delightful country drive by a charming lady in a pony carriage" (C,p38) - shows, in the privacy of "domestic life", "traces of the primitive cave-dweller's temperament" (C,p38).

Many critics have noted the intertextual allusions in this section of Chance to the domestic-epic poem The Angel in the House (1854,1856) and to certain temperamental similarities between its author Coventry Patmore and the fictional Carleon Anthony [45]. Michael Mason writes that The Angel in the House is "often cited as a normative statement of Victorian views on the relation of the sexes" (Mason, p27). In her essay on the poem, Carol Christ highlights the central **agon** of the poem where the "idealization of woman's purity" contends with "an ambivalence towards masculine sexuality".[46] The radical splitting between the ideal of the asexual woman and the potentially sexually aggressive man creates an unresolvable tension in the poem.

The Angel in the House also provides an interesting example of the domestication of the chivalric-romance - complete with desiring triangle. The male protagonist, Felix, meets the three desirable daughters of the Dean of Salisbury Cathederal after a gap of some years. He is

unable to differentiate between the charms of the three young women and choose one to be his wife, until he discovers that the eldest, Honoria, is being silently worshipped by her cousin Frederick Graham (who happens to be a sea captain). Instantly, Honoria is distinguished as the object of desire and choice: "Whether this cousin was the cause/I know not, but I seem'd to see,/The first time then, how fair she was,/How much the fairer of the three".[47]

The need to displace the rival is equally if not more pressing than the commitment to the chosen bride who is retrospectively endowed with the ideal feminine qualities. Felix's desire is evoked and defined towards the women in its passage through a (male) third. Chance, as I hope to show, incorporates and radicalises this version of the desiring triangle, which indicates the repression and displacement of desires that develop in oppositional relation to the bounded social-sexual norms that men and women mostly conform to.

As far as Captain Anthony is concerned, escape from the tyrannical father into the world of work is an option that is not available to his sister. His competence in the world of work screens an unaccomplished social/emotional subject: "Captain Anthony ... was of a retiring disposition, shy with strangers ... He had had a rather unhappy boyhood; and it made him a silent man" (C,p46). The meeting of these two emotionally abused adults doesn't exactly seem to constitute a recipe for success.

And indeed the process of their courtship contains elements of the perverse and the conflictual, signalling the encounter of these two damaged, but not irreparably damaged, psyches. Captain Anthony encounters Flora when she is existing, as Marlow's narrative terms it, "with one foot in life and the other in a nightmare" (C,p223). Her father is imminently to be released from prison and she has no idea how they are going to survive. Marriage to Captain

Anthony is indeed one shaky solution to the problem, but it is noticeable how little this practical aspect plays a part in the courtship, and how large a part is played by the clash of desires between two people who **both** believe themselves to be unlovable. "'Nobody would love me'" Flora tells Captain Anthony, "'nobody could'" (C,p225). "'Nobody ever cared for me as far as I can remember. Perhaps you could'" he tells her (C,p224).

Flora's response to Captain Anthony's physically restrained but vehemently expressed desire for her is to construe it as "abuse": "She felt certain that he was threatening her and calling her names" (C,p226). Mentally, Flora is placed at the bottom of the quarry into which she was physically prevented from jumping. When she agrees to meet Captain Anthony at night, her fear that he might be "violent" towards her, that he might even, in his disappointment with her, strangle her, is converted by a process of perverse logic into an advantage: "It would be as good a way to be done with it as any" (C,p229). Marlow, listening to Flora's account, is horrified by her resignation to the worst: "This makes one shudder at the mysterious ways girls acquire knowledge" (C,p230). (But Marlow's narrative knows how Flora's "knowledge" has been acquired).

Captain Anthony's behaviour at this "tryst" is "'gentleness itself'" in Flora's words (C,p230). Marlow's comment on the Captain's behaviour is perceptive: "Gentleness in passion! What could have been more seductive to the scared, starved heart of that girl?" (C,p235). It is the gentleness and the violence of Captain Anthony's passion that Flora comes to depend on, where the perverseness of the process is connected to an effect of sustenance. Captain Anthony is never physically violent to Flora; he is "violent" on behalf of his own feelings and in support of Flora against her victimisation, especially by her father: "And deep down, almost unconsciously she was seduced by the feeling of being supported by this violence"

(C,p331). Marlow calls him "the man of violence, gentleness and generosity" (C,p238). Both Flora and Captain Anthony have to "learn to read" the language of the "affections" (C,pp331,244), a language of which both have been deprived.

Marlow summarising the emotional positions of Flora and Captain Anthony, pinpoints "Flora de Barral in the depths of moral misery, and Roderick Anthony carried away by a gust of tempestuous tenderness" (C,p326). His oxymoronic characterisation of Captain Anthony's desire encapsulates the emotional trajectory of the latter's courtship of Flora which runs along the track of pity for her, into the realm of "something more spontaneous, perverse and exciting" (C,p224). Captain Anthony's desire is aroused by Flora's appearance of weakness, her obvious lack of material resources. Her white face (see p122), her obvious sadness, are powerful components of this desire.

Captain Anthony speaks to Flora: "'You dare stand here ... you white-faced wisp ... you little ghost of sorrow in all the world ... Haven't I been looking at you? You are all eyes. What makes your cheeks always so white as if you had seen something ... Don't speak. I love it'" (C,pp226-27,last ellipsis in citation is text's ellipsis). The verbal erasure of Flora into "wisp", "ghost" can be read as an effect of a traditional masculine/feminine power play - similar to the attempted erasure of women's social and sexual agency in <u>The Angel in the House</u>. Captain Anthony is left "with the feeling that if only he could get hold of her, no woman would belong to him so completely as this woman" (C,p224). However, the manoeuvres of courtship provide only a stage in their story.

Flora and Captain Anthony marry under the shadow of a series of mutual misunderstandings. Put simply, Captain Anthony believes Flora only marries him to give shelter to her disgraced father while Flora believes that Captain Anthony only marries her because he pities her (see pp 243,246). The transformation of the dyad into two varieties

of triangle - the "melodramatic" and the "desiring" - breaks the stalemate and provides for two contradictory dynamics to be played out.

The signifier that connects the two triangles - to recap: Flora-Captain Anthony-de Barral and Flora-Captain Anthony-Powell - is the word "unusual". It is used with reference to the melodramatic triangle as a sign of the unease that Powell (among others) senses in the set-up on board ship between husband, wife, and wife's father (C,p292). With reference to the desiring triangle it is used to signal what is "unusual" in the marital relations between Flora and Captain Anthony - that they haven't had sexual relations (C,p272). The relationship is observed and then mediated by Powell.

Christina Crosby's definition of melodrama is pertinent to the presentation of the melodramatic triangle. According to Crosby, melodrama is a mode that highlights the gendered distinctions that the Victorian dominant ideology made between the social and the political: "The intimacy of the private is differentiated from the public, and women are distinguished from men".[48] "Melodrama" she continues, "exaggerates these distinctions, turns them into polar oppositions, heightens and intensifies the difference between the terms, makes the differences elemental" (Crosby,p77).

And a classic **locus** for the struggle between these (gendered) oppositional positions is the Oedipal triangle.[49] In the reconfiguration of this triangle in the narrative space of <u>Chance</u>, de Barral (father) struggles with Captain Anthony (son-figure) over Flora (mother-figure). In this triangle, the melodramatic opposition works as an "exaggeration", an excess of both speech and action, which pushes Flora and Captain Anthony towards each other, perversely achieving the very opposite of what de Barral is plotting for. For it is precisely de Barral's pathological jealousy that provides the opportunity for them to recognise their mutual feelings.

Firstly, de Barral's constant verbal undermining of Captain Anthony serves to keep him in the forefront of Flora's thoughts. It is de Barral's jealousy that, paradoxically, prompts an insight into Flora's repressed feelings for her husband: "'You are in love with him'"; "'You are infatuated with the fellow'" he tells her (C,pp363,364). Secondly, his desperate attempt to poison Captain Anthony (in a reversal of the traditional Oedipal father/son scenario) gathers up the elements of the Oedipal melodrama, but produces the opposite effect to the one desired: it is de Barral who dies and Flora and Captain Anthony who are united.

De Barral's vengeful intentions are disrupted by Powell when he warns Captain Anthony not to drink the poisoned glass (C,pp420-22). Powell's positioning in this triangle is interesting. Later in the scene, when Captain Anthony tells Flora he will "let [her] go", to her father's delight (C,p429), Powell is placed in front of de Barral as if he is doubling the latter's position in the triangle. At the beginning of the scene, he is placed on deck outside the cabin looking (voyeuristically) through the skylight at "the most private part of the saloon, consecrated to the exclusiveness of Captain Anthony's married life" (C,p410). It is from this vantage point that he sees de Barral's hand pour something into the Captain's glass of brandy and water. In telling of his act of spying, Powell admits to "a sort of depraved excitement in watching an unconscious man [Captain Anthony]" and this excitement is enhanced by the object of his gaze: "and such an attractive and mysterious man as Captain Anthony at that" (C,p416).

There is a subtle process of desiring and identification going on here, a process that leads to Powell aligning himself with Captain Anthony, bringing into relief the desiring triangle whose dynamics work to displace the destructive movements of the melodramatic triangle. For if Powell replaces de Barral as the third in

the (desiring) triangle, he doesn't function as Captain Anthony's rival. Rather, his desiring cathects as its objects both Captain Anthony and Flora: he both registers the "attractive[ness]" of Captain Anthony, and "his head was full of Mrs Anthony" (C,p426). It might be said that Powell's (desiring) act short-circuits the melodramatic triangle and replaces it with the desiring variant.

Part of the radical nature of the desiring triangle, I will argue, is that within its vectors (formed by the hopes and fears of Flora, Captain Anthony and Powell), desire circulates and cathects as its object that which might not be designated the "correct" object in terms of prevailing social norms.[50] In addition, equal weighting is given to both men and women as desiring subjects. This, I hope to show, is the "logic" of the desiring triangle. My discussion of the protagonists of Chance as elements of this triangle aims to explore, what Rachel Bowlby calls, "trios which disturb the securely dual vision of the difference between the sexes and their respective orientations".[51]

An understanding of how the desiring triangle functions, requires an understanding of how the subject is constituted through fantasy. In Male Subjectivity at the Margins, Kaja Silverman uses Freudian and Lacanian theory to present a theoretical basis for her analysis of visual and verbal texts which explore "deviant" masculinities. She states: "Identity and desire are so complexly imbricated that neither can be explained without recourse to the other" (Silverman,p6). The "implicit starting point" for her discussion "is the assumption that lack of being is the irreducible condition of subjectivity" (Silverman,p4).

Silverman continues: "although at the deepest recesses of its psyche the subject has neither identity nor nameable desire", it is the "fantasmatic" which "provides the 'blueprint' for each subject's desire" (Silverman,pp6,354). The fantasmatic and the **moi** or ego "together work to

articulate a mythic but determining version" of identity and desire (Silverman, p6). As Slavoj Žižek writes, it is through fantasy that **"we learn 'how to desire'"** (Žižek quoted Silverman,p6).

Silverman goes on to discuss two ways in which fantasy can be incorporated "from outside" "into the infant subject": the "specular" and "structural" kinds of incorporation (Silverman, p7). The "specular" aspect comprises an "'imaginary' identification" and its model is the Lacanian mirror stage. The "structural" aspect of incorporation indicates a "'symbolic' identification" and the Oedipus complex "provides the founding instance" of this latter aspect (Silverman,p7).

It is through "specular incorporation" that "the **moi** is formed and upon which the fantasmatic draws for its images of 'self' and other". It is through "structural incorporation" that "the subject assumes a position within the **mise-en-scène** of desire" (Silverman,p7). This positioning, "where the subject stands" in relation to its desire, "makes a practical difference" Silverman argues to "what identity it there assumes, or - to state the case somewhat differently - by what values it is marked" (Silverman,p8).

For example: "An external representation" which "at the level of the fantasmatic" posits a structurally masochistic position, might "at the same time involve an identification with a masculine corporeal image" (Silverman,pp7-8). Could this example be applied to Flora's strategic positioning **vis-à-vis** Captain Anthony - and her father? Could her structural positioning as "victim" also incorporate an "imaginary" identification with Captain Anthony or de Barral? What I am trying to suggest is that the complexities of representing Flora need to be extended beyond a strict binary division of sexual difference and fixed oppositions of agency and power/powerlessness. In this "ideological" application of the fantasmatic, the relation of the subject to power is shifted to the extent

that the repertoire of subject positions is made more various, more risky and certainly more perverse. ("Perverse" we recall is the word that Marlow uses to describe Captain Anthony's feelings for Flora - see p224.)

In another example, the subject's "structural identification with voyeurism might be ideologically reconfigured through a simultaneous imaginary identification with blackness or femininity" (Silverman,p8). So, Powell's voyeuristic position with regard to the melodramatic triangle reconfigures in an imaginary identification with femininity in which he can fantasmatically explore his attraction to both Captain Anthony and Flora. That is, his desire for Flora can also produce his desire to be Flora - to be feminine. From this position of feminine identification, he can desire Captain Anthony; he can also desire Captain Anthony from a masculine position. The flexibility of these multiple desiring positions, mobilised through fantasy, means that Powell can catect both Captain Anthony and Flora as objects of desire while his imaginary identification designates him masculine or feminine, as required.

The possibility for multiple desiring positions is given a theoretical basis in chapter eight of Silverman's book. Here she develops her introductory remarks by tracing "the place of femininity" in male homosexuality. She then presents "three psychoanalytic paradigms for conceptualising male homosexuality" (Silverman,p10). These paradigms are all triangular in shape.(As far as Chance is concerned, I will concentrate on two of them). Silverman's aim is to disrupt the sexual dualism that obtains within both the "dominant representation" and "certain kinds of psychoanalytic discourse": "It is frequently assumed ... that there are only two possible subject positions - that occupied on the one hand by heterosexual men and homosexual women, and that occupied on the other by heterosexual women and homosexual men" (Silverman,p339).

Silverman's discussion focuses on Freud's writings on homosexuality. In "Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality" (1905), Freud states that "all human beings are capable of making a homosexual object choice and have in fact made one in their unconscious".[52] Sexuality is in a state of constant flux: "Generally speaking, every human being oscillates all through his life between heterosexual and homosexual feelings and any frustration or disappointment in the one direction is apt to drive him in the other".[53] Silverman observes that in Freud's essay "Psychogenesis of a Case of Homosexuality in a Woman" (1920), he "concedes that identification and object-choice do not necessarily reverse each other" (Silverman,p357).

Following this formulation, Silverman introduces the Oedipus complex in both its "positive" and "negative"/ "inverted" variants as a model for homosexual desire.[54] Referring to the passage in "The Ego and The Id" (1923) where Freud outlines "his theory of a double Oedipus complex", Silverman emphasises the dual experience - both heterosexual and homosexual - every subject encounters: "This passage [[55]] suggests ... that at an early point in its history the subject desires the father as well as the mother, and identifies with the mother as well as the father" (Silverman,p360).

This oscillation within the Oedipus complex also indicates the bisexuality of desire with reference to both subject and object. In terms of desire the subject can switch between the two models, or the temporal-sequential aspect of identification and desire may be figured in terms of parallelism or traces:

> While a male subject may indeed enact at the level of his sexual practice a startlingly explicit performance of a (displaced) negative Oedipus complex, his identification with femininity may also attest in part to an earlier desire for the mother, just as love for the father might be found to underpin the most seemingly heterosexual of masculine identifications.
> (Silverman,p361)

Silverman sets up another homosexual paradigm which she calls the "'Leonardo' model of homosexuality"

(Silverman,p367) citing Freud's 1910 essay "Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of his Childhood". Here Freud suggests that, in the absence of a father (-figure), the male subject identifies with the mother - this identification replacing an earlier desire for the mother - while choosing the love-object in his likeness. These love-objects are "substitutive figures and revivals of himself in childhood - boys whom he loves in the way in which his mother loved **him** when he was a child. He finds the objects of his love along the path of **narcissism**".[56]

The variant of this triangle, takes into account the reversibility of the role of the subject within the paradigm. In the "Leonardo triangle" Mark Two, the subject identifies with the love-object who represents "what the subject once was" (Silverman,p371) and recovers the desire felt for the mother when young which was then repressed. Thus the mother becomes the love object. Silverman emphasises the possibility of "a constant oscillation between th[ese] two modalities" (Silverman,p371).

These triangles, which Silverman presents as paradigms for homosexual desire and identity, can also be read as a blueprint for a bisexual fantasmatic and as such they will be applied to the variations of the desiring triangle in Chance. Marjorie Garber writes, in Vice Versa: Bisexuality and the Eroticism of Everyday Life: "eroticism comes in fact from its unspoken nature, from the way in which erotic tension develops triangularly, from unacted upon desires".[57] In this reading of the relations between Flora, Captain Anthony and Powell, I am exploring both the explicit and implicit ways in which desire circulates between certain subjects in a designated space.

Powell's position as desiring subject within the triangular economy can be mapped from a generic starting point which places him as squire in the chivalric triangle and repositions him as son-figure in the Oedipal triangle. For the purposes of my analysis, Powell oscillates between the

"positive" and "negative" versions of this triangle. In the "positive" version, Powell identifies with Captain Anthony (father-figure) and desires Flora (mother-figure). In the "negative" version, Powell identifies with Flora, and from this feminine identifying position, desires Captain Anthony.

It is significant that all three participants in the triangle have no mother living. So, the imaginary identifications and the shifting desiring positions incorporate the fantasy of the lost mother. The fantasy mostly, thought not entirely, focuses on Flora as the mother-figure, as the site of what Silverman calls "a partial identification with femininity while occupying a masculine body" (Silverman,p387). In this fantasy Flora is also the object of desire.

What I am attempting to develop in the transition from the more traditional version of the "melodramatic"/Oedipal triangle to the desiring triangle, is a version of subjectivity and desire that is more fluid, more flexible in its construction of subjectivity and desire and more potentially pleasurable in the interaction between the elements. For I would argue that we need a reading of Chance that valorises the intense eroticism of the relationship beween Captain Anthony and Flora, an eroticism that can only flourish when it is triangulated through the positioning of Powell - and Marlow - as performers and narrators.

Captain Anthony takes up his position in the Leonardo model. In the Mark One version, Captain Anthony identifies with the mother-figure Flora and desires Powell ("what the subject once was"). In the Mark Two variant he identifies with Powell and desires Flora. The absence of the father from this triangle - the patriarchal tyrant Carleon Anthony - is very appropriate.

Initially Flora as desiring subject in her own triangle presents a problem. If she desires both the men, then who is the mother? If she doubles the positions of

desiring subject and mother then what happens to either Captain Anthony or Powell? I suggest that part of this problem is the problem that Marlow's narration struggles with: that of representing Flora, and Flora as agent. Consider the different "Floras" that Chance presents: Flora as object of the governess's verbal murder; Flora as object of social constructions of femininity; Flora as object of Marlow's narration. It's not surprising that Flora as subject of her fantasmatic presents a problem.

But if Flora is "over-mediated", she is not the only character in the novel to be so. Flora is presented through Marlow's narration, but in the constructed world of Chance, Flora and Marlow do meet. He does, at times, report her direct speech. Marlow never meets Captain Anthony who is presented to him entirely through Flora's and Powell's narratives and through Marlow's imagining. So the difficulty encountered is not just one of the representation of femininity but of representation **per se**. When Marlow says of Flora: "She was not so much unreadable, as blank" (C,p207), he admits to the potential failure of his attempts to construct a "Flora", but he also holds out a tentative possibility for Flora's agency, for her potential to write her own page.

So, I position Flora in another variant of the Oedipal triangle. In version one, Flora identifies with a feminine-identifying Powell who stands in for the mother-figure and desires Captain Anthony - as father-substitute. In version two, Flora identifies with a feminised Captain Anthony (as mother-figure) and desires Powell. Thus, within the libidinal economy, the flexibility of fantasy is enlisted to produce the substitution(s) for the lost mother. Moreover, these triangles, in conjunction with the "specular" and "structural" aspects of incorporation discussed above, suggest possible ways in which the bisexuality of both the desiring subject and the object of desire can be fantasised beyond, in addition to, the sexual and gender norms that define the subject as male or female.

Within the textual space, the relations between the subjects of the desiring triangle develop in the confined space of the ship - the "floating stage of that tragi-comedy" (C,p272). In moving beyond the confines of the chivalric-romantic triangle (as theorised by Georges Duby) and the homosocial triangle (as theorised by Eve Sedgwick), Chance presents a triangle which does not obscure Flora. Moreover, when it concentrates on the Flora-Captain Anthony axis, it speaks strongly for heterosexual desire.

Flora tells Marlow (at the end of the novel): "'I only discovered my love for my poor Roderick through agonies of rage and humiliation'" (C,p443). The mixture of passivity ("humiliation") and agency ("rage") is characteristic of the relations between these two who initially believe themselves to be unlovable. The non-consummation of the marriage can also be read as the effect of the childhood traumas experienced by both protagonists.

The long chain of misunderstandings and grievances, unspoken on both sides, is dramatically resolved in the scene in the cabin after Powell saves Captain Anthony from de Barral's poison. The "psychological moment" in which Flora and Captain Anthony express their mutual desire in the "embrace" is "discovered" precisely through Powell's actions and his desire for both of them (see pp426-27). Conrad's - and I think it is Conrad's - endorsement of the "embrace" as an indispensible component of heterosexual love is expressed in terms which leave it fruitfully open to interpretation:

> Pairing off is the fate of mankind. And if two beings thrown together, mutually attracted, resist the necessity, fail in understanding and voluntarily stop short of the - the embrace, in the noblest meaning of the word, then they are committing a sin against life, the call of which is simple. Perhaps sacred.
> (C,p426-27)

While the context of the statement favours a reading that endorses the heterosexual nature of the "embrace", the gender neutrality of some of the terms used - "pairing off", "two beings" - allows another reading: the pair need

not necessarily be constituted heterosexually. Once again, the presence of Powell modifies and extends the "forms offered to us by life" (C,p426).

The moment of Flora and Captain Anthony's physical union is also the moment where "race" makes its return, pointing up 1) its involvement in the thinking of sexuality in the context of an imperialist-inflected rhetoric where it is difficult to think one term without the other; 2) the further potential for fantasy to think "o " of the reductive dualisms that form the basis of a particular ideology.

In this scene, Captain Anthony is decribed twice in terms of "blackness", a blackness which contrasts with Flora's frailty and "whiteness". Powell's narration places them together: "'I had never seen them so near to each other before, and it made a great contrast'" (C,p424). Flora, in Powell's account "'looked like a foresaken elf'", and Captain Anthony "'with his beard cut to a point, his swarthy, sunburnt complexion, thin nose and his lean head[;] there was something African, something Moorish in Captain Anthony'" (C,p424). A little further on, Powell "notice[s]" "Captain Anthony, swarthy as an African, by the side of Flora whiter than lilies" (C,p427). Critics have noted the reference to Shakespeare's Othello - and left it at that.[58] Why, though, does "race" make a return at this point? What does it mean to imagine Captain Anthony as the "black man" to Flora's "white woman"?

In her essay "The imperial unconscious? Representations of imperial discourse", Laura Chrisman makes a strong case for a more nuanced and complex reading of the overlapping, contradictory, parallel themes and structures at work in the texts of imperial self-representation. It is her argument, for example, that in the analysis of "a scene devoted soley to the supreme encounter with the Other", what lacks is "the network of domestic/metropolitan and imperial discourses which informed it and which were informed by it".[59]

I must plead at least partly guilty to this charge. In tracing the complex sexual politics unfolding on the **Ferndale**, in following the trail of the "psychological cabin mystery" (C,p325), I have left out what Scott McCracken calls "the centrality of the history of imperialism in the function of the ship, the **Ferndale**, which links up the global outposts of the British Empire" (McCracken,p277). It seems though, that the text would not let me forget this aspect. The "colouring" of Captain Anthony and Flora at this important psychological moment deploys the fantasy of a mixed-race union - denied by official imperial ideology, practiced unofficially in the interstices of the administration of both the ideology and the everyday routines of imperialism in colonised territories.[60]

Chrisman's reading of H. Rider Haggard's She (1887) works from "a premise of the multiple dynamics within the text, of gender, 'race', and a variety of social science discourses, whose intersections are overdetermined by the dictates of a highly problematic imperialism" (Chrisman, p42). She underlines the way in which "questions of gender become inextricable from questions of generation, of racial reproduction, familial relations of power" in the "reversion" of "imperialist discourse" "from the discourse of political economy" to that of biology and Social Darwinism (Chrisman,p48). (I recall my discussion of Schreiner above.) Thus, among the ambiguities of imperialism, questions of gender imply questions of race - and vice versa - as the metropolitan-based **imperium** defines itself in terms of/against its colonised other, as Europe seeks to structure and consolidate its hegemony in opposition to not-Europe (or Eastern Europe).

With reference to this "racialised" moment in Chance, a number of reversals and displacements seem to be going on. The textual moment evokes fantasies concerning what Anne McClintock calls, one of "the governing themes of Western imperialism: the transmission of white male power

through control of colonized women" (McClintock,IL,pp1,3). The analogy that can be drawn between the oppression of colonised women and white women in the domestic/work setting, must be deployed with great care and an awareness of the different modes and implications of this oppression.[61] What I'm trying to do is to extract the multiple allusions that this textual moment gives rise to.

Most interestingly, the familiar trope of the dominant white male "colonising" the native female is reversed in the comparison of Captain Anthony to black Othello and, in effect, of Flora to Desdemona. Shakespeare's play presents a doubling of the transgressive in the Othello-Desdemona union. The sexual transgression - Desdemona disobeys her father and enters into union with Othello - is doubled - and expanded - by the fact of Othello's blackness and the ways in which this blackness is defined by the Venetian establishment.

The mixed-race image which Powell's narration superposes on Flora and Captain Anthony can be read at a number of levels: With reference to its intertext it provides an analogue for Flora's decision to choose husband over father; it eroticises an already charged moment with its reference to a familiar topos which "orientalises" the idea of male-female desire.[62] In the reversal of the more familiar white man-black woman couplet, I suggest that it also gestures towards a potential undermining both of the terms "male" and "female" as monolithic constructs and of the normative gendered positions which are associated with these terms, while potentially going even further.

For, in fantasising Captain Anthony as a black man - one of the "others" of imperial ideology, one who can be both feared and desired - Powell allows for two scenarios to be played out: Captain Anthony as "Othello" is allowed the expression of a sexual potency in his relations with Flora, who as "Desdemona" is allowed to make the choice she desires without suffering the fate of her dramatic referent. With reference to Powell's position within the

triangular desiring economy, he could be said to desire Flora, while at the same time (and recalling Silverman's formulation of a voyeuristic position which allows "a simultaneous imaginary identification with blackness or femininity"), same-sex desire is here doubled by the fantasy of Captain Anthony as the desired black man.

Maybe this is the moment in which the "imperial unconscious" rises to the surface to gesture towards the way in which the many levels of what is called "forbidden" or "illicit" or "excessive" might be accomodated - if only momentarily, if only through the agency of an erotic fantasy which "colours" the reality in front of it.

Powell's agency in this scene inheres in his orchestration of its narrative possibilities and his "structural positioning" as voyeur. In an earlier scene (Part II Chapter three) he plays an even more reciprocal role along with the two other protagonists of the desiring triangle. This is the scene in which Powell, Flora, and Captain Anthony save the **Ferndale** from collision with another ship (see pp315-320). Marlow describes it as "how [Powell] first got in touch with his captain's wife" (C,p315).

The lighting of the safety flare is performed as a mutual act between the three protagonists as it passes from Powell to Flora who lights it - singeing her hair in the process - back to Powell to Captain Anthony. The desperation of the moment - the **Ferndale** is, appropriately, carrying a cargo of dynamite - is intercut by the intimacy of the groupings: Flora and Powell trying to light the flare just inside the companion whisper together "as if they had been a couple of children up to some lark behind a wall" (C,p318); Powell runs out of the companion "straight into the Captain" who takes the flare from him and "held it high above his head" (C,p318). In this scene, the passing of the flare from one protagonist to the other combines the elements of the triangle; it can also be read as initiating the circulation of desire which inheres

within a situation of danger, indicating the need to act in mutuality for the good of all.

Similarly, in a later scene, Flora's shawl acts as the connecting sign between the three. Captain Anthony tells Powell to give Flora her shawl so that she won't get cold sitting on deck. (Captain Anthony won't give it to her because she is with her father.) In a "zeugmatic" move, Powell conveys to Flora both the shawl and the knowledge that he is carrying out the Captain's wish (C,p392). When Powell stays with Flora to chat with her and subsequently succeeds in making her laugh "twice in the course of a month" (C,p393), he is called over to Captain Anthony: "This was not done in displeasure" but with "a sort of approving wonder" (C,p393). In this exchange Powell "felt himself liked [by Captain Anthony]. He felt it" (C,p393), and he simultaneously discovers "in himself an already old-established liking for Captain Anthony" (C,p394). The exchange between the three (specifically bypassing de Barral and the melodramatic triangle) is again established as one based on mutual desire, sympathy and the ability to give pleasure - Powell makes Flora laugh; Captain Anthony "approves" of, "likes" Powell because of this.

Structurally, the "flare scene" functions as a prolepsis of the later collision in which Captain Anthony is killed after he saves Flora and Powell (see pp438-440). The sailors of the Belgian steamer involved in the collision abandon the lifeline after Powell has come on board because they mistake him for Captain Anthony and believe there is no one left on the **Ferndale**. Some years after the sinking, at the end of the novel, Flora is about to marry Powell. Although this trajectory does not fulfil the logic of triangular desire, it does fulfil the logic of monogamous heterosexual marriage laws. In addition, it indicates quite clearly the sustaining of a chain of desire that has been forged in a fantasy of the potential for expansion of the dominant fiction of the dualism of gender/sexuality.

And what of Marlow's role within the sexual permutations, the fantasmatic crossings of gender boundaries which compose the dynamics of the desiring triangle? As narrator he can most conveniently take the place of Powell, who also plays the part of one of the subset of narrators. As protagonist, Marlow has the potential to exchange with any or all of the elements of the triangle. The play of desire that circulates between Flora, Captain Anthony and Powell is created as part of his narration and as part of his imaginary introjection, and both these elements provide for his imaginary entry into the desiring triangle.

Marlow narrates and his narration creates the (fantasmatic) space for his own insertion into the economy of desiring. This doubled perspective thus allows for movement between the position of (desiring) narrator and the assumed identity of the protagonist(s), positions which are mediated by fantasy. After dwelling on Marlow the narrator/protagonist and his difficulties in constructing Flora in reciprocal relation to his shaky idea of his own masculinity, I now propose Marlow as fantasiser, where fantasy becomes the constitutive category which can potentially unmake, cause to slip, the socially designated roles and practices which make and mar us. This is how I deploy the possibilities of the desiring triangle which I read out of the melodramatic triangle - setting one in juxtaposition to the other.

If part of Marlow's fantasy is a desire for Flora and a desire for identification with Flora, then how does this function within the chronological sequence of a narrative in which narrators proliferate, much to the famous discomfort of critics such as Henry James? Another way of looking at the disruption of sequential chronology leads to the conclusion that Marlow might be attempting to construct a narrative which does not aim for sequential logic, but which attempts to create a simultaneous space in which the sometimes conflicting and sometimes complementary desires of the protagonists can be explored. Perhaps what is being

endorsed is the logic of the desiring triangle, the space of the unconscious where, writes Michèle Montrelay, "as Freud has seen negation does not exist, where consequently the terms of a contradiction, far from excluding one another, coexist and overlap".[63]

The potential for the reconfiguration of the terms "masculinity" and "femininity" is then echoed by the achronicity and reflexivity of this text and by the ways in which it ironically questions, makes, and unmakes its own structures. This results in the production of the time and space of the fantasmatic which runs parallel with that material world where men in ships create and sustain an imperial system.

The radical, though tentative, exploration of male and female subjectivity and desire, which I propose begins substantively in Chance, is continued in Conrad's subsequent novels, especially in The Rescue (1920) - where the relations between Tom Lingard and Edith Travers display elements of sexual/gender ambiguity and anxiety - and The Rover (1923) - where the "desiring" triangle formed by Peyrol-Arlette-Lieutenant Réel parallels the one in Chance. It must be stressed that the potential challenge to heterosexual norms inheres in the structures of the relationships between the protagonists (again as in Chance), rather than at the level of event or plot.

It is because of this insistent creative pushing at the would-be established boundaries that I read the later novels not as contributing to Conrad's "decline" - the mainstream critical orthodoxy that prevailed from the publication of Thomas Moser's 1957 study for a number of years - but rather as tentative, probing excursions into the terrain where identity and desire are formed and broken down, challenged and reconfigured, through fantasy and through the creative writer allowing himself and his characters to imagine.

This creative questing/questioning is also a salient feature of the novels that Conrad produced earlier in his writing career, texts which more explicitly present aspects of imperialist ideology as it arises out of narratives which unfold within - and push beyond - the adventure genre. At all the stages in his writing career, which encompasses and extends the genres of, for example: the adventure narrative, social realism, (historical) romance, a common element is signalled when would-be established boundaries - of national identity, of "race", of gender - are pushed at until they become potentially transformable, to a point where this shifting produces questions which point to alternative directions.

At its most conventional, Conrad's **oeuvre** seeks to uphold certain national traditions - for example, of "fidelity" to the "Service" - which have underpinned the perpetuation of a system that seeks the material and conceptual advantages which can only accrue as the correlative of the ruthless subordination of any group designated not-"one of us".

At its most radical, his **oeuvre** encompasses the contradictory and complementary aspects of the "dominant fiction" according to which we function, where oppositions slide into translations, where the binaries that bind us are collapsed in order to produce different, challenging configurations - possibilities for radical change to the limitations of an existing economic, political and imaginary order.

NOTES

1. Joanna de Groot, "'Sex' and 'Race': The Construction of Language and Image in the Nineteenth Century" in ed Susan Mendus and Jane Rendall, Sexuality and Subordination: Interdisciplinary Studies of Gender in the Nineteenth Century, London and New York: Routledge, 1989, p92.

2. Quoted in Kaja Silverman, Male Subjectivity at the Margins, New York and London: Routledge, 1992, p6. All further references to this work, abbreviated Silverman, will be included in the text.

3. See for example Daphna Erdinast-Vulcan, Joseph Conrad and the Modern Temper, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991, pp166-172. Erdinast-Vulcan proposes the term "surrogacy" to express the interconnectedness and interchangeability of the male protagonists of Chance. All further references to this work, abbreviated Erdinast-Vulcan, will be included in the text.

See also Robert Hampson "Chance and the Secret Life: Conrad, Thackeray, Stevenson", The Conradian 17:2 (Spring 1993), p115; Andrew Michael Roberts "Secret Agents and Secret Objects: Action, Passivity and Gender in Chance", The Conradian 17:2 (Spring 1993), p99. All further references to this work, abbreviated Roberts, will be included in the text.

4. Martin Ray, "Introduction", Joseph Conrad, Chance: A Tale in Two Parts, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1988, px. All further references to this work, abbreviated Ray, will be included in the text.

5. The debate about the "Woman Question" encompasses both the period covered by the action of the novel and the period during which it was written. Chance began its written life as a short story called "Dynamite" which Conrad started in the late 1890s. It was serially published by The New York Herald from January to June 1912 and published in GB in 1914 with many deletions from and a few additions to the serial version.

See Martin Ray, **op. cit.** and Robert Siegle, "The Two Texts of Chance", Conradiana 16:2 (1984) for the publishing history.

See Susan Jones, "The Three Texts of Chance", The Conradian 21:1 (Spring 1996) for discussion of the additions and deletions. All further references to this work, abbreviated Jones, TTC, will be included in the text.

6. Joseph Conrad, Chance (1914), The Uniform Edition, London: J.M. Dent, 1923, p281. All futher references to this work, abbreviated C, will be included in the text.

7. See Paul B. Armstrong, "Misogyny and the Ethics of Reading: The Problem of Conrad's Chance" in ed Keith Carabine, Owen Knowles, Wieslaw Kraja, Contexts for Conrad, Volume 2, Boulder: East European Monographs, 1993, as an example of this type of criticism.

8. For a discussion of the construction of "mainstream" masculinity in nineteenth-century Britain, see the essays by J.A. Mangan, "Social Darwinism and upper-class education in late Victorian and Edwardian England" in ed J.A. Mangan and James Walvin, Manliness and Morality: Middle-class masculinity in Britain and America 1800-1940, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987 and Jeffrey Richards, "'Passing the love of women': manly love and Victorian society" in ed Mangan and Walvin, **op. cit.**

See Lyn Pykett's Engendering Fictions: The English Novel in the Early Twentieth Century, London: Edward Arnold, 1995, for an acount of the complex interplay between and (re)constructions of masculinity and femininity at the turn of the century.

9. See Sally Ledger, "The New Woman and the Crisis of Victorianism" in ed Sally Ledger and Scott McCracken, Cultural Politics at the **Fin de Siècle**, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995. All further references to this work, abbreviated Ledger, will be included in the text.

In her introduction to this essay Ledger lists the symptomatic "new" "coinages of the 1880s and 1890s" including "New Woman", "New Journalism", "New Criticism", "New Unionism" and discusses how the debate which was carried on around them reflected the hopes and fears of an historical and cultural moment at **fin de siècle**, a transitional, shifting ground between "two ages, the Victorian and the modern" (Ledger,p22). She also discusses how ideas about and positionings of the "New Woman" interacted with "the politics of Empire" and "the nascent socialisms of the late nineteenth century" (Ledger,p23).

See also Elaine Showalter, Sexual Anarchy: Gender and Culture at the **Fin de Siècle**, London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 1990, especially chapters 2 and 3. All further references to this work, abbreviated Showalter, will be included in the text.

10. See also Lyn Pykett, The "Improper" Feminine: The Woman's Sensation Novel and the New Woman Writing, London and New York: Routledge, 1992, pp137-38. All further references to this work, abbreviated Pykett, IF, will be cited in the text.

11. Linda Dowling, "The Decadent and the New Woman in the 1890s", Nineteenth Century Fiction 33:3 (December 1978), pp434-35. All further references to this work, abbreviated Dowling, will be included in the text.

12. Rebecca Stott in the Fabrication of the Late Victorian **Femme Fatale**: The Kiss of Death, London: The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1992, theorises a splitting of the New Woman as literary figure "who challenges dominant sexual morality" without invoking "the sexual fatalism of the **femme fatale** type" (pviii). However, this avatar of femininity is "shadowed" by the **femme fatale** who, according to Stott, is incarnated as Eliza Lynn Linton's "Wild Woman" (pviii).

In Woman and the Demon: The Life of a Victorian Myth, Cambridge Massachusetts and London: Harvard University Press, 1982, Nina Auerbach concentrates on the creative potential of this dual figure in both its positive and negative manifestations. "Like ourselves" Auerbach states, "Victorians did not always believe where they approved" (p5), and she examines the polarised typing of woman as angel/whore, pointing to the richness, the variety within

these seemingly restricted types as they inhabit different generic structures. See chapter 1.

13. Jane Eldridge Miller, Rebel Women: Feminism, Modernism and the Edwardian Novel, London: Virago Press Ltd, 1994, p7.

14. See especially Miller, **op. cit.**, chapter 5. See also Katleen Blake, Love and the Woman Question: The Art of Self-Postponement, Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1983 and Kate Flint, The Woman Reader 1837-1914, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993, for further perspectives on the new woman writing and reading, especially Blake's discussion of the theme and trope of feminine/feminist self-postponement in the texts she uses. See her chapter 6 on Sue Bridehead.

See Pykett, IF, chapter 4, for discussion of the gendering of the aesthetic in critical writing of the period with regard to the form and content of the contemporary novel.

15. Olive Schreiner, Woman and Labour (1911), preface, Jane Graves, London: Virago Press Ltd, 1978. All further references to this work, abbreviated WL, will be included in the text.

16. Rebecca West, The Young Rebecca: Writings of Rebecca West 1911-1917, selected and introduction, Jane Marcus, London: Macmillan Ltd, 1982. All further references to this work, abbreviated YR, will be included in the text.

17. Anne McClintock, Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Context, New York and London: Routledge, 1995, p292. All further references to this work, abbreviated McClintock, IL, will be included in the text.

18. Robert J.C. Young, Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race, London and New York: Routledge, 1995, p9.

19. Interestingly, it is in the fictional text From Man to Man: Or Perhaps Only (1926), introduction, Paul Foot, London: Virago Press Ltd, 1982, that Schreiner feels more able to interrogate these assumptions through the deployment of her surrogate Rebekah. The fictional space seems to provide a wider field than the polemical one, into which contradictions and doubts can enter and be presented as part of a dialogical exchange.

20. See Christabel Pankhurst's series of articles "The Great Scourge" (1913) quoted in Susan Kingsley Kent, Sex and Suffrage in Britain 1860-1914, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987, p5. All further references to this work abbreviated Kent, will be included in the text.

See Kent, chapter 7 and Martha Vicinus, Independent Women: Work and Community for Single Women 1850-1920,

London: Virago Press, 1985, chapter 7 for an account of the suffrage movement.

21. Jeremy Hawthorn, Joseph Conrad: Narrative Technique and Ideological Commitment, London: Edward Arnold, 1990, title of chapter 4. All further references to this work, abbreviated Hawthorn, JCNT, will be included in the text.

22. Joseph Conrad, The Collected Letters Volume 4 1908-1911, ed Frederick R. Karl and Laurence Davies, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, p327. All further references to this work, abbreviated CL and followed by volume number, will be included in the text.

23. See Ledger, pp25-27 and Showalter, p41 for comment on the visual and verbal cariacatures of the "New Woman" in the popular periodical press of the time.

24. Scott McCracken, "Postmodernism, a Chance to reread?" in ed Ledger and McCracken, **op. cit.**, p275. All further references to this work, abbreviated McCracken, will be included in the text.

25. Anne McClintock calls the Victorian governess a "threshold creature" (McClintock,IL,p277).

See also M. Jeanne Peterson's essay "The Victorian Governess: Status Incongruence in Family and Society" in ed Martha Vicinus, Suffer and Be Still: Women in the Victorian Age (1972), Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1973.

26. See Martha Vicinus, **op. cit.**, for an account of the slowly expanding opportunities for women in the latter half of the nineteenth century from the practicalities of education and waged work to the attempts to create alternative female communities centred around the contemplative life or settlement work.

27. Friedrich Engels, The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State (1884), introduction, Michèle Barrett, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd, 1985, p35. All further references to this work, abbreviated Engels, will be included in the text.

28. Judith K. Walkowitz, City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian Britain, London: Virago Press Ltd, 1992, p11. All further references to this work, abbreviated Walkowitz, CDD, will be included in the text.

29. Judith K. Walkowitz, Prostitution and Victorian Society: Women, Class and the State, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980, p87. All further references to this work, abbreviated Walkowitz, PVS, will be included in the text.

30. Michael Mason, The Making of Victorian Sexual Attitudes, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1994. All further references to this work, abbreviated Mason, will be included in the text.

31. Joseph Conrad, The Collected Letters Volume 5 1912-1916, Ed Frederick R. Karl and Laurence Davies, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, p290.

32. See as examples of this type of criticism Henry James's essay "The New Novel" (1914), Notes on Novelists with Some Other Notes, London: J.M. Dent and Sons Ltd, 1914 and Albert Guerard, Conrad the Novelist, Cambridge Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1958, p254. All further references to this work, abbreviated Guerard, will be included in the text.

33. Janice Radway, Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy, and Popular Literature, Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1984, pp134, 150. All further references to this work, abbreviated Radway, will be included in the text.

34. See also Diane Elam's Romancing the Postmodern, London and New York: Routledge, 1992, for a nuanced discussion of how "the relationship between postmodernism and romance becomes a way in which to rethink narrative and its relationship to the legitimation of historical knowledge" (p12). Her book includes a chapter on Nostromo.

35. Robert N. Hudspeth, "Conrad's Use of Time in Chance" in ed Keith Carabine, Joseph Conrad: Critical Assessments Volume 3. The Critical Response: The Secret Agent to Posthumous Works, East Sussex: Helm Information Ltd, 1992, p361.

36. See Robert Hampson, "Chance: The Affair of the Purloined Brother" in ed Keith Carabine, **op. cit.**, for a discussion of Chance's affiliation to both the chivalric-romance and the detective story genre.

In an essay called "The Damsel and her Knights: The Goddess and the Grail in Conrad's Chance", Conradiana 13:3 (1981), Julie M. Johnson identifies the "underlying structure" of the novel as parallel to that of quest literature, and allots the "damsel figure" - Flora - three knights: Captain Anthony (who corresponds to the Galahad of Arthurian myth), Powell (as Percivale) and Marlow (as Bors) (p221). Johnson's schema includes Marlow among Flora's suitors as one of the questors after the grail of femininity that Flora represents - with all its accompanying complexities.

37. This is René Girard's term and it has been extended by Eve K. Sedgwick in Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire, New York: Columbia University Press, 1985, which analyses the male-female-male "erotic

triangle", where the rivalry between two males for the female creates a bond between the two males which "is as intense and potent as the bond that link[s] either of the rivals to the beloved" (p21). This relation functions in a wider social context as a consolidation of male power structures: "In any male dominated society, there is a special relationship between male homosocial (**including** homosexual) desire and the structures for maintaining and transmitting patriarchal power" (p25).

38. In Georges Duby, Love and Marriage in the Middle Ages (1988), trans. Jane Dunnet, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994, p62. All further references to this work, abbreviated Duby, will be included in the text.

39. I want to emphasise at this point that I am taking the Oedipal triangle as a "classic" mapping of the coming to awareness of sexual difference within the familial structure in order to use it very flexibly, as a model onto which I map the triangular combinations which are played out in Chance.

40. See Ruth L. Nadelhaft, Joseph Conrad, Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991, p113, on this point.

41. In the "Introduction" to Sea Changes: Essays on Culture and Feminism, London: Verso/NLB, 1986, p4.

42. The metaphor of "poisoning" is made literal in the second variant of the melodramatic triangle where de Barral tries to poison Captain Anthony's drink.

43. Sigmund Freud, "On the Universal Tendency to Debasement in Love" (Contributions to the Psychology of Love II) (1912), Standard Edition Volume XI, pp180-181.

44. John Batchelor, The Life of Joseph Conrad: A Critical Biography, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1994, p213.

45. See for example E.E. Duncan Jones, "Some Sources of Chance", Review of English Studies 20 (1969); Hawthorn, JCNT, p133; Jones, TTC, p66.

46. Carol Christ, "Victorian Masculinity and The Angel in the House" in ed Martha Vicinus, A Widening Sphere: Changing Roles of Victorian Women, Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1977, p152.

47. Coventry Patmore, The Poems, ed and introduction, Frederick Page, London: Oxford University Press, 1949, The Angel in the House (1854, 1856), III,2:1-4.

48. Christina Crosby, The Ends of History: Victorians and 'The Woman Question', New York and London: Routledge, 1991, p77. All further references to this work, abbreviated Crosby, will be included in the text.

49. See McClintock, IL, pp87-95, for a telling analysis of the Oedipal triangle and Freud's erasing of an historical and social context in the production of his theory. For my purposes, I take this ahistorical version as a convenient "jumping-off" point.

50. See Havelock Ellis on "sexual inversion" in Volume two of his Studies in the Psychology of Sex (1897), Third Edition, Philadelphia: F.A. Davis Company, Publishers, 1924, for a contemporary analysis of same-sex desire.

See Ruth Robbins' essay "'A very curious construction': masculinity and the poetry of A.E. Houseman and Oscar Wilde" in ed Ledger and McCracken, **op. cit.**, for the "fall-out" effect of the Wilde trial on the making and marring of masculinity and homosexual identity in the literary productions of Wilde himself and A.E. Houseman.

See Alan Sinfield's The Wilde Century: Effeminacy, Oscar Wilde and the Queer Moment, London: Cassel, 1994, for an account of the construction of the "homosexual".

51. Rachel Bowlby, Still Crazy After All These Years: Women, Writing and Psychoanalysis, London and New York: Routledge, 1992, p3.

52. Sigmund Freud, "Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality" (1905), Standard Edition Volume VII, p145.

53. Sigmund Freud, "Psychoanalytic Notes on an Autobiographical Case of Paranoia" (1911), Standard Edition Volume XII, p46.

54. For a reevaluation of the terms "positive" and "negative", see Silverman, p362.

55. See Sigmund Freud, "The Ego and the Id" (1923), Standard Edition, Volume XIX, pp33-34.

56. Sigmund Freud, "Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of his Childhood" (1910), Standard Edition Volume XI, p100.

57. Marjorie Garber, Vice Versa: Bisexuality and the Erotics of Everyday Life (1995), London: Hamish Hamilton, 1996, p329.

58. See for example William B. Bache, "Othello and Conrad's Chance", Notes and Queries 200 (November 1955) and John Batchelor, **op. cit.**, p217.

59. Laura Chrisman, "The imperial unconscious? Representations of imperial discourse", Critical Quarterly 32:3 (1990), pp38-39. All further references to this work, abbreviated Chrisman, will be included in the text.

60. See Ronald Hyam, Empire and Sexuality: The British Experience (1990), Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1991, for a detailed historical account

which argues "that sexual dynamics crucially underpinned the whole operation of British empire" (p1).

61. Gayatri C. Spivak's "Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism" in ed Henry Louis Gates Jr, "Race", Writing and Difference, Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1986, provides an exemplary analysis of the dangers of this tendency.

62. See de Groot, **op. cit.**, pps100-23.

63. Michèle Montrelay, "Inquiry into Femininity" (1978), trans. Parveen Adams in ed Toril Moi, French Feminist Thought: A Reader, Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd, 1987, p228.

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