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Conrad's Mediation in American Literature: Focus on his Dialogic Relations with Eugene O'Neill

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In memory of my wife Melbouci Djamila

And

To my mother Dilem Dahbia

as well as

my children, Sadek, Nordine, Adel, Amina,

and most notably Kamilia, my pride and joy, on whom I will smile down from Heaven.

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Abstract

This research explores the literary connections between Joseph Conrad and a selection of American authors across three generations, from James Fenimore Cooper up to Eugene O'Neill. The purpose is to shed light in the placement of Conrad in the American literary tradition. To this end, the dialogic or intertextual approach inspired by Mikhail Bakhtin and Julia Kristeva is used but with a significant inflection of the paradigm of dialogism or intertextuality by the new insights provided by the recent theories of gift exchange such as the ones elaborated by Lewis Hyde and Georges Bataille. The research significantly shows that though our modern cultures are overrun by monetary gains, literature remains the domain par excellence wherein the gift community survives the onslaught of the cash nexus and the commodification of human life.

In retracing the literary associations between Conrad and the American authors, this research departs from the classic comparative and intertextual studies in focusing not on hunting for the sources of inspiration or on the anxiety of influence and authorship but on intertextuality, storytelling and the practice of the craft of novel writing as a performance of give exchange. Hence, Conrad shows himself principally as a recipient of the gift from donors such as Cooper, Hawthorne, Melville, and Poe. Conrad's reciprocation to the American authors of his time like Mark Twain, Henry James, Stephen Crane, and Jack London assumes the form of dialogue and outrage, attitudes accounted for in terms of the similarity and differences in personal temperaments, age, sharing of life afflictions, conceptions of the art of storytelling, competition in the literature market and so and so forth. This reciprocation to these first two generations of American writers is reversed in the case of the Lost Generation Authors.

From recipient or receiver of gift of the art of storytelling, Conrad becomes a donor of gifts or mediator for the American authors such as Fitzgerald, Eliot and Hemingway, who all sought to appropriate Conrad's fiction for their own ends.

The Conrad-O'Neill connection is typically illustrative of the role of mediation that Conrad plays in the American literary tradition. Reading O'Neill's drama through the eyes of Conrad demonstrates that his plays elaborate the major themes (belonging and regression) that Conrad develops in his fiction. Furthermore, Conrad's passing on the gift is reciprocated by O'Neill in the sense that he emulates his mentor in patterning his life and his career as a dramatist on those of Conrad. In short, O'Neill emerges as the Conrad of American drama.

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

My encounter with Joseph Conrad and Eugene O'Neill dates back to the mid-1970s when I was an undergraduate at the Department of English, University of Algiers. Both writers even then were assigned authors in the curriculum for English studies, an inclusion that can be accounted for by their enshrinement as canonical authors in the British and American literary traditions. Since their works, *Heart of Darkness* for Conrad, and *The Hairy Ape* for O'Neill, were studied in parallel, the former in sixth-semester British Literature module, and the latter in American Literature module in the same semester, I was naturally led to write a very small research establishing linkages between them as modernist artists. Centered on Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and O'Neill's *The Emperor Jones*, the research is concerned principally with the theme of "Materialism and the Betrayal of Ideals."

More than 30 years later after my first encounter, a second encounter with Conrad and O'Neill took place at the Department of English, University of Tizi-Ouzou, this time in my capacity as a postgraduate student, and as a lecturer following a successful completion of an MA dissertation in film studies, and my recruitment as a lecturer by the same Department. So, it can rightly be said that this research is the delayed outcome of two fruitful encounters, with a long interval of time between them devoted to teaching in high school and working for the SONATRACH/FLUOR TEXAS, Inc. (the Algerian/American Gas and Petroleum Company) in the Algerian Sahara, and later on my own as a free entrepreneur in plumbing business. As an MA postgraduate and teacher I was given the opportunity to teach the modules of American and British Civilization as well as a module on films adapted or inspired from Conrad's and O'Neill's major works to MA students majoring in the stream, Literature and Civilization. The occasion to "hit two birds with one stone," as the proverb says it so well, became a solid reality

for me when my proposal to study for a doctorate on my two favorite authors, Conrad and O'Neill, was accepted under the title of "Conrad and Eugene O'Neill."

The reader might ask at this stage the famous question that all researchers ask themselves during all the course of their researching, "and so what?" In response, I would say that the research is not just another study on Conrad and O'Neill whose works have received a huge bulk of critical literature written from various perspectives by academics in both Algeria and abroad. The selected bibliography included in the backward matter of this research speaks for itself. However, I did not feel daunted by the task of exploring again the thematic commonalities of the two authors in spite of the formidable volume of criticism already produced on them both. In the preparation phase of my research proposal I realized that Conrad is constructed into a major cultural figure in American letters. Though none of his works is set in the United States of America (except perhaps for *Nostromo* set in Costaguana, somewhere in Venezuela, which was like all the rest of Latin American countries considered as American influence zone), all of them are mis/appropriated by cultural critics in ideological defense of their own cultural and political standpoints. This appropriation and/or misappropriation took a strong momentum during and after World War I, and particularly so after Conrad's only visit to the United States in 1923, that is to say, just one year before his sudden death in 1924 at the age of 60. Since that watershed year, the representation of Conrad as "Our man," to paraphrase Conrad's title character Nostromo, was definitely established in the United States of America, for all cultural critics, and authors including O'Neill the American dramatist par excellence.

In Algerian academia, Conrad is above all studied from a postcolonial perspective, and often from a comparative angle involving African authors such as Chinua Achebe, Ngugi Wathiango (born James Ngugi), and Tayib Salih. This prevalent postcolonial and comparative reading of Conrad has a lot to do with the emergence of postcolonialism as a literary theory strongly defended by critics like Edward Said, and as well as the postcolonial condition of Algeria as a

decolonized country. Overall, this research is intended as a corrective reading of Conrad aiming to show another facet of the author when looked from the American perspective. As already suggested above, the Americanized Conrad, contrary to the "Africanized one" is not solely a polemical figure whose writings, particularly *Heart of Darkness,* African critics have misread to "write back to empire." In the post-World War I American context, Conrad is rather a medium through whom the American authors speak to each other about the major political, cultural, social as well as literary issues of their times. Regardless of the region from which they come, and their ideological standpoints at both the national and regional levels, Conrad following a successful commercial campaign for his books in the United States, especially after the Great War, gradually but surely became for American cultural critics an inevitable cultural agent whose writings were transformed into ideological grounds or sites for the negotiation of new schemes for American culture. And it is understood that O'Neill does lag behind this appeal to Conrad in writing his drama.

It follows that in the Algerian academic context of an excessively postcolonial and polemical reading of Conrad, this comparative research of two authors (Conrad and O'Neill) across the Atlantic can redress the balance by shedding new light into aspects of Conrad's and O'Neill's works to which academics have to date not accorded enough attention. The research focuses particularly on why and how Conrad was brought in to mediate between American authors and cultural critics across ideological and sectional boards in their attempt to express their sense of selfhood and nationhood in the looming new world order born out of the chaos caused by World War I. In the course of my teaching of the module of American Civilization I came across one of the major American cultural figures who might account, provisionally at least, for the reason why Conrad, who had until the war disdained the American readership, had in less than 10 years, toward the end of his life, all of sudden and paradoxically turned into some sort of oracle whose writings are read to mediate the major differences, disputes, and issues in post-World War I

America. This cultural figure is H. L. Mencken, whose two collections of essays *A Book of Prefaces* and *A Book of Prefaces Series Two,* which significantly open with an essay on "Conrad" shows to what extent the latter was posited as early the 1919 as a medium through whom American cultural critics and authors discuss about the major problems that they have had to address since then. This dialogic construction of Conrad as "Nostromo, our man" in American culture is what outraged and motivated Chinua Achebe's writing of one of his major essays, "*An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's Heart of Darkness*," during his stay at the University of Massachusetts in 1975. This essay, it should be noted, dramatically influenced the current of literary criticism of Conrad in the African Continent.

To come back to the issue to be addressed in this research what is there in Mencken's "Conrad" which contributes to the consensual elevation of the British, Polish-born author into a medium for the dialogic invention of America with all its complexity? Two notions in Mencken's cultural construction of Conrad deserve to be noted: Conrad as the "public enemy," and Conrad as the spiritual "aristocrat" standing the mob, and its narrow-minded philistinism. Interestingly, the former finds an echo in P.B. Shelley's construction of the poet as "legislator" and the latter recalls Nietzsche's cultural paradigm of the "aristocracy of the spirit" characteristic of the new-born man that he calls the "Superman." It is with these two notions Mencken sets out to destroy the prevalent ideology of Anglosaxonism of the cultural and literary critics who sought to fashion Conrad into an assimilated cultural figure in defense of 100 per cent Americanism. For Mencken, and later for O'Neill, the figure of Conrad defies "The winds of Doctrine howling about him [and] leave him absolutely unmoved. He belongs to no party, and has nothing to teach, save only a mystery as old as man." We understand that through such claims Mencken, the German-American essayist, is seeking to bring a corrective to those American cultural figures who attempt to construct and recruit Conrad as "Nostromo that is to say our man" for the defense of their own ideologies including Anglo-Saxonism,

internationalism, nationalism, literary Puritanism and its aesthetic associate philistinism. Mencken's dialogic construction of Conrad as a public enemy and a spiritual aristocrat as well as a solitary, cultural and tragic figure standing aloof in the very center of discussion equidistant from all standpoints in the American cultural circles also finds expression in O'Neill's drama where the sense of belonging everywhere and nowhere, as will be argued in one of the chapters of this research, is so prominent that it invests all of his plays with a tragic dark mood.

The outraged and polemical tone of Mencken's essay "Conrad" is not the sole cultural critic to be engaged in the dialogic construction of Conrad. The list includes famous essayists and authors like Van Wyck Brooks (the writer of that seminal manifesto entitled *America's Coming-of-Age* (1915), John Crowe Ransom (essayist and author of an elegy entitled "Conrad") Robert Penn Warren, William Faulkner, and so and so forth. This research will devote a whole chapter to the interpellation of Conrad by American authors as an illustration of his centrality in their dialogic construction of the American republic of letters in grips with both national and international issues such as immigration, integration, regionalism, and anarchism. Provisionally, I shall quote Brooks who summarizes well the central position that Conrad would come to assume in the American literary and cultural imagination immediately prior and after World War I. Conrad, as he puts so well, is far away from being a "novelist of ideas" as being "supremely the cause of ideas in others." He goes developing this idea of Conrad as an inspiring literary and cultural figure by making the case that his "figure [is] not more remarkable in himself than in his relations." Such a claim reinforces Brooks's idea of culture and literature as a system of relations wherein Conrad's works are of the "greatest importance and should receive the greatest importance" for at least two reasons, one of them pertaining to the fact that they combine "several hitherto impossible things," and the other attached to the plural catalyst effect that Conrad "this most fugue-like figure" has in triggering off conversation.

Brooks's claim of the central role that Conrad plays in American literature and culture coming-of-age is supported by another contemporary critic Wilson Follett. In completion to Brooks's conception of Conrad as a mediation between American writers, Follett responds with the idea that the "final significance of Conrad" in American culture and literature resides in his "relationship to reality […that he] "creates and that he constantly recreates." "The near he comes to us," he goes on to argue, "the farther away he is seen to be." It is this idea of reflection and refraction of reality in Conrad's works that Follett makes his own, and that I shall develop in two other chapters devoted specifically to the issue of immigration and anarchism in Conrad's *Amy Foster* and *The Secret Agent*. Other works by Conrad might have been selected to deal with other issues equally resonant or reverberating for the American literati like Follett. For example, it can be argued that if *Under Western Eyes* has received acclaim until now in the United States it is because its treatment of the issue of the Russian revolution finds an echo in post-World War I period. The same argument can be developed in relation to American isolationism and exile reverberating in *Lord Jim* and *Almayer's Folly*. If I have chosen to focus on *Amy Foster* and *The Secret Agent,* it is because I consider that these two works have had much more resonance to the American readers of the time, marked among other things by the ideology of anti-immigration, and the Red Scare or the fear of anarchism across the Atlantic.

So the function of mediation that Conrad assumes in the American Republic of letters in its dialogic construction or imagination of self-hood and nationhood or regional particularities, involves two types of intertexts: literary and social texts. So far critics and literary theorists have looked at the notion of intertext only in terms of relationship between literary texts *per se* giving little attention to the social dimension of texts as patterns of or scripts for social behavior, or as Pierre Bourdieu calls these patterns, the habitus. Very often the historical reading of social text in literary criticism is reduced to the notion of context or at best of subtext. Such a historicist reading also relies too heavily on the notion of realism as a reflection of reality in the broadest

sense of the word. This research departs from such narrow-minded conception of reality by understanding realism in fiction in the terms formulated by George Luckas, that is to say realism as a "mediation of or meditation on reality." Folett's quote above points in this direction in its emphasis on Conrad peculiar relation to reality, which both interpellates (the notion of interpellation is Althusser's) and eludes the American reader that Folett is. Said in other words, the relation of Conrad to reality is both a matter of reflection as mediation and refraction marked by a change of direction. To put it in nutshell, this research will look at intertextuality or dialogic imagination as Mikhail Bakhtin calls it as a relation not only between literary texts but also between social texts. That is the treatment of the issue of mis/appropriation of Conrad as a medium for dialogic imagination of selfhood and nationhood the focus is placed on both the social texts developed around such transatlantic issues as the ideology of immigration and the fear of anarchism as well as on the dialogic give-and-take among American authors in their literary or cultural construction of Conrad as "Nostromo, Our man" that is to say the man of the situation in all his ambiguities and peculiar tragic moods. The tragic moods of Conrad's works find an echo in O'Neill's drama which will be accorded much more emphasis in this research, because of the little critical attention that it has received.

The issue of the mis/appropriatation of Conrad's works as ur-texts or foundational texts in the American republic of letters, may seem odd in the light of Conrad's seeming indifference to the United States wherein he set no work of his own except by oblique references to characters hailing from there in novels like *Nostromo, The Nigger of the Narcissus,* and *Victory*. One of my hypotheses in this research is that if Conrad had not set none of his works, it is because of the strong autobiographical strain of his works wherein gained experience emerges clearly. It can arguably be postulated that if he had managed to undertake the planned transatlantic voyage from Rouen to Canada in the Adowa in December 1893, as Meyers suggests, Conrad would without doubt have produced a work against that background just as he had done for the other

localities in the world. It happened that his one-month tour to the United States took place too late in his writing career to have that experience translated into a fiction. So this research makes a short case of assertions such as the ones forcefully made by Joseph Retinger and Hugh Walpole to the effect that Conrad's attitude towards Americans was pronouncedly cool, and he rarely invited them to his house [and that] in selling his books in America he felt exactly like a merchant selling glass beads to African natives."

As Jeffrey Meyers, from whose book the citation is borrowed, has noted quite pertinently Conrad was not all that antipathetic to Americans in general and to his fellow contemporary American culture figures living in Britain or who happen to visit Britain during his time. Among other American cultural figures that Jeffrey refers in support of the contrary is Stephen Crane, Henry James, Own Wister, Ellen Glasgow and John Powell to whom he generously offered his hospitality. Conrad has even favored the first two figures with critical essays, Crane with a preface to his *Red Badge of Courage* and an appreciation, and James with literary essay entitled "Henry James – An Appreciation" (1905). The last essay is so well crafted and with such a philosophical depth that Faulkner found it an inspirational source for his Nobel Prize Speech of 1950. It is true that Conrad publically disliked Herman Melville, whose "irrationality" Meyers exposes clearly. This "dislike" if taken within a larger perspective, turns out to a normal response to the critical circles of the time which wanted to straightjacket Conrad as a "sea novelist." Indeed, to be coupled with Herman Melville and sometimes at his own disfavor as D.H. Lawrence does in his seminal book of essays *Studies in Classic American Literature* (1923) can only hurt Conrad who wants to have his books other than the ones about the sea to be appreciated at their right value. This downscaling largely explains Conrad's cry of outrage when the Oxford Edition provocatively called Conrad to write an introduction to *Moby Dick.* Meyers reports without resort to what Harold Bloom calls the "anxiety of influence" and other literary theorists "the anxiety of authorship" that Conrad dismissed Melville's novel as a "rather strained

rhapsody with whaling for a subject and not a single line of the 3 volumes of it." In support of his assertion, Meyers also quotes the sculptor Jacob Epstein's statement that Conrad considered that Melville "knows nothing of the sea. Fantastic, ridiculous … Mystical my eye! My old boots are mystical. (2001: 173)"

So I assume in this research that if Conrad was indeed indifferent to American settings for North America as a whole, it is simply because his imagination leans on experience, and that had earned no experience with that region of the globe though he had planned it, for his recruitment on the *Adowa* en route from Rouen to Canada in 1893 backfired at the last moment when the voyage was cancelled by the Franco-Canadian Company which owned that ship. In saying this, I wish to add that I also assume that if Conrad has been mis/appropriated as cultural mediator in the United States it is not simply due to his antipathy or sympathy to American authors such as Fennimore Cooper and Frederick Marryat, both whom at the source of his engagement in sea adventures, but also to the importance accorded to the foreign artists and arts in the West in general and in the United States in particular. Much has been said, for example, about Picasso's or Monet's stylistic borrowings from African or Oriental arts in the development of Cubism and Impressionism. Some cultural anthropologists went to the extent of qualifying this craze for foreign arts as a larceny the object of which is to give a shot of adrenaline to the enervating state in which arts at the turn of the nineteenth to the twentieth century found itself.

It has to be noted that this search for foreign works of Art and artists in the United States at the same period was even much more vigorous than in the rest parts of the West. The reason for this is that the United States as a relatively young republic was considered as suffering from a lack of culture located as the origin of the exile of many Western artists to Europe and exile of artists to Europe such was case with Henry James and Edith Wharton to be followed later by the Lost Generation authors such as T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, Ernest Hemingway, and Scott Francis Fitzgerald to mention but a few. As a result of this lack of culture and tradition in the arts, private

art collectors and curators of all sorts sought to acquire abroad art objects to fill up the cultural void in the private, and public spheres, and thus to offset the crass materialism that prevailed in industrial America born out of the Gilded Age. So I assume that Conrad and his works fall in this general phenomenon of appropriation of foreign arts and artists to invigorate the American cultural scene at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. It is worth pointing out that Conrad really started to know artistic and commercial success in the United States with the acquisition of no less than 231 manuscripts by his American benefactor, John Quinn, and the copyrights attached to his books by the Doubleday edition, which sponsored his one-month tour of New England in 1923 to promote his books.

To put it in a nutshell, the major working hypothesis sustaining this research is that Conrad is some sort of "metic" in the Greek sense of the word, a mediating foreign artist coming from the outpost of the Western World, which was conquered Poland. Arguably, Conrad willingly or unwillingly encouraged the major American cultural figures of his time to buy this idea of Poland in essays such as "Poland," "The Partition of Poland," "Poland Revisited," and the "Autocracy and War," all of them aiming to set Poland from the panslavic world of Tsarist and later of revolutionary Russia. Moreover, as an adopted Briton having served in the British Merchant Navy for nearly twenty years, learning English aboard its flotilla to become a recognized author among his British contemporary fellows while keeping the Polish aristocratic habitus, that is to say the way he behaves and dresses etc., and a "strange" Polish accent in his speech, it is all easy for American cultural critics across their ideological and sectional boards to recuperate him as a cultural figure to debate the predominant issues confronting post-war America. Moreover, the profundity and the ambiguities of his works are such that he is invoked in the discussion of issues like the "American language (Mencken)," the black-white relations (Dubois), the type of foreign policy to be followed isolationism or liberal internationalism, American democracy, the defense of the idea of self-determination and imperialism, 100 percent

Americanism and ethnicity, nationalism and sectionalism, literary tradition and style, and so on and so for. This potential of polarity between various American cultural critics in their mis/appropriation of Conrad's works, which to say the least, served as grist to the mill to each and every one of them speaks of the polyphony or highly dialogic nature of Conrad's works.

The American writers' speaking and thinking through Conrad with the multiple voices evidenced by his works naturally requires the type of dialogic approach elaborated by literary theories such as Mikhail Bakhtin and Julia Kristeva. I would develop this approach at the end of the first chapter of this research in the synthesis of the relations that these American writers in general held with Conrad. In the mean time, I have to underline that this dialogic, historical approach will be supplemented as suggested in the course of this introduction with critical paradigms borrowed from other literary theories of gift exchange. I shall also the concept of "interpellation" or hailing is borrowed from Louis Althusser, those of "medium" and "reflection" from Georges Lukacs, and that of "habitus" from Pierre Bourdieu. So overall I would say that my approach is an eclectic approach wherein Baktin's dialogism is central. Such an eclectic approach is dictated by the broader concept of intertextuality that I have made my own. This intertextuality based mostly on the theories of gift exchange such as Lewis Hyde's *The Gift: Creativity and the Artist of the Modern World* is looked at not only in terms of relations between literary texts but also between literary texts and the predominant social scripts or texts of given periods.

Following this eclectic approach, I will articulate this thesis in two parts divided into 6 chapters. The first part in three separate chapters will expose in general terms the issue of literary relationship of Conrad three generations of American writers, focusing on how intertextuality or dialogism as a form of gift exchange. The first chapter will highlight how Conrad received the gift of storytelling from early American authors, such as James Fenimore Cooper, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, and Edgar Alan Poe. His relationships with this early generation

of American writers will be categorized according to the scheme provided by Mikhail Bakhtin in his two major books *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, and *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, and with an emphasis of dialogism as gift exchange. As for chapters two, it will be devoted to Conrad's literary connections with late nineteenth-century American novelists, such as Mark Twain, Henry James, Stephen Crane, and Jack London. Just as in Chapter, it is the intertextual theory of gift exchange that will be applied with a focus on the variations in Corand's attitude to his exchanges with these authors on the basis of the literature market, the economics of authors, and the life and times of each and every one of them. In the third and last chapter of the first part, the stress will be put how Conrad turned from receiver of gifts to a donor of gifts to the American authors of the Lost Generation, most notably Francis Scott Fitzgerald, T.S. Eliot, Ernst Hemingway, and Langston Hughes.

The second part divided into three chapters will be concerned specifically with the dialogic relation between Conrad, and O'Neill. Hence, the overall technique of the development of the issue of the role of mediator that Conrad plays in the rethinking of American cultural and socio-political issues in the post-World War I period will be from the general to the specific. Three separate themes will be dealt with in three separate chapters. The three themes treated in these three chapters are "belonging," "regression", and "race relations" with reference to Conrad's *Tomorrow*, and *Heart of Darkness* on the one hand, and O'Neill's *Beyond the Horizon*, *Hairy Ape,* and *The Iceman Cometh* on the other. The inclusion of the theme "race relations" will, I am sure, provide the readership with a more comprehensive and compendious vision of the context wherein "belonging" and "human regression" affect the very conduct of society members worldwide. Apart from these three themes, the purpose of the comparison is to illustrate how O'Neill's tragic mood has one of its inspirations in Conrad, and his works. O'Neill, I would argue, expands or supplements (the word is Gérard Genette's) this mood, which is already an inherent feature of his character as a modern man, to construct himself into the father figure of

modern American drama. This form of stylization of Conrad through whose tragic veil at the modern man and the modern world will be best seen against the background of other forms of mis/appropriation dealt with in the first chapter that follows.

Part One:

Conrad's Connections with American Writers Across Generations

Chapter One:

Conrad's Reciprocation to the First- Generation of American Writers

Introduction

"The artist appeals to that part of our being which is a *gift* [emphasis mine[not an acquisition – and therefore not an acquisition. (2007: 48)" So writes Conrad in his preface to *The Nigger of the Narcissus*. The citation is a follow-up to a short description of the social function of what he calls the "thinker" and the "scientist" in their quest for their truth and their appeal to the various aspects of human nature, ranging from commonsense, "the cultivation of our minds" and the "attainment of our ambitions". In stark contrast to the thinker's and scholar's concern with extraneous, "weighty matters," the function of the artist is principally introspective. As he puts it, "Confronted by the same enigmatical spectacle the artist descends within himself, and in that lonely region of stress and strife, if he be deserving and fortunate, he finds the terms of his appeal.(2007: 47) " To qualify human inner life and the appeal that it has when it is disclosed to plain view, Conrad employs the synthesizing concept of the "gift" in contrast to acquisition. In other words, the artist is, beyond everything else, interested in more enduring human values, the gifts with which the human species are inherently endowed, gifts such as the "capacity for delight and wonder," "our sense of pity, and beauty and pain" and the "latent feeling of fellowship with all creation – and the subtle but invincible, conviction of solidarity that knits together the loneliness of innumerable hearts. (2007: 48)

It is the capacity to operate in this "world of the gift" that distinguishes the artist from other scholars, such as the "thinker" and the "scientist." As he goes on with listing the multifaceted nature of human gifts treasured in our inner lives, Conrad provides a definition of his obligation as writer of fictions, an obligation conceived in a gift conception of literature, theorized later by anthropologists, like Marcel Mauss and Georges Bataille. For Conrad, the obligation to

reciprocate to the gifts bestowed on Mankind, makes him strive with the "power of the word, to make you hear, to make you feel – it is before all, to make you *see* (author's emphasis). The emphasis shows the extent to which Conrad puts on the performative aspect of his texts as gifts presented to his listeners/readers in storytelling conditions. In accordance to the "logic of the gift," he expects the reader to dialogically reciprocate to the generous gift that he provides in the form of "that glimpse of truth for which you have forgotten to ask. (2007: 49)"

This research is not solely concerned with Conrad the donor of gifts, but also with Conrad the recipient of early American gifts, such as Fenimore Cooper's, Herman Melville's, Nathaniel Hawthorne's, Edgar Allan Poe's, and Stephen Crane's works. Conrad, I would argue, has strong affinity for the above American authors, and he reciprocates to them by using their works as a major source of intertextuality. In support of this claim that I shall develop later in this chapter, I would say that the early American authors, most notably those mentioned previously, has the same Conradian conception of literature, a literature conceived as pertaining to performance of textual gift exchange. Harold Bloom has come very close to putting his finger on this performative aspect of early American literature when he qualifies its major texts as "speakerly texts," but he stops short in theorizing its participation in storytelling as gift exchange.

The Performative Aspect of Literature as Give and Take

Before extending further on how Conrad reciprocates to the early American fiction authors as first donors of the gift to explore the "mysteries of life," the "loneliness of innumerable hearts," "the solidarity in joy, in sorrow, in aspirations, in illusions, in hope, in fear, (2007: 48 " and so and so forth, a few more words on gift exchange are in order at this stage. The major principle of literature as gift exchange is the principle of give and take. This principle of 'Give and Take' has a strong bearing on human relations functioning in the "world of the gift" by contrast with the "world of commodities." In the former, the nexus is the gift whereas in the latter, what prevails is

the cash nexus. Before documenting this principle of 'Give and Take' in literature as performance of gift exchange, it would be worthwhile and even judicious to delve into the very depth of the area it has stemmed from. It is worth pointing that cultural anthropology or field ethnography is the one discipline that has popularized the fundamental importance of giving, taking, and returning gifts, including textual gifts, in weaving and unraveling social bonds. Not very strangely, the one modernist author who has come to be recognized as a pioneering the cultural anthropological view of literature as a performance of an obligatory gift exchange between interlocutors (authors and readers) is Joseph Conrad. These words by Malinowski, Conrad's fellow Polish exile, cited by James Clifford (1988) are quite supportive of the above claim: "[W.H.R.] Rivers is the Rider Haggard of Anthropology: I shall be the Conrad. (p.96)" These words acquire their full meaning when we are acquainted with the fact that Malinowski is the first field cultural anthropologist to be interested in gift exchange. This interest finds expression in *The Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (1922).

As a follow-up to Malinowski's *The Argonauts of the Western Pacific*, Marcel Mauss (1872 – 1950), theorizes gift exchange before it is further developed in its literary strand by scholars such as Georges Bataille and Victor Turner. We are given to understand that this principle takes its roots in the very ancient and primitive societies, namely Melanesia, Polynesia, and Northwestern North America. This societal undertaking has been developed in his famous work entitled *The Gift* (1925). On the whole, the matrix his work revolves around underlies the subtlety of the religious, legal, economic, mythological features of giving, receiving, and repaying. The economic practices at work in these primitive societies proved not just efficient, but (they) created strong bonds among the society members; they created a system of positive solidarity, as witnesses this statement: "A gift that does nothing to enhance solidarity is a contradiction" (Marcel Mauss, 1990: x).

The underpinnings of such an economic practice in these faraway social groups lie in the society members helping one another to create social bonds beyond the mere material, economic interests. Nonetheless, this aid is not to be assimilated to a charity that is given to the needy. The gift, according to Mauss, is a social act that ties society members together all through their life. That is, a member receiving a gift is not just supposed to return it, but he has to lest that would belittle him and destroy his honor, and more than that he would be punished by God. In the context of these primitive societies, no gift is given free, though it seems somehow contradictory. For Mauss, it would be nonsensical to believe that a Trobriand husband handing a gift to his wife is free; on the contrary, this husband is only just recompensing his wife for sexual services (M. Mauss, 1990: x). This, in a way, epitomizes a centuries-old process of contractual gift: hence the idea that manifestly, it is the giver who gets the gift – a principle of obligatory reciprocation. It is important to note that Conrad, just like the Melville of *Omoo* and *Typee* before him, has visited the exotic places whose two parallel social and economic exchanges, Mauss has studied in his book. Conrad even prefigures in his *Karain: a memory* the work of both Malinowski and Mauss. He knows so much about the importance of gift exchange in creating social bonds beyond those involving trade in mere commodities that he makes his white central character, Hollis, in this short story extend an already received gift (a Jubilee coin bearing "the image of the great Queen" that he himself treasures in his keepsake) to Karain, a native of Eastern Malay Archipelago in order to dispel the guilt that haunts him since the killing of a fellow native in a love story gone wrong. The latter is also presented as a textual gift by Karain to Hollis the trader/gunrunner who feels obliged to reciprocate for the friendship that the native Karain has showed him by sharing with him the love story gone wrong. As Antony Fothergill argues in the citation below, Conrad masters so well the mixed economies characterizing the Eastern Malay Archipelago that he superbly staged how they function:

> In *Karain: a memory* these ostensibly separate worlds of material economy and the gift are bound together in an inseparable and dizzying way. Clear distinctions are dissolved. The figures in his tale, primarily connected the economies of trade, are suddenly united in the experience of the gift. The gift, is paradoxically, a piece of money: precisely that which normally represents materiality, material value. It is a coin that possesses virtually no material value, even though as a gift it carries life-redeeming worth. It is given in recompense for the gift of Karain's stories about his memories… . (Fothergill Antony, 2002: 206)

Fothergill's above critique of the overlap of monetary exchange and gift exchange is to the point. However, he overlooks to underline that coin is etymologically related to the concept of "word" and that literature/storytelling and money, as Marc Shell has fully demonstrated in his *Money, Language, and Thought* (1993), are closely linked. The first artistic work that Shell interestingly uses to highlight the parallel processes of coining and exchange of words in storytelling and the minting of money is Edgar Allan Poe's short story, "The Gold Bug."

A more recent interpretation of the principle 'Give and Take' as that undertaken by Professor Adam Grant, at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, has emerged and to which he complemented with a third criterion: 'Matcher'. Given his specialization in organizational psychology, Grant finds himself more bent to finding motivation and living more generous and creative lives among society members. The reciprocity, which at the time of Marcel Mauss was dyadic, has now shifted to a triadic one with the inclusion of the third criterion 'Matcher'. In a nutshell, being a matcher undergirds the availability of an element that would assure a certain balance between giving and taking. That is, it maintains under control all kinds of excesses, as posits Adam Grant in the following,

> Professionally, few of us act purely like givers or takers, adopting a third style instead. We become *matchers*, striving to preserve an equal balance of giving and getting. Matchers operate on the principle of fairness: when they help others, they protect themselves by seeking reciprocity. If you're a matcher, you believe in tit for tat, and your relationships are governed by even exchanges of favors (Adam Grant, 2013: 14).

As the citation above makes clear, giving, taking and returning in all fairness, more often than suspected affects the material world. This is what Conrad highlights when he makes the materially interested characters, the two gunrunners Hollis and Jackson change the way they look at the world the moment they accept to become gift receivers who in all fairness reciprocate by giving the Jubilee gift, the coin bearing the picture of Empress Victoria. The latter undergoes a transvaluation in the story telling as a version of gift exchange. So though the socio-historical contexts in which Marcel Mauss's *The Gift* (1925) and Adam Grant's *Give and Take* (2013) were written greatly differ, Grant's approach is more linked to how an individual, who is not necessarily in want, is likely to better succeed in his/her professional life if they abide by the rules of gift exchange instead of the rules and calculus of monetary economy. Besides, the use in the quotation of the expression tit for tat is meant to be metaphoric of the overall working conditions at work, that is, do to people as you are done.

While Mauss's vision of the principle 'Give and Take' rests upon obligatory reciprocation because of the commonly shared interests, that of Grant's departs from it in a very subtle way; that is, the socio-historical and economic contexts vary greatly from one another. For Grant, the gift is not expected to be returned with whatever amount; it is simply an act of generosity, and an act whereby the author gets his satisfaction (A. Grant, 2013: 13). Just because givers are compassionate individuals, and do care for needy fellows, the principle of reciprocity is not governed by self-interest. The taker or the recipient, if sincere in his want, (he) would simply express his gratitude, and the deed is done.

A crucial undermining element related to the principle of 'Give-and-Take' need be emphasized and pinpointed. It is indeed the time span separating the making of these two texts: that of Mauss's at the advent of modern life, in the early twentieth century, and Grant's at the turn of the twenty first century. In this approximately 100- year period between the two works, things have deeply changed, sometimes to the best, sometimes to the worst. Armed with

psychological and psychoanalytical tools, scholars are now more apt to analyze the flaws resulting from the individuals' behaviors and attitudes toward one another. Of a common agreement, modern life has upset the individual, and made him feel the most formidable feeling of lonesomeness, estrangement, despair, sadness, depression – and the list is long.

Egoism, among other psycho-social flaws, has jeopardized social unity in that selfish individuals see nothing but their own greed in material interests, and this isolates them from the rest of the society members. To this flaw we add the exaggerated sentiment of individualism, as defined by Alexis de Tocqueville (1805 – 1859). For Tocqueville, individualism

> Meant the apathetic withdrawal of individuals from public life into a private sphere and their isolation from one another, with a consequent and dangerous weakening of social bonds: individualism was a deliberate and peaceful sentiment which disposes each citizen to isolate himself from the mass of his fellows… [Which] at first saps only the virtues of public life, but, in the long run, attacks and destroys all others and is eventually absorbed into pure egoism (in: Mauss, 1990: xiv).

As can be seen, individualism merges into egoism causing thus the individual to shift his life from other-focused to self-focus. This transformation of compassion to selfishness constitutes the gist of Adam Grant's work *Give and Take*. Through the identification/explanation of the terms *Giver* and *Taker,* Grant wishes to alert the readers to the pathologic behavior of the *Takers* who show excessive eagerness to take whatever is handed to them, not because they are in need, but simply because they believe they are much smarter than others. As underlined in this quotation:

> Takers have a distinctive signature: they like to take more than they give. They tilt reciprocity in their own favor, putting their own interests ahead of other needs. Takers believe that the world is a competitive, dog-eat-dog place (A. Grant, 2013: 13).

As expanded in what follows, Conrad as already argued above, is no mere taker, he holds to the theory of storytelling that the calculus and rules of monetary exchange, where in the words of Adam Grant the principle of give and take is perverted to "give one and take ten.(2013: 11)" Practically, the majority of

Conrad's works including *Heart of Darkness*, *Lord Jim*, and *Victory* are framed by narratives wherein the narrator performs the role of an ironic participant observer reporting to the reader the give and take, that is the performance of an oral narrative marked by verbal exchange of shared experiences between the storytellers and listeners. It is true that Conrad is caught up with the laws of the market place, like his frame narrator he stands removed to observe that storytelling as a system of gift exchange still holds its own in spite of the encroachment of the world of marketable commodities on the traditional world of the gift. This is highlighted by Conrad in the eagerness with which the capitalist establishment represented by the Director of Companies, the Lawyer, and the Accountant at the start in *Heart of Darkness* are prepared to listen to one of the yarns by Marlow. Everything in this story, the listeners' comments, that of the frame narrator, to the rhetorical manner in which Marlow shares his African experiences shows that *Heart of Darkness* is a story about Marlow's colonial memories in the Congo. It is a story told from the hearth, and which somehow prefigures and supports Walter Benjamin's about the "gift of storytelling" as an art of repeating stories thriving in the form of an "artisan form of communication" "the milieu of work- the rural, the maritime, and the urban milieu (1968: 91 ", but at the same he disavows Benjamin when he affirms that the ability to remember and exchange experiences "has fallen in value (p.83) " as far as fiction is concerned because of the advent of the "age of mechanical production." Mediated experience through the written word and industrially produced literature in Benjamin's view has given a fatal blow to the gift of storytelling, but Conrad clearly follows in the footsteps of the early American authors in his belief that the art of storytelling is transferrable to fiction in its exploration of the infinite mysteries of human life and man's quest for truth.

Conrad as Recipient of James Fenimore Cooper's textual Gifts

James Fenimore Cooper is the one early American author, whose books have been tapped by Conrad as a source of intertextuality or dialogue. While still in Poland, and still Conrad (as) a boy under the charge of his mother's brother, Tadeuzs Bobrowski, embraced James Fenimore Cooper (1789 – 1851) as his favorite author among all the America authors available to him in translation (Robert Secor et al., 1985: xxxiii). Amongst the works that Conrad read, figure the famous *Leather-Stocking Tales: The Deer Slayer (1841), the Last of the Mohicans (1826), The*

Path Finder (1840), The Pioneers (1823), and *The Prairie (1827).* All these stories deal more or less actual with the watershed events of American history, combining both the popular moves from New England to the Far Western part of the Northern American continent, referred to in American history books as the Frontier. Later this march toward the West was justified by the concept of Manifest Destiny, formulated as a divine ordained mission for white American settlers to conquer the Western territories populated by Native Americans. The questions that come to mind at this stage are as follows: How did Conrad come to be the happy recipient of Cooper's textual gifts? And quite aside from being influenced by Cooper through reading him at a very young age, what kind of affinities can justify Conrad's resort to Cooper as a favorite donor of the gift of storytelling when Conrad at quite an advanced stage tried to self-fashion his identity as an English author?

The answer to the questions above are complex, and certainly deserve to be devoted a whole thesis. However, to illustrate the small point that we are making here as regards the dialogue or the process of gift exchange in the passage of the storytelling version of giving and receiving with the obligation to return that gift. Admittedly, it is true that when young Conrad, just like all children, can only be impressed by the adventures that Cooper recounts in his stories. This is particularly if we take into account the huge number of adventure stories published, translated and consumed in Europe at the time of Conrad's time, when the Old Continent was readying itself for the imperial "scramble" of the "Dark Continent," Africa. We understand that the young Conrad, like all young readers of his readers, helped himself to the same literary dish consisting of adventure stories such as those written by R. Haggard, Louis Stevenson, Jules Verne, and Mark Twain. However, it is also true to claim that the influence that Fennimore exercised on Conrad goes beyond the "wonder" (this word is one of Conrad's favorite in his definition of what fiction should be.) that adventure stories could excite in young readers. I would contend that adventures at the Frontier such as those of Cooper cannot fail to interpelate or hail authors

such as Conrad, whose short story "Outpost of Progress" is the best illustrate of the Frontier as a zone of contact between wilderness and civilization. What I want to sustain is that there is strong ideological affinity between the two story tellers/ romancers (Cooper and Conrad). If Cooper speaks to Conrad's artistic sensibilities, it is because for him partitioned Poland is also a Frontier wherein Polish civilization was grappling with the Russian wilderness. Conrad, as his major essay, "Autocracy and War," establishes a clear-cut distinction between a Poland, which though under colonial occupation, is endowed with the spirit of Western Civilization and a mere Oriental geographical entity like Russia whose national spirit was perpetually stifled by autocracy.

There is another reason that might have made Conrad sense a strong affinity for Cooper. This, we would claim, could be traced to social status. Indeed, both Cooper and Conrad belong to the aristocracy, and both of them as storytellers/romancers tell their stories of the struggle for inventing their respective nations. Somewhat in the manner of Balzac who is also an aristocrat who manages in his novels to put aside his social origins to describe at work the forces shaping the France of his time, Cooper and Conrad observe the same detachment in describing world affairs at the Frontier. It has to be observed that Conrad has a great admiration for Balzac. For him, Cooper and Balzac are birds of the same aristocracy feather and that's why for him they go together. I would make the case here that it is this shared ideological background that has made Conrad affirm his preference of Cooper over the Twain. He even came to Cooper's defense when Twain attacked him for his ideological position and his elaborate prose that makes a small case of vernacular American language. I have to note here that Conrad's narratives were dismissed for the same reasons by some critics.

All of the above reasons account for Conrad's strong sense of affiliation that has made him a readily available recipient of Cooper's national romances. However, it would be a serious omission to overlook the importance of Cooper as author of sea stories in the pull that the

American author exercised on Conrad's imagination. Among these sea stories that Conrad read and appreciated, we can mention *The Pilot* (1824) and *The Red Rover* (1828), the latter title evokes Conrad's *The Rover*. According to F. Wayne, "James Fenimore Cooper invented a new literary genre: the sea novel. … From 1824, anyone who made literary use of the sea did so in Cooper's wake' (F. Wayne, 2007). Conrad did not lag in listening to the call of Cooper when he decided to share his sea experiences in narratives after his nervous breakdown in the Congo. Cooper's sea stories are welcomed gifts for a writer looking for templates of sea romances.

It has to be observed that Cooper's resort to sea-story writing was not random; sea-faring life is constitutive of his own life. As Wayne writes so well

> Cooper drew on his direct knowledge of ships and sailors to present a truer picture of life on the sea than had ever before achieved in literature. As a boy of seventeen he had sailed before the mast on a merchant man bound from New York to London and then to Spain. On board he experienced the life of a common seaman, learned the craft of sailing, encountered terrifying storms, was chased by pirates, and watched the impressments of crew members by a British man-of-war. He later served as an officer in the United States Navy. (F. Wayne, 2007).

Obviously, there is a strong parallel between the life of Cooper and Conrad as sea men to justify the comparison that I am trying to make in the present section of this research. Wayne's citation focuses on the life of Cooper in this quote suggests the richness of his literary thematic: now providing his readership with inland experiences, now with sea adventures, the total of which constructs an undeniably profound knowledge. This diversity of narratives has drawn Cooper to the forefront of the highly praised Anglo-American authors resulting in his attraction of so many Western writers to excel in sea-story writing. Though this chapter aims to show how much knowledge Joseph Conrad has taken – regarding the give-and-take principle – from the works of James Fenimore Cooper all along with his writing career, we believe it necessary to get a glimpse at other Western European authors who, at their turn, had not let the opportunity go by without doing the best they could to immerse in sea-story writing. Among these authors, we can, for instance, cite Rudyard Kipling's *Captain Courageous* (1897), Robert Louis Stevenson's

Treasure Island (1883), Cecil Smith Forster's *Lieutenant Hornblower* (1952), and finally Joseph Conrad.

Because of the scholarly importance binding Cooper, the American author with the above mentioned contemporaries, we would be more inclined to define this relationship in terms of intertextuality, and dialogism rather than in terms of affinities, indebtedness, influence, or whatever. And this leads us to the concept of intertextuality as posited by M. M. Bakhtin, and J. Kristeva. The recency of the relationality between texts is not that recent. A word or a text written by an individual author is actually not thoroughly subjective, it relates to other individual authors and subjectivities. That is, a subjective work is only partially conclusive, and so it needs a plurality of voices to construe a certain sense of truth or completion. The modern approaches to literary critical devices especially those relating a text to another text are rooted in the classics of the Socratic Dialogs which create a kind of completion among the members taking part in the dialog (In: Martinez Alfaro, 1996: 269).

More importantly, the signification we endeavor to reach, and therefore to convey to the reader, resides in not comprehending Conrad's appropriation/misappropriation of knowledge resulting from the mental efforts of his predecessors. That is, giving voice to the principle of give and take does not incriminate, in any way, a belated author in using this artwork. From the moment the author of the artwork has rendered this work public, he no longer has the right to dictate his exigencies on whoever acquires this work. The latter has become a by-product made at the service of consumers and/or readers: hence the very significant idea Roland Barthes developed in a famous essay in 1966. "Barthes proclaimed that the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the author (In: David Lodge, 1988: 166). Consequently, one need not enthuse in compelling other authors to acknowledge their literary affinity or indebtedness to the creator of the said-work all the more so since another American critic, William S. Burroughs

comes, and reinforces the liberty of the reader to make whatever use of the product made at his/her disposal. Burroughs maintains that,

> After all, the work of other writers is one of the writer's main sources of input, so don't hesitate to use it; just because somebody else has an idea doesn't mean you can't take that idea and develop a new twist for it. Adaptations may become quite legitimate adoptions (In: Linda Hutcheon, 2006: no page number).

Though Conrad, in his lifetime, did not get the praise, and high position in the mainstream world literature, most critics nowadays claim him as, indeed, one of the most brilliant authors literature has ever encountered. In one of his works, The Great Tradition (1948), F. R. Leavis, a famous literary critic, opens his book with a shortlist of names of authors including Jane Austen, George Eliot, Henry James, and Joseph Conrad. The reason for this choice rests, according to Leavis, on the fact that the above-mentioned authors all bear a moral seriousness when developing their narratives. As regards Conrad, Leavis says,

> He [Conrad] drew from English literature what he needed, and learnt in that particular way of genius which is so different from imitation. And for us who have him as well as the others, there he is, unquestionably a constitutive part of the tradition, belonging in the full sense (F. R. Leavis, 1950: 18).

In a nutshell, Conrad is acknowledged by all as being a great author of the complex modernity. This was made possible thanks to his intellectual curiosity which helped him acquire new knowledge not only from the life hardships he experienced in his own life but also from other scholars before him, as is the case of Cooper. What Conrad took from Cooper is discernible in his works.

The sea stories developed by Cooper, and then complemented by Conrad really constitute a direct knowledge of ships, and sailors (Wayne Franklyn, 2007) in that they comprise, and provide the readership with a register of vocabulary specific to sea stories. In skimming just a few pages from Cooper's narrative, *The Pilot*, we come across these sea-related lexicons like: schooner/hull/mast/pennant/spar/bow/steer/anchor/wreck/keel/frigate …An almost similar list of sea-related words is used in Conrad's *The Nigger of the Narcissus*: quarter

deck/poop/boatswain/forecastle/port/starboard/anchor/tow-rope/bow/wedge… Of course, these specific lexicons are to be found in other writers' works as well.

Moreover, it can be said that both Cooper and Conrad share a certain geographical consciousness -- knowledge about the world circumnavigation and its inferred socio-political symbolism. As very young men, Cooper and Conrad have sailed through the oceans to a variety of countries, and continents in the world, building in this way their panoptical vision of the different areas of knowledge. Conrad following in the scholarly footsteps of Cooper underpins an intimate closeness in the making of their narratives. Moreover, in his *Tales of the Sea,* Conrad considers J. F. Cooper as well as Frederick Marryat as the key influences upon his own maritime writing (Phair, Charles A. J. (2009: 3) .The handling of the world nature in Cooper's series of adventurous tales (*The Leather-Stocking Tales*) equates in value the nature Conrad used as a setting in his novella *Heart of Darkness*. Nature for them engages human beings in metaphysical query about their human existence. Robert Secor and Debra Moddelmog highlight Cooper's face-to-face engagement with nature in the citation below:

> Nature for Cooper was not just the framework; it was part of the essence of existence. In his sea tales, 'the sea interpenetrates with life; it is in a subtle way a factor in the problem of existence, and, for all its greatness, it is always in touch with men, who, bound on errors of war or gain, traverse its immense solitudes' (Robert Secor and Debra Moddelmog, 1985: 3).

In nearly of his works from *Heart of Darkness*, *The Nigger of the Narcissus,* to *Typhoon,* Conrad like Cooper shows the Lilliputian human being in a life-and-death struggle with the huge natural forces like storms. Nature in these works turns into some sort character, sometimes playing the role of antagonist, and at other times that of helper or support for the central character. With Cooper's accent in *Typhoon,* Conrad has his central character MacWhirr admonish his chief mate who wants to change the sea route in order to ward off a looming gale with the following words: "A gale is a gale, Mr. Jukes… and a full-powered steamship has got to face it. There's just so much dirty weather knocking about the world, and the proper thing is to

go through it with none of what old Captain Wilson of the *Melita* calls 'sea strategy"'. Honor is the one human moral value, which MacWhirr upholds by refusing to dodge the "winds of heaven." In Dodging the "winds of heaven" an element of nature offends MacWhirr's idea of the "proper thing to do." The necessity of abiding to this rather primitive moral value to face the difficulties of the world is reinforced by the sense of brotherhood that it creates. In the midst of the gale when everything seems to be lost, when the whole crew is driven into the depths of despair, Conrad comes up with the stirring image of Jukes feeling an arm that of his captain thrown over his shoulder, to which gesture he responds with "great intelligence by catching hold of his captain round the waist." There follows another stirring image by describing the two sailors holding fast against the life threatening force of the storm. We are told that the two men "clasped … in the blind night, bracing each other against the wind, cheek to cheek and lip to ear, in the manner of two hulks lashed stem to stern together."

The above description brings us back to Conrad's idea of art as human solidarity in the face of "the dirty weather of the world" propounded in the author's note to *The Nigger of the Narcissus*, another novel which with the power of the written word makes us hear, makes us feel – and before all make us see honor and human solidarity at work (the words are Conrad's). Some critics like Baines have traced Conrad's interest in depicting Man's wrestling with the elements of nature like storms as an illustration of the role of honor in human salvation to the Alfred de Vigny, the French author of *Servitude et grandeurs militaires*. I concede that though Conrad might have been influenced by de Vigny's moral vision of the world, I would add that this kind of the morality of honor as "an act of primitive faith on which may be built a doctrine of salvation and way of life "is drawn essentially from Cooper. The discussion between Jukes and MacWhirr, opposing intelligence and instinct, has many counterparts in the dialogues between characters such as Chingachgook and Natty Bumppo in Cooper's five *Leatherstocking Tales*. In short, the kinship between Cooper and Conrad shows in drawing moral lessons, just as

storytellers do, from man's struggle with elements of nature such as forests, mountains, oceans, and rivers. For them, nature is not just an inert physical setting, but a character that highlights not only human frailty, limitations and vulnerability but also human values on which we may build a doctrine of life and human salvation. Cooper's moral vision of life passed through the mediation of Conrad to authors such as Ernest Hemingway and William Faulkner.

The give-and-take principle bonding Conrad to Cooper lies not just in the field of their literary profession, but it goes very much beyond that literary horizon in that what Conrad took from Cooper constitutes an almost integral part of his world vision, and his existential philosophy. Conrad claims that Cooper has influenced not only his own life, and career, but also other scholars,' and he credits him with having shaped his life, a "surrender" which he has never regretted (Robert Secor and Debra Moddelmog, 1985: 3). A remarkable reflection Conrad has addressed concerning his enthusiasm for Cooper depicts the latter as an eminent man of letters who knows the men, and who knows the sea; even though at times his method may be faulty – a quality that is only human – his art is genuine (J. Conrad, in: Phair, Charles A. J., 2009: 3).

In a letter Conrad addressed to Edward Garnet on December 22, 1902, Conrad expressed his immense enthusiasm about Cooper's existential philosophy and decided to introduce his son, David, to Cooper to partake of the latter's existential values (J. Conrad, in: Robert Secor, 1985: 4). In this context, Conrad's, and by extension his son's readings of Cooper's tales in this order, that is, *The Last of the Mohicans*, then *The Deer Slayer*, and finally *The Prairie*, and not in another order, results in a real spiral-building of knowledge not likely to evaporate so soon (In: R. Secor, 1985: 4). The reading order of Cooper's tales by Conrad's son, David, suggests the idea of dealing with matters in the order of priority to attain more positive results. For Conrad, knowing in what order to read the tales – not in the order of appearance in the novel – leads to knowing that the efficacy of the strategy adopted cannot be impaired.

The momentous feature characterizing the relationship between Cooper and Conrad as regards the notion 'give and take' can be summarized in grossly two aspects of epistemological and ontological knowledge. The inclusion of the concepts geographical and existentialist consciousnesses in their respective works open new horizons about life, nature, and man in the elaboration of their literary narratives. Though the notion of geography, for sure, is not new for Conrad, who, as a very young man had crossed many countries from Eastern Europe (Poland) to join France, and then England, his readings informed him deeply what it means to have a geographical consciousness. Conrad's geographical curiosity was stimulated by the works he read when he was still in Poland. According to Christopher Morley, it was Cooper who was at the origin of Conrad's geographical consciousness (Robert Secor, 1985: 8) which is best rendered in *Heart of Darkness* when he recounts his boyhood dreams about distant geographical spaces:

> Now when I was a little chap I had a passion for maps. I would look for hours at South America, or Africa, or Australia and lose myself in all 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 (but they all look that) I would put my finger on it and say, when I grow up I will go there.

The quotation above takes us to what I have said above the shared interest that Cooper and Conrad had for the Frontier as a zone of contact between civilization and the wilderness. Here, I shall add that the poetics of space or geographical discourse that Cooper has bequeathed to Conrad as a gift. Geography for both functions as a theatre, a battle field, wherein man tests his mettle. In "Questions of Geography," Foucault argues that "A critique could be carried out of this devaluation of space that has prevailed for generations. … Space was treated as the dead, the fixed, the undialectical, the immobile. Time, on the contrary, was richness, fecundity, life, dialectic. (Foucalt Michel, 1980: 70)" Arguably, this does not seem to be the case for Cooper and Conrad where geographical consciousness is the most pervasive. Conrad and Cooper did not write war novels declared as such, but both of them in are interested in the contact zone of the

Frontier as a geographical zone man where their characters are shown at war with the natural elements, highlighting their courage, their cowardice, their fears, their illusions, their solidarity, in brief the whole gamut of human emotions and values.

The allusions to Cooper in Conrad's books are too many to cite all of them in this section. So I will content myself with just one case as an illustration about how civilized man can lose his bearings when confronted with the Other in the contact zone of a different human geography. Postcolonial critics of *Heart of Darkness* have noted Kurtz's backsliding to the status of native, linking this social phenomenon to colonial fears of becoming the likes of those they have come to civilize. However, so far they have overlooked the extent to which Kurtz's rallying cry to the massacre of the natives "Exterminate all the brutes" finds an echo in Cooper's Hawkeye's call to arms "Exterminate all the varlets." Hawkeye gives this exclamation in the thick of his life-and-death combat with the Hurons, an Indian tribe always on the war path against the Mohican tribe of which he was one of the survivors. I would argue that it is in allusions like the one above, the predilection that both Cooper have for the display to the full view of the human moral struggle in the contact zone of the Frontier, as well as the peculiar accent with which their stories are recounted to us that the reader comes to realize to what extent Conrad's artistic imagination has been shaped by the gift of storyteller that Cooper has handed to him. This gift conception of "artistic creativity and the artist in the modern world (Benjamin Walter1968: 91)" has its foundation in what Conrad calls "surrender," surrender to Cooper's storytelling and its major moral lessons. If as Walter Benjamin argue "storytelling is the art of repeating stories" that we have listened to with "surrender," then we have no better illustration of this claim than in Conrad's dialogic relationship with Cooper.

In "Unpacking the gift: illiquid goods and emphatic dialogue," Lee Anne Fennell argues that in "return for a gift, a donor might receive in return for a gift, affection, loyalty, respect, power, status, understanding or the knowledge that he has pleased another person. (2002: 86)" It is this

type of gift interaction that prevails in the relationship that Conrad has built with his American literary father, Cooper. In Cooper, Conrad seems to find a surrogate father after the death of his biological father. This peculiar gift interaction is exemplified in Conrad's acknowledgement that Cooper has "shaped his life and that he has no regret that he has surrendered to his influence." Such statements of gratitude included in *Joseph Conrad: Life and Letters*, we see no trace whatever of what Harold Bloom calls the "anxiety of influence." Instead I would argue that Bakhtin's category of "hidden dialogue" and Lee's description of gift exchange as emphatic dialogue as the most fit to capture the depth of the affinity or affiliation between Conrad and Cooper. Conrad's sense of affinity or affiliation with Cooper is so deep that, as stated above, Conrad came to his literary father's defense when Mark Twain in 1895 blamed Cooper for "114 literary offences."

In response to Twain acerbic criticism, Conrad makes clear in what kind of dialogic relationship he stands with Cooper by elevating him into the position of "master" and "companion." Outraged by Twain for having dirtied the memory of his literary mentor, Conrad does not hesitate to dismiss him "as a mean white himself, about the meanest that ever stole the gift of words from a nodding god. (1927: 73" The implication of Conrad's use of the metaphor of the stolen Promethean gift in his attack on Twain's outrageous behavior to his American predecessor smacks as an accusation of blaspheme and parental disloyalty to the father of American literature. Twain, unlike Conrad, does not set a value on the gift of storytelling handed down from literary fathers to literary sons in the American literary tradition. The employment of the phrase "gift of words" by Conrad definitely puts the relationship that he holds with Cooper in "the world of the gift," a world marked by the generosity of the donor in giving and the reciprocation to the giver in the form of recognition and gratitude on the part of the taker.

In his *Life and Letters*, Conrad further sheds light on why for him Cooper stands like a god in the American republic of letters. He writes that well "before the great American language was

born, Cooper wrote as well as any novelist of his time." In this statement, Conrad shows that his counter offensive against Twain's disloyalty and insult to the memory of his mentor is self-interested in the sense that he has found himself obliged to write in the same context as Cooper who was obliged to invent the American idiom to counter the domination of British authors. Cooper blazes the way for Conrad to affirm against all odds his peculiar authorship as a metic/ exile among recognized giant British authors such as Forster, Kipling, Maugham, and Wells. Like Cooper he was obliged to invent another idiom, that is to say an accented English prose that Leavis later qualifies as an "adjectival prose." In the grateful eyes of Conrad has handed him a gift of words, a medium of expression in not quite the same way as his British contemporary authors to affirm his literary talent. In his introduction to *The Portable Conrad*, Michael Gorra (2005: XI) finds himself in the same dilemma as other critics as to why Conrad chose to write in English instead of French of which he has a better command. Gorra contented himself by citing from Conrad's letter to Ford Madox Ford where he claims that "no English word has clean edges" and that French is too perfectly "crystallized." The full meaning of this statement is that British literature, contrary to the French, is as yet to be refined. It gives ample opportunity (just as it did for Cooper earlier) for a Polish metic like him to polish its language.

To close this rapprochement between Cooper and Conrad, I would refer to two examples illustrating perfectly the extent to which the former has subtly shaped the latter's imagination and how the language of the literary father comes naturally to the literary son (Conrad). In Conrad's *Chance* (1921) puts the following words in one of the character's mouth:

> You are the expert in the psychological wilderness. This is like one of those Redskin stories when the noble savages carry off a girl and the honest backwoodsman with his incomparable knowledge follows the track and reads the signs of her fate in a footprint, here a broken twig, there a trinket dropped by the way. I have always liked such stories. (Conrad,1921: 311)

The reference in the citation above is to Cooper's *The Last Mohican*. This shows how far Conrad can go in repeating Cooper's stories and reciprocating his "gift of [accented] words."

This reciprocation is also found in other works like the *Outpost of Progress* where his central characters Carlier and Kayerts are compared to Hawkeye one of the aliases of Natty Bumppo in Cooper's *Leatherstocking Tales*.

Nathaniel Hawthorne and Melville as Donors of Different Gifts to Conrad

Cooper is not the sole early American author to be Conrad as a source of intertextuality. Hawthorne is arguably the next in the list of early American fellow predecessors to have impacted Conrad's world vision. The "gift of word" that is received from this American romancer can be detected in allusion in his fiction. For example, the trial scene in Hawthorne's *Scarlet Letter* finds an echo in Conrad's trial of the eponymous character Lord Jim. Marlow's gothic description of the latter's trial for having abandoned a ship in distress in the midst of the ocean alludes explicitly to Hawthorne's *Scarlet Letter*: There was no high scaffolding, no scarlet cloth (Did they have scarlet cloth on Tower Hill, they should have had), no awestricken multitude to be horrified as his guilt and be moved to tears at his fate – no air of somber retribution. (Conrad Joseph, 1968: 96). The context of public shaming and punishment of Hester Prynne for adultery or sin of fornication with Arthur Dimmesdale, a young and eloquent minister, is strikingly different from the one that Marlow describes, though the guilt of having let down pilgrim passengers in distress is as acute as the one the one Hester Prynne's betrayal of her husband, Roger Chillingsworth experiences. However, what is interesting to note in the quotation above is the similarity in the way Hawthorne's narrator recounts his story, and how Marlow repeats it by emphasizing the difference of contexts and that of the actors.

It has to be observed that the nameless character of Hawthorne's romance is said to have worked as a surveyor of the customs house of Salem, Massachusetts, before he turned to teller of tales. Exploring his attic, he finds out, among other documents, a manuscript wrapped up in scarlet cloth with a gold embroidered patch inscribed with the letter "A." The manuscript is left

packed up there by previous surveyors and recounts a true-to-life romance of a fallen woman that happened in Salem two hundred years before the surveyor has landed his job in that customs house. It is this unexpected gift that Hawthorne's narrator decides to fictionalize in the form of a romance when his job as a surveyor is terminated. It is to this narrator's contextualizing of the story of adultery, betrayal, guilt, and redemption with a focus on Hester Pryne and Dimmesdale that Marlow evokes in his reference to his missing of the "scarlet cloth" or the original story to repeat. Contrary to Hawthorne's narrator-surveyor, Marlow finds nothing in Tower Hill, and so needs to repeat Hawthorne's story by borrowing Hawthorne's "gift of words," as well as his patterning of Lord Jim on Dimmesdale, his narrator, and his rhetorical gothic style, the narrator's point of view, and themes such as betrayal, guilt, and redemption.

Hawthorne's Dimmesdale has his counterpart in Lord Jim. For a whole period of seven years, Dimmesdale is tormented by the guilt of having been the secret lover of Hester Pryne whose husband, Roger Chillingworth, is reportedly said to be lost in the crossing of the Atlantic. Dimmesdale's secret love results in the birth of a baby girl Pearl. Roger Chilligworth reappears in disguise to torment the sinner and make him avow his sin. Hester Prynne acts as a foil to Dimmesdale by displaying her shame while keeping the name of Dimmesdale a guarded secret up to the end. Lord Jim finds himself in nearly the same situation. Young Jim is a young man who is so infatuated with the heroism recounted in sea novels (Conrad mentions Cooper in this regard.) that he resolves to live up to the heroic ideal by making seafaring a way of life. His ideal founders when at the decisive moment of the capsizing ship, the Patna, carrying Muslim pilgrims to Mecca, he cowardly deserts the ship leaving his passengers to drown. This desertion creates in him a guilt and shame that he tries to exorcise and hide by a self-exile from the sea to a distant Island (Patusan) in the Far East working first as a water clerk. Jim, the parson son, is bestowed the title of Lord for having chosen to fight on the winning side of two tribes in conflict. Dimmesdale and Jim are thus invested with a smell of holiness, the former being a Reverend and

the other a Lord. Their position of holy prestige gives them the authority to sit on judgment on others, while behind the pretence they are tortured by guilt. The whole issue in both works is, therefore, the difficulty to bring one's ideals, honor, and decency into line with the social code of conduct in the face of reality. The emphasis falls on the inner life of the characters and the intense probing of it, all through the two works.

In telling his story Conrad gives us another glimpse into the importance of gift exchange in creating social bonds. Jim, in Patusan, is re-born into the conditions of heroic existence after having considered committing suicide. In helping to secure the Patusan from the greed of adventurers and traders in pepper, Marlow tells us that Jim makes "a conquest of love, honor, [and] men's confidence. (Conrad Joseph,1983:226)." But this "great achievement" against an economic system based on greed, as Marlow calls it, is made possible through gift exchange. Jim would not have been accepted in the Patusan if this system of gift exchange has not been put into operation. In the course of the narrative, we are told that Jim is given a ring by Schomberg Stein, a former trader with the Patusan, as a talismanic token and Doramin's pistols, the present that this chief of the Patusan has received from Stein in exchange for the ring. Jim's return of the ring, the gift, to the Patusan chief Doramin, repeats Stein's friendship that allows Jim to be temporarily integrated in his host community where he is elevated to the position of Lord. This gift exchange and its role for weaving social bonds, as Jim says, is "like something you read in books. " Conrad 1983: 233-234)" Indeed, this is the case in Hawthorne's *Scarlet Letter* where Pearl, born out of wedlock in complete disregard of the patriarchal economic system, turns into the sole gift of life, the result of an act of disinterested love and triumph over the death drive of a whole community.

At this stage, we might ask the question of why Conrad felt a sense of kinship or friendship with Hawthorne. What kind of similarity of contexts that might have made them write in a similar way about similar themes? For a long time, Hawthorne was considered as a romancer

whose interest was centered on Puritan material, and that as a stay-at-home author, his creative imagination is essentially local. Recent literary scholarship such as the one carried out by Luther S. Luedtke has contested the literary Puritanism and Europeanism attached to Hawthorne, referring both to Hawthorne's life and times, and his romances, particularly *The Scarlet Letter* to support the argument that his gift of imagination has also much broad scope. What is interesting to note in Luedtke's reevaluation of Hawthorne are his emphasis on Hawthorne's father's maritime voyages to the Orient (China) as a sea captain, his contact with other sailors to the Orient in the docks of Salem, the huge number of allusions to *The Arabian Nights* in *The Scarlet Letter* and other romances, as well as his reading of the annals of Massachusetts maritime history as a customs officer, and his acquaintance with the Far Orient through the huge number books published during what is called the Oriental Renaissance period. All these details are fed in the argument that Hawthorne lived and worked among seafarers, and that it is against the background of this often forgotten legacy that Hawthorne has also to be read. Obviously, the Hawthorne to which Conrad was drawn was no less a traveler to the Eastern world than he, and that as fellow travelers notwithstanding the differences of the means of transportation, Conrad might have fully realized the deep affinity or affiliation he has with his early American predecessor.

In his *Fantasy as Morality: Conrad's Heart of Darkness and Hawthorne's The Scarlet Letter* (1850), T.A Apter emphasizes the literary connections or affinities bonding Conrad to Hawthorne. Apter argues that both authors are fantasists in that they use fantasy to explore, not to escape reality (Cited in Robert Secor, 1985: 12). The introduction of such a subtle term as fantasy in this context prefigures the nexus between the field of psychoanalysis, and that of literature. "Fantasy," Apter claims, [is| itself depends on a 'peculiar, unexpected mingling of internal and external reality' (ibid: 12). One of the implications of Apter's citations is that Hawthorne is a kind of Freud before time who acted as a mentor as far as the exploration the

inward life is concerned. I would not contend with such an implication. However, I would also that if Conrad is interested in that peculiar realism characteristic of fantasy and romance in Hawthorne's work, it is also because both authors' creative imagination are steeped in the literature woven about the Western world, most notably *The Arabian Nights*. The latter work par excellence the source book that theorized the concept intertextuality in the way it repeats and embeds different tales from different origins. Quite aside from the fantasy with which it recounts the breaking of law, it is also the book whose main hero Sindbad is the archetypal sailor and the cross-over or cross-cultural character. Luedtke has already explored the extent to which Hawthorne has patterned his romances on *The Arabian Nights*, I would argue here that time has come for critics to see how far Conrad has followed the lead of Hawthorne in borrowing the oriental type of fantasy that characterizes *The Arabian Nights*. As the occidental Sindbad, Conrad could not have overlooked to draw heavily on that book to elaborate that peculiar realism which is the distinctive of all his romances.

In his public pronouncements about his relationships with Hawthorne Conrad is at best contradictory. For example, James Huneker in an account of an interview with Conrad, the latter described himself as an "admirer of Poe, Hawthorne, Walt Whitman, and Henry James, among others. (Cited in Segor, 13)." However, on an occasion reported by Lenormad H.R., Conrad turns out to be "severe towards Bret Hart, O'Henry, Frank T. Bullen, and even Hawthorne [while speaking] of the French writers with filial affection. (Ibid)" What can we make of such contradictions about Conrad's attitude to American authors? The first response is to accuse Conrad of bad faith since he seems to put all American writers in the same bag, though we know that the so-called filial affection that he shows to French writers is not as intense as the one he expresses for Cooper, as a representative American author. I would say that the best way to solve this contradiction in Conrad's public announcement about his literary preferences is to return to his books. D.H. Lawrence's claim "never to trust the teller but the tale" is crucial for the

assessment of the kinship between Conrad and Hawthorne. And the least that can be said is that Conrad's tales tell another story about their literary connections.

In addition, the give-and-take principle is not solely restricted to literary and philosophical themes; it also concerns their personification of geographical, sites and their distinctive stylization. The subtle way in which Hawthorne has tackled the mysteriousness of the forest as a setting that constantly interferes with human life in one of his tales titled *Young Goodman Brown* (which appeared in an 1846 collection of tales and sketches, *Mosses from the Old Manse*) has undoubtedly inspired Conrad in tackling – at his turn – the dreadful appearances of the forest endlessly haunting his characters in his novella, *Heart of Darkness.* One of the scenes which symbolizes this unfriendly nature – character interaction – describes the crew on board their boat clattering and jigging, interrupting thus the stillness of nature. Marlow recounts that:

> A frightful clatter came out of that hulk, and the virgin forest on the other bank of the creek sent it back in a thundering roll upon the sleeping station /…/ we stopped and the silence driven away by the stamping of our feet, flowed back from the recesses of the land. The great wall of vegetation, an exuberant and entangled mass of trees branches, leaves, boughs, festoons, motionless in the moonlight, was like a rioting invasion of soundless life, a rolling wave of plants, piled up, crested ready to topple over the creek to sweep every little man of us out of his little existence (Joseph Conrad, 2013: 53, 54).

Quite aside from using nature or the wilderness as both setting and character, the very title of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* seems to come directly from Hawthorne's *Young Good Man Brown* , which speaks about the "heart of the dark wilderness." In his book, Nathaniel Hawthorne: The Poetics of Wilderness, digresses writes that 'Young Goodman enters the "heart of the dark wilderness,' and like Marlow, never again is able to see the human world in the same way. (Dryden Edgar, 1977: 40)" Indeed, the experiences of Marlow and Goodman brown are transformative, but Dryden does not explore is the way the notion of evil is probed and how faith in human ideals in both stories is shaken the moment social restraints are removed. If Marlow's story is repeated to us by the frame narrator, who seems to have taken it from Hawthorne is to

counsel us that storytelling about evil in the human heart can be restrained only when the social bonds of the community to which we belong are not cut. The gift of storytelling in this case, is in the words of Annette B. Weiner (1992), an "inalienable possession" that forestalls the encroachment of evil on human by the very social bonds it creates. To Hawthorne's conception of art as a gift fostering the ethos of "the brotherhood of man," Conrad responds with a conception of art as a gift bestowed on man to cement "human solidarity" in the face of the overwhelming "power of evil in this world."

Hawthorne's exploration of the "deeper psychology" of the human species whose lessons Conrad seems to have made his own is found not only in *Young Goodman Brown*. For instance, the psychological exploration of paternity in Hawthorne's "Rappaccin's Daughter" is echoed in Conrad's *Almayer's Folly*; Hawthorne's *Blithedale Romance* can be brought together with Conrad's *Victory* in their treatment of the complexity of human existence that does not brook isolation as a way of altering social surroundings and the necessity to affirm one's commitment to social life notwithstanding the horrors, the failures, and tragedies that can attend it. This moral vision of human commitment in both works is simply the mark of human dignity. All in all, apart from a similarity in themes in individual works, I would contend that Conrad and Hawthorne are "Secret Sharers" (Conrad's title for a short story of his) of an aesthetics, a gift of storytelling, which in the words of Mary Rohberger, "desire to discover the truth not to be found in outward events and to use the symbol to get at this truth. (Rohrberger Mary, 1966: 9)"

Conrad's phrase, "secret sharers" can also be employed to describe the hidden dialogue between Conrad and Herman Melville. On the whole, the literature review of the comparative studies centered on the two authors falls into two major categories: influence and literary affinities. The first category of literary scholars emphasizes the disparaging remarks that Conrad often addresses when his American predecessor's name is associated with his or just pronounced in front of him. For example, Epstein underlines Conrad's outrage when his interest in and depth

of knowledge of sea life are put on an equal footing with those of Melville. Epstein reports that this presumptuous comparison was countered with a "furious denunciation of it." For Conrad, Melville "knows nothing of the sea," and that his idea of the sea is just "fantastic, ridiculous." Epstein who knows Conrad's dislike for mysticism which he associates with Russian literature for political reasons tries to mitigate Conrad's negative attitude to Melville by referring to the mystical dimension that might be at the origin of the repulsion that he feels for Melville's works. Epstein attempt at mitigation or reservation is a blasting rejoinder by Conrad: "My old boots are mystical. (Epstein Jacob, 1963: 76)" For Conrad, to accept this difference in philosophical outlook is to admit to a fundamental spiritual similarity as regards other philosophical and ethical matters and to being written off as a sea writer. It has to be noted that at the time Conrad started writing his books, Melville can be said to be a forgotten author.

Conrad's refusal to acknowledge publically Melville's influence or at least his affinity with him is not just verbal. In one of Conrad's letters to Humphrey Milford included in Hershel Parker and Harrison Hayford's edited book of essays *Moby Dick as Doubloon: Essays and Extracts, 1851-1970* (1970: 122-23), Conrad writes about his refusal to honor the request of an introduction to the Oxford Edition of Moby Dick. The major reason why he has turned down that request is there is nothing for him to be tapped from Melville's books: "Years ago I looked into Typee and *Omoo*, but as I didn't find there what I was looking for when open a book I did go no further. Lately I had in my hand *Moby Dick*. It struck me as a rather strained rhapsody with whaling for a subject and not a single line in the 3 vols. of it. (Ibid.)" The word rhapsody is worth underlining, for it adds another reason for not being associated with an excavated author whose forgotten sea romance might cause harm his reputation. This reason is the naïve primitivism of Melville and his Christian or Puritan fervor reduced to old stories which by the secular spirit and the anthropological findings of the late nineteenth century.

Notwithstanding Conrad's disavowal of Conrad, a huge number of critics have indulged themselves in comparing him sometimes favorably and unfavorably with his American predecessor. These comparisons are interested in literary affinities between the two authors. For example, Edgar Dryden (1974) develops the theme of evil and madness in the confrontation of Melville's and Conrad's central characters Ahab and Kurtz with "whiteness" in *Moby Dick* and "darkness" in *Heart of Darkness*. The literary affinity underlined by Dryden is to the point. However, he overlooks to underline that the theme of evil and madness in both stories resides in the transformation of the hunting of big game, the elephant for its ivory, and the white whale for sperm, into a frantic quest wherein objects turn out into fetishes. The "color of objects" to which Dryden refers as a major difference between Conrad's and Melville's does not matter as much as their transformation into objects of worship.

William Dillingham (1972) has also highlighted the thematic kinship between Conrad and the early work of Melville. For example, Lem Hardy, the Renegado to Christianity and humanity, in Melville's *Omoo* is suggested as being at the basis of Conrad's characterization of Kurtz in *Heart of Darkness*. In the comparison of these two stories, Dillingham also underlines the similarity in their attitude to work as the one way to man's happiness, dignity, and self-revelation. Similarities and differences between Conrad and Melville are discussed in a huge number of other affinity studies, centered on the symbolic inclusion of the black man in Conrad's *The Nigger of the Narcissus* and *Heart of Darkness*, and Melville's *Benito Cereno*; the elements of humor and the dream, and primitivism as well as the philosophical ideas of Schopenhauer on their works. The number of literary affinity studies are such that we are given the impression that most of the critics have start their studies with the assumption that Conrad has indeed used Melville as an intertextual sources and that the numerous affinities between their works betray Melville's shaping influence.

In this research, I would argue that Conrad's public disavowal of Melville as a donor of an intertextual gift sounds as overt polemics (the phrase is Bakhtin's). The overt polemics technique is deployed by Conrad as a smoke screen to hide his huge indebtedness to Melville in the elaboration in the art of storytelling. It is very easy in this particular case to appeal to the psychopoetic theory of influence of the type developed by Bloom to argue that the overt polemics that Conrad has raised in relation to Melville is symptomatic of the anxiety of influence or authorship that a belated author (Conrad as a literary son) feels when he is spoken to by a dead author or literary father (Melville). I have already enumerated some of the reasons that might have pushed Conrad to react negatively to the association of his name with that of Melville. Here, I will have to add that Melville and Conrad as sailors before the mast, for several years, before turning into authors to recount their experiences are interested in the same geographical territory, the South Seas. The originality of Conrad in relation to British authors of sea adventures such as Louis Stevenson and Rudyard Kipling resides in the stretching the geographical limits of his literary interest beyond British India and the Indian sea already occupied by Kipling, or the West Indies the territory of Stevenson, to the South Seas. It happens that Melville preceded him in the use of this yet unexplored geographical territory of the South as a setting for his works. And naturally, Conrad might have thought this precedence could undermine his competitive edge with the contemporary British authors mentioned above.

To use the terms peculiar to the gift theory of literature, I would say that what Conrad and Melville share in terms of experience as sailors in the same Eastern world belong to what George Bataille (1993; 1991) calls the "accursed share." This notion of the accursed share relates closely to the gift as potlatch, which in the economy of gift exchange involves the conspicuous consumption of commodities including sacrificial victims to establish prestige in one's community. In his polemical disavowal of Melville, Conrad speaks of the impossibility of textual gift exchange, but the tone of the polemics, the huge number of affinities that we can easily elicit

from a comparison of his works with those of his American predecessor tell the dark story of gift exchange, that of the potlatch. To quote Derrida in this context of intextual relationship between Conrad and Melville, we would say that the figure of the circle peculiar to gift exchange "precipitates both time and the gift toward the possibility of their impossibility. (1994: 6)" As regards storytelling as a performative gift exchange, the following quote from Melville's Preface to *Typee* speaks to the extent to which Conrad's conception of story telling is indeed a gift from Melville:

> Sailors are the only class of men who nowadays see anything like stirring adventure; and many things which to fire-side people appear strange and romantic, to them seem as commonplace as a jacket out at elbows. Yet, notwithstanding the familiarity of sailors with all sorts of adventure, the incidents recorded in the following pages have often served, when "spun as a yarn," not only to relieve the weariness of many a night-watch at sea, but to excite the warmest sympathy of the author's shipmates. (Melville Herman, 1982: 9)

Melville's conception of the gift of storytelling and its major function as a constitutive element of human fraternity is repeated in nearly the same words by Conrad in his reference to the close connection of storytelling with human solidarity in all types of human situations, and his mouth piece the frame narrator and Marlow act on this conviction in *Heart of Darkness*.

To borrow the words of Walter Benjamin in another context, Melville, Conrad and their character narrators, as "storytellers tend to be begin their story with the presentation of the circumstances in which they themselves have heard what is to follow, unless they simply pass it off as their own experience." Benjamin Walter, 1968: 92)" Conrad and Melville are often described as nostalgic romancers. I would contend that if they are indeed nostalgic, their restorative energies are directed toward regaining that "web in which the gift of storytelling is cradled," the web spun among the community of sailors in listening and repeating yarns. Conrad is particularly sensitive to this nostalgia for the old ways of sailing displaced by modern ships that no longer test human endurance or elicit the values he cherishes the most such as fear,

courage, dignity, and above human solidarity in confronting or facing up to the lived reality of human existence without any sort of moralizing.

Life experience, Benjamin tells us, constitutes the foundation of storytelling, and one reason for the decline of the importance of storytelling is, always in Benjamin's words, due to the fact that "experience has fallen in value" as a result of the age of information and mechanical reproduction best represented the written press. Benjamin adds that "peasants and seaman were masters of storytelling, the artisan class was its university. In it was combined the lore of faraway places, such as a much-traveled man brings home, with the lore of the past, as it best reveals itself to natives of a place. (Benjamin Walter, 1968: 85)" Both Melville and Conrad make it clear through their narrators that they have been at the university of the artisan class of sailors, and what they desperately, much more so for Conrad than Melville, try to recount is not information but experiences lived or passed on from mouth to mouth. I would argue that if Conrad has faulted Melville for his "rhapsody about whaling," it is because his disavowed mentor has in his eyes indulged himself too much in giving information, betraying in this way the spirit of the gift of storytelling. The gift of storytelling that Melville passed to Conrad is thus not a "pure gift".

To develop further the point above, I would refer to the two nostalgic romances by Melville and Conrad that critics have compared the most: *Moby Dick* and *Heart of Darkness*. Indeed, these two stories bear comparison at both formal and thematic levels. Ahab is the counterpart of Kurtz. Both are obsessed by big game and their produce, whales and sperm oil for the former and elephants and ivory for the latter. Both work for companies who disguise their material quests as philanthropic ventures. These philanthropic quests are so perverted by greed that their representative agents inevitably became in the process agents of evil. What Melville and Conrad describe to us is an economic system of exchange so marked by the hegemony of commodity and material calculation that human beings across the racial board are turned into sacrificial fuel

for that dark, primitive side of gift exchange that cultural anthropologists such as Georges Bataille call the potlatch. This potlatch view of the world wherein commodities are held supreme and where "principles," as Marlow in *Heart of Darkness* says, are like straw in a blaze" is redeemed by the Melville's and Conrad's narrators, Ishmael and Marlow, who give us a glimpse into the other side of the gift of human life marked by friendship, compassion, and fraternity.

The literary affinities between Melville and Conrad such as the ones highlighted above can be found in nearly all their works. However, as claimed above, Conrad does not consider that the gift of storytelling Melville has handed him to be a pure gift. To understand how Conrad has reciprocated and returned this gift, I would contend that we have certainly to probe into thematic and technical differences, just as for example, the representation of the black man in Melville's portrayal of Queequeg as the noble savage in *Moby Dick* and Conrad's disparaging image of Africa and the African in *Heart of Darkness*. Such differences are arguably due to the evolution in human sciences and socio-political contexts between the two writers. And yet, to stick to our point in this research, that gift exchange between Melville and Conrad, I would sustain that the one major reciprocation that the latter makes to the former is a slender, user friendly version of Melville's *Moby Dick*. Conrad slims down the mammoth *Moby Dick* and wraps up *Heart of Darkness* as a returned gift by depriving it of information about that biggest mammal called the elephant or the whale. In saying this, I keep in mind what Benjamin has said about the incompatibility of the profusion of information with the art of storytelling. It is this subtle form of refinement of Melville's gift of storytelling to counter the inflation of information that Conrad considers as fatal to storytelling that has made us describe the hidden dialogue between the two authors as a dialogue between "secret sharers."

Conrad's Spiritual Kinship with Edgar Alan Poe

If Conrad's literary relationship with Herman Melville is of the order of the secret, his relationship with another early nineteenth-century author, Edgar Allan Poe, is that of avowed complicity. This complicity seems as deep as the one that he has developed with Cooper. A few more words of gift exchange in literature are in order here to advance further my argument about the dialogic relationship of Conrad with Poe. Gift exchange in literary activity, as Antony Fothergill, is exemplified in the performance of a narration, the passing on not of an object but of a story, a gift of words, which creates a certain sort of imaginative exchange between the teller of tales and the listeners on the one hand, and the repetition of the same tale by those who have listened to it and retained in their memory to another audience no less attentive to the council that storytelling conveys. I have already highlighted the extent to which Conrad reproduces this circularity of the gift of words between donors and receivers in *Heart of Darkness* and other works like *Karain*. I have to observe that Edward Said has written insightfully about the attitude of storyteller that Conrad adopts in his fictions marked as he says by the "presentation of narrative" about "remarkable characters" to an imagined community of listeners. However, Said does not refer to the circular chain of transmission that makes the performance of stories into a system of gift exchange. The frame narrator in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, for example, is among the four attentive listeners to Marlow's story of his experience and encounter with Kurtz in the Belgian Conrad. As a listener who has committed Marlow's story to his memory, the frame narrator in accordance with one of the imperative of circularity or movement in gift exchange passes on that gift of words to us, and thus becomes in his turn a story teller. As Mauss has it written so well, a spiritual "power is present that forces gifts [including aesthetic objects] to be passed around, to be given, and returned. (2007: 55)" In addition to the inherent power of the gift, there are values such as honor, credit, solidarity, friendship, and the need for communication that force people to pass around the gift.

If the theory of the gift and its principles are recalled here, it is in order to point the kinship that exists between Poe and Conrad as tellers of tales. This kinship between the two tellers of tales (both Conrad and Poe use this phrase.) is publically avowed by Conrad. The best sign of it is his intervention on behalf of Poe in the critical appreciation of Poe's work among late nineteenth century critical circles. In a letter to Warrington Dawson dated June 20, 1913, Conrad expression his indignation at the dismissal of all types of novelty in art as cases of morbidity and unhealthy by what he calls the Philistines. The best "illustration of the moral attitude of the Philistines," shows itself in Rufus Griswold in his memoir of Poe. For him, the latter's work is "an atrocious life […] written by a man professing himself to be his [Poe] friend. (Qt in Secor Robert and Moddelmog, 1985:37)" The use of the word "Philistine" to dismiss the attitude of critics rejecting Poe's innovative art of narrating stories under the pretext of abnormality stories echoes Mathew Arnold's distinction in *Culture and Anarchy* between the two spirits animating late cultural and socio-economic life in nineteenth century Britain. The two spirits are called respectively the Hebraic and the Hellenic. The Hebraic spirit is attached to crass materialism and philistinism in aesthetic matters while the Hellenic is association with culture defined as the best that is thought and written. Clearly, in denouncing the philistine attitude of critics toward cultural and artistic creativity, Conrad places Poe and implicitly himself on the side of culture against the barbarians and their anarchism. At the same time, he shows how Griswold's relationship with Poe is purely of the "utilitarian type" contrasted with the "friendship of virtue" that he holds with Poe. Much more will be said about the Aristotelian distinction between types of virtue and their relation to the gift in the next chapter of this research. It is enough to underline here that while Conrad reciprocates to the gift of words given to him by Poe, his utilitarian friend sells him out to the prevalent philistine public opinion of the late Victorian period.

Many critics have already pointed out that in no single book of his does Conrad miss the opportunity to add an author's preface. These prefaces very often account for the circumstances

that have enabled the telling of the stories, the innovative theories of storytelling that underline them, as well as the effect that his stories are meant to have on the readership. I would maintain that in his concern for elaborating a new theory of creative art in line with storytelling, a gift that he learned through his experience among artisans/sailors, Conrad prefigures the twentieth-century modernist call, such as the one Ezra Pound launched in inviting all the artists to "make it new." And the best predecessor that Conrad has heard making the same call is Poe. There is no space to dwell on Poe's theory of the art of storytelling. Very briefly, the major function of a story is to create what he calls a "unity of effect" through focus on a single incident and one remarkable central character. Plot, theme, and characterization are to be arranged with such a "scientific" precision as to achieve the unity of effect that is the one ultimate object of all storytelling. Poe's theory of storytelling finds an echo in Conrad's exposé of his theory of creative art in the preface of *The Nigger of the Narcissus*, where he says his major task as an artist is by the "power of the written word, to make you hear, to make you feel – it is, before all to make you see. (2007: 49)" True to his theory, Conrad has very often made his narrator ask the listeners, as is the case in *Heart of Darkness*, whether they can hear, feel and see the grim experiences he is recounting.

To say that Conrad's theory of the creative art as a gift repeats Poe's is not to diminish Conrad as a derivative artist. Arguably, Conrad repeats Poe's theory with a major difference, particularly as regards the distinction between the scientist and the artist. D.H. Lawrence (1977: 70) writes that "Poe is rather a scientist rather than artist." I would say that Conrad has overcome this confusion of genres. Conrad, unlike Poe, makes a short case of the scientific logic of cause and effect in achieving the unity of effect that he looks for in telling his stories. Moreover, he differentiates between the functions of the artist and the scientist or thinker as regards the quest for truth. For Conrad, "confronted by the same enigmatical spectacle, the artist [unlike the scientist] descends within himself, and in that lonely region of stress and strife, if he be

deserving and fortunate, he finds the terms of his appeal." He goes to write that the artist always by contrast with the thinker, "appeals to that part of our being which is not dependent on wisdom: to that which is a gift and not an acquisition – and therefore, more permanently enduring. (2007: 48)"

Conrad's interest in the inwardness, the uncanny in human life as the one site to explore and excavate the truth or truths of human existence is often cited in parallel with Poe's concern with the abnormal, the monstrous, the morbid, the double, and the haunting terrors and mysteries attached to them. Conrad's indignation at critics' objection to Poe's stories on this ground indicates the extent to which he is hurt by the critics of his time who saw in his interest in the same phenomena symptoms of a deranged mind. The shaky health of the two artists is certainly at the origin of the parallels that critics are too quick to draw between their respective works. Indeed, there are thematic and formal similarities between Conrad and Poe but to account for me on the basis of shared health conditions stretches the truth of the comparison. We would contend that if Conrad repeats Poe's stories, he repeats them with a significant difference as far as what is called abnormality is concerned. It is enough again to refer to his prefaces to realize the care he takes to observe that his characters, including the most eccentric not to say the most morbid," are inspired by persons he had met even fleetingly, and not pure figments of a morbid imagination.

In his preface to *Lord Jim*, Conrad has these bitter and harsh words toward those who tax him as a morbid author. He recounts in an anecdotal form that "a friend of mine returning from Italy had talked with a lady there who did not like the book." Conrad, tells us, that he "regretted that of course, but what surprised me was the ground of her dislike. 'The book,' you now she said, 'it is all so morbid." In the first place, Conrad shows himself ready to excuse the lady's critical response by allowing for a discrepancy between the subject of his book and women's normal sensibilities. In this context, we remember that in *Heart of Darkness* the gruesome story of what is really taking place in the Congo is kept out of view of women because of their sensibility.

Marlow goes to the extent of telling a lie to Kurtz's Intended to protect her from the traumatic effect that his death in the mudded waters of the Congo might have had on her. In the preface to *Lord Jim*, Conrad has no such qualms to tell the truth to the lady. He qualifies the concession made to her saying that the lady reader "could not have been an Italian." He continues in the same line of thought that disqualifies her as a critic of his book:

> I wonder whether she was European at all? In any case, no Latin temperament would have perceived anything morbid in the acute consciousness of lost honour. Such a consciousness may be wrong, or it may be right, or it may be condemned as artificial. But I can safely assure my readers that he is not the product of coldly perverted thinking. He's [Lord Jim] not a figure of Northern Mists either. … (Conrad, 1983: 8)

To dismiss further the idea of morbidity attached to him, Conrad explains the extent to which the characterization of Jim is inspired by the chance encounter of his type. "One sunny morning in the commonplace surroundings of an Eastern roadstead, I saw him pass his form pass by, - appealing – significant- under a cloud - perfectly silent." Lord Jim is thus far from being the figment of a morbid imagination of the type of Poe, but the product of the author's observation of the evanescent human life to which the author is committed. "I was for me," he writes to clinch the argument, "with all the sympathy of which I was capable, to seek fit words for his meaning. He was 'one of us. (Ibid. p.8)'''

As suggested above, Conrad is so obsessed with the association of his name with the abnormal that he keeps reminding the readers of his books that his characters are not inventions of a romantic, gothic disease, but character types inspired from real life. Even in his fictions, he desperately tries to link his characters to real-life experience, and shows that the most eccentric of them is "one of us" notwithstanding his breaking of the social norms of behavior. It is in this trait of his characters that Conrad shows a whole world of difference with Poe, who most of the time in his tales, portray Gothic characters so totally divorced from the human realm in order to reach to reach the desired effect, what he calls the "heightening" of emotional life. Conrad's

shows an appreciation of Poe's style of storytelling, and like him, seeks to "heighten" life by looking at the disturbingly horrible aspects of the human heart. However, unlike Poe he does not "try alcohol, and any drug that he could lay his hand (Lawrence, D.H., 1977:73 " to achieve his description of the introspection of life. Conrad's typical characters may be as morbid and as abnormal as those of Poe, but they arise, as Georg Lukacs would have said it, out of typical social situations that Conrad has observed.

To highlight further the similarities and differences between Conrad's and Poe's stories, I would refer to *Heart of Darkness* and "The Fall of the House of Usher." Storytelling, as Walter Benjamin puts it, is an art of repetition of stories that we have listened to/read. This principle of repetition is clearly observable in Conrad's and Poe's works. Both works are based on the narrators' travel to geographically, and I would also say temporally, distant places and the report of the gruesome experiences that they have had in their contact with gothic settings and the characters/friends to whose calls they have responded. The character-narrator in Poe's story is left unnamed whereas that of Conrad is named to us as Charlie Marlow. The friends looked for are Kurtz and Roderick Usher, each of them described as being remarkable in his own way but also diseased or eaten out by a forbidden passion. Poe strikes out this note right at the beginning by an epigraph from Béranger which says "Son coeur est un luth suspendu;/ Sitôt qu'on le touche il résonne." Conrad, through his narrator/character, progressively makes us feel that Kurtz suffers from the same oversensitivity. The tarn with the reflection of the trees and the mysterious and haunted house of the ushers in its dark waters is analogous to the Congo River and the mysterious wilderness that encroaches upon it. The nerves of Roderick Usher and those of Kurtz are so strung that they vibrate to the mysterious quivering of their environment. At the most heightened or climatic moment in the two stories, our travel-narrators relate to us the horror of how their diseased friends flounder in turbulent dark waters.

There are many more similarities between "The Fall of the House of Usher" and *Heart of Darkness*, but those listed above are enough to highlight Poe's and Conrad's literary affinities, the shared gift of storytelling as an art of repetition. And yet, this repetition is not made without that difference that makes Conrad's "gift of words" special to the ears of the listener and the eyes of the reader. Isidor Okpewho has fully documented how the art of storytelling is impacted by the temperament of the storyteller as well as the negotiation that the latter makes with his audience. Contrary to Poe's character-narrator, Conrad's storyteller, or narrator-character Marlow is kept in check by the listeners, who in at least two points in his narration is put straight in his place. Quite aside from this difference in the control of imagination, Conrad's story is doubly based on concrete, historical experience. Marlow's journey to the Belgian Congo and his traumatic experience is a fictionalization of Conrad's similar experience there. Marlow's quest for Kurtz is also a fictionalization of the famous encounter of the young American reporter Henry Morton Stanley with the missing missionary Dr. David Livingston in the wilds of Africa in 1871. Even Marlow's concern to hear the voice of Kurtz echoes Stanley's obsessive resolution to continue to chase for Livingston in order bring back what Dr. Livingston has to say." The historical figures behind Marlow shows to what extent Conrad's imagination, by contrast with Poe's, is deeply anchored in real-life experience.

Conclusion

As a final synthesized note, I would say that Heart of Darkness, through the evocation of Stanley the American reporter's words through Marlow, is the most American book of Conrad's. In the above discussion, I have tried to specify as much as possible what determined the passing on of the gift of words from the early American authors to Conrad, focusing on individual cases such as Cooper, Hawthorne, Melville, and Poe. At this point, I would generalize by saying that Conrad and these writers share similar cultural conditions that made interested in similar themes

and in performing their stories in a similarly accentuated style. The majority of early American storytellers complained about the lack of homegrown literary material and experience to be fed to their works. The nation was simply as yet too young to have that experience and so its storytellers were forcefully driven to explore other themes than the social manners peculiar to the British novel. These American themes are already detailed by literary scholars such as Leslie Fielder, and include among other things, the introspection of the self, the moral vision of the war of existence, the frontier and the sea as character settings, moral isolation and solitude, male comradeship in the confrontation with outside complex reality on the vast spaces of the oceans and the wilderness. The forms and techniques are no less innovative in the effort to self-fashioning and assertion of literary identity marked by a grandiloquent, oracular, incremental style, an American literary idiom, introspective techniques, and above all symbolism. As Polish-born exile author with no English cultural and bearings among a famous generation of British writers have found himself obliged to write in similar cultural context as that of the early American authors. And so naturally, for Conrad, the early American literary tradition is thus an unexpected gift, a windfall medium to advance his literary career and affirm his literary identity. As the next chapter will show, Conrad's dialogic relationship remained as close with his contemporary American fellow writers as with their predecessors.

Chapter Two:
Conrad and American authors of his Time

Introduction

Conrad does not speak only with early American authors but also with fellow contemporary American authors such as Mark Twain, Henry James, Stephen Crane and Jack London. His relationships with the latter, as will be demonstrated below, are still embedded in that system of gift exchange documented in the previous chapter. Their closeness or intimacy, it would be argued, is determined by the same literary compulsion to innovation in order to affirm their identity under foreign literary skies. The exchanges between authors are due not only to matters of influence and literary affinity due to similar context, but to the combination of the factors in some sort of confluence. The dialogic relationship between Conrad and his contemporary fellow American writers are as complex as the ones that he has held with the early American authors. The relationships range from literary friends, to literary companions, and foe. And yet these differences in communication about the art of storytelling and what innovative form it should be given particularly in the context in the late nineteenth-century Anglo-American rapprochement do not obscure the fact that Conrad shared with his American fellow writers like Crane, James, London, and Twain similar thematic and formal concerns.

Conrad, Twain and James: Dialogue and Outrage

Twain is the eldest authors among the three writers, mentioned in the title of the section. So it is logically to start with him as the immediate successor to the American authors referred to the first chapter, Cooper, Hawthorne, Poe, and Melville. His life and education career parallels more or less that of Joseph Conrad, and largely accounts for their literary connections. He was born on November 30, 1835 in Florida, a small Frontier town in Missouri. He was the son of a land speculator John Marshall Clemens and of Jane Lampton, a Kentucky belle. His family moved to Hannibal, Missouri in 1839. At the age of 12, his father passed away, and was forced to leave

school and work as apprentice to his elder brother Orion, editor of the Missouri *Courier*. It has to be noted that both Clemens and Conrad lost their fathers at an early age, and that both continued their education in an erratic manner. Conrad was brought up by his uncle just as Clemens was taken under the wings of his elder brother.

Three years after his apprenticeship with his brother, Clemens was recruited as a journey man printer in St. Louis, New York, and Philadelphia from 1853 to 1854. In 1855 he joined his brother, who in the meantime had moved to Keokuk, Iowa. While working for his brother, he was planning to go to South America. He finally gave up his plan to turn into a steamboat pilot on the Mississippi from 1857-1861. The parallel between Conrad and Twain cannot be missed by the reader, for nearly the same reasons Conrad his uncle's home to turn into first a sailor, and then a steamboat pilot in the Congo. Twain's experience as a steamboat was the one experience Conrad was drawn to when in his turn he decided to work as a steamboat pilot.

The Civil War (1860-1865) stopped traffic on the Mississippi. Sam Clemens, or rather Twain, enlisted for a few weeks as volunteer in the Confederate Army, but he soon left it for the Nevada Territory, where Orion is secretary to the Governor. Twain became at once a miner, journalist, and gambler. The parallel between Conrad's and Twain's life and times are also strong, for while the Civil War was raging in the United States between the Union and the rebelling South, Poland rose up against the Russian Emperor in 1863 to regain its independence. This uprising was caused by the Emperor's attempt to break up the nationalist movement by forcefully conscripting Polish activists for a 20-year service. Conrad's father we remember is one of the patriots and was sentenced to exile into Siberia when Conrad was only four years.

In 1862 he joined the staff of the Virginia City *Territorial Enterprise*, Nevada. It is while working for this newspaper that Twain tried his hand to writing humorous tales under the pen name of Mark Twain (from "two fathoms), a term used in making soundings on the Mississippi. Two years, later, he had to leave Nevada because of his involvement in an unlawful duel. He

took the direction of San Francisco where he wrote articles in various papers to earn his living. It is in San Francisco that Twain met the two authors that would dramatically change his life: Artemus Ward and Bret Harte. In 1865, that is just a few months after this fateful meeting, Twain published "The Celebrated Jumping Frog" which was hailed as both a commercial and artistic success. The association of Conrad and Twain continues as far as their lives are concerned. Conrad was also obliged to leave Marseilles and the French Merchant marine in order to flee his debtors and French law because of his frequent drunken brawls. It is also in nearly similar circumstances that he wrote his first fiction *Almayer's Folly* (1895) under the alias of Joseph Conrad. After leaving the French merchant marine, Joseph Conrad enrolled himself as a sailor in the British navy. Just as Twain was inspired by Bret Harte ad Artemus Ward, Conrad is said to have his source of inspiration in Flaubert whose *Madame Bovary* is set in Rouen where Conrad was stationed as a sailor. This similarity in literary career does not stop as will be shown below.

In 1866 Twain made a voyage to the Sandwich Islands (Hawai), and his lectures inspired by his experience made highly popular. A year later in 1867, he made his trip to the Mediterranean and the Holy Land as a reporter. It is his popularity as author of a first collection of stories entitled *The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County and Other Tales* and his successful lecturing on his voyage to the Sandwich Islands that earned him the job as reporter to the Mediterranean and the Holy Land, and whose experience resulted in the publication of *The Innocents Abroad* 1867. Twain's two voyages to the Eastern world find their counterpart in Conrad's similar voyages. *The Innocents Abroad* finds an echo in Conrad's *Lord Jim*, with the failed voyage of the still innocent eponymous hero with Muslim pilgrims to Mecca.

In 1870 Twain married Olivia Langdon from genteel, conservative society, and settled in Buffalo where he worked as editor of the *Buffalo Express* for a year, before moving to Hartford Connecticut in 1871. In 1872, he completed the writing of *Roughing it*, a fanciful account of his

trip to Nevada at the outburst of the Civil War. The manner this fanciful account is delivered as will be shown later in this section is similar to that of Conrad. For the moment, it is important to note that like Twain, Conrad married an English genteel lady after a span of his life spent with sailors in the Eastern world, and a short stay in the Congo as a steamboat pilot. In 1873,Twain made a voyage to London, preceded by the popularity of his *Roughing it*. The same year he co-published with C.D. Warner the one book that gave to his age the famous name "The Gilded Age." The influence of *The Gilded Age* on Conrad cannot be underestimated as we shall see.

Though tied by the bonds of marriage, Twain remained on the move. In 1876, as if seized by his childhood experience in the Frontier, he published *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, before voyaging to Bermuda in 1877, and in Europe from 1878 to 1879. In four hectic years, he wrote successively *A Tramp Abroad*, *The Prince and the Pauper*, *Life on the Mississippi*, and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Of the latter, Stendhal is reported to have said that it is " un miroir que l'on promène le long d'une rivière." Conrad's use of river as setting and character in *Almayer's Folly*, *Lord Jim*, and *Heart of Darkness* is surely inspired by Twain's novels *Life on the Mississippi* and *Huckleberry Finn*.

Unlike Conrad, Twain did not suffer from disease, but he experienced in his own way the agonies of life that dramatically changed his vision of the world. After the publication of *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* in 1889, his partnership in Ch. C. Webster's publishing firm turned to disaster, and his second business venture with Paige typesetting machine led to bankruptcy in 1894. Twain was forced by these circumstances to write *The Tragedy of Pudd'nhead Wilson* and *Tom Sawywer Abroad* and to voyage round the world giving lectures to be able to repay his debts. He made enough dividends with the publication of Tom Sawyer Detective, Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc (1896) and *Following the Equator* (1897) to repay his debts, and settle in a rented house in New York in 1900, which saw the publication of *The Man that Corrupted Hedleyburg*, the book that shows his acquired pessimistic

vein. This pessimistic vein is confirmed in "What is Man?" published in 1906, three years after the death of his wife in Italy. His wife's death was followed up by the loss of his daughter Susan in 1894, his daughter Jean in 1907. With the loss of his son Langdon in 1872, his wife, and his daughter was left alone with the sole consolation of his books might perpetuate his name, a consolation expressed in his "Is Shakespeare Dead?" In 1910, he died at Redding, Connecticut, leaving behind him one existential book, The Mysterious Stranger, and Autobiography, published posthumously in 1916, and 1924. Conrad's debt-ridden life and the hardships of life due to his disease and that of his wife also colored his last publications but not to the point of embracing pessimistic determinism.

This sketch about the life and times of Mark Twain shows that it has many similarities with the life and times of Conrad, though they necessarily contain some differences. However, what needs to be pointed out at this stage in relation to storytelling as gift exchange is the fact that both Twain and Conrad were inspired by the art of storytelling as that of repeating stories that they have listened to. In other words, these stories are gifts impressed on their memories when they worked alongside miners, the steamboats, travelers to the Eastern world for Twain, and alongside sailors in the British marine, and fellow travelers in the steamboat for Conrad. Both Twain and Conrad felt a compulsion to repeat these stories as gifts to the readers. Benjamin quotes a German proverb to support that circulating stories is like the compulsory circulation of gifts in the economic process of gift exchange. This saying runs as follows: "When someone goes on a trip, he has something to tell about." This is perfectly the case with both Twain and Conrad, whom it is easy to imagine as storyteller, some sorts of Sinbad, because they are well-traveled and have therefore something to say and to listen to rapturously.

There is mystery in critical literature that Conrad read Twain and that he exerted an influence on him, notwithstanding Conrad's ambivalent appreciation of his fellow American author. For instance, in a letter to Arthur Symons dated Aug. 1908, included in Joseph Conrad: Life and

Letters, where he refers to Twain as "that dismal 'bajazzo' with his debased jargon of niggers and 'mean' whites." In the same letter, Conrad also expresses his outrage that Twain has attacked the memory of his "constant companion" and "master" James Fenimore Cooper. In response Conrad wrote that Twain is a "mean white himself, about the meanest that ever stole the gift of words from a nodding god." At least two allusions are made to Twain in this statement of outrage. One of them is to *Huckleberry Finn* where what he calls "the jargon of niggers" predominates and the other one to Twain's essay "Fenimore Cooper's Literary Offences." Twain's reading of Cooper and Conrad contrapuntal reading gives what can be called a triangular relationship marked by the quarrel over Fenimore's literary legacy or gift of storytelling. What Conrad reproaches Twain is his disavowal of one of the literary fathers in the American Republic of letters for his non-mastery of language, the basics of a good tale, his repetitive tricks, and his lack of a sense of observation. Cooper writes, "Cooper's proudest creations in the way of 'situations' suffer noticeably from the absence of the observer's protecting gift. Cooper's eye was splendidly inaccurate. […] He saw nearly all things as though through a glass eye, darkly." In short, Twain castigates Cooper for his lack of vision. He does not spare Cooper even in his fiction. In *Huckleberry Finn*, Twain satirizes Cooper in the King and Duke scene where Cooper's artistic sensibility and aristocratic mindset is implicitly compared to that of Walter Scott. This aristocratic mindset is set in stark opposition to his own democratic vision embodied in his youth characters (Huckleberry, Tom Sawyer) and the African-American character, Jim.

Coming from the stock of nobility, Conrad's attitude to Cooper differs completely in the sense that he reciprocates to the gift of words that this American "aristocrat" has handed down to ungrateful American successors like Twain. The refined and metaphoric language of Cooper did not disturb Conrad at all, for as a matter of fact he does not master the vernacular versions of English. As I have argued in the previous chapter, Conrad, to use a pun, is a Polish writer who

has to write in English in order to polish it. He could have written in his second language, but he saw no work to be done there, for French as an international language at the time was already refines. It is in English that he saw the edges that were waiting for his skill to be refined. And here comes Twain with his "jargon of niggers" and "mean whites" to stand against his enterprise. Twain's popularity achieved partly through his roughly hewn American English. Conrad comes very close to the Russian formalist in this regard because he did not consider that literature or storytelling should be written or recounted in the language of the tribe. On the contrary, literature's major function is to purify the language of the tribe by substituting for it a refined language.

However, no matter the extent of Conrad's outrage at Twain's linguistic hybridity of his fiction and his besmirching of the reputation of Cooper whom Conrad reveres as his muse, master, and constant companion, it never mounts to total disavowal. In both Conrad's public pronouncements and his fiction, we cannot miss his appreciation of his fellow American writer, though this appreciation was not reciprocated by Twain. I would argue that if Conrad and Twain did not exchange the gift of words in the form of letters as is the case with the other American authors in this chapter, it is basically because Twain was many years the senior of Conrad, and whilst the latter came to the literary scene, the former had already entered the pessimistic stage of his life that turned him into a solitary man. It has also to be observed that if Conrad was somewhat critically harsh with Twain, it is because of Twain's decision not to reciprocate to Conrad's fiction at least in the form of encouragement. The hurt to Conrad's *amour propre* seems to be so profound that his tribute to the American writer came belatedly, after Twain's death and during his visit to the United States in 1924.

So in *Joseph Conrad and his Circle*, Jessie Conrad reports her husband's announcement in a newspaper article during his American tour, where he declares his "complete familiarity with Twain and other American writes." In this unidentified article, he would have "discussed the

cheap editions of Twain's masterpieces he bought and read while on the Congo." Always according to Jessie Conrad, in this article, her husband "recalls a visit to Arthur Symon's room where sat a young man like Twain, 'the great American writer. (Conrad Jessie, 1964: 252-253)" It is quite important to remark that the Arthur Symon mentioned above is the same person to whom Conrad wrote the reprobation letter deflating the importance of Twain. One could ask the question whether Conrad's outrageous complaint about Twain was not due to the fact that Twain the elder writer, ironically referred to as "the young man dressed like Twain," had superciliously ignored the presence of Conrad the younger writer, then in need of reciprocation for the latter's reference to the former in his works.

Conrad's familiarity with Twain is also evoked by Cyril Clemens (1969) Twain's cousin, who recalls a visit from Conrad. During this visit, Conrad would have said that his first novel, *Almayer's Folly*, had one source of inspiration in Twain's *Life on the Mississippi*. Cyril Clemens even claimed that Conrad quoted from memory a long passage from that book, and that his cousin's book served as a guide book during his river voyage on the Congo. The similarities between Twain's *Life on the Mississippi* and to some extent *Huckleberry Finn*, and Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* bear witness to the credibility of Cyril Clemens. Hammond Tracy Lewis (1971) also recalls Conrad's expression of his admiration for Twain in an interview that he would have given just before the end of his tour in the United Sates. Conrad reportedly said that this admiration dated back to the 1880s. As sustained above, Conrad's recognition of Twain's gift came late. His belated tribute to his elder literary brother seems to be justified by his tour in the United States. It would have been a breach of etiquette for a visitor in a promotional campaign for his work in a host country to make disobliging remarks about one of its literary icons whose decease was still fresh in the American mind. His earlier outrage is diplomatically put under the carpet, sustaining instead his dialogic reciprocation to Twain's works in that literary system called gift exchange. I might exaggerate in citing Jacob's tricking of Isaac to get

the blessings due to his elder brother Esau by presenting himself in disguise as an archetypal case for Conrad's assumption of the literary heritage left by Twain.

To imply, as I have done above, that Conrad seized the opportunity of his tour to the United States to promote his fiction through the return of his obligation to Twain does not mean that Conrad does not reciprocate in real for the literary gifts that he received from his elder fellow American author. A huge number of critics have already highlighted the resemblances of Conrad's fiction with Twain's, mostly as a case of influence of the latter on the former. For example, Allen Jerry (1965) has compared the shared experiences of Conrad and Twain as pilots and the influence that these experiences had on their fictional worlds. George P. Clark (1978) has also pointed out the similarity in the two authors' background and careers as steamboat pilots, a similarity in his view which accounts for the reciprocity of Conrad to Twain, most particularly in the place that Twain's *Life on the Mississippi* has on Conrad's *The Secret Sharer*. The same Clark (1969) has drawn parallels between the artistic evolution and that of Twain citing Conrad's *Youth* and *Heart of Darkness* on the one hand and Twain's *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn* as a typical illustration of this literary development from a "youthful tone of wistful regret and reminiscent tenderness toward a larger and more mature view. (1969: 134-135)"

So on the whole whether just immediately after Conrad's tribute to Conrad during his tour for the promotion of his books or sometime later critics have followed up this tribute by looking into the literary kinship of Twain and Conrad. The literature volume has dramatically increased over the years, but most of it is centered on the obligation of Conrad's reciprocity to Twain by referring to those books of his that deal with his pilot experiences such as *The Life on the Mississippi* or *Huckleberry Finn*. Little attention is accorded to the passing of the gift of storytelling from the elder author to the junior author, or to books dealing with the frontier life, the evil of corruption that attended the industrial revolution and its appendage the imperial enterprise. I would argue that it is in these shared interests in narrative and themes peculiar to

their time that one can see the dialogue underneath the polemics that Conrad had developed with Twain. Using Bakhtin's critical categories, I shall define this dialogic relationship in fiction as one of stylization. In other words, in his fiction Conrad does not come very close to Twain as to be qualified as a derivative or imitative fiction nor was it written in a totally different vein, which would have turned the literary relation into parody or polemics. In stylization, I see the best form of that literary gift exchange where the receiver does not reciprocate to the donor with the same gift that he received but with something different and yet the same in at least the enriched spirit of the gift.

The literary kinship between Twain and Conrad that the latter denied during the former's life time is best seen in the manner their stories are recounted. So far critics like Edward Said have concentrated on the way Conrad tried in his fiction to reproduce the context of traditional storytelling. I have already expressed my agreement with such claims. However, I have add at this point that Said has overlooked the origin, or "beginnings," the word is Said's, of this narrative tendency in Conrad's fiction. I would contend that no matter the degree of influence that French authors like Flaubert, Stendhal, Gogol, and Turgenev might have had on him as a modern storyteller, Conrad's talent in storytelling has grown on the congenial ground of Twain's fiction like *Roughing it* (1872). As said earlier, both Twain and Conrad had tapped the rich vein of storytelling in listening and repeating the stories that they have heard among miners (for Twain) and sailors (for Conrad). However, it is Twain who preceded Conrad in feeding this storytelling vein into fiction. Twain's commercial and artistic success in this exploitation of this vein of storytelling might have probably given Conrad the idea of following the leader of his elderly literary brother, who in spite of all their differences in nationality shared the same exotic look for their readers on both sides of the Atlantic.

What kind of evidence can be adduced in support of the above claim that Conrad has invested his gifted talent in the storytelling vein that Twain has tapped during his stay with miners and

steamboat crews? In answer, I shall first highlight the aspects of storytelling in *Roughing It* that set a new departure for American literature. These aspects are taken as illustrative examples from the "Buffalo Yarn" included in *Roughing it* as some sort of metafiction wherein Twain explains his own conception of the yarn. "The Buffalo Yarn" is a casual narrative typical of frontier humor which combines loquacity and a slow tempo. The most distinctive yarn is the tall tale, in other words, the art of stretching facts. At the beginning, the listener or reader is hardly aware of the humorous intention since the tall talk abounds in true-to-life notations. Twain, it has to noted, saw in this dead pan manner of telling a story a reflection of the genuine American temper. In one of his famous quotes, he says what follows about this American manner of telling a story:

> To string incongruities and absurdities together in a wandering and sometimes purposeless way, and seem innocently unaware that they are absurdities, is the basis of the American art, if my position is correct. Another feature is the slurring of the point. A third is the dropping of a studied remark apparently without knowing it, as if one were thinking aloud. The fourth and last is the pause.

This American manner of telling a story is reflected in *Heart of Darkness*. In this novel, the narrator Marlow's yarns are unlike the other seaman's yarns. "The yarns of seamen," the frame narrator tells us, "have a direct simplicity, the whole meaning of which lies within the shell of a cracked nut." The case of Marlow's stories is strikingly different, for "Marlow was not typical (if his propensity to spin yarns be excepted), and to him the meaning of an episode was not inside like a kernel but outside, enveloping the tale which brought it out only as a glow brings out a haze, in the likeness of those misty hallows that sometimes are made visible by the spectral illumination of moonshine. (1983: 30)" This comment of Conrad's frame narrator recalls Twain's definition of the American art of storytelling as an art of stretching facts, that is an art that strings incongruities and absurdities together in a wandering and seemingly purposeless way. A huge number of critics and writers of his time, particularly British, have blamed Conrad just on this point of letting the tale that he recounts in Heart of Darkness, develop in what looks like a seamless fashion overlooking its closeness to what Twain did in his fictions. The same

remarks are made about the stretching of Marlow's tale about Lord Jim in the book of that name, regardless to the wink it sends to Twain's manner of telling his stories.

So in a manner of speaking, critics and authors who point out what looks like a threadbare and and loose manner of telling stories in Conrad's books have not identified it as a mark of literary exchange between Conrad and Twain. Marlow's manner of spinning yarns owes its distinction to what Twain's calls "slurring the point," in other words, concealing or disguising the meaning of the tale, and hence making the reader or listener look for it. We remember that the frame narrator in *Heart of Darkness* tells us that Marlow's yarns "envelop the tale which brought it [meaning] out only as a glow brings out a haze, in the likeness of one of these misty halos that sometimes are made visible by the spectral illumination of moon shine." The slurring of the point in Marlow's yarn is self-conscious, for at several points of his tale to ask his listeners whether they can see or understand what he means in what he says is "an unvarnished tale." Pointing to the complexity of the tale that he proffers as a gift to his listeners afloat on the *Nellie*, Marlow drops out the following words: " …. No it is impossible, it is impossible of any given epoch of one's existence – that which makes its truth, its meaning – its subtle and penetrating essence. It is impossible. We live, as a dream – alone…. (1983: 57). He follows up this remark about the wandering stream of his tale, which like *Huckleberry Finn* resembles in the words of Stendhal "a miroir que l'on promène le long d'une rivière" that of the Congo River.

This seemingly haphazard structure of Marlow's manner of spinning his tale has another feature that Twain mentions as one of the features of his fiction associated with what he calls the American temper. The tale is seemingly left out to spin out of control to the point where the storyteller "drops a studied remark apparently without knowing it, as if one was thinking aloud." The feature is also encountered in Marlow's tale which starts it in an unexpected manner by making this remark inspired by the context of being kept afloat together with his listeners on the *Nellie* waiting for the turn of the tide to be able to float down the River Thames. As if indeed

thinking aloud about the parallel between the Congo River and the Thames River, he makes this remark: “And this also, said Marlow suddenly, “has been one of the dark places of the place. (1983: 29)” Marlow sometimes even makes disobliging observations about his listeners as illustrated by the following example, wherein Marlow indignantly rebukes one of the listeners for his dismissive response to Marlow’s missed opportunity to hear at long last Kurtz’s voice, described as a “vanished gift.” “Why do you sigh in this beastly way, somebody? Absurd? Well, absurd, Good Lord! Mustn’t a man ever – Here give me some tobacco. (1983: 83)”

Marlow’s outrage over the listener who has not made a big case of his overstatement that the missed opportunity to hear to Kurtz is like missing his “destiny in life” is followed up by a pause. As the frame narrator tells us, “There was a pause of profound stillness, then a match flared, and Marlow’s lean face appeared, worn, hollow [….] and as he took vigorous draws at his pipe, it seemed to retreat and advance out of the night in the regular flicker of the tiny flame. (1983: 83)” Still hurt by the listener’s boring and disbelieving attitude of the listener to his tale of the missed encounter with Kurtz reduced to an enchanting voice, Marlow addresses another admonition for their incapacity to project themselves into his fictional world: “Absurd! He cried out. This is the worst of trying to tell …Here you all are, each moored with the good addresses, like a hulk with two anchors, a butcher round one corner, a policeman another, excellent appetite, and temperatures normal – you hear – normal from year’s end to year’s end. (1983: 84)” The pause, as Twain puts it in his quote, is the fourth marker of the American art of spinning, and it is the one that gives Marlow’s tale its distinctive quality. The pauses are not just observed by Marlow but also by the setting, which in the tale functions just like a character, with moments of silence contrasting with noise of all sorts.

The above discussion shows that the kinship between Twain and Conrad is deeper than expected by critics who have already compared his works since this kinship involves a shared conception of the art of storytelling. If Twain struck a new literary lode inspired by miners in the

Nevada camps and the steamboat crews on the Mississippi, and which gained him a never failing popularity as a folk storyteller, Conrad suggests the same thing in *Heart of Darkness* when his narrator recounts his kinship with the mechanics on the wrecked steamboat. After reporting his conversations with the agents of the Congo Company, conversations full of intrigue, Marlow is eager to join his workmates. Work is the last thing in the Congo, which salvages him from mental collapse, so he establishes a distinction between those white agents who are there for the "show" and the mechanics. "I was not surprised to see somebody sitting aft, on the deck, with his legs dangling over the mud. You see I rather chummed with the few mechanics there were in that station, whom the other pilgrims naturally despised – on account of their imperfect manners I suppose. (1983: 60) So I can claim that Marlow, who is some sort of picaresque character, met in several novels by Conrad, enjoys posing as philistine castigator of swollen attitudes, who like many of his counterparts in Twain, expose religious and philanthropic hypocrisy of the white agents, and the spurious code of chivalry of all those involved in the imperial venture.

Quite aside from the similarity in Twain's and Conrad's characterization, in their elevation of the setting (the river, the sea, and the forest) into a character functioning as an antagonist, and in the shared conception of the yarn, I would argue that Conrad borrows heavily from that tradition of theatre that informs Twain's conception of such black characters as Jim in *Huckleberry Finn*. That tradition is the Minstrelsy, a type of theater that appeared around the 1820s. Minstrelsy makes of the black man (what is referred as Jim Crow) a comic figure through wearing a blackface. As Ralph Ellison puts it, "Writing at a time when the blackfaced minstrel was still popular, and shortly after a war which left even the abolitionists weary of those problems associated with the Negro, Twain fitted Jim into the outlines of the minstrel tradition, and it is from behind this stereotype mask that we see Jim's dignity and human capacity – and Twain's complexity – emerge. (1958)" It is not solely Jim who wears the mask in Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*, for even Finn is made to wear the mask of youth the better to speak the truth to those in

power in the North and South. We remember that *Huckleberry Finn* was published in 1884, three years after the Hayes Tilden Compromise. Through this compromise, because of a tie in the presidential election, the victory was conceded to Republican Rutherford B. Hayes over the Democrat candidate Samuel J. Tilden on condition that Hayes would remove the Federal troops from the Southern states where they were still stationed. This compromise of 1877 was called the Great Betrayal for the negotiation between the North and the South made the black man as into some sort of scapegoat. All his gains were swept away with a stroke of a pen, and were replaced by the notorious Jim Crow laws. Read against this background of the betrayal of the cause of the black population, Twain's use work as an ambivalent form of protest through the friendship of two disguised characters.

As I said above, the dialogic relationship between Twain and Conrad can be described as one of stylization, and this stylization involves, among other aspects, the patterning of Conrad's characters in *Heart of Darkness* on blackfaced minstrels. Just as in *Huckleberry Finn*, part of the storyline in *Heart of Darkness*, unfolds on a river, that is to say the Congo River with Marlow as pilot of a steamboat sailing up and down river for the rescue of Kurtz. The dangers of being caught in a snag, the dark atmosphere of the sailing up and down the Congo River as well as the rescue mission are strangely similar to those faced by Huck Finn and Jim. However, contrary to other critics who have contented themselves with such similarities, I would argue that the most important resemblance between Twain's and Conrad's novel is the transformation of the steamboat in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and the raft in *Huckleberry Finn* into a stage wherein a Minstrel show is performed. In other, there is a flavor of theatre in both. It is in this reciprocation to Twain's appropriation of the Minstrel tradition that I see the close connection between the American writer and Conrad.

In his 1974 essay, "An image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's Heart of Darkness," Chinua Achebe has taken to task Conrad for the images that he used to paint Africa and the African. For

Achebe, the indistinct noises, and the sort of deformity, and primitivism associated with Africa and Africans are indicative of the racist attitude to the Other. It is true that it is not only in his fiction that Conrad uses derogative terms such as the word "Nigger." The fact that he dismisses Twain's language as a "debased jargon of niggers and mean whites" may be taken as one further evidence of his racist leanings. And yet, this critique has to be nuanced by reference to context. In the public pronouncement, it sounds as an expression of indignation or outrage for Twain's dismissive response to Cooper's refined language which he seems to have appreciated at an early age. As for his inclusion of what seems the very "jargon of niggers" in *Heart of Darkness*, it says something of the ambivalence of Conrad toward Twain's use of language. More importantly, I would contend that this language and the comic images associated with the African characters have a lot to do with the Minstrel Theater. The black characters that Marlow has with him on the boat not only speak like Jim, but they think like Jim in the sense that they are full of superstitious beliefs. Examples are too many to be cited here. So that of the helmsman that he calls a fool is enough as evidence of Marlow's resort to the Minstrel show for characterization. Before introducing this black helmsman, Marlow has given us something that looks like stage directions by describing all the actors participating in the show. This is what Marlow tells us about his helmsman: "An athletic black belonging to some coast tribe, and educated by my poor predecessor, was the helmsman. He sported a pair of brass earrings, wore a blue cloth wrapper from the waist to the ankles and thought all the world of himself. (1983: 79)" For Marlow, the helmsman is a representative type of African in contact with white men. What is the important to note in this representation, as I have said earlier, is the flavor of theater, for Marlow makes the African helmsman wear disguises according to the expectations of audiences familiar with the Minstrel shows. As he goes on with this mimicry, or mimetic portray, Marlow says that "He was the most unstable kind of fool I had ever seen. He seemed with no end of a swagger while you were by; but if he lost sight of you, he became instantly the prey of an abject funk, and would let

that cripple of a steamboat get the upper hand of him in a minute. (1983: 79). On reading such a portrayal, one cannot fail to suspect that Marlow has made the helmsman perform his comic role in blackface. And yet one notes the same ambivalence in Conrad's use of the tradition of the Minstrel as Twain's in the sense that comparatively to the white Pilgrims, particularly the Pilgrim in pink pajamas, the black characters on Marlow's steamboat are described as having less moral restraint and even more cannibalistic in their drives.

Critics who have dealt with Twain-Conrad connection have so far concentrated their attention on their work as nautical writers, neglecting the two writers' critique of the seamy sides of their industrial and imperial age. To continue the comparison between Twain and Conrad, I would say that if there is one book by Twain to which Conrad reciprocated with feeling and understanding, it is *The Gilded Age* (1873). The latter was co-authored with Charles Dudley Warner, and deals mostly with the dream or idea of the Western Frontier and its failure as well as similar grandiose dreams of the Westerners who looked to the urbanized East as the New Frontier. In brief, *The Gilden Age* is the story of the transplantation of a poor pioneer family from Tennessee to the upper South in Missouri, captured by the project of a friend Colonel Sellers, a land speculator, who made them hopeful of a better future. On their way to Missouri, which Twain dismisses as a "slothful frontier," the Hawkins family adopts two orphans. One of these is a girl called Laura, who survive the explosion of a steamboat carrying her family up to the Upper Frontier. The other orphan is found near the bedside of her family living a frontier village decimated by the cholera.

All sounds fine in spite of these forebodings, but the plot gets complicated a few years later with the involvement of Colonel Sellers' in land speculation. Easy money replaces hard work and self-reliance as values in Twain's and Warner's slothful Frontier with the plentiful credit appropriated by the Federal Government for the construction of railroads that would join the different parts of the country. Harry and Philip, two gentlemen from the East in quest of fortune persuade Colonel Sellers to be partner in a speculative enterprise, consisting of diverting the

itinerary of the railroad in such a way as to make it pass through a bogged land that is destined at least on paper to be transformed into an urban zone. This megalomaniac project triggers a wave of speculation that enriched the local owners of the bog but ruined the dreams of Sellers and his Eastern partners as well as that of the Hawkins.

With this disenchantment with the slothful Frontier of Missouri, the Hawkins family and Colonel Sellers, at the initiative of Laura who has in the meantime discovered her aristocratic origins thought of falling back on the estate that they have left behind them in Tennessee by selling to the Federal government for building a vocational school for the colored population. *The Gilded Age*, looks eastward to the urban frontier of Washington D.C., the seat of the Federal Government, where Laura nearly succeeds to make the fortune of these pioneers from the Western with the complicity of the Senator of Missouri. However, the project fall apart with the reappearance of the errant husband, a former Confederate soldier who married Laura in Missouri. Laura kills her husband, gets acquitted for the murder, and dies a short time in her solitary room after trying to get a living by giving lectures about her life in the Frontier. The scandal of corruption, graft, and greed comes out for all eyes to see, whether one looks Eastward and Westward to the Frontier. It is the scandalous crass materialism that the book portrays that has made historians of the high period of American industrialism apply it to the post-Reconstruction age of the Robber Barons.

The *Gilded Age* and its major concerns are replicated in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. The colonial enterprise in the Belgian Congo is similar to the business venture in the Missouri Frontier. Both of them are marked by sloth, corruption, graft, and greed. What happens in the center of governmental decision, whether in Belgium or Washington is no less corrupted, for behind the lofty ideas or ideals motivating these ventures are pervaded by a scramble for making fortunes. As Marlow puts it so well, "I have seen the devil of violence, and the devil of greed, and the devil of hot desire; but by all stars! These were strong, lusty, red-eyed devils, that

swayed and drove men – men, I tell you. (1983: 43)" To the parallel that I am drawing between the imperial scandal of the Congo business venture and that of conquering of the Western Frontier, one has to add the objections that both authors oppose to imperialism in the Free Congo State. On reading *Heart of Darkness*, one cannot miss its dialogic relation with Twain's King Leopold's *Soliloquy* (1905), a pamphlet in the form of a fictional monologue wherein King Leopold II mounts a self-defense of his actions in the Congo Free State. His raving about the good things in the Congo, such as the provisions of millions on religion and art for uplifting of the Africans is strangely similar to those Kurtz's mad raving in *Heart of Darkness*. The false piety of the pilgrims in *Heart of Darkness* also resembles that of Twain's Leopold who says that he went to the Congo with piety "oozing" from "every pore" and with the intention of spreading Christianity and putting an end to slavery. However, this shared satirical thrust at imperialism and corruption is accompanied by the sense that opposition to imperialism is in vain given Twain's and Conrad's pessimistic view of human nature. Twain's pessimistic vein is even more pronounced as his *The Man that Corrupted Hedleyburg* (1900) and "What is Man?" make clear in their espousal of pessimistic determinism.

The literary kinship between Twain and Conrad underlined above does not mean that Conrad reciprocates as a disciple would do to a literary guru. The differences between the two authors are too many to qualify their kinship as that of discipleship. I would say that the major difference between them is that while Twain's fiction is predominantly marked by satire, or to use Bakhtin's favorite word, Menippea, that of Conrad is overwhelmingly ironical in its turn. This strikingly difference goes back to their sources of inspiration, with Twain drawing heavily on American folk humor ranging from the vulgarly burlesque to the acutely significant, and with Conrad deeply steeped in the ironic literary tradition of Cooper, Hawthorne, Melville, and Poe. The distance between ironical and satirical mode of telling stories is one of the grounds on which the literary exchange between Twain and Conrad on which it is described as a stylization. So, on

the whole I would argue that Conrad's reciprocation to Twain is marked by both dialogue and outrage. As claimed all along this section, Conrad's outrage is due to resentment against Twain's damage to the reputation of Cooper whom he considered as his "constant master" and his (Twain's) ignorance of the gift or talent of Conrad as budding novelist. In the light of what is said above about the similarities between the two authors, I would make my own the thesis that Conrad as literary aspirant has tried to come close to Twain by stylizing him in terms of both theme and form. However, the failure of Twain, who was then at the height of his popularity, to reciprocate Conrad's recognition is felt as a breach to the principles of literary gift exchange.

It is only at Twain's death that Conrad's outrage seems to have cooled off, giving place to his public recognition of what he owes to Twain in order to capitalize on the popularity of his fellow American writer. I have contended above that this belated recognition of literary gift exchange between Conrad and Twain can be accounted for in terms of the economics of authorship. To gain access to the literature market in the United States, Conrad who has made the transition from literary aspirant to popular writer in Britain needed to mark his spiritual kinship with Twain, the elder literary brother, by recognizing his indebtedness and the gift of storytelling that he has received from him. However, as this section of the research shows, Conrad's belated sense of obligation toward Twain cannot not be explained only by Conrad's business drive but also by his attempt to be part of the continuity of the American literary tradition. As V.S. Pritchett puts it so well, "It is an enormous comfort to a writer and one of the great rewards of writing to find that what you've written has meant something to another writer or to other people and that you're part of the continuity of literature. (Cited in Lachman Howard, 1979: xiv)" So, in one way, by recognizing the gift that he has received from Twain and other American writers, Conrad was also honoring the principle of gift exchange by returning the compliments to the American readers during his 1924 tour in the United States.

The gift relationship between the audience and Conrad on the one hand, and that between Conrad and Twain on the other hand is not a contradiction in terms even when associated with the literary industry and market. As Mark Osteen (2002) and George Bataille have argued the two realms of the gift and commodity are not fundamentally opposed. This is particularly the case with literature which in our modern world has turned out into a commodity, produced for market exchange, but at the same time preserves the characteristics of gift exchange peculiar to the performance of stories in traditional societies. The stories are not performed in presence of listeners, but as consumers we often read inscribed by the author, or offer them as gifts wrapped up for our friends and kith and kin. The stories in our mechanical age are also not handed down from listener to other listeners to be transmitted through a chain of transmission, but in our mechanical age of mass production they are passed down from earlier writer to later writer as reader, and from writer to reader as gifts to constitute what is called a literary tradition. It is in this light of interlocking of the economy of the gift with the monetary economy that I propose to look at the relation between Twain and Conrad, and also that of Henry James and Conrad discussed below.

Very briefly, the relationship between Henry James and Conrad as contemporary writers resembles the one that Conrad entertained with Twain. Both of these relationships are marked by dialogue and indignation. Without going deeply into details of context that can account for the literary affinities, I would say that both James and Conrad are metics in the Greek sense of the world. The former is a cultural exile looking for a more congenial social ground than his native soil could offer in order to be able to develop his talent or gift. This idea of America as a cultural waste land is captured later by Ezra Pound when he writes

> For three years, out of key with his time,/ He strove to resuscitate the dead art/ Of poetry; to maintain the "sublime"/ In the old sense. Wrong from the start - / No hardly, but seeing he had been born/ In a half-savage country, out of date; / Bent resolutely on wringing lilies from the acorn; Capaneus; trout for factitious bait. (Pound Ezra, 1973: 81)

It is this idea of America as a "half savage" that motivated James to move to Europe for give full vent for his artistic creativity. This is particularly true in late nineteen century American culture, increasingly governed by money and overrun with commodities. As James' s *The American* (1877) shows, the story post-Civil War America was certainly a success story economically speaking, but it felt the lack of culture that made its hero Christopher Newman (a suggestive name), a Californian millionaire comes to Europe in spiritual quest of the perfect wife. Uncultured, but fundamentally generous, idealistic and scrupulous, he will give up the thought of taking his revenge on upper class Parisians, the Bellegardes (also a suggestive native) who have snubbed him by refusing to let a "businessman" marry into their family. The many ironies developed in this fiction will not be developed here, but it is important to note that unlike the hero who bought fake copies of art to take back home to enrich its fine arts, the author as cultural exile working as a metic was able to transform the novel into a respectable artistic craft.

In his *Art of Fiction*, James put on a part or on the same footing the novelist and the painter that he calls the "brother of the brush." There is, "he argues, "the community of method of the artist who paints a picture and the artist who writes a novel.(A Concise Anthology of American Literature. p. 1395)" The merit of both resides in the mastery of execution and workmanship, and how far their works are inspired by experience. As far as experience is concerned, James writes that "The power to guess the unseen from the unseen, to trace the implication of things, to judge the whole piece by the pattern, the condition of feeling life in general so completely that you are well on your way to knowing any particular corner of it – this cluster of gifts may almost be said to constitute experience… (Ibid. 1396) James continues his definition of the art of fiction by adding that "the air of reality (solidity of specification) seems to me to be the supreme virtue of a novel." He comes back to the comparison of the craft of novelist with that of the painter, saying that "It is here in very truth that he compares with life; it is here that he competes with his brother the painter in his attempt to render the look of things, the look that conveys their

meaning, to catch the colour, the relief, the expression, the surface, the substance of the human spectacle. (Ibid., 1397)"

There is no need to develop further James's theory of the art of fiction, but it has to be noted that James's writings and essays about fiction revolutionized the writing and literary criticism. Quite aside from what has been said above, I would mention his introduction of a center of consciousness embodied in a narrator observer, a point of view that put an end to what is called the omniscient narrator that was predominant in the Victorian Age; he also introduction a narrative method marked by indirection or obloquy through the use of subtle irony. Last but not least, I can refer to the presentation of characters and the development of imagery inspired by impressionist painting. In short, James' aesthetic theory of the novel that puts the art of fiction on the same footing as painting and music, all of them involved in the quest for truth in the spectacle of life has made some British authors like Ford Madox Ford suggest that the fiction of James and Conrad was like an "alien cloud" which changed for ever and radically the landscape of the English novel that it passed over. Qt in Segor Robert and Moddelmog Debra, 1985: 86)"

The fact that James and Conrad are critically mentioned as "the two foreigners" that brought out fundamental change to the novel makes what I have called the "metic." As stated earlier, if James's exile to Europe is culturally motivated, that of Conrad is political. The Russian imperial domination over Poland, the early death of his father exiled in Siberia as well as of his mother a few years later are among the factors that forced him to go on exile. There is no need to repeat the conditions under which he chose to become a sailor in the British merchant navy and how he became an exotic curiosity years later when he settled down in Britain to write his fiction in the wake of health breakdown. If one has to look for parallels between the careers between James and Conrad, I would argue that the former offers a shared motivation when he wrote that if he had voluntarily left his country, it is because of "the terrible denudation of America." The case of colonial Poland was certainly not different. The second is that both came under the influence of

French writers like Flaubert. Here I come back to the point made earlier that though Conrad mastered French better than English, he decided to write in English because there are still things for a Polish-born writer to polish in that literature. French literature was comparatively too refined for Conrad to impose himself in it. So, in James and Conrad we have two exile authors writing across two cultures, competing in the same literature market. James being the elder writer and the first to offer his gifts complicates his relationship with Conrad in nearly the same proportions as the Conrad-Twain connection.

Conrad and James were involved in exchange of courteous correspondence, mutual visits, and participation in the same literary circles. James even offered his books with his own inscriptions as gifts to Conrad, and the latter did not fail to return his gratitude. For example, in the flyleaf of *An Outcast of the Island* (1896) offered as a compliment gift to James, Conrad has included the following inscription: "I address You (Sic.) across a vast space the name of that one of Your children you love the most." He follows up this introduction by saying " I am not sure that there is one! (Sic.) love more than the others. Exquisite Shades with live hearts, and clothed in the wonder garment of your prose." Conrad goes on with the expression of his gratitude for James's companionship through his children books as follows: "they have stood consoling, by my side under many skies. They have lived with me, faithful and serene – with the bright serenity of immortals. And to your thanks are due for such glorious companionship. (1983: 307)" The family metaphors attached to James's literary progeny and their elevation to immortality shows the extent of Conrad's admiration for James and his expectation for the return of the obligation, which James reciprocated in kind.

All the exchanges between Conrad and James did not take place between Conrad and Twain. However, they belie the reality of their literary relationship behind the courteous personal façade. Indeed, as a huge number of critics have already observed, there are many similarities between James's and Conrad's fictions. Quite aside from the similarity between novels such as Conrad's

Heart of Darkness and James's *The Turn of the Screw*, or Conrad's *The Secret Agent* and James's *The Princess Casamissima*, there is an undeniable literary kinship as far as the issues of literary technique and artistic theory for the novel and the truth of human life are concerned. As the extended above shows, Conrad wishes to establish a blood-line connection between his children-books and those of James in drawing some sort of a literary family tree with James in his capacity as elder writer being considered as the titular literary figure.

Indeed, Conrad's and James's books look familiar in terms of characterization, point of view, and narrative technique. For instance, both of them consider characterization as a fundamental feature of the novel. Their central characters are often what Conrad calls "remarkable men". Instead of omniscient narrator, the two authors use a central consciousness embodied in figures such as Marlow in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and *Lord Jim*, and Christopher Newman in James's *The American*, and Chad Newsome in *The Ambassadors*, or the eponymous heroine of the *Princess Casamassima*. Their methods of narration are also similar in the sense that it is marked by irony and indirection. Notwithstanding these similarities, the relationship between the two authors cannot be said that of imitation but rather that stylization in the first stage and that of parody in later stages. Stylization as a dialogic relation is marked by the observation of distance in the emulation of a literary predecessor while parody is marked by a swerve that express disapproval. I shall come to the illustration of these two types of dialogism below.

The question to be addressed at this stage is how we can account for this shift in attitude toward James on the part of Conrad. A complaint by Conrad about the overwhelming predominance of James in the literary market gives us the first clue. In one of his letters to Fisher Unwin, Conrad complained that James's circulation of *What Maisie Knew* in the *New Review* "blocks" the serial publication *The Nigger of Narcissus*. (Conrad Joseph, 1983: 349) In this complaint, we gain access to the literary industry in turn-of-the-century Britain and the difficulty of an aspirant author like Conrad to publish his own book in mass circulation magazines and

newspaper such as the *New Review* because of the overwhelming presence of James. Naturally, in this economics of authorship, Conrad has to model without falling into imitation of James to be able to satisfy the demands of editors and the expectations of readers.

It goes without saying that given the competition in the literature market, James could not remain unaware that Conrad's stylization or emulation of his books entails sharing the literature market. In other words, James suspected that Conrad's friendship was of the utilitarian type instead of friendship of virtue. James's suspicion eventually grew into a harsh critique of Conrad's *Chance,* the popularity of which might have irked the American writer, feeling a change in public reception in favor of Conrad. I would also argue that for the mentor's taste, Conrad has learned too well the craft of the novel to choose deliberately to parody the one writer whom at the beginning of his career he considered as a "glorious companion". James has always regarded Conrad as one the one of the greatest "nautical writers," who owes his reputation to the fact of being an "exotic foreigner and former sailor." For the American writer, Conrad's reputation is above everything else a question of singularity. It is such disguised ironical thrust that pushed Conrad to parody in the clearest terms James's *The Princess Casamassima* in *The Secret Agent*.

So if one has to qualify the literary relationship between James and Conrad in terms of the gift exchange theory used in this research, I would say their exchange is principally ambassadorial, in other words ceremonious. Each of them avows a friendship for the other while keeping an eye on their own interests as literary metics. The praises that they addressed to each other are not made without second thoughts in mind. Admittedly, in stylizing James, Conrad expresses recognition for James, but at the same his expectation is to cash on this kinship in both literary and commercial terms. On the other hand, James reciprocated to Conrad but not without thinking about his literary reputation and commercial success by having his name associated with a "foreigner" exotic and non-Anglo-Saxon metic, whom he wanted to confine to nautical

authorship. These conflicted interests largely accounts for the dialogue and fits of indignation that marked the relationship between James and Conrad. The former expressed his fits of indignation directly in the form of critical essays whereas the latter resorted to parody in his literary incursion into land-based themes such as anarchism long cordoned off by James.

So on the whole, in emulating or stylization James, Conrad drew on the same sources as James, such as French symbolist writers and impressionist painters as well as American authors like Poe or Hawthorne. In so doing, Conrad staked out an equal claim for a share in the gift their predecessors have passed to the novelists of their own generation. More importantly, though Conrad tried to curry favor with his fellow elder American author, he never fell under his sway. Emulation or stylization often implies following the lead of the first author to come in the literary scene while striving at the same time for gaining a reputation for excellence that goes beyond that of the mentor. For example, whilst James theorizes the function of the novel as essentially concerned with making the reader "feel life." James defines this function as follows: "As people feel life, so they will feel the art that is most closely related to it. This closeness of relation is what we should never forget in talking of the effort of the novel. (James Henri, 1400)" Conrad responds to James's claim for the centrality of feeling in the novel but not with some reservation or irony, I would say, for as he writes in the preface to *The Nigger of the Narcissus*, "My task which I am trying to achieve is, by the power of the written word, to make you hear, to make you feel – it is before, to make you see. That – and no more, and is everything. (Conrad Joseph, 2007: 49)" The last two chunks of this statement represent the extent to which Conrad wanted to mark his departure from the theory of fiction as defined by James. And Conrad strives to observe the uniqueness of the aesthetic consciousness, which he otherwise admires in James, by making his picaresque hero narrator, Marlow in *Heart of Darkness* and *Lord Jim*, insist that his listeners look for ocular proof in the spectacle of horror in the Belgian Congo that he tries to

draw for them with the power of words. It is this gift of words that Marlow deeply appreciated in Kurtz whom he sought to see all through the novel.

In *Heart of Darkness*, Marlow warns the reader that his tale is a report based on experience. "I don't want to bother you very much," he says to his listeners, right at the outset," with what happened to me personally, […] showing in this remark the weakness of many tellers of tales, who seem so often unaware of what their audience would best like to hear." He follows up this remark about the objectivity of his tale, saying "And yet to understand the effect of it on me you ought to know how I got out there, what I saw, how I went up the river to the place where I first met the chap [Kurtz]. It was the farthest point of navigation and the culmination of my experience. (1983: 32) " Two points need to be made the uniqueness of Marlow's/Conrad's concept of the art of fiction by contrast with that of James. In the first place, Conrad wants to make it clear that what he is interested in is the objective theatre, what we can see, rather than the subjective theater that is the inwardness of the character/narrator as is often the case in James. Characters, for both Conrad and James, are central to the art of fiction, but while characterization for the latter is based mostly on deep analysis, for the former what counts is the appearance, what we can see. In the second place, both James and Conrad agreed that "experience" must be put at the crux of the novel. James, for example, advises novels to "write from experience and experience only." However, Conrad stretches the concept of "experience" beyond mere subjectivity to include concrete, factual, domain where what counts most is not "feeling" or showing to the plain eye.

The other striking difference that distinguishes Conrad's art of fiction from that of James is deployment of a different type of narrator. As many critics have pointed out both James and Conrad abandoned the use of omniscient narrators and adopted narrator who are participant observers. However, Conrad refines this idea not by resorting to psychology, as James does, but to field ethnography. This ethnographical pose is fully documented by James Clifford (2002)

who compares Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* with Malinowski's *Diary* and *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*. It is this ethnographic dimension that explains the special quality of the participant observer narrator in Conrad's fiction in its focus on the give-take principle documented in the first chapter of this research. It also accounts for this definition of narrative that the frame narrator provides in the first chapter in emphasis of the uniqueness of Marlow as storyteller: "Marlow was not typical (if his propensity to spin yarns be excepted), and to him the meaning of an episode was not inside like a kernel but outside, enveloping the tale as a glow brings out a haze." Critics have already compared James's *The Turn of the Screw* and Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* putting stress on the function of the function of the "lie" in both works. I will finish this discussion of the give-and-take exchange between Conrad and James by saying that their friendship is ambassadorial in the sense like in their fictions they are both confronted by the alternative between telling a lie consisting of exchanging book gifts as ambassadors and spoiling a relationship. I would finally argue that most of the novels by Conrad resemble the various eponymous "ambassadors" in James's novel, which unsuccessfully try to call back the young American Chad Newsome to the family fold.

Conrad, Crane and London: Affinities and Belated Reciprocation

The relationship between Conrad on the one hand, and Stephen Crane and Jack London on the other hand are devoid of the lie that characterizes the give-and-take between the writers discussed above. Following the mainstream social philosophy of the give-and-take principle, and the mutual undertaking of the spiral construction of knowledge, it is sometimes alluded to, that only present day generations can grasp knowledge from preceding ones. In the present case, however, where the objective lies in pursuing traces of literary affinities between Conrad, and another American author, Stephen Crane (1871 - 1900), our endeavor seeks to reverse the tendency of the young benefiting from the old. There was some fourteen years' difference between Conrad and Crane, Conrad being the older. The point in this case shows the freshness of

knowledge of the younger author serving as a source of inspiration for the older one. It is, moreover, important to mention that these two authors came to acquaint with one another in the course of 1897 to 1900, the latter year being unfortunately the year of Crane's unexpected death.

What has roused Conrad's interest in Crane's professional career as an author, perhaps, lies in similar life hardships they experienced as early as their boyhood. The loss of their fathers at such an early age (11 years for Conrad and 8 years for Crane), and the ensuing life harshness and disease constituted a sort of magnetism that attracted one to the other, and helped them immerse in the profundity of the existential philosophy. The new modern era with its apprehension of life compelled the late nineteenth and early twentieth century authors write in a similar manner about similar themes. Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899) is said to share thematic and literary viewpoints with Crane's *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* (1896) (Sharla Finley, pp 1-5).

It would, indeed, seem superfluous to claim that Conrad borrowed from Crane the theme of social depravity, and misery, and the deployment of impressionistic technique to construct his narratives. It would instead be more scholarly to emphasize their shared visions of life concerning the tackling of existential matters and the subtle way they present them to their readers. Their restriction to just pinpointing at so serious life hardships without imposing their own standpoint is relevant and pertinent enough of their relying on the technique of Impressionism. Conrad and Crane have handed their readers a significant painting the resolution of which remains incumbent not on the authors, but on the consumers. A viable proposition that tends to relate the works of these two authors lies perhaps in the closeness of their acquaintance, though ephemeral. The fact that Crane sent Conrad some of his original manuscripts not just for reading, but for keeping them in his library created assets for Conrad to unconsciously draw his inspirations. To make Conrad – Crane correspondence one that is fruitful and lasting, G. Jean Aubry put it this way, reporting letter content by Crane: "Under the supposition that you might like to keep it [original manuscript] in remembrance of my warm and endless friendship for you"

(Aubry, In: Robert Secor, 1985: 46). It is in this friendship of virtue where one author, the younger one at that, who bestows his own original manuscript as a gift, a token of friendship on the older author that we see at work the concept of literature as gift exchange

As has already been stated earlier in this research, adopting adaptations of other writers' works – as maintains William S. Burroughs – is only legitimate, and ought not to be viewed as expropriation/abrogation of an individual's work by another individual. It is the sum total of subjective undertakings in all fields that construct a collective knowledge. Again, with reference to the give-and-take principle, claiming that Conrad's *The Nigger of the Narcissus* share many similarities with Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage* should not stir any sort of controversy, since, according to critics and theorists such as a dialogue, a mind talking to mind in the same spirit. As Conrad avows his literary kinship with Crane in his preface to Crane's The Red Badge of Courage as follows:

> Stephen Crane dealt in his book [*Red Badge*] with the psychology of the mass – the army; while, I—in mine [*The Nigger*] – had been dealing with the same subject on a much smaller scale and in more specialized conditions – the crew of a merchant ship, brought to the test of what I may venture to call the moral problem of conduct (Joseph Conrad, In: Robert Secor, 1985, 47, 48).

This moral problem is closely related to the issue of war and heroism. The latter ideologies are characterized by the unleashed expansion of imperialistic and colonialist imperatives. Though Conrad and Crane grew and lived in this manifestly arrogant and violent historical era, they refrained from indulging into writing about the praise of the Western supremacy in general, and their domineering political practices against – according to the Westerners' vantage point – the overseas backward societies. Among the reasons which deterred Conrad and Crane from being dragged into this merciless enterprise of imperialism and colonialism, we can advance the following. Either they thought this European imperialism too preposterous and overworked especially by the Orientalist authors initiated mainly in England, or, they wanted to labor themselves in something new, and it consists of analyzing what had really driven these

imperialists, and their followers to behave likewise. It seems that the latter alternative is more plausible, and it is more likely to bring some new knowledge to their readership.

The new knowledge Conrad and Crane have set themselves to attain resides in bringing to the fore new elements hitherto unthought-of. Indeed, focusing their attention on elements that are intrinsic to the human mind and self opens more avenues of understanding of the human behavior. As referred to above, Conrad's relying on the psychology of the individual – in Conrad's story characters like Marlow, Kurtz in *Heart of Darkness*, Jim, in *Lord Jim*, and Captain Hagberd in *Tomorrow* – and Crane on the psychology of the mass – as for instance talking about the army in *The Red Badge of Courage* – this psychological trend establishes their hallmark, and positions them as the pioneers of a new critical dimension in their own right. Moreover, it can be invoked that Conrad and Crane are avant-garde authors in that they tackled a very sensitive aspect of the human personality well before the arrival of the new psychoanalytic findings – in the case of Crane. For Crane and Conrad, the old warlike type of heroism is no longer a viable option for the modern man armed with lethal weapons though it is tied closely with the death instinct.

Additionally, in view of this psychological treatment of the characters' behavior, it is worthwhile throwing some light on the dramatic outcomes of story characters in both Conrad's and Crane's narratives. To begin with, we would first cite Crane's story entitled *Maggie: a Young Girl in the Streets* (1896) as it was published three years prior to the publication of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness (1899).* Because the unfolding of the story of Maggie targeted events likely to stir the reader's innermost sensibility, Crane had to face enormous difficulties in trying to publish his work at the famous magazine, *The Century*, as suggests this conversation between Crane and Richard Watson Girder, the editor of *The Century*,

> "I'm sorry, I can't publish it." When Crane asked, "Why not, Mr. Girder?" Girder said, "It's too cruel." Crane said, "You mean it's too honest, don't you?" And

> Girder said, "Yes, perhaps I do." (Edwin H. Cady, in: Landmarks of American Writing, VOA forum series, 1982: 198).

Given the above conversation, the diction used by Crane (cruel, honest) reveals how deep in the personality of the character he has gone through to relate not physical action, but emotive sentimental underpinnings of overall human behavior.

Because the above-mentioned works can be categorized as psychological endeavors, the dramatic successive events performed by the characters symbolize the strain, and the stress of their authors [the characters] which led them to an overwhelmed and neurotic state of mind, and ultimately fell into their demise. Maggie, in Crane's story, presents a vivid contradiction between her, a beautiful and innocent girl, and the remorseless society she lives in: "Maggie, a pretty girl, a flower which blossomed in a mud puddle" (In: Hennig Cohen, 1982: 195). What, in the eyes of the reader, is even more dramatic is the issue of her death. Crane's appeal to the highly aesthetic device of oxymoron to express the hell-like life of Maggie in the Bowery slum of New York of the post Civil War years positions him as an author endowed with an exceptional imagination as, according to Harold Bloom, he had neither experienced the war life of the mid-nineteenth century nor had any relationship with the underworld of fallen women (Harold Bloom, 2005: 7). The metaphoric imagery embedded in Crane's oxymoron – a beauty blossoming in a mud puddle – brings to the readers' minds again and again the tragic life of the American citizens during the unsettled socio-political issues trying to find a way out. The image one can draw from Maggie's story depicts innocent citizens paying for the mistakes of others, and how the latter do not refrain from their unscrupulous attitudes. Maggie was made to pay for her family, her lover, and overall society:

> Her ghastly family, dreadful lover, and incessant poverty all drive her into prostitution and the ambiguous death by drowning, which may be suicide or victimage by murder (ibid: 2005: 7).

Crane's tendency to depict the victimization of innocent people in his works clearly defines his stance as regards his existential philosophy which, to a great extent, equates Conrad's. The literary and artistic complementarities bonding Conrad to his contemporary Crane is perhaps much deeper than that can be construed from the other American authors whom we may label as second generation writers; that is, those authors who first persevered in establishing and consolidating American literature.

Before going further into the affinities between Conrad and Crane, I would first draw the similarities in their respective life and times that can account for them. Arguably, the most important parallel between Crane and Conrad is their "community of affliction" at the time of their encounter. Conrad turned from sailor to writer in the wake of a health breakdown during his voyage to the Belgian Congo. His first book to be published is *Almayer's Folly*. As for Crane, he suffered from tubular hemorrhage in 1899 the very year that *Heart of Darkness* saw the day. Their shared sickness certainly led them to develop a special relationship, particularly on the part of Conrad whose seniority in terms of age led him to feel very deeply for Crane whom he considered his junior brother. Crane was born in 1871, that is to say 14 years later than Conrad. However, Crane started writing earlier than Conrad, for he published *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* in 1893, and *The Red Badge of Courage* two years later in 1895, which professionally speaking makes him the immediate predecessor of Conrad. This closeness in literary career partly accounts for mutual moral support and admiration that they expressed to each other during their brief but intense period of friendship. The three-year long Conrad-Crane friendship between 1897 and 1900, the year of Crane's death, as many biographers tell us, include home visits, correspondence, and attempted collaboration which failed just because Conrad avowed to Crane that he had no "dramatic gift." These biographers also recount that Conrad felt so deeply for the diseased Crane that he went so far as to make requests for publishers to advance money to his

junior literary brother weather the dire financial condition that he faced during the last three years of his life.

In a letter dated Dec., 1898 to Blackwood, a publisher, Conrad expressed his confidence in Crane's artistic abilities and future as follows: "The man will develop. I find [The Price of the Harness] broader, gentler, less tricky and just as individual as the best of his work. It is the best bit of work he had done since *The Red Badge*." The bond of brotherhood between Conrad and Crane, as the request for money above, shows is so strong that the literary rivalry in the literature market that marked the relationship between James and Conrad was overcome. In return for this deep sense of fellowship, Crane even went to the extent of sending Conrad some of the original manuscript of *The Red badge of Courage* "under the supposition that you might like to keep it in remembrance of my warm and endless friendship to you." Such an artistic exchange shows how gift exchange between two foreign artists re-established itself in a culture increasingly governed by money and overrun by commodities. Between Crane and Conrad, there is no writing over "vast spaces" as the latter says in one of his correspondences to James, there is instead an acute sense of intimacy due to a similar community of affliction and a life lived dangerously but without surrender. I would surmise that if Crane had left Conrad a keepsake in the form of the manuscript of a book at the threshold of death, it is with the intention, conscious or otherwise, to lead Conrad to complete successfully a literary career that he had no time left to achieve. The deep friendship between Conrad and Crane was very brief and was woven at the moment that both writers fell on hard times both in terms of finance and health. So if we had to describe literary connections, also due to a similarity of world vision and attitude to life, I would say that it is a type of *tessera*.

In his *Anxiety of Influence*, Bloom (1975: 49-73) speaks of one of the six possible relationships between writers and predecessors as an antithetical one. Like the initiate in one of the ancient mystery religions, the artist must, to be recognized, supply a completing fragment or

tessera which, taken in conjunction with his predecessor's work, makes a satisfactory whole, redeeming the incompleteness of the predecessor's vision. By thus laboring to "complete" his predecessor, the new writer establishes his absolute necessity – his real priority – for his is by implication the larger vision. To make this strategy work for him, the influenced writer must impose an interpretation on his predecessor's work so that he can see it as requiring fulfillment or completion. Now, the theory of the anxiety of literary influence elaborated by Bloom is inspired by the Freudian family romance, wherein parricidal conflict between father and son holds prominence as a principle for the formation of identity. It follows that all the six literary relationship that Bloom elicited from his poetic study of the writer influencers and writer influence are antithetical at various degrees.

So the question that comes to mind here is to what extent this antithetical attitude between literary predecessors or father-artists, and literary successors or belated artist-sons hold true in the case of the literary connection between Conrad and Crane. I would argue that the tessera or literary completion that Conrad provides for Crane's literary legacy because of his early death does not fall totally within an antithetical framework, because of the community of afflictions (health problems compounded by financial problems) between the two writers and the reversal of their relationship in terms of seniority, Conrad being older, and publication with Crane preceding Conrad on the literary scene. Bloom, himself, qualifies his description of the literary relationship of the *tessera* when he compares this type of literary connection among British writers and their American counterparts. "It seems true," he writes, "that British poets swerve from their predecessors, while American poets labor rather to "complete" their fathers. The British are more genuinely revisionists of one another, but (or at least most of our post-Emersonian poets) tend to see our fathers as not having dared enough. (Bloom Harold, 1975: 68)" This qualification brought out by Bloom to his theory as far as national differences in literary relations are concerned allows for a similar qualification of the literary kinship between Crane and Conrad,

who, as I have implied above, see each other as a soul mate. Their exchange of book gifts, particularly the part of the manuscript that Crane sent to Conrad as a keepsake, might be viewed as an invitation for Conrad to supply a tessera for his not yet completed literary career. Viewed in the light of gift exchange economy, this tessera as a type of intertextual or dialogic relationship between the two soul souls, turns into an emphatic dialogue.

This peculiar *tessera* or emphatic dialogue finds expression in many novels, tales, and prefaces by Conrad. For example, Conrad wrote a preface to the 1925 Heinemann edition of *The Red Badge of Courage* where he calls the dead novelist "an artist, a man not of experience but a man inspired, a seer with a gift for rendering the significant on the surface of things and with an incomparable insight into primitive emotions, who in order to give us the image of war, had looked profoundly into his own breast." He goes on with this tribute by qualifying the book as a masterpiece "if only because of the marvelous accord of the vivid impressionistic description of action on that woodland battlefield and the imaged style of the analysis of the emotions of the inward moral struggle … of one individual." Crane's concern was with "elemental truth only, and in any case I think that as an artist he is non-comparable. He dealt with what is enduring and was the most detached of men." I have quoted Conrad's memorial praise of Crane and his book extensively to show how far the words he uses reverberate in the prefaces to novels such as *The Nigger of the Narcissus*, which he considers as having issued from the same smithy of imagination as Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage*, and *Heart of Darkness*. Conrad also expresses the same admiration to Crane's artistic achievement in his famous tale "The Open Boat."

It is in fiction rather in his essays that Conrad wrote most in memory of Crane. I consider that it is *Heart of Darkness,* rather than in *The Nigger of the Narcissus* written before Crane's death, that the *tessera* or completing reciprocation to the deceased soul male is the most prominence. Indeed, *Heart of Darkness* starts in a similar way as the "open boat," the Nellie floating on the

tidal river of the Thames. The atmosphere of *Heart of Darkness* is as gloomy and ominous as that of Crane's "Open Boat." The character on the stage-boat are typical and equal in number, and all of them seem to have their eyes fixed on the horizon with the gleam of the navigation beacon and the beacon of hope that the tide will turn. The reverberations of the "Open Boat" are also found on the *River Congo*, where the steamboat assigned for Marlow is discovered to be stranded on the shore, with no rivets provided for its repairs. It took months to be able to stand navigation, and even then it is threatened at every turn of the river to be snagged on some rocks. The characters, and most notably Marlow, standing all once for the Captain, Correspondent, Oilman in "The Open Boat" voices the same absurd cry as Crane's Correspondent: "If I am going to be drowned – if I am going to be drowned – if I am going to be drowned, why, in the name of the seven mad gods who rule the sea, was I allowed to come thus far and contemplate sand and trees? Was I brought here merely to have my nose dragged down away as I was about to nibble the sacred cheese of life. (Crane Stephen, 1418" In terms of narrative technique and imagery, Conrad also comes very close to Crane since both are concerned not with "the significant on the surface of things and with an incomparable insight into primitive emotions." The frame narrator reminds us that Marlow's interest is not in the yarn, but in its surface or in the outside of things, and the emotions that Marlow reports are of the atavistic type.

Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage* also finds many echoes in *Heart of Darkness*. Admittedly, on at least its surface, the latter does not claim the status of a war novel, but it belies this impression from right the start when Marlow compares the military conquest of Britain by the Romans with that of the Congo by the Belgians and Europeans. At the end of his job interview and medical examination in the Belgian Headquarters of the company for trade in the Congo, Marlow meets with two of three women representing the three Fates. As he says about these women, "An eerie feeling came over me. She seemed uncanny and fateful. Often far away there I thought of these two, guarding the door of Darkness, knitting black wool as for a warm pall, one

introducing continuously to the unknown, the other scrutinizing the cheery faces with unconcerned old eyes." And for Marlow to add the following ominously ironical salutation used by gladiators in the Roman times before starting their life-and-death struggle in the arena: "*Ave*! Old knitter of black wool. *Moritori te salutant* [Those about to die salute.] Not many of those she looked at ever saw her again – not half, by a long way. (Conrad Joseph, 1983: 37)"

Later during his voyage out to the Congo on French ship along the Atlantic Coast of Africa, Marlow describes the war waged by the French military on invisible African coastal tribes hidden in the thick forests. Marlow posing as a war correspondent writes outrageously what follows about this French war on these coastal Western African tribes: "Once I remember, we came upon a man-of-war anchored off the coast. There wasn't even a shed there, and she was shelling the bush. It appears the French had one of their wars going on thereabouts. In a satirical thrust at what looks an absurdity, he adds, "Her [the French man-of-war] dropped limp like a rag; the muzzles of the log six-inch guns stuck out all over the low hulk; the greasy, slimy swell swing up lazily and let her down. In the empty immensity of earth, sky, and water, there she was, incomprehensible, firing into a continent. (Ibid. p.41"

Marlow bears witness to the absurdity of the undeclared war on the African continent even when he lands on the site of the first station. As he says about dynamite detonation in the quarry next to the site of the station, "Another report from the cliff made me think of that ship of war (the French man-of-war] I had seen firing into a continent. It was the same kind of ominous voice, but these men could by no stretch of imagination be called enemies. They were called criminals, and the outraged law, like the bursting shells had come to them, an insoluble mystery from the sea. (Ibid. p.43) Following this description is the portrayal of the desolation of the environment and the corruption that generally accompanies the waging of a war. In terms of characters, Christopher Marlow resembles to a large extent Henry Fleming, the hero in Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage*. Like Fleming, Marlow like adventure since he kept

dreaming about visiting foreign lands for exploration. His discovery of the war-like context of the Belgian venture is as startling as Henry Fleming's discovery of the reality of Civil War in the United States. Crane describes the first jolt of Fleming's awareness about the gruesome reality of the war and death at the moment that he thought that out of cowardice he has escaped the war front in the bosom of nature. "At length," the narrator tells us, "he [Henry Fleming] he reached a place where the high, arching boughs made a chapel. He softly pushed the green doors aside and entered. … Near the threshold he stopped, horror-stricken at the sight of a thing." A description of the horror of war follows in a separate paragraph:

> He was being looked at by a dead man at by a dead man who was seated with his back against a column-like tree. The corpse was dressed in a uniform that once had been blue, but was now faded to a melancholy shade of green. The eyes, staring at the youth, had changed to the dull hue to be seen on the side of a dead fish. The mouth was open. Its red had changed to an appalling yellow. Over the gray skin of the face ran little ants. One was trundling some sort of a bundle along the upper lip.

I have already pointed above by referring to Walter Benjamin that storytelling as a form of gift exchange between storytellers among themselves on the one hand and between readers/listeners and storytellers on the other had has at its basis repetition. It is this repetition with completion or *tessera* supplied to *The Red Badge of Courage* that we encounter on several occasions in the description of the horror of the war in *Heart of Darkness*. The above description of Henry's sinister figure of the dead body of the soldier of the Union has its first parallel in Marlow's discovery of Freshleven's skeleton overgrown by a mass of vegetation. As if to increase the effect of repetition/completion the horror scene described by Crane, Conrad makes his hero pass through a grove where he encounters Africans, the victims of the horrors of colonial exploitation: "I began to distinguish the gleam of the eyes under the trees. Then glancing down, I saw a face near my hand. The black bones reclined at full length with one shoulder against the tree, and slowly the eyelids rose and the sunken eyes looked up at me,

enormous and vacant, a kind of blind, white flicker in the deaths of the orbs, which died out slowly. … (Conrad Joseph, 1983: 44)"

In his preface to the 1925 Heinemann edition of *The Red Badge of Courage*, Conrad makes two other remarks about Crane and his book that he puts into execution in *Heart of Darkness*. The first remark is that Crane is "a seer with a gift for rendering the significant on the surface of things and with an incomparable insight into primitive emotions, who in order to give us the image of war had looked profoundly into his own breast." This reading or rather misreading of Crane and his masterpiece is reciprocated in Marlow's rendering of his voyage in the Congo as an inner voyage in Man's heart. The moral battle against evil is essentially an inward struggle, whose effects are externalized in impressionistic images of horror. Moreover, Marlow's voyage into the interior station is viewed as an exploration of Man's primitive emotions that Conrad distinguishes as a hallmark of *The Red Badge of Courage*. "Going up that river," Marlow tells his listeners, "was like travelling back to the earliest beginnings of the world, when vegetation rioted on the earth and the big trees were kings. (Ibid., p. 66)" This statement is followed by the description of the atavistic instincts of man across ethnic groups as the steamboat navigates its way through the thick forest of the Congo to rescue the "remarkable man," Kurtz, whose soul is captured by the evil of greed.

Conrad's reciprocation to Conrad is found in other novels by Conrad. For example, we encounter Stephen Crane and his philosophy of determinism in *The Secret Agent*. Both are embodied in the character of the autistic Stevie, who keeps drawing circles as if in counterpoint to the plans what so-called normal characters in the novel. Conrad, it has to be observed, often refers to Stephen Crane using the endearing term Stevie. More importantly, Stevie meets an early death, just like Stephen Crane, in an absurd way since he is abused both by his anarchist ward, Verloc, who makes carry the bomb destined to explode the Greenwich Royal Observatory. We also meet Stephen and his wife, Cora, fictionalized in Conrad's novel, *Victory* as Heyst and

Lena. In light of all this evidence, I would say that in his fictions, Conrad supplies a tessera, a completion accomplished not in an antithesis but as an exchange of gifts of two soul mates, the purpose of which is to round off a literary career cut off short. In this exchange which I have also described as an empathetic dialogue Conrad improves his soul mate's art of storytelling by repeating it but with a significant difference in order to highlight his uniqueness. This uniqueness is illustrated, among other aspects of his fictions, in the conception of nature. Whilst Crane sees nature as being indifferent to Man's suffering, Conrad gives a malevolent image of this nature. But such a difference in their perception of what nature is sustained by their belief in the brotherhood of man.

The last American writer to be discussed here in relation to Conrad is Jack London (1876-1916). In terms of age and literary career Conrad is the senior writer and preceded London on the literary scene. However, there is a parallel between London and Crane since both of them passed away before completing their literary careers. London died on November 22, 1916 from an overdose of narcotics, presumably a suicide, whereas Crane died from a pulmonary hemorrhage. The similarity in their fate notwithstanding, Conrad did not respond to them in a similar way. Even their lifetimes, the personal and literary relationships between Conrad and London are not as strong as those prevailing between Conrad and Crane. The exchange of letters between London and Conrad with the latter's exultant encomium for the publication of Conrad's *Victory* in 1915, one year after the start of the outbreak of World War I. This letter deserves to be read very closely because it reveals hidden aspects of the relationship between the two authors.

The London letter starts with the usual salutation term "Dear Joseph Conrad" followed by a paragraph about the exotic setting of a Honolulu beach Wakiki in Hawaii from where the letter was addressed to Conrad. "The mynah birds are waking the hot dawn about me. The surf is thundering in my ears where it falls on the white sands of the beach, here at Waikiki," he writes. London goes on to invoke how he has entered in dialogue with him across the oceans, saying "

the green grass at the roots of the coconut palm insists to the lip of the wave-wash. This night has been yours – and mine. London Jack, 1979: 157).” I would sustain that in this introductory paragraph, London implies that he has followed the lead of Conrad to the exotic oriental world, and that the night that he spent reading Conrad (Victory) in the very context of which Conrad has set his novel, make them kindred literary spirits.

In the second paragraph of the letter, London shows that his interest in Conrad is not just occasional, that is to say caused by the celebration of Conrad’s *Victory* as a literary success in England and the United States. His appreciation is long-dated, for as he writes to Conrad, “I had just begun to write when I read your first early work. I have not merely madly appreciated you and communicated my appreciation to my friends through all these years. (Ibid. 157)” This sounds as if London tries to present excuses for his belated direct contact with Conrad, whom he seems to take as his literary mentor. “I never wrote you. I never dreamed to write you,” as if to emphasize that his belated correspondence is due to the fact that he stood in awe of Conrad as a literary giant. Having done with his apologies, London explains how he comes to break this respectful restraint saying “but *Victory* has swept me off my feet, and I am inclosing herewith a carbon copy of a letter to a friend at the end of this lost night’s sleep [reading Conrad’s book].” So, London is saying that his appreciation is not addressed just to him personally but to his friends as well in order to promote it. Arguably, London here is at fault because the commercial promotion of Conrad’s book with its warlike title and announced victory of the Alliance does not really need his assistance.

Making a short case of the territorial behavior of writers, and most notably that of Conrad in the last and third paragraph, London writes to Conrad that “Perhaps you [Conrad] will appreciate this lost night’s sleep when I tell you that it was immediately preceded by a day’s sail in a Japanese sampan of sixty miles from the Leper Settlement of Molokai … to Honolulu. (Ibid. 157)” London took this patterning of his behavior on that of Conrad as a praise of his

predecessor without noting that for a Conrad suffering from gout, it cannot fail to raise his resentment for an encroachment on a chartered territory that served as settings for his fictions. This territorial encroachment on the part of a writer, who had ignored his authorship for many long years until his reputation was consolidated with the publication of *Victory* in 1915, largely account for Conrad's lukewarm and formal response to the London letter. The Conrad letter of 1915 to London starts formally with the expression "My Dear Sir." This formal salutation is far removed from the informal and friendly salutation of "Stevie" that Conrad uses when he addresses Stephen Crane. The formal open salutation is followed by a courtesy wherein Conrad responds to Crane's kindness and appreciation of his book. Crane is addressed as "a true brother in letters," but in a hyphenated phrase he adds a phrase that qualifies this literary brother hood by pointing to the special "personality and art I have been intensely aware for many years. (Conrad Joseph, 1979: 158)" This hyphenated statement is fraught with meaning in the sense that Conrad distinguishes his own personality and art from that of London, and reveals the reason why the two writers have remained, at least in terms of literary brotherhood, in separate literary circles.

As if in parody of London's letter, the second paragraph of the Conrad letter, reports how "Percival Gibbon (a short-story writer and most distinguished war corresp. Sic.) and I were talking you over endlessly, in the quiet hours of the night. (Ibid., 158" The ironical thrust comes in when Conrad seems to laugh at London's commitment to socialism and his glorification of strength in fictions like *The Strength and the Strong* (1911), *The War of the Classes* (1905), and *The Sea Wolf* (1904). He satirizes crane writing that "Gibbon who had just returned after 5 months on the Russian front had been taking you in bulk, soaking himself in your prose." Conrad adds that "we admired the vehemence of your strength and the delicacy of your perception with the greater sympathy and respect. (Ibid.)" The irony cannot be lost in Conrad's qualification of Crane's fictions as propaganda in which Crane feeds the other storytellers like Gibbon while sun-basking in the Pacific at the height of war in Europe. It seems that Conrad has at hand the

two last books by London, *The Mutiny of the Elsinor* (1914) and the *Star Rover* (1915). The former is a war book written for Collier's, which commissioned him as a war correspondent to Vera Cruz, Mexico whereas the latter is strangely reminiscent of Conrad's *The Rover*. While recognizing that he has read about the enthusiasm that London's latest books have raised among readers, he tells London that the book (either *The Mutiny of Elsinor* or the *Star Rover*) is in "the house but I wait to finish a thing (short) I am writing now before I sit down to read you. (Ibid.)"

So for Conrad reading London's latest book has to wait because of his urgency of writing a piece of literature of his own contrasting his own conditions as an elder writer suffering from gout and writing under German airplane bombings, and those of London to whom he says "It'll be a reward for being a good industrious boy (Ibid.)" Until the end of the letter, Conrad has remained courteous but very ironical in response to London's attempt to establish a literary connection with his predecessor. "And so no more – this time. Keep me in your kind memory and accept a grateful and cordial handgrasp," he says as if to cut short the conversation with London. The salutation of the Conrad letter ends with the formal expression of "Yours Sincerely" as if to keep off London's familiar and informal salutation of "Aloha (which is a sweet word of greeting, the Hawaiian greeting, meaning 'my love be with you.' (Ibid. 157)"

It is not only in their personal correspondence that we note London's attempt to come close to Conrad. In Martin Eden, a largely autobiographical fiction, Jack London has his central character Eden have the following thought about what he considers as his best fiction "There's only one man who could touch it … and that's Conrad. And it ought to make even sit up and shake hands with me, and say "Well done Martin, my boy. (p.318)" I would argue that Conrad's reference to Jack London as "an industrious boy" in the Conrad letter I have analyzed above echoes London's attempt in his letter to earn the recognition of Conrad. Conrad also reciprocates, though not without irony, the handshake that Eden wishes to get from the former for his achievement by asking London "to keep me in your kind memory and accept a grateful and cordial handgrasp."

Critics of London's fiction have all noted the huge number of similarities between Conrad's and London's work such as the ones existing between the former's *Heart of Darkness* and *Youth* and the latter's *Martin Eden* and *John Barleycorn*. However, we have also to note the differences in temperament and their vision of life. For Conrad, London's vision of life based on the irreconcilable tenets of *The Communist Manifesto* and *Thus Spake Zarathustra* is simply unacceptable in the light of his support for liberal theories.

The Conrad-London connection is the one literary connection of Conrad with the late nineteenth century American writers which shows clearly the reversal of the literary system of gift exchange that he had established in the American literary tradition. Instead of taking the storytelling gifts from American writers, it is Jack London who receives Conrad's storytelling gift. So, on the whole Conrad's relationships among contemporary American writers in the late nineteenth century vary from one writer to another. With Twain the relation is marked by outrage at the beginning and grows to dialogue at Twain's death. As for the Conrad-James literary connection, it is quite the reverse. It changes from stylization to parody as Conrad moves from the writing of sea stories to writing about a literary territory (land themes). It is with Stephen Crane that Conrad develops to the most that emphatic dialogue characteristic of the literary system of gift. The London-Conrad association is strained because of their differences in temperament as persons and artists. Yet, London is one of the first American writers, who publically acknowledged the influence of Conrad though belatedly. Conrad's personal correspondences with the four American studied show the shift in the roles of donors and receivers peculiar to gift exchange as dialogism. Whilst Conrad often refers to the three American writers (Twain, James, and Crane) as authors whose books he has carried with him during his sea voyages, it is London and wife who sustain the same idea about Conrad's books as literary baggage. In the London-Conrad letter, London writes that he read *Victory* on the Waikiki Beach, Hawaii, and his wife affirms that London read Conrad (*Youth, Typhoon, The End of the*

Tether,) aloud to the crew of the *Snark*. Hence by the time London started writing his books, Conrad was so definitely inscribed in the American literary tradition that he became one of the literary mediators for the next generation of American writers. The chapter that follows will deal with the types of literary relationship that Conrad developed with them.

Conclusion

Obviously, the gift of early American storytelling is not only passed on to Conrad by the early American authors, but also continued to develop its medium with late nineteen-century American authors. The dialogue with the dead American authors is superseded by a dialogue with contemporary American authors, a dialogue that I conceived as belonging to that emphatic dialogue associated with the system of gift exchange. In other words, this give-take- and match principle is performed with shadowy American literary figures of the past but with American literary friends, literary companions, and literary foes forming an American literary circle or club that Conrad as an exile infatuated with American literature. Conrad reciprocates the gift of words that he received from his early American authors and their descendants by re-establishing through his works the popularity of the latter, and critical appreciation of the works of the latter through letters, notes, direct in-person conversation, prefaces and so and so forth. The result of this double gift exchange with American authors of different generations is the transformation of Conrad into some sort of cultural mediator to early twentieth-century American authors. Formalist theory of influence claims that the transmission of literary legacy is an indirect transmission. In other words, the literary gift does not pass on from the literary father to literary son, but through the medium of an uncle. This avuncular function of Conrad to writers like Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway, Eliot and other authors will be the major concern of the next chapter.

Chapter Three:

Passing on the Gift: Conrad and the Lost Generation authors

Introduction

"Was this America," Yanko Gooral cries out in Conrad's "Amy Foster." This cry indicates the extent to which America and the American literary legacy play a crucial role in his imagination. The two previous chapters have attempted to document the reasons why Conrad was drawn to the American literary tradition as embodied by both the early and late nineteenth century authors. In this chapter, the focus will be put on how Conrad passed on the gift of storytelling that he indirectly inherited to early twentieth-century American authors. The fictional and critical construction of Conrad as an avuncular cultural figure in the American republic of letters, which in the words of one critic, has "come of age" in the first decades of the twentieth century can be accounted for by the detection of a familiar feature in Conrad as regards the treatment and scope of themes sounding close to American concerns, past and present, as well as the quest for formal innovation. Since the one major author who said it loud and clear to construct Conrad as "one of our own" is Fitzgerald, I shall focus on his kinship with Conrad in the context of what I have called the gift theory of literary exchange.

Fitzgerald's conception of the gift and friendship with Conrad

None of F. Scott Fitzgerald's other literary works, whether in poetry or prose, has received as much critical attention as his *The Great Gatsby*. If it is true, as it is sometimes claimed in critical circles that authors really produce only a single book that they keep re-writing in different forms, *The Great Gatsby* is certainly the case. Among all his books, it is this novel that has earned Fitzgerald the title of novelist. To date, it has been read from so many perspectives that it has become very difficult, indeed, for belated researchers to carve a niche in the huge of scholarship that it has already amassed. However, notwithstanding the intimidating volume of literature presently at hand, *The Great Gatsby*, just like the Sphinx, never ceases to invite the reader to try

to solve its hidden mysteries. The purpose of this research is to do just a little of that in its focus on the interlocked issue of friendship, gift, commodities, and social bonds in the novel.

The issues of the gift, commodities, and social bonds in American literature have already attracted the attention of Hyde (2007), who has opened new avenues in American literary studies ever since the publication of his first book in 1983. The works by Emerson, Whitman, and Pound, among other American writings, have been analyzed from the anthropological perspective to show to what extent artistic creativity and the artist in American culture are deeply steeped in the world of the gift and gift exchange contra the money-centered drive of capitalism. Following in Hyde's steps, scholars like Zerar (Personal communication made at the 15th International F. Scott Fitzgerald Society Conference, June 24-29, 2019) and Laceb (2018) have recently applied the theory of the gift as Potlatch in a tentative attempt to shed new light into *The Great Gatsby*. However, though these critics are to the point in ranging Fitzgerald alongside his American fellow writers as an author interested in the "world of the gift," an aspect of Fitzgerald's novel, consciously or unconsciously overlooked by Hyde, their studies concentrate so much on the negative perception of Potlatch, as a warlike conception of gift exchange, that they sidestepped its positive aspect, which is the strengthening of social bonds in a world dominated by commodity exchange.

How does this issue of the gift link up with the equally important theme of friendship in *The Great Gatsby*? From which philosophical and ethical sources, Fitzgerald draws the concept of friendship? On what types of friendship do the imagined communities in Fitzgerald's novel rest? In what ways these types of friendship contribute to or unravel social bonding in the novel? These are some of the questions that previous studies of *The Great Gatsby* have not yet fully attended to. The central claim of this research is that friendship is the core around which the themes of the gift, commodity exchange, and social bonding coalesce. Unless consideration is accorded to the manner Fitzgerald makes use of the gift to critique the American consumerist

society of the 1920s, the social, moral, and aesthetic significance of *The Great Gatsby* for both Fitzgerald's contemporaries and today's readers, the issues that the novel raises will not be appreciated at its real value.

The approach to this above stated issue is basically dialogic or intertextual in Bakhtin's sense of the word. The intertext that is considered as the key text for grasping the social, moral, and cultural implications of friendship of *The Great Gatsby* is Aristotle's *The Nicomachean ethics* (1987), *The politics* (1992), and *The metaphysics* (1998). In the former work, Aristotle defines friendship in terms of virtue, which he holds as "natural, as the bond of society, and as morally noble. (1987: 204)" He distinguishes between three distinct types of friendship, friendship of utility and of pleasure on the one hand, and friendship of virtue, on the other hand. The latter species is higher in personal and social ranking, for contrary to the two other types, it has a permanent rather than an accidental quality. The "perfect type of friendship," as Aristotle (1987:204) has written, "is that between the good, and those who resemble each other in virtue." Further details from *The Nicomachean ethics* and the two other works by Aristotle are proffered as the discussion below goes along. Here it is important to add that this ethical, political, and philosophical approach to friendship and related themes like the gift, commodities, and social bonding is supplemented by studies of the complex issue of gift and commodity exchange by scholars like Malinonowki (1922), Mauss (2002), Schrift (1997), Weiner (1992), Godbout (1998), Gregory (2015), to mention but a handful.

All of Tom Buchanan's friendships in Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, including the one he has presumably developed during his school days with Carraway, the narrator-character, at college are friendships of utility, friendships intended primarily to show off his virility with both sexes, by resorting to bullying. For instance, as a college boy, born with a silver spoon in his mouth, he bestows his beneficence to those he considers his most intimate friends, such as Carraway, on condition for them to be at his beck and call. Right from the outset he is depicted as a bulky,

racist man, looking at the world from a narrow-minded perspective. Tom is not even capable in developing a friendship of the pleasure type that Aristotle holds as superior to friendship of utility. At home, he fails to appreciate the pleasure of being in the company of his wife with his mind perpetually distracted by his adulterous relationships. We see him standing aloof, and declining to meddle with other guests attending Gatsby's party, which he churlishly dismissed as a "menagerie." The only person to have bonded with him in terms of friendship of pleasure is Myrtle. Even so, Myrtle suffers severe bruising at the hands of her paramour Tom for having dared to divulge the name of his wife before the guests in Myrtle's New York City private apartment. He presumably does not want to lose his social respectability because of an adulterous relationship, which paradoxically he is proud to share with Carraway, as an old school chum of his. The purpose of letting out the secret is to show that he has not lost the success that he used to have with women at college.

Zerar (2019) and Laceb (2018) have analyzed the mythical aspect of Tom by referring to the monstrous figure of Cyclops in Homer's *Odyssey*. The clue to this archetypal interpretation of this character, a foil to *The Great Gatsby*, is his dismissal of the latter as a "Nobody from nowhere" during their confrontation for the love of Daisy in the Plaza Hotel. "Nobody" is the name that Odysseus cries out to the blinded Cyclops to trick out his fellow monsters and escape identification by the patron sea god of the Cyclops, Poseidon. Indeed, the Cyclops holds the clue to the archetypal identity of Tom given the moral and the physical monstrosity, or deformity of the latter described above. However, in stating their case, Zerar and Laceb have missed the important detail that the Cyclops, as Vernont (1965), has rightly put it belongs to a place, the Island of Sicily, imagined in Homer's *Odyssey*, as a place that refuses gift exchange and hospitality. In other words, Tom does not belong to the world (Godbout, 2000) or community of the gift (Hyde, 1983). Completely ignorant of the "logic of the gift," both Tom and his

archetype, lack the disposition "toward an ethic of generosity (Shrift, 1997)," which Aristotle places at the core of the friendship of virtue and the community of friends it is associated with.

What is said about Tom's typically utilitarian "friendship" holds true for many other friendships in *The Great Gastby*. The case is the same for the relation between Wolfshiem, the Jew, and Gatsby; Myrtle and her husband, Wilson; Jordan and Carraway; Carraway and Tom; Tom and Daisy; and the established residents of East Egg and the *nouveaux rich* world of West Egg; and finally the miserably poor residents of the Valley of Ashes and the rest of the New Yorkers. In *The Nichomachean ethics*, Aristotle writes that friendship, especially in its civil concord aspect, is the cement of the polity. For Fitzgerald, through his character-narrator as participant observer of social life in New York City, the predominance of the two inferior, perverted types of friendship – in other words, the pleasure and utility types of friendship – and the scarcity of the perfect third type of friendship, called the friendship of virtue are strong indications that the American society of the 1920s had trodden the dangerous path of unraveling its social fabric.

Whatever has already been said about inoperative friendships in Fitzgerald's novel, it would be stretching the truth a little if no exceptions to the rule are allowed. One such exception is the posthumous friendship that Carraway avows of the hero at the beginning and the end of the novel, when all the utilitarian friends of Gatsby have deserted him. Whatever negative characteristics can be attached to Gatsby, as the main romance character, he still embodies the good that is usually the hallmark of the protagonists in the romance genre. His agonistic relationship with Tom is also conventional in the sense that in romance there is conflict between the good and the bad. However, this being said, he is the one man whose friendship has the attributes of that perfect type of friendship Aristotle calls the friendship of virtue. Hence, in the course of the romance, Gatsby keeps alive the friendship with his mentor Dan Cody/Buffalo Bill by having a portrait of his place in his library. To Carraway's question as to the identity of the man in the portrait, Gatsby unhesitatingly responds that he is "my friend." Keeping a memory of

a friend, who in his words has fashioned his character through an appropriate education, shows the extent to which he appreciates the good that is done to him, regardless of the fact that he is tricked out of his pecuniary gains by Dan Cody's mistress. The other characteristic that makes his friendship a friendship of virtue is that "smile" of his, which distinguishes him from churlish and fawning people around him in the days of his magnificence. It is this smile that has compelled Dan Cody to make him his closest friend.

However, we would say that Gatsby's virtuous friendship shows mostly in his devotion to his love in the Platonic sense of the word. Though unrequited in his love, he sticks to it up to his tragic fall at the end of the romance, which in this particular case really deserves the qualification of "secular scripture" that Frye (1976) has accorded to it. The character of the good man, or the perfect friend, Aristotle tells us is steadfast. It does not "ebb and flow like the tide. (1996:242)" Though crossed in his love Gatsby never despairs, or loses his sense of chivalry and his gallant disposition. Unrequited in his love, Gatsby practically falls in love with love, in other terms with the Platonic idea that he makes of love. From the outset of the romance, Gatsby as a clam-digger and salmon fisherman is figured out as a "fisher of men," particularly when this trade is associated with that enticing smile of his. It is true that he is recruited as a bootlegger gangster. However, this does not throw a shadow over his character, for as Red and Edwards, have pointed out, the gangster at that time "was elevated to a sort of public hero as though American worship of success had finally burst out all bounds in its admiration for the slick operator. (1967: 309)" Indeed, Gatsby's gangster activity may be out of moral bounds, but he has been reluctantly enticed into it. If he is drawn to this immoral activity, it is not because he has an evil purpose in mind, but he desperately lacks the wherewithal to re-gain that supreme good, which is love.

The issue in Gatsby's romance or novel is that love has become a commodity. Just like any other marketable good, love can be bought and sold. To use Weiner's book title (1992), love no longer belongs to that category of things, which in the world or community of the gift, are called

"inalienable possessions." Furthermore, as Carraway tells the reader, Gatsby "has an extraordinary gift of hope, such as I have never found in any other person and which it is not likely I shall ever find again. (p.8)" It is such a permanent and absolute attribute that makes Gatsby's friendship, a friendship of virtue. As a donor of immaterial, spiritual goods such as the gift of hope, of love as a gift, and an ever-ready winning smile, Gastby cuts the high figure of Christ. Romance is displaced by tragedy toward the end of the novel, but like all heroes he leaves behind him a literary testament written by his disciple/friend (Carraway). This testament reminds the reader that love and the community of friendship will ultimately triumph, though the world of commodities has temporarily encroached on the inalienable possessions called love and the friendship of virtue. These non-reciprocated, immaterial gifts that Gatsby bestows on his friend, and which in his turn transmits to his readers in his tragic romance, or "secular scripture" to employ Frye's words again, belies Derrida's (1994) strong claim that free or "pure" gifts belong to the world of the impossible.

As Aristotle recognizes, there are some gifts between equal friends that cannot be repaid because "their worth cannot be measured against money." The Greek philosopher gives the typical illustration of a friend who has learned philosophy from another friend to support his case. Thus, Aristotle, contra Derrrida (1994) and Mauss (1990), admits that there is, indeed, such a thing as the free gift, or "transfer that need not be returned" (1941 a: IX. 1.11164b2) This Aristotelian definition of gift fits in well with the immaterial gifts that Gatsby bequeathed to his comrades-in arm and friend of virtue, Carraway. Though the latter expresses his gratitude to Gatsby, Gatsby's gift giving underscores the possibility of annulling the reciprocal obligation or debt generally associated with gift giving, and of going beyond monetary calculations and the economy of the market place. For all the reasons stated above, there is the need to re-evaluate the critique that Riche (Personal communication made at the 15th International F. Scott Fitzgerald Society Conference, June 24-29, 2019) has leveled against the character-narrator, Nick Carraway, whom

he has off-handedly dismissed as a failed Wall Street bondsman turned artist writer. (2019). On the contrary, when Carraway is considered in the light of his change of attitude toward Gatsby , the former does not look as a failed businessman in the bonds market, who is compelled to fall back on writing commercially successful books as an alternative to the bonds business to make up a return on investment. He cuts the high figure of a constant friend who has rallied to Gatsby's call for love in the same way as Christ's disciples such as Jean did in the Christian love book par excellence, which is *The New Testament*. This comes with the reminder that Aristotle's conception of the friendship of virtue finds an echo in Christian love as depicted in *The New Statement*.

A huge number of critics have the tendency to link romance in Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* only with the central hero, overlooking the fact that Nick Carraway is also involved in a romance by leaving the Middle West. Deeply traumatized by his participation in the Great War, he grows restless in "that the ragged edge of the universe [and] goes East to learn the bond business. (p.9)" This quest motif is a hallmark of the genre of romance typically illustrated by the story of the Holy Grail. As already suggested above, his initial quest to make pecuniary gains by initiating himself into the trade of bondsman does not turn as well as he has expected, so he involves himself instead in an alternative spiritual enterprise by trying his hand at writing about social bonds. In his first observation of social life in New City as participant observer, Carraway has a very negative attitude to Gatsby's princely pretentions, going so far as to dismiss him as a "Turbaned character leaking sawdust [in other words an effigy] at every pore as he pursued a tiger through the Bois de Boulogne (p.71)," a red district in Paris, France. Thus Gatsby's pretention to a courageous big game hunter is, in Carraway's eyes, reduced to a chasing of women of ill-repute in the notorious red zone of the French capital.

However, in the course of the narrative, Carraway comes to make a distinction between Gatsby and Tom, appreciating the former at his real value as the Grail he is looking for to heal his war

psychopathological wounds. Toward the end of the novel, he becomes an intimate good friend of Gatsby, joyfully accepting rides in the front seat of Gatsby's Rolls Royce; giving him good advice in the extremely difficult situation that he has landed himself in the run-and-hit accident; admiring his generosity in covering for Daisy and taking the blame for what his golden girl, or girl friend has done; and waking up in the early morning just to hurry to Gatsby's home, to share a cigarette smoking with him and see how well he has managed the situation. After giving him advice to run away before the police track his Rolls Royce down in his garage, he expresses his admiration for Gatsby before he reluctantly leaves Gatsby friend for work fearing of what might eventually happen to him. As he tells the reader, "before I reached the hedge I remembered something and turned around. "They are a rotten crowd," I shouted. You are worth the whole damn lot of them together. (1994:160)'"Thus, swept along by the force of affection of friendship, Carraway clears his friend's name that has been mudded throughout the romance. The force of his ethical friendship is such that it is the only friend to stay in Gatsby's home to take in charge of the funeral ceremony.

Gatsby's Magnificence and the imagining of Community of the Gift

Critics have paid little attention to the title of Fitzgerald's romance, *The Great Gatsby*, which in the French language translates as *Gatsby le magnifique*. This title shows the extent of respect and the touching devotion that Carraway has for his deceased friend. The reader remembers that at the outset of his romance, in consequence of his father's advice, Gatsby is "inclined to reserve all judgments, a habit that has opened up many curious natures to me and made me the victim of not a few veteran bores. (p.1)" As shown above, this parental advice to get rid of judgmental attitude toward people helps him to play perfectly the role of participant observer of social life in New York City. Still he does not totally manage to hold his tongue, particularly with regard to women, the colored people, and the Orientals. With Gatsby, he makes a short case of his father's piece of advice, moving from an adversarial to a friendly judgment with this ultimate statement

that "Gatsby turned out all right at the end, it is what preyed on Gatsby, what foul dust floated in the wake of his dreams that temporarily closed out my interest in the abortive sorrows and short-winded elations of me. (1994: 8)" These attenuating circumstances in Carraway's tribute to and sanctification of Gatsby have the Christian overtone of the absolution of temporary temptation by sin. Even Jesus is not exempt to the temptation of evil, given his nature as both human and divine.

Writing a book about a remarkable friend that he entitles *The Great Gatsby* is a way of cherishing his fond memories of an honorable man and perpetual friend. In Fitzgerald's romance, reference is made several times to tableaux. At the outset of the romance, Carraway ironically points to his resemblance to the war profiteering great grandfather's brother, the one who established the fortune of what he calls the Carraway "clan". "I never saw this great-uncle," he tells the reader tongue in cheek, but I supposed to look like him – with special reference to the rather hard-boiled painting that hangs in father's office. (p. 9)" As the romance unfolds, Carrway again observes that Gatsby has placed a portrait of Dan Cody whom he calls a friend on the dressing table of his room. Carraway's story of "the great Gatsby cannot be set apart from this predominant iconology. In other words, the story that he sets out about his friend is intended as a portrait, or rather an icon that will be a lasting memorial to a remarkably good man, comrade-in-arms, and virtuous friend. He makes a second homecoming to Louisville a healed man, just as if he had touched the Grail, which Gatsby has vainly pursued. He also comes back to the West as a born-again convert to the community of the gift. It is as a convert to Gatsby's virtue of love and friendship that he writes down the following lines:

> When I came back from the East last autumn I felt that I wanted to be in uniform and at a sort of moral attention forever; I wanted no more riotous excursions with privileged glimpses into the human heart. Only Gatsby, the man who gives his name to this book, was exempt from my reaction – Gatsby, who represented everything for which I have an unaffected scorn. If personality is an unbroken series of successful gestures, the there is something gorgeous about him, some heightened sensitivity to the promises of life, as if he were related to one of those intricate machines that register earthquakes ten thousand miles away. (p.8)

In consigning the above words in his testament, he seems to observe the solemnities of a deceased comrade-in-arms, who in his uniform stands in moral attention to salute the memory of an exceptional knight of love who fell in battle in the world of commodities prevailing in the East. The superlative title of the book, The *Great Gatsby*, which Carraway gives to his romance, leads us back to Aristotle's *The Nicomachean ethics* in its evocation of what its author calls *megaloprepeia*, in other words "magnificence," best rendered in the French title of the book, *Gatsby le magnifique*. "Magnificence," as Aristotle tells the reader, means "a fitting expenditure involving largeness of scale." It is closely related to civic and religious expenditure on a great scale of generosity, anticipating in these words what George Bataille says about the economy of sumptuous squandering in his *Accursed share*. Aristotle adds two important remarks about "magnificence" and the "magnificent man" that can help get a short glimpse into what Carraway means by calling the hero of our romance, The Great Gatsby. The first remark is that a poor person could be generous but he could by no means pretend to reach magnificence. The second remark is that the "magnificent man spends not on himself but on public objects and gifts [which] bears some resemblance to votive offerings." Much more importantly, the "magnificent man is like an artist, for he can see what is fitting and spend large sums tastefully," avoiding in this way the sense of vulgarity.

Aristotle's interweaving of the artistic and ethical standards of magnificence associated with generosity, gift, and friendship prefigure the great importance that philosophers like Hegel and Nietzsche and modernist artists in general accord to aesthetic objects, not necessarily in the form of the absolute autonomy of art for art's sake, but in their potential to operate both inside and outside the commercial circuit of commodity exchange. The portrait that Carraway draws of the Great Gatsby falls in this type of aesthetic objects. The sentimental wrappings in which he

packages that the portrait of Gatsby for the readers makes it look like an illiquid gift that set it quite apart from the ordinary, consumer commodities.

It follows that the epithet of "great" attached to the name of Gatsby by Carraway does not solely invoke the idea of magnificence (*Megaloprepeia* in Greek), as the French translation of Fitzgerald's book as *Gatsby le Magnifique*, righty suggests. The epithet "great" is also linked to what it exactly says in English, greatness or greatness of soul which Aristotle calls *megalopsychia*. Just like "maginificence," "greatness," or "great souledness" is the third and highest of Aristotles's virtues of giving in Aristotle's ethical scheme. The reader remembers that Carraway avows that when he comes back from the East, he "wanted no more riotous excursions with the privileged glimpses in the human heart (1994:8)". However, immediately after he revises his attitude and makes an exception to his resolution as regards Gatsby the man for whom at his first encounter with him "represented everything for which I have an unaffected scorn. (p.8)" In hindsight, the fond and cherished memories of the man, who has become a remarkable friend of his in the course of the narrative, loosens his tongue saying the words that accounts for the qualification of Gatsty as a man with a great soul: "There was something gorgeous about him, some heightened sensitivity to the promises of life, as if he were related to one of those intricate machines that register earthquakes ten thousand miles away. (1994:8)"

Aristotle has called the greatness of soul, "a sort of crown of the virtues, for it makes them greater, and is not found without them." These are the virtues that will celebrated later in The New Testament about the spiritually remarkable figure of Christ, who, among other things, has chastened the world of commodities then prevailing in Jerusalem. Aristotle has noted an asymmetry in the practice of giving, for the man with a greatness of soul is "a sort of man to confer benefits, but he is ashamed of receiving them. " The man with the greatness of soul is a man who is always on search for opportunities of acting as a doctor in order to impose his social superiority. We might read Bataille's idea of potlatch as a social rivalry in Aristotle's words. For

Aristotle the man with a great soul is always inclined to do everything on a grand scale and the most outstanding hallmark in his character is "pride," which far from being a vice "implies greatness, as beauty implies a good-sized body."

Aristotle's interweaving of aesthetic and ethical virtues finds an echo in Carraway's description of the Great Gatsby depicted at once as "great" and "gorgeous". Pride is also one of his traits particularly with his rival Tom. It is arguably because of Gatsby's behavior as a proud man always inclined to give gifts to impose his superiority on Tom the representative of the established wealthy class, which partly accounts for Carraway's initial "unaffected scorn." Aristotle offers the reader a key for understanding why he comes to appreciate Gatsby despite what looks like a defect for people without Carraway's aesthetic sensibility. In *The Nicomachean ethics,* Aristotle has suggested that ethical friendship might overcome "pride" in the practice of giving and receiving gifts. His character being a compound of outspokenness, honesty, courage, disdain of pettiness and slavishness, the proud man-cum-good man with the greatness of soul, "must be unable to make his life revolve around another, unless it be a friend." Martha Kendal Woodruff explains perfectly why pride attached to greatness yields to or is suspended in cases in cases of ethical friendship of the type binding Carraway to Gatsby.

The perception that allows Aristotle to go beyond the calculation of gifts is the well-known idea of the friend as 'another self' [*allos autos*]. For Aristotle, friendship stimulates both ethical and intellectual achievement. Only through cultivating friendships of virtue do we realize who we are by recognizing ourselves in the other. The human self, to become fully itself, demands an "other," not an anonymous or abstract other, but an equal, a friend. This relation suggests a far richer understanding of self and other than either a Cartesian model, dependent on an isolated self, or an economic model, dependent on competing self-interests. (Woodruff, 2002: 124)

The community of the gift that the celebration of friendship implies is deeply controversial in the sense that it is gendered, racial, and class-based. Indeed, when we look into characterization, it is

first, the female characters, which are lumped together as an outside group, are shouted down one by one, as accountable for the dangerous shift of the American community from the world of the gift into the world of commodities. The conception of women as "poor," "rotten," "bad" drivers is typical of this gender bias. It is these pejorative epithets that Carraway employs to describe Jordan Baker's drive to her home in Warwick for a house party after a summer golf-tournament. Carraway tells the reader that "It was on that same house party that we had a curious conversation about driving a car." (1994: 65). This conversation is preceded by Carraway's description of how he has come across Jordan Baker in the golf tournament, and his remembrance of having read about the scandal she has nearly caused at her first golf tournament by shamefacedly breaching the rules of the game. The reminiscence about the scandalous beginning of her career as golf player is triggered by an equally scandalous behavior that of leaving " a borrowed car out in the rain with the top down, "1994: 64" and lying about it in the same breath. He closes this introduction to the conversation by making the misogynist qualification of Jordan Baker as "incurably dishonest" woman with "a cool, insolent smile turned to the world [… to] satisfy the demands of her hard, jaunty body. (1994: 64-65. Making of Jordan Baker a typical case, the reflection jumps from the particular to the overgeneralization that "Dishonesty in a woman is a thing you never blame deeply. (1994: 65)"

The curious conversation that Carraway has with Jordan Baker about driving a car comes as Jordan's confirmation of his masculine prejudice toward females, most notably the emancipated types, such as the ones that Fitzgerald nicknamed "the flappers." One particular incident sticks in his mind, and provides an occasion to start the argument of driving wherein Jordan Baker condemns herself as a reckless driver. The conversation, he says to the reader, "started because she passed so close to some workmen that our fender flicked a button on one man's coat.(1994: 65)" In her offhand response his reminder about her incautious style of driving, Carraway has put these self-accusing words in her mouth: "They'll keep out of my way[…]. It takes two to

make an accident. (1994: 65" When she is told to make the supposition that she "met somebody just as careless as" herself, she is reported to have made this cynical statement: "I hope I never will. […] I hate careless people. That's why I like you. (1994: 65" Thus, Jordan Baker disqualifies herself as a totally irresponsible driver, selfishly interested in doing everything her own way, and more than that hateful of intelligent males.

Aside from the fact that Carraway is deeply anxiously about women wearing men's breaches, as one might say, female drivers as poor drivers symbolizes the exclusion of women from the public space. In the American Republic, Carraway suggests, women are not qualified to steer what Plato calls "ship of the state," because of their inherent dishonesty and their blatant lack of social responsibility. This American Republic as imagined by Carraway is threatened from the inside by self-willed females making a small case of male virtue, a word it must be noted is etymologically derived from the same root as virility, which is "vir." It has also to be observed that this gendered conception of females as anti-social, and non-friendly is equally strong in Aristotle's *The Nicomachean ethics*, and most particularly in his *Politics* wherein he describes women as monsters. For both Aristotle and Carraway, women do not have and cannot have their place in the beloved community, or the world of male friends, for they are naturally incapable of working for the common good. In other terms, they are reduced to a subhuman species, a chattel, or subalterns, which must by all means be confined to the household alongside slaves and house furniture.

As the major female character in *The Great Gatsby*, Daisy fares as badly as Jordan Baker at the hands of Carraway. The way the lover story unfolds shows that they are not cut out of the same cloth, that is the same text(ile)s. Daisy's character development and that of Gatsby go into two opposite directions. The least that can be said is Daisy Fay is at first described as a sympathetic way. She is given the floor to express her disappointment with her husband's infidelity, bigotry, misplaced pride, and racist attitude. However, the arrangement of the events concerning her

character is twisted in such a way that from the role of victim she shifts into that of Gatsby's complicit tormentor. Progressively, the reader is presented with all her human frailties. Her love for Gatsby turns out to be a passing fad for a World War I soldier, an attractive doughboy stationed in Louisville. She too easily lets go on her previous love to move on with life by riding the wave of conspicuous consumption that characterized the "Roaring Twenties," as Fitzgerald has dubbed the decade of the 1920s. Instead of waiting patiently, in a Penelope fashion, for the return of the Ulysses figure, Gatsby, she quickly disposes of her love commodity to the highest bidder in the marriage or erotic market by marrying Tom to whom she bears a baby daughter, Pam. There is some truth in Woldsworf's claim (2019: 236) that Daisy's reality principle allows her to successfully negotiate her mourning over the loss of her lover, Gatsby. And yet the very citation he makes in support of such a claim shows that her mourning is all too brief to be true colors:

> She began to cry – she cried and cried. I rushed out and found her mother's maid and we locked the door and got into a cold bath. […] Next day at five o'clock she married Tom Buchanan without so much as a shiver and started on a three months' trip to the South Seas. (1994:236)

Ironically, as Gatsby is making his pilgrimage to Louisville in a desperate attempt to recapture his love, Daisy and Tom are abroad in France for their honeymoon. When the forgotten lover shows up after a difficult *nostos*/homecoming, her love for the newly enriched Gatsby flares into life, but it almost immediately peters out in the Plaza Hotel scene. What is written about her sounds as she is determined to have her last flings with her former lover to pay back in kind the sexual infidelity of an adulterous husband. As the novel draws to the close, the plot is turned one more screw to show her to be as irresponsible as Jordan Baker in driving. Not only does she cause a hit-and-run accident, but she is also complicit with her husband in disclosing the identity of Gatsby, who has covered for her, in order to run away with the murder of Myrtle.

If the contrastive representations of Daisy and Gatsby have to be qualified at all, they can be described as respectively Ovidian and Platonic, or Aristotelian. Gatsby's love, as Carraway has reported about it, is "Platonic," that is to say perfect. It is offered to the reader as a contemplative aesthetic ideal that endures the vicissitudes of time. By contrast, Daisy's love is liable to metamorphosis, i.e., to easy change. Thus, Daisy, like all female figures in the novel, shows lack of character. Carraway even uses irony to point out that Daisy is short of virtue. Indeed, it is irony that peeps out behind Carraway's reference to Daisy's daughter, Pam, who is presented to both Carraway and Gatsby. Pam is an oblique reference to Richardson's, Pamela, the eponymous heroine. The reader remembers that the full title of Richardson's book is *Pamela, or, virtue rewarded*. Daisy is strikingly different from Richardson's heroine of virtue. Instead of being rewarded for virtue, Daisy is seen rather as an adulterous woman, at whom Pam, her daughter, points an accusation finger. In Carraway's characterization, Pam is to Daisy what the elf-child Pearl is to the adulterous Hester Prynne in Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*.

In the final analysis, in accordance with clear-cut Aristotelian distinctions between the bad and the good that Carraway has made his own, Daisy is lumped together with the philosophical or ethical category of the bad best represented by Tom. The following condemnatory lines about the cynical attitude to human life clearly make it clear that Tom and Daisy are cut of the same cloth or textile:

> I couldn't forgive him or like him, but I saw then what he had done was, to him, entirely justified. It was all very careless and confused. They were careless people, Tom and Daisy – They smashed up things and creatures and then retreated back into their money or their vast carelessness, or whatever it was that kept them together, and let other people clean up the mess they had made… (1994: 186)

Carraway's above final outrage at Tom's and Daisy's unethical complicity is misleading, for from the outset, Carraway shows if they flock together, it is because they are of the same feather. It is not difficult for the reader to gather that Carraway's characterization of Tom is that of a wealthy draft dodger and war profiteer trying to make up for his cowardice in the eyes of his

community by playing on the cord of social, racial, and class prejudice. Licari (2019) and Laceb(2018) have superbly illustrated this character trait. From this citation included in Carraway's evocation of how Daisy comes to meet Tom while Gatsby is fighting in "that delayed Teutonic migration known as the Great War, (1994: 6)" Tom and Daisy seem to enact the roles of the mythical figures of Aegisthus and Clytemnestra in Homer's *The Iliad*: Daisy, the reader is informed, "didn't play around with the soldiers anymore but only with a few flat-footed, shortsighted young men in town, who couldn't get into the army at all. (1994: 60)" Carraway suggests through such derogatory statements that those who have come to inherit post-World War America are made of an unethical stuff at the detriment of the real war heroes, like Gatsby, Carryway himself, and the Owl-Eyed man.

In *The Great Gatsby* the disbanded or demobilized war heroes are forgotten because the people and the nation as a whole have decided to turn the page of the Great War, the Spanish influenza, kin to Covid 19 of our time, race riots, anarchist plots as well as labor strikes. President Warren Harding well summarizes the spirit of the second decade of the twentieth century in his Normalcy speech of May, 1920:

> America's present need is not heroics, but healing; not nostrums, but normalcy; not revolution, but restoration; not agitation, but adjustment; not surgery, but serenity; not the dramatic, but the dispassionate; not experiment, but equipoise; not submergence in internationality, but sustainment in triumphant nationality.

It goes without saying that adjustment to the normative model of society for which Harding has called is not easy to realize for traumatized veterans like Gatsby and Carraway. Harding's emphasis on normalcy finds an echo in Carraway's ironic reference to "war bores," obliged to tell their stories in an erotic vein. As it is rendered, Caryway's story of love in War- and Post-World I context, it is not just story of women that have unmanned the "band of brothers" (the words are Shakespeare's) and threatened the society fabric through their erratic asocial drives, but also that of the threat of laborers, Orientals, and the black males. How far the community is

at loose ends is expressed in the accident scene in chapter III, wherein a crowd is gathered around two collided cars. In the process of collision, one of the cars has one of its front wheels wrenched off. When its driver comes out to check why his auto is not moving, he stupidly asks the question whether it has "run out of gas" while "half a dozen fingers pointed at the amputated wheel. (1994: 61)" Still not realizing the mechanical damage, he adds another stupidity to the first one by asking the crowd: "Wonder'ff tell me where there's a gas'line station. (1994: 6)" For Carraway, this car accident typically illustrates the extent to which the American society has lost its directions.

In *Orientalism*, Said (1978) writes that Western authors often deploy the Orient in all its aspects for "local uses." Such statement is true to facts in *The Great Gatsby* where the eponymous hero is explicitly compared to Trimalchio. As is well-known from biographical information, the name of this mythological figure, inspired by the Roman author Petronius, was originally intended to be the title of the novel. A huge number of critics have tried to make a linkage between Trimalchio and Gatsby on the one hand, and their economic success and their quest for social prestige through the organization of banquets. To recap what has already been said above, the parties that Gatsby throws in West Egg resemble the ceremonies of potlatch. The latter are celebrated in a war-like spirit in Gatsby's mansion a glitz Camelot with the sole view to win back Daisy's heart from Tom's grips in East Egg. The literary "parallel lives" between Petronius' Trimalchio and Fitzgerald is made by critics, who have accorded only a little attention to its orientalism, and its political and socio-cultural implications.

Grimal offers the key to Carraway's orientalism when he writes that "De façon générale, tandis que le siècle d'Auguste avait prétendu amorcer une réaction contre le luxe et retourner aux vertus ancestrales, on assiste avec la période suivante, à l'envahissement de Rome par la civilisation orientale. (Grimal, 1967: 84)/*Overall, while the century of Augustus had presumably sought to react against luxury and to return to ancestral virtues, in the subsequent period we witness the*

overwhelming of Rome by oriental civilization/. Grimal refers to Petronius' *Satyricon* and Trimalchio, one of the major characters of the book, for evidence of his assertive claim. Among other things, he underlines how at the end of the reign of Nero, the fifth Emperor of Rome infamously remembered for extravagance and debauchery, undermined the social and political fabric of the Roman Empire through the influx of newly enfranchised Semites like Trimalchio. Grimal goes on to explain how the frugal Roman way of life that had prevailed during the first century of the Roman Empire was shaken at its foundations by the introduction of the oriental, luxurious model of society brought into Rome by economically successful Orientals admitted not only as citizens of Rome but also as chief players on the political stage.

Looked at closely the above surface parallel lives of Petronius' Trimalchio and Fitzgerald's/Carraway's Gatsby is sustained by a deep parallel between the decadent careers of the Roman Empire and the United States of America. It has to be noted that America really started to play the role of empire only in the last years of the nineteenth and the first years of the twentieth with the annexation of Spanish colonies such as Cuba and the Philippines. Its participation in the Great War strongly consolidated its imperial status among the other empires of the time. The concern over empire in *The Great Gatsby* is not just a matter of literary reference to Petronius' oriental character Trimalchio, but also of fantasized Orient that found its way into the American imagination and life through movies like Thomas E. Eddison's A street Arab (1898), *Arabian gun twirler* (1899) released by the American Mutoscope, *The Sheik* (1921) by the Famous Players Lasky Corporation, and *The Sheikh's wife* (1922) by Harilal C. Twitwedi, and *The village Sheik* (1922). The rhyme sung by children in *The Great Gatsby* demonstrates how these movies about the oriental figure of the Sheikh entered into popular usage. Gatsby is doubly orientalized in Fitzgerald's novel since he is associated with both Trimalchio and the Sheikh. It important to observe that Rudolph Valentino played the role of Sheikh Ahmed Ben Hassan in the 1921 version of the movie features. Obviously, Gatsby and his tragic destiny are

patterned on the dark-skinned Italian-born actor, Rudolph Valentino, the sex symbol of the 1920s and his tragically premature death.

In elaborating his fictionalized drama, Carraway also makes Gatsby play minstrelsy role. The reader remembers that Dan Coddy, the fictional Buffalo Bill in Fitzgerald's work, is a show man and that he is represented as Gatsby's surrogate father. Apprenticed to a show man, it is not surprising that Gatsby is given several roles to play at the same time, including that of a white man/actor passing for a black man by the blackening of the face just as in minstrel shows. Minstrel shows, it has to noted, were still in fashion in the world of American theater of the 1920s, and their prevailing influence of Minstrelsy on American drama can be felt in O'Neill's *Emperor Jones*. Looked at from this perspective, Fanon (1967) provides a key for understanding the complexity of Gatsby's desperate attempt to move from "rags to riches", marry his golden girl, Daisy, and integrate the established white elite. Speaking of the black man's alienation, Fanon writes what follows:

> I wish to be acknowledged not as black but as white.
> Now – and this is a form of recognition that Hegel had not envisaged – who but a white woman can do this for me? By loving me she proves that I am worthy of white love. I am loved like a white man.
> I am a white man.
> Her love takes me onto the noble road that leads to total realization. …
> I marry white culture, white beauty, white civilization.
> When my restless hands caress those white breasts, they grasp white civilization and dignity and make them mine. (Fanon, 1967: 63)

This situation of alienation described by Fanon finds an ironic echo in Carraway's characterization of Gatsby's erotic quest for Daisy and the civilization that she stands for. Such an interpretation is plausible in the light of the interest paid to Jazz in the novel, whose author is famous for the catchy phrase "the Jazz age." Moreover, this Jazz age was marked by the Harlem Renaissance, whose white patron is Carl Van Vechten. And yet, no matter Gatsby's success in playing a part in Carraway's staged minstrel show, Gatsby, to come back to the metaphor of driving used in this section, is not spared the consequences of reckless driving that characterizes

the whole community. As Carraway suggests to the reader, in the culture of commodity peculiar to the community of the bad such as Tom and Daisy, Gatsby's romantic quest for the golden girl is doomed to failure before it even starts. On his road, he meets what Carraway calls a "colossal accident."

Conrad and Fitzgerald and their Friendship of Virtue

At this stage, I come back to the question of the connection between gift exchange and friendship, but this time with an emphasis on the connections between Conrad and Fitzgerald. When the latter speaks of Conrad, saying that all writers should qu, when cannot fail to note how far Fitzgerald seeks the authority of Conrad to confirm his identity as a writer. There is what I already identified as the "empathetic dialogue" characteristic of gift exchange as a distinguishing mark of the friendship of virtue or disinterested sense of affinity between Conrad and Fitzgerald. Fitzgerald does not only affirm publically the friendship that he bears for Conrad but he also fictionalizes it in *The Great Gatsby*. Fitzgerald's reciprocal relationship with Conrad is shown in all the formal and thematic aspects of his novel or romance.

The one aspect of Fitzgerald's romance is the way the story is told about a "remarkable man," Kurtz and by a Marlow-type narrator who recounts his own encounter with that character in New York City, Fitzgerald's heart of darkness. The contexts in which the two stories of these two remarkable literary figures are recounted are strikingly different. Marlow tells his on the board of the merchantman the Nelly, momentarily blocked by the shallow waters of the Thames because of the ebb tide. The audience for the audience is enumerated and consists of the Captain who is host, the Account, the Lawyer and other sailors at the mast who are not mentioned by name. The atmosphere is also specified, the emphasis being put on the brooding dusk atmosphere. In short, all the ingredients for an oral performance are gathered for Marlow to indulge in what seems to be his favorite pastime, which is "spinning yarns" for an interested audience deeply appreciative of this gift. Storyteller and listeners are happy to share Marlow's memories of African

experience and his encounter with the "remarkable man" who is Kurtz. However, before given the floor, the outermost or frame narrator reveals something special about Marlow's art of storytelling described as often "inconclusive," many-layered at the level of meaning, and with its central theme being jealously kept under wraps somewhat in the manner of present a gift to someone we appreciate. Marlow's art of spinning yarns, we are told, is unique in the sense that it is gift-wrapped and that each and every listener/reader has to unwrap it to discover what is inside. If this wrapped gift is insubstantial, it is for the simple reason that what matters in the story telling version of gift exchange is not the concrete object as much as the immateriality of the act of giving, taking, and reciprocating.

It is this art of storytelling that is passed down by Conrad to Fitzgerald who fully acknowledges his indebtedness, an indebtedness which he repays by an empathetic dialogue. The difference in the context of the delivery of the story of the Great Gatsby can easily be noted. Carraway, the Marlow-type character, does not recount his story to a group of sailors at rest to excite the warmest sympathy of his shipmates, but by writing a romance/novel with a speakerly text to memorialize his experience in New York and his encounter with the Great Gatsby. Notwithstanding this difference and many others that we will not mention, the affinity between Conrad and Fitzgerald cannot be missed. The disclosure of the central character, Gatsby, is delayed to the maximum keeping the listener/reader tense up to the last minute of his appearance on the stage, and even he remains quite insubstantial as a human being. Rumor is the key narrative technique that both Conrad and Fitzgerald use to create suspense about who their remarkable men are. For example, Marlow hears about Kurtz when still in Belgium for the job interview, and these rumors about the remarkableness of the character keep inflating up as he moves from the outer station to the inner station.

To sum up, this research at this stage has demonstrated that the reader of *The Great Gatsby* is offered the gift of a hero and a book, of which America is particularly fond at all times. Its

narrator/character employs a moral or ethic framework (the first and last chapters of the book) inspired by an Aristotelian vision of ethics and politics to distinguish between the community of friendship or the community of the gift, and the community of the bad. However, as the second section of the research has shown Carraway's ethic and political model of community rests on gender, racial, and class prejudices. As it is conceived and perceived in *The Great Gatsby*, friendship is a monopoly of white males, most notably the outrageously forgotten white World War I veterans in whose memory the book was written. It is highly symbolical that the funeral ceremony of the tragic hero is attended only by two friends of virtue, Carraway and the Owl-Eyed man the literary surrogate of Roosevelt, a World War I veteran and creator of the American legion. Thus, in a culture of commodity that has made a short shrift of the virtue of heroism and friendship as social cement of the polity, *The Great Gatsby* can be read not an elegy for the passing of a heroic age, but also a re-affirmation of an ethical order in the face of the decadence of all sorts.

The friendship of virtue between Fitzgerald and Conrad is reflected in the friendship of their two central characters, the Great Gatsby and the remarkable man who is Kurtz on the one hand, and Marlow and Nick Carraway on the other. Nick Carraway, like Marlow, started with an ambivalent attitude toward the protagonist (Great Gatsby), but he ends developing with him a friendship of virtue. The case is similar with Marlow becomes no more nor less a soul mate. The interviews of these central characters at the end of both novels redeem the very characters about which all the rumors are weaved. Unlike the other pilgrims who had material objectives in meeting Kurtz, Conrad was looking for Kurtz to drink from his fountain of words, to know his story. In other words, it is the gift story that Marlow is looking for. The following quote by Marlow illustrates the reason why he wants to meet Kurtz: "I wasn't very interested in him. No. Still, I was curious to see this man, who had come out equipped with moral ideas of some sort,

would climb to the top after all and how he would set about his work when there. (Joseph Conrad, 1983: 62)"

The presence of European characters in the Belgian Congo is supposedly motivated by the spirit of the gift, that of taking civilization into one of the African frontier "Dark Continent." Using ironic myth, Conrad shows how this sharing of the gift of civilization with the Other turns into a potlatch, an unbridled quest for the commodity of irony at which European pilgrims kneel in worship. It is this idea of the gift transformed into a potlatch that we also found in Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*. The principal characters of the novel move from the West, the space associated with the Frontier and American values such as self-reliance, democracy, hard word, and so on and so forth, into the urban Frontier of the East. In the process, they completely lose these values because this new frontier is overrun by the world of commodities at which the idea of potlatch holds a central place.

As it is said above, critics have started reading *The Great Gatsby* in the light of World War I poetry. It is true that at the level of symbol, Fitzgerald's fiction is a war novel. However, critics have not identified its source of imagery. In the previous chapter, I have drawn a parallel between Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage* and *Heart of Darkness*, showing to what extent Conrad is indebtedness to Crane in crafting his novel as a war novel that is not explicitly announce its name. So, I would that the special type of war novel to which Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* owes much to the passing of the craft of war novel writing that Crane wrote as mediated by Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. For example, the waste land images which are strewn in *The Great Gatsby* are similar to the war type images that Conrad has included in his novel. So, obviously, Marlow and Kurtz on the one hand, and Nick Carraway and Great Gatsby are war heroes. More importantly, Marlow and Nick Carraway come back from the war front with a war story to pass as a gift to the readers/listeners. In recounting to their comrade-in-arms and friends

who fell in the battlefield of the Frontier, both Marlow and Carraway not only pay tribute them but also undo their traumatic experiences of the potlatch in the world of commodities.

Conrad, Eliot, and Hemingway: A Quarrel over Conrad's Legacy

Fitzgerald is the one American author belonging to the Lost Generation writers, who makes no secret about the gift of crafting the novel from Conrad. It is the one author who claims that "most writers line themselves up along a solid bar like … Joseph Conrad's art.(Fitzgerald Scott, 1963: 167)" At the time when Ezra Pound was complaining about the lack of congenial literary background in which American writers can give leeway to their literary creativity, Fitzgerald cites the case of Conrad to contradict him saying that " Conrad is one of the many writers who has been added by being brought up in an atmosphere unrelated to literature. Ibid." And yet I would say that Eliot is also the poet who has best theorized and captured the essence of Conrad's art in his poetry. Eliot's essay "Tradition and the Individual Talent" is a groundbreaking theory of what came to be known as intertextuality since Eliot tells us clearly that artistic creativity is a process of gift exchange, an investment of individual talent in the tradition from which young writers can expect the reciprocation of recognition as author. The passing of the gift from one generation to another enriches the tradition in accordance with the evolution of history. It is this theory of individual talent looking for tradition in a process of gift exchange that Eliot puts into practice by starting his "Hollow Men" with an epigraph, "He Kurtz dead," from Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. Eliot, against the advice of Pound, has elevated Conrad's book to a classic stature, a book capable to illuminate many aspects of his poem, written in the wake of World War I and the result loss of human values.

It is not only in Eliot's poetry that we can identity traces of the literary gift that Conrad has passed to Eliot. The so-called mythic method that Eliot is said to have formalized by reading Joyce's *Ulysses* has also part of its inspiration in Conrad's fiction, most notably *Heart of Darkness*. Indeed, well before the publication of Joyce's mock-epic novel, *Heart of Darkness*

illustrates the use of myth and irony as parameters to parody the seamy sides of the modern world and the futility and vanity of spiritual quests. For example, in calling the European adventurers and predators in the Congo pilgrims and at the same time showing the horrors caused by their material greed, it is the mythic pattern of the spiritual quest that is ironically set upside down. Parallels of the spiritual quest to Conrad's can be found in the romance of Holy Grail as well as Jason's quest for the golden quest. It is such myths, which Conrad uses to measure the extent of what he calls the "idea" is corrupted in the process of the scramble for ivory in the Congo. If Eliot has formalized his theory mythic method from the analysis of Joyce's fiction, this does not mean that he has not in view the continuity of the literary method from James, Conrad up to Joyce.

The third point to be made about the passing of the gift from Conrad to Eliot is the latter's use of ethnography or anthropology in his poetry, in for example, *The Waste Land*. When critics write about the influence of ethnography on T.S. Eliot's poetry, very often critics appeal to Jessie Watson's analysis of the romance of the Grail and J.G. Frazer's *The Golden Bough*. However, I would contend that though Eliot might have been inspired by Jessie Watson and J.G. Frazer as far as primitive rituals and myths are concerned, it is in Conrad's fiction that he saw the use that can made of primitive myth and ritual. I have already illustrated in the second chapter of this research, how for instance, fictionalizes the system of gift exchange in *An Outpost of Progress.* I agree with James Clifford (2002) when he writes that Conrad has put to be side by side with his fellow American-Polish ethnographer Malinowski, who wrote the *Argonauts of the Pacific*. The narrator- ethnographic observers that populate Conrad's fiction find their parallels in Eliot and his narrative personae who in his poetry speak with an ethnographic voice about Western modern society.

Ernest Hemingway is another writer belonging to the Lost Generation, in whose library Conrad has a prominent place. What is be noted in Hemingway-Conrad connection is that Hemingway

appeals to Conrad when he speaks about his antagonism with T.S. Eliot. As contemporary Lost Generation Writers leaving in exile, each of them tries to lord it over the other in the literary scene. Like many other American writers, Hemingway claimed that he defended the excellence of Conrad as an artist at the time when other writers of his generation "disparaged" him. This can be held as a claim to his priority to Conrad's literary legacy since the recognition of Conrad as a literary father by other American authors came late. The Freudian family romance in *Totem and Taboo* describes perfectly the quarrel among the Lost Generation writers over the right of succession to Conrad's gifts.

In his contrast that he established between Eliot and Conrad, Hemingway writes what follows: " If I knew that by grinding Mr Eliot into a fine dry powder and sprinkling that powder over Mr Conrad's grave Mr. Conrad would shortly appear, looking very annoyed at the forced return, and commence writing I would leave for London early tomorrow with a sausage grinder. (Hemingway Earnest, 1967: 33). What Hemingway implies by this statement is that Eliot's use of Conrad is not appropriate, for there is no literary kinship between them. At the time, he saw himself as the one writer who reciprocates in the right spirit to the literary father Conrad. If Hemingway is so harsh in his critique of T.S.Eliot's so-called misappropriation of Conrad, it is because he wants to see himself as the one novelist and short story teller to whom Conrad would respond favorably because of his respect to the latter's theory of the art of fiction.

There is no space here to develop amply the many similarities existing between Conrad and Hemingway. So, I shall content myself to the most prominent of them. The first similarity is arguably the elevation of the art of storytelling and novel writing to spectacle, and the dramatization of the inward life, the subjective life, in an objective theatre. Hemingway's fiction, just like Conrad's, has the major task not only to make us hear, feel, but above all to make us see (The words are Conrad's). In addition, this dramatization of the subjective theater is based on plot situations involving situations of extreme testing man's courage and his convictions. I would

sustain that the code of moral conduct that Conrad has evolved out of his dialogue with previous American authors is passed to Hemingway who translated it into a code of honor. We see this code at work in Conrad's fiction just as in Hemingway's fictions such as *The Old Man and the Sea, The Sun also Rises,* and *For Whom the Bell Tolls,* wherein man's courage is pitted against natural, elemental, human forces of destruction. Hemingway's characters are not without recalling the captains of Conrad's ships and the male comradeship of their crews. Finally, if there is one thing to add to these similarities, Hemingway has made his own the message contained in Conrad's *Victory* that "withdrawal to an island is not human option." This message is echoed in Hemingway's "No man is an Island," and that male comradeship is a necessity for living and surviving the vicissitudes of life with dignity.

The American quarrel over Conrad's legacy, that is to say the claim to the right of succession to Conrad and his completion can be seen among many other American writers, such as Robert Penn Warren, William Faulkner, James Gibbons Huneker, H. L. Mencken, and so and so forth. I would not expand on this attempt at appropriation of Conrad as a mediator in the American literary scene. However, I would make an exception by referring to the literary relationship that African-American writers have developed with Conrad, whose popularity in the United States coincided with the rise of what is called the *Harlem Renaissance*. The appropriation by African-American writers of Conrad's fiction also an object of debate as heated as the ones that marked their white American counterparts, but here I would focus on the Hughes-Conrad connection, for it is the one that comes close to Achebe's relation with Conrad as it is illustrated by his "Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's Heart of Darkness." Unlike the dialogue that Countee Cullen, W.B. Dubois, Richard Wright and other African-American writers, Hughes is arguably the one writer who looks at the gift that Conrad hands down to his counterparts as a poisoned gift. In his *Autobiography*, The Big Ship, Hughes tells the story of a decommissioned haunted ship, a kind of Dutchmen, stationed on the Hudson River, that he challengingly boarded during one winter

night. One plot situation involves the reading "all the ship's library" including *Heart of Darkness*. At the climatic, he throws overboard Conrad's book as if to challenge the championing of Conrad in American literary circles. In the *Luani of the Jungles,* which is set in Africa, he reciprocates Conrad's gift of storytelling by parodying *Heart of Darkness* with Conrad as a hero of his own book. Conrad is described as a "strange, weak-looking little white man" speaking with a "queer accent" and in a "foreign sort of language." In a nutshell, I would say that Hughes is one of the first postcolonial writers who, in the famous phrase of Bill Ashcroft "writes back to empire."

Conclusion

"The best way to criticize a novel," Ralph Ellison writes in *Going Beyond the Territory*, "is to write another novel. This sounds particular true as regards the construction of Conrad as an American literary figure in the early twentieth century. This critical stance to this avuncular figure in the American literary tradition ranges from that of friendship of virtue (Fitzgerald), male comradeship (Hemingway), to friendship of utility (Eliot) and abrogation of amity (Hughes). Conrad's passing on of the inherited gift to these American authors could not have taken place if Conrad's fiction is not imbued with American themes and forms peculiar to the American tradition. Neither could it have taken place, if Conrad's treatments of American like immigration in "Amy Foster" and *Nostromo*; anarchism in *The Secret Agent*, Russian revolution and communism in *Under Western Eyes*; self-determination in *Lord Jim*; isolation isolationism and internationalism in *Victory* with its warlike tones; and race relations in Heart of Darkess and the Nigger of the Narcissus are not broad enough to accommodate all types of ideological appropriations of Conrad's gifts of words. The context of nativism and one hundred per cent Americanism, the fear of anarchy and communism best illustrated in the Palmers Raid in 1919, the condemnation of the Italian "anarchists" Sacco and Vanzetti in the 1920s as well as the context of war and peace, and the related debate about isolationism and internationalism, the

racial riots following World War I, and the Harlem Renaissance make the most important American cultural figure claim Conrad as “our man/ Nostromo,” the man of the American people because of his potential pass on to each and every critical circle a gift of words that befits his or ideological stance. In the second part of this research with its three chapters, the focus will be put on Conrad’s passing on of the gift to Eugene O’Neil, who as we shall argue best, performs that theatrical and spectacular view of the universe that Conrad evokes in his conception of artistic creativity in nearly all his novels.

Part Two:

The Dialogic Relationship between Conrad and O'Neill

Chapter Four:
The Theme of Belonging in Conrad's and O'Neill's Works

Introduction

Conrad, and to some extent O'Neill, is known for being an erudite man of letters, and as such he has always "resisted being assimilated with any particular literary movement". The reason for this attitude lies in the feeling that a writer is "restricted and compartmentalized" in his work (John G. Peters, 2006: 31). Though Conrad, for sure, has been influenced by the modernist philosophical and literary currents of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries – Scientific Positivism, and its criticism, Determining Knowledge by employing the scientific method, Social Darwinist view of the world, Schopenhauer's Will and Representation, Romanticism, Realism, Naturalism, and Impressionism – the gist of his literary mission is to feel free when he tackles his large spectrum of objects of consciousness: physical objects, human subjects, events, ideas, space, and time. Above all else, these philosophical concepts, and literary movements solely contribute to Conrad's elaboration of narratives whose objective is to focus on "the struggles of the individual to find meaning in human existence" (J. G. Peters, 2006: 29 – 36). For, an individual has to spare himself the life-long and overwhelming questioning of belonging. Being both immigrants, Conrad, and O'Neill have been deprived of the very ties bonding them to the lands of their infancy, Poland for the former, and Ireland for the latter. As a consequence, their early sea writings can be viewed as the symbolic representation of Joseph Campbell's psychoanalytic artwork entitled *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (2008). Because both Conrad, and O'Neill are submerged with existential worries likely to lead them to their demise, they have, each one his own way, set themselves to delve into life hardships to attain this hard-to-reach meaning or reason for life (B. Bethlehem, 2010: 8). This will probably comfort them, and help them unravel the mystery of identity, and where they belong. Though this

questioning is legitimate, Conrad, and O'Neill are more concerned with the aesthetics ruling their professional careers than just telling tales, and adventures.

Impressionism and the Subjective Theater in Conrad's and O'Neill's Fictions

There is, indeed, no need to emphasize the importance of language, diction, and literary modes and/or techniques in the construction of narratives. Conrad's appeal to the mode of impressionism in his works to deal with the complex themes related to man's existence serves the purpose of keeping the author/narrator aside from imposing his/her personal views, and opinions on his/her readers. The author builds his works of literature by providing his readership with impressions he has about a certain topic whose understandings/interpretations rest upon the reader's ability to wring meaning, and then decide of the texts' philosophical, and ideological orientations. In a nutshell, an impressionist author/narrator cares more about describing scenes/events than interpreting them.

Additionally, this movement of impressionism is equally shared by other arts like painting, and music where the viewers, and spectators are urged to ponder about what they have seen or heard: it, in a way, plays the function of stimulus, and response. A similar perspective is developed by Terry Eagleton in his work *How to Read Literature* (2013) where he provides readers with clues that will guide them to the gist of the author's piece of narrative. An equally important contribution to the explication, and the presentation of this literary movement is issued by the critic Meyer Shapiro who argues that:

> Impressions are the immediate effects on the mind in its encounter with objects and therefore more genuine/authentic and reliable than abstract notions that have been shaped by reflections, schooling, fantasy, and tradition and are thus further removed from their concrete sources (Meyer Shapiro, 1997: 25).

This is a procedure of acquiring knowledge, that is, we obtain or develop ideas from our senses of perception when they encounter images or signs from the outside world. The individual

ponders over these objects, and attributes meaning to them, basing this process on his faculty of perception, and judgment. The significance thus obtained remains personal, and can by no means be considered as collective; hence knowledge acquisition is individual, and versatile in the sense that significance varies about the amount, and quality of knowledge a person has. As Roland Barthes puts it, "A text is plural. Which is not simply to say that it has several meanings, but that it accomplishes the very plural of meaning: an irreducible plural" (R. Barthes, 1977:159).

Furthermore, Conrad's appeal to the impressionist literary technique underlies the coalescence of the "philosophical recognition of the subjective nature of human experience, and thus knowledge", and "the political skepticism about the purportedly universal values of the western world" (Stephen Ross, 2002:718). This outcome schematizes, albeit momentarily, Conrad's philosophical outlook, and his sociopolitical orientation.

At the level of narratology, and ideology, it is worth mentioning O'Neill's implementation of Conrad's philosophy, and his sociopolitical orientation. Indeed, O'Neill's dramatic narratives serve, to various degrees, the purpose of dramatizing – or bringing on the stage – the sociopolitical themes developed by Conrad. The complementarity is all the sharper when we compare the narrated contents of the works, namely Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899), *Amy Foster* (1903), *The Nigger of the Narcissus* (1897), and *To-morrow*, and respectively O'Neill's works, *The Emperor Jones* (1921), *The Hairy Ape* (1921), *Bound East for Cardiff* (1914), and *The Iceman Cometh* (1939). These and probably other works convey a sort of voice interference which the authors have achieved through individual literary/dramatic aesthetics. Concerning their ideological stances, we reckon they have ineluctably been impacted by the massive onslaughts of the new modern era of the *fin-de-siècle* environment. The skepticism as regards the then politics, and the economic precariousness weighed heavily on the world populations especially in England, and the USA. However, no matter how deep and cruel the modernity-related ailments seem to be, human existence has survived, and will indubitably

survive, and one need not lend to polemics. From the sociological perspective, Emile Durkheim "did not think the problems of modernity – for example, alienation – endemic to our predicament, but the result of a transitional period in human history" (Anoop Gopta, 1969: 69). A slight light of hope will always enlighten the human mind to tolerate the other, "to acknowledge, and validate the other's experience, rather than dismiss it as absolutely different or elide its specificity" (John G. Peters, in Stephen Ross, 2002:721).

In view of the ups and downs encompassed in the aforementioned socio-historical background in the United States of America, O'Neill, as a second-generation Irish-American immigrant had grown in a country where life was hard and uncertain. Although reticent to academic school learning, he was endowed with an acute sense of generating a way of life based outside life itself. Indeed, his personal curiosity expanded abundantly with his reading of authors like Friedrich Nietzsche, Karl Marx, Peter Propotkin, and especially Joseph Conrad. These and certainly others had "encouraged his own instinctive rebellion against conventional people, and conventional ideas" (M. Mollan, 1990: 28). Furthermore, the rebellious spirit which is embedded in O'Neill – but not only – takes its roots from Nietzsche's declaration of deconstructing the old patriarchal system, and the overall traditional values inherited from the outdated Judeo-Christian assumptions, and canons. Nietzsche's will to abrogate nihilism lies in his revolt -- a revolt which many authors of Modernity have appropriated. This spirit/attitude of revolt is well illustrated in Robert Burstein's book, *The Theater of Revolt*:

> The modern dramatist takes up Nietzsche's challenge, assuming an attitude of refusal which puts him in conflict with the laws of modern necessity. Rejecting God, Church, community and family – vindicating the rights of the individual against the claims of the government, morality, conventions, and rules – he adopts the posture of a rebel, chafing against restraints, determined to make all barriers crack (R. Burstein, In Eurides Rossetto, 1979: 2).

The above quotation highlights the possibility of the modern man of the early twentieth century to retrieve his confiscated rights to live free, and lead a life devoid of all sorts of torments under the condition of engaging himself body, and soul in the struggle.

Young though O'Neill was at the turn of the twentieth century, he witnessed people living in the hypocrisy inherited from the British Victorian Era; a time when people thought they were living in peace, in prosperity thanks to the Industrial Revolution which provided them with all necessary pieces of equipments, and goods to make their lives better and easier; but reality was all else. The industrial capitalists, and the factory owners did the best they could to exploit workers, women, and even children. They made them live in appalling conditions, and worst of all, nobody seemed to care.

O'Neill's reaction to that overall hypocritical environment was slow but certain. In a conversation Mary B. Mullett had with O'Neill following his early dramatic narratives which went counter the then conventional ideas, and people, namely his long plays *Beyond the Horizon* (1920), and *All God's Chillun Got Wings* (1924), O'Neill had amazingly conquered the American theater-goers with his new vision of not just life, but also the traditions of the American theater. O'Neill said to Mary:

> "The audiences sat there and listened to ideas absolutely opposed to their ordinary habits of thoughts, and applauded these ideas".
>
> "Why?" I asked.
>
> "Because they had been appealed to through their emotions", he said, "and our emotions are a better guide than our thoughts. Our emotions are instinctive; they are the results of not our only individual experiences, but the experiences of the whole human race, back through all the ages. They are the deep undercurrent, whereas our thoughts are often only the small individual surface reactions. Truth usually goes deep. So it reaches you, through your emotions (Mary B. Mullett, 1990: 26-27).

As the gist of Conrad's works lies in his unraveling of the discrepancies, and traumas overwhelming the humans of the modern time, so does O'Neill's in that his recourse to emotions

all through his dramatic narratives underpins his epistemological and ontological approaches to help audiences deconstruct, and rebuild life based of truth, and sincerity: live life as is, not hypocritically. By so doing, O'Neill "wants to give us a better understanding of ourselves and a better understanding of one another" (ibid: 27).

Furthermore, O'Neill's appeal to the emotions, and sentiments of the theater-goers has sprung on the scene from the actual society changes brought about by the coming of Sigmund Freud to America in the early twentieth century. Freud has indeed helped the Americans to react against the centuries-old patriarchal systems around which innumerable taboos stand firmly. The discrepancies discernible in the American society following the technological advancement of the Industrial Revolution on the one hand, and the new philosophical ideas about the gradual loss of faith, and spirituality on the other (D. Bradshaw, 2006:201) have contributed to the making of the new American citizen a tragic citizen lost amidst wealth and despair. It is therefore not surprising to see O'Neill following the track of his predecessors, namely H. D. Thoreau whose work *Civil Disobedience* (1849) deeply impacted O'Neill. What, in fact, impacted O'Neill was not Thoreau's entanglement or involvement in the American government politics or tax levying system, but rather his conviction, and eagerness to react against social injustices, be they political, social or economical (H. D. Thoreau, 2009).

Additionally, E. Hemingway, J. Conrad, H. Ibsen, and A. Strindberg were among the scholars who helped O'Neill forge a deeper creed, and philosophy to provide his audiences with dramatic narratives likely to lead to a multi-dimensional awakening. This bottom-up metamorphosis stamps the hallmark of O'Neill's vision of the definitely new American theater, and drama. It represents a heavy "slap on the face" of both the audiences, and the bourgeois capitalists rooted in the British-American Victorianism. The literary and dramatic device expressionism has become an unquestioned tool to rebel against, and initiate a profound critique

of civilization (D. Bradshaw, 2006: 201), as witnesses this other conversation with Mary B. Mullett:

> "Well», he said, "I suppose it is the idea I try to put in all of my plays. People talk of the 'tragedy' in them, and call it 'sordid', 'depressing', 'pessimistic' – the words usually applied to anything of a tragic nature. But tragedy, I think, has the meaning the Greeks gave it. To them it brought exaltation, an urge toward life and even more life. It roused them to deeper spiritual understandings and released them from petty greeds of everyday existence. When they saw a tragedy on the stage, they felt their hopeless hopes ennobled in art" (In: Mark W. Estrin, 1990:37).

Aren't tragedy and its tragic atmosphere the resolution man has to ponder over? Because the tragic events are not new to O'Neill, he sets himself to enlighten his audiences' minds as regards life, and how to give meaning to this life. He argues that life in itself is not worth its salt. It is rather the dream that keeps us fighting, willing, and living; accumulating material possessions is in reality a stale finale. What's the worth of life full of riches, and the mind full of worries, and misery? It is only the life struggle that determines the success of the individual; and this gives a spiritual significance to his life as he fights all the hostile forces within, and without himself to achieve future and nobler values (ibid:37). The harshness of O'Neill's life, and to a greater extent Conrad's, has only convinced them that life is synonymous to struggle, and as such they find it a commonplace for an artist to break down both taboos, and barriers (Mark W. Estrin: 47) to help unleash society ambitions towards justice, and progress. These and other ambitions constitute the objectives of Conrad's mission, and especially of O'Neill who is bound to reach in the practice of his dramaturgy:

> The key to O'Neill is found in his belief that the theater should be used for the presentation of the struggle for existence – man's elations, conquests, sorrows, defeats, joys, doubts – and that his job as a dramatist is to express his vision of that struggle without compromise to any prejudice, using all the means at his disposal at the theater (Mark W. Estrin, 1990: 45).

A critical reading of both Conrad's and O'Neill's works highlights how, through years of hard task, and a relative social instability, they have managed to build their iconoclasm with the

prevailing sociopolitical atmosphere. On the one hand Conrad made it his duty to deconstruct all the beliefs, and assumptions associated with the "center, and the periphery", "the Europeans, and the non- Europeans", and "the Social Darwinism". Conrad's reaction to the above is not surprising all the more so since his host country, England, adopts similar politics as that of the invaders of his native country, Poland. As a matter of fact, Conrad inherited revolutionary attitudes from his father, Apollo, who, while working in a publishing house, in Zhitomir, was carrying on rebellious activities for which he was arrested, and spent seven months in jail (N. Page, 1986: 1). On the other hand, O'Neill had really enough of the injustices which prevailed in the turn of twentieth-century America: the white Americans suffering from the consequences of modernity; and the black Americans suffering from the effects of slavery, and marginalization.

It looks quite evident and almost axiomatic that the fields of literature and drama have brought about enormous changes in terms of their themes. We cannot possibly deny the "intrusion" of the findings of the new sciences, and the profound impact they have on the entire humanity. These new sciences are no other than psychology, and especially psychoanalysis. The new understanding of the human behavior, and the mapping of the mind as initiated by the Austrian neurologist, Sigmund Freud, and his followers, has had a deep echo in the writings of many authors who gradually stepped through the threshold of a new world vision, and a new construction of knowledge; hence the breaking of taboos, and supplanting the pre-enlightenment "forbidden knowledge", as suggested by Anna Davin (1980: 5, 6).

The notion of "forbidden knowledge" may lead to confusion due to its ambivalent nature. One interpretation of it relates to Protestant Literature where it was commonly agreed that literary themes to tackle in this field should be inspired from the basic tenets of Protestantism. That is, authors were covertly compelled to write about themes that do not differ much from the ones dealt with by churchmen inside churches (William Calderwood, 1977). And this alludes to the paternalistic tendencies prevalent in the pre-Enlightenment period. The other interpretation,

however, deals not with religious-imbued topicality, or commonly-agreed-upon world visions, but with ideas closely related to the modern era of the twentieth century. The modernist authors of the rank of Conrad and O'Neill have produced another form of literature: literature that looks in the very inside of the human beings, and the traumas that rely on psychology and psychoanalysis for their settlement. Moreover, for an individual to avoid being overwhelmed by neurosis, psychosis, and the like, he has to depart from another kind of knowledge, equally referred to as "forbidden knowledge". As an illustration of this, William Freedman, in his seminal work entitled Forbidden Knowledge and *the Saving Illusion* (2014) posits that

> The idea that there are forms of knowledge too threatening to be encountered or acknowledged or otherwise proscribed has many voices and a long, venerable, and variegated history. Psychologically, it is at the heart of psychoanalytic theories of repression and denial, the mechanisms with which we protect ourselves from the knowledge that menaces our well-being or source of self-esteem. "With the truth" Otto Rank remarked, "man cannot be able to live, one needs illusions" (W. Freedman, 2014: 5).

As explicated in the above quotation, the very core of knowledge lies deep as regards human education. For the religious, it takes the attribute of "forbidden" as it can drag people, especially the young, away from righteousness, and the divine scriptures, and lead them to apostasy; and this is achieved through the elders henpecking the younger generations. The other trouble intellectuals, especially psychologists and psychoanalysts, attach to knowledge underpins the excessive involvements of the individuals in matters that need full cognizance as far as their innermost conduct is concerned. This relates to Psychoanalyst, Otto Rank's assertion that reality or truth does not always help individual lead a placid life. To liberate oneself from these internal conflicts, and their resulting consequences, one needs fantasy, and illusion.

Following the multifarious contributions of the world readers to Conrad's and O'Neill's foundations, one certainly needs no great methodological perfection to grasp the fact that these contemporary authors are mutually complementary, and are bathed in the same atmosphere.

Their tackling of themes which we qualify as pervasive – like the subject of this chapter: Belonging – is so emotive and so deep that it leads the readers/audiences to the complex and esoteric field of the internal struggles of life.

Alienation in Conrad's and O'Neill's Works

As is commonly known in the Greek literary tradition, and cultural heritage (In: Michael Holquist, 1981: 88), an author's originality in constructing narratives is theoretically not possible, and merely worthless. A certain topicality that discusses or raises an issue on either diachronic or synchronic levels, or both, in whatever literary genre from adventure to the parodic and satirical or plot-less novel (emphasizing only structure or form) can by no means be viewed as a reiteration or influence. As Bakhtin maintains, each author reproducing a text/issue, it "is in fact a new performance, a new text, a new event" (M. Bakhtin, 1984: 4). He also posits that a repetition does not repeat the original, but constitutes a new action and a new version of that which is done or talked about (Per Linell, 1981: 11). The sole elements likely to make a similar text/issue different are the evolving ideologies, differentiations, and polyphony (or multi-voicedness) from the chronotopic perspective. Chronotope, in Bakhtin's parlance, expresses the exploration of the dialogic relationships between space, and time, and how the latter inform different kinds of literature: a relatively past issue enters into another issue in different space, and time.

Belonging as a philosophical concept is very insightful, and it conveys an ambivalent interpretation. In its positive sense, it is very settling, and it soothes an individual's state of mind in that it assures him of pertaining to a social group or community which, at its turn, considers him as a "legitimate" member of it: a member/person bonded to familiarity, appreciation—when deserved—and attachment (J. Bowlby, 1951). Company and attachment are, without doubt, very crucial for the physical and mental development of an individual, especially the youth, during

adolescence. A youth surrounded by friends, and peers – in addition to his family members -- at this specific life period represents a panacea for all kinds of psychopathologies like estrangement, fear, anxiety, and despair. This idea is backed by Jean Jacques Rousseau who writes, "As soon as a man needs a companion, he is no longer an isolated creature, his heart is no longer alone" (in: Anoop Gopta, 1969: 65, 66). Following the same idea, Gopta adds that "It is at the time of puberty that Rousseau sees the need for others arise, a need that results in an interaction that inaugurates us into a moral world" (ibid: 66). However, the other side of the coin – the negative sense – is all too stressing and overwhelming. It draws a whole lot of psychological phenomena beginning with frustration, alienation, anxiety, and sometimes reaching high degrees of disillusionment, and despair. An individual not belonging to a place or a social group is that caterpillar confining itself in its cocoon. Not belonging is the source of powerlessness, and meaninglessness; and this leads us to the seminal work entitled *The Myth of Sisyphus* (1942) by Albert Camus where he almost explicitly raises some of the most crucial existential issues related to man, and life. Very grossly, some of the questions are: Is life worth living? Why is life so mysterious, and so ungrateful? Why has modernism merged with absurdism?

Considering Conrad's severance of his family ties, and his overwhelming feeling of abandonment imposed by the Russian power, and her allies, the only survival way out left for him was to exile to France, and join the merchant navy so to sink his worries, and to start life anew. Three and a half years later, he ultimately moved on to England where, on August 18, 1886, he was granted the British citizenship which for him, was a life assurance, and a feeling of belonging to a great and powerful nation, no matter what politics she conducted (N. Page, 1986: 6).

Although the British government did their best to consider Conrad as a British citizen, he never quite felt at home. The status of exile-novelist he chose to have created a distance between

him, and the British society: he always had the feeling of a stranger, and he had never had a home of his own (Norman Page, 1986: 40); he did not quite digest the idea of being a citizen other than that of Poland, and he "felt a disinclination to try to send down roots in a country that was not his native land" (ibid, 1986: 40). Quite objectively, one is tempted to say that Conrad was experiencing the Freudian Syndrome of *The Uncanny* (1919). He is indeed haunted by the spirit of the *unheimlich* which creates the feeling of not belonging to the home, *heim*, and he is therefore strange and unfamiliar. This situation evidently creates a sort of destabilization in the innermost of Conrad, as explicated in the following citation:

> Indeed Conrad never lost a sense of his foreignness and this difference of background afforded him a perspective from which to observe and judge the British Empire that was unavailable to many Britons. This background also makes Conrad the most worldly, the least provincially English, of all English novelists, and it undoubtedly contributed to his complex attitude toward Britain – a fondness to its democratic institutions, yet a skepticism regarding its colonial agenda – that is registered in Conrad's enigmatic fin-de-siècle novella (Bradshaw, 2006: 315).

In view of this quote, Bradshaw makes it clear that Conrad is still submerged by a deep malaise, and the main reason for his seeking refuge in Britain is her democratic institutions, not her hegemonic policy. Conrad has actually had enough of the dictatorship, and the totalitarian regimes of the invaders of his home country, Poland. Despite this all, Conrad was not that kind of an ungrateful individual who would pick on a country whose policy was not different from that of the hegemonic Russia and its allies who partitioned his native country, and put to death both of his parents. For Conrad, being saved by the British authorities could by no means end up in biting the hand that fed him. And here lies Conrad's ingenuity in building narratives the aim of which is to accompany the reader, and share with him his views concerning the modern world, and how the latter seems to upset humanity in general.

Similarly, though O'Neill's parents abandoned their native country, Ireland, for reasons which were more economical than political in the mid-nineteenth century, their new settlement

in the United States of America did not really spare them the social turmoil of that time. Just like Conrad who refused to belong to the British society, O'Neill, too, was overwhelmed by the feeling of belonging-yet-not-belonging, and that weighed very heavily on his innermost self all along his life. A common deep malaise seized them, and that foreshadowed almost overtly the sameness of the trajectory they had to follow in order to give meaning to their lives. In a conversation O'Neill had with a certain Malcolm Mollan concerning some critics calling him names like morose, pessimistic gloomster, gloom and doom, he answered a question about happiness saying:

> I'll write about happiness, if ever I happen to meet up with this luxury, and find it sufficiently dramatic and in harmony with any deep rhythm of life. But happiness is a word, what does it mean? Exaltation: an intensified feeling of the significant worth of man's being and becoming? (In: M. W. Estrin, 1990: 15).

This quote bears quite a few sociological and philosophical insights referring to Emile Durkheim's notion of happiness he developed in his *Leçons de Sociologie 1890 – 1900,* saying, approximately, that happiness is meaningless if it is not shared by the majority of the society members. Equally important is J. J. Rousseau's affirmation that happiness cannot be achieved among humans as some are socially strong, others weak (1754 [1998]). Moreover, given the value individuals do attach to this binary combination of happiness and unhappiness (and its close relationship with belongingness), it is tackled by so many scholars of so many fields of artistry as literature, drama, psychology, to mention only these. In view of the contribution happiness and unhappiness have on the healthy development of an individual, Freud, too, has indulged him to comment on them, saying,

> What do they [men] demand of life and wish to achieve in it? The answer to this can hardly be in doubt. They strive for happiness; they want to become happy and remain so. This endeavor has two sides, a positive and a negative aim. It aims, on the one hand, at an absence of pain and unpleasure, and, on the other, at the experiencing of strong feelings of pleasure (James Strachey, 1961: 23).

If men were allowed to construct their being in this world, they would certainly do it on the basis of happiness, and pleasure, far from any source of pain, and worry, but reality is different. Though lack of happiness and presence of other life ailments are, as says Durkheim, only transitional, they would be supplanted by other ailments more or less overwhelming and so on *ad infinitum*.

Given the social position of both Conrad, and O'Neill, it is clear that their aspiration for a better future is jeopardized by the inequalities befallen on them. O'Neill's belonging to the Irish community in the United States has raised in him the sentiment of not belonging, and he is therefore not welcome in this host country. This situation is, to some extent, not very different from that of the American autochthons, and the Afro-Americans, as suggest these article excerpts about race theory by Shannon Steen:

> a- While O'Neill may not look like a victim of social oppression at first glance, his status as an Irishman in early twentieth century was extremely ambiguous.
>
> b- [Richard] Dyer illustrates how the Irish were contradictorily positioned as both white (in relation to non-European peoples) and black (in relation to the British Anglo-Americans), a practice that continued in the 1920s. During this time, the Irish were frequently literally depicted as blacks. Dyer writes about the "index of nigrescence" used by mid-nineteenth century doctors to trace African blood in the Irish as proof of Celtic inferiority (S. Steen, 2000: 352).

It follows from the above quotes that the Americans in authority or at least those in power to segregate, and marginalize the foreigners are using the same strategies the European imperialists used with the natives of their respective colonies, with the difference that the Americans abstain from referring to the famous expression *The White Man's Burden*. If it were not stark injustice, and inequality how could the Anglo-Americans possibly view the Irish man as both black, and white? And this has indubitably made O'Neill sink in abysmal despair, as witnesses this indescribable passage we ran into in a website entitled *goodreads:*

> It was a great mistake, my being born a man; I would have been much more successful as a seagull or fish. As it is I will always be a stranger who never feels at home, who does not really want or is not really wanted, who can never belong, who must be a little in love with death (goodreads.com/quotes).

This quote is deemed to be left with no comment.

Given the emotiveness raised by the quest of Conrad, and O'Neill for belonging, it is more than evident that this theme, and others will unconsciously be projected to their characters in their literary/dramatic narratives; hence the autobiographical or semi-biographical aspects of their respective works. Overall, the westerners – the British as well as the Americans – were misled by the swift development of the Industrial Revolution, and the ensuing new living conditions. These were, in fact, aspects of the British Victorian Age. The westerners were plainly given to understand that, indeed, a new era had come. Enlightenment ideas had supplanted the social and religious taboos which hindered any kind of social evolution. The scientist had replaced the layman, and science rationality, and darkness. However, the breaking out of the First World War broke away with it the triumphant feeling of modernity, and happiness. On the American scene, the 1920s, or the *Roaring Twenties*, as commonly called, had resulted in the lost generation (in its broad sense): young people who were completely at a loss and completely disillusioned by the large number of casualties in WW I. Europe and America were gradually entering a new world characterized by a disturbing loss of meaning, and purpose in human life. The long-wished-for blessing turned out to be a curse for the entire humanity, as witnesses this famous witty statement: "Party it up, live for today, because there may be no tomorrow" (In: Modernism, 2015).

As regards the lost generation, Conrad, and O'Neill, too, had experienced the same society hardships, and discontents – though O'Neill was in his thirties, and Conrad stepping into the sixties—and this constituted a vivid topic in their works: Conrad's short novella, *To-morrow (1902),* and O'Neill's *Beyond the Horizon* (1920). They ingenuously combined the concepts of

belonging, and happiness. In fact, these overlap so much that it is almost impossible to dissociate one from the other especially in this very specific period of Western society. Indeed, modernity which was supposed to generate happiness for its citizens offered them, instead, a nightmare. The population, in view of the havoc of World War One, became disoriented, and disturbed by the future outcomes this modernity would drag them into. The loss befallen on them engendered a more profound loss of meaning, and purpose in human life.

The aim of this research work, let it be clear from the outset, is not intended to focus on comparative literature *per se*, but rather delve into O'Neill's plays in the search for Conrad's themes, as the one under study in this chapter: *Belonging*. A propos of this, and for the sake of providing a more nuanced understanding of the concept belonging, it is cardinal to shed light on the nexus between Conrad's *To-morrow*, and O'Neill's *Beyond the Horizon* as regards the ambivalent interpretation of this concept. Belonging in these two works varies from the one they had both experienced. The other facet of belonging is used as an artistic strategy with which to criticize modernity, and how the latter has pestered the life of the individuals with skepticism, and restlessness. The case here is about people living in their home, and family, yet they are not satisfied, and therefore they are overwhelmed with the feeling of not belonging.

Indeed, O'Neill's titling his play *Beyond the Horizon* is overarching and very suggestive of the morosity, and disgust an individual may feel. *Beyond the Horizon* as an expression is symbolic of a light of hope glittering in a place where one is not, hoping that something better is on the other side as the popular adage puts it: "The Grass Is Always Greener on the Other Side of the Fence" (Thesaurus.com). As a title, *Beyond the Horizon* takes its roots from the *Biblical Exodus* of the Jews living in Egypt under the totalitarian regime of the pharaoh. To this we associate the work of the American Civil Rights Activist, Martin Luther King, Jr. who wrote a seminal book entitled *Where Do We Go from Here?* It is a book that bears biblical insights

comparing the socio-political situation of the American black slaves, and the enslaved Jews in Egypt.

Though Conrad and O'Neill had overtly renounced their faith in Catholicism, this remains only partly true, and it is by no means related to the nineteenth century claims that God is dead, as invoked by the then philosophers like Friedrich Nietzsche (Nietzsche, 1974, In: Kevin Cole, 2013: 1, 2). The surface, as well as the deep interpretations for the death of God are metaphoric of the *Collapse of Christendom* where "supposedly civilized", and nominally Christian nations [turned] against one another in total warfare (ibid: 2). Conrad and O'Neill, on the contrary, backed the contents of their narratives with religious references. O'Neill's naming one of his female characters "Ruth" is an example of this. Ruth is, indeed, a biblical figure during the time of the *Exodus* between 15 and 13 centuries B.C. (Bryant Wood, 2009), as suggests this citation:

> Although Ruth's early life was neither simple nor easy, nor even in many ways very satisfactory, its defects were fostered upon her from without while she maintained her wholeness and purity of being (Rabbi Adin, 2015: 1).

Because the point we set ourselves to elucidate is *belonging*, we limit our study solely to Act One – Scene One of O'Neill's play, *Beyond the Horizon*. The play opens with the introduction of the two sons, Andrew and Robert Mayo, living on their father's farm. The scene takes place on the road during sunset of a day in spring. Immediately, contrast is drawn between the two brothers: Robert a 23 year-old young man is viewed as a would-be intellectual always spending his time reading books; Andrew, four years his senior is a typical farmer just like his father. Though Robert lives in his father's farm, his mind is haunted by the idea of going beyond the horizon stretching far beyond their farm. This causes him to feel himself a stranger, and it creates in him a feeling of pathos, and uneasiness. Robert is so immersed in his curiosity to discover a better life outside the farm that he literally closes his eyes about the farm life, and its people. He says "What I want to do now is keeping on moving so that I won't take root in any one place"

(The Plays of Eugene O'Neill, Vol.1, 1989: 83). Apparently, O'Neill's character, Robert, seems to have read Mark Twain's work, *The Gilded Age*, and he has been deeply influenced by the statement describing the desolation of the farm environment in the United States. It says, "It [a farm] is a place to turn young people into dried food" (M. Twain, 1783: chap. xiv).

The message O'Neill has set himself to transmit to his fellow American citizens who have utterly been disappointed by the transformation of their dream into a nightmare that one ought not to behave so stubbornly, and unreasonably, ignoring the negative consequences of their behavior. Just thinking I am not pleased where I am can, through time, be the worst blunder ever one can make. For, one should not panic, and he should accept the situation and adjust oneself to it while waiting for something better. A curse sometimes can be a blessing in disguise as will be seen in the anticlimax of the story of Robert in the play, *Beyond the Horizon*.

As Andrew had failed in trying to change Robert's mind about running away from the farm, he went home leaving him seated on the fence. It was finally Ruth who joined the place where Robert was sitting. The imposing presence of Ruth, and the description O'Neill has made of her was enough to soothe the seething Robert:

> She [Ruth] is a healthy, blonde, out-of-door girl of twenty with a graceful, slender figure. Her face, though inclined to roundness, is undeniably pretty, its large eyes of a deep blue set off strikingly by the sun-bronzed complexion. Her small, regular features are marked by a certain strength – an underlying stubborn fixity of purpose hidden in the frankly-appealing charm of her fresh youthfulness (E. O'Neill, 1989: 86, 87).

O'Neill making so vivid a description of Ruth is for sure not random. On the contrary, it is very insightful and replete with connotations as regards the inhibitions that have hindered the acquaintances between boys and girls as a result of the Victorian views of life, and the overall Judeo-Christian assumptions, and beliefs. Failure to have feelings for a partner of the opposite sex -– and worst of all, to repress them – one feels frustrated and self-estranged, and forces his/her way willy-nilly through life. This approach rightly suggests that O'Neill, from the onset

of the 1900s, had a clear vision of what came to be known as Freudian psychoanalytic ideas. And this is the case of Robert who lacks the courage to admit the love he has for Ruth ever since he was a boy.

When Ruth had engaged in a conversation with Robert, she had been plain and straightforward saying: "We're all going to miss you so awfully. It's a shame you're going – just at this time, in spring, when everything is getting so nice. But you haven't told me your reason for leaving yet (E. O'Neill, 1989: 88, 89). In the course of the conversation, little by little Robert's stubbornness, and rigidity were melting into calm and deep tenderness, and he finally avowed to Ruth that he truly loved her. That had given way to sweet and lovely talk, and he ultimately confessed that:

> I think love must have been the secret – the secret that called to me from over the world's rim – the secret beyond every horizon; and when I did not come, it came to me. Oh, Ruth, our love is sweeter than any distant dream (ibid: 92).

The moral we can draw from this emotive scene is worthy of the morals fairy tales teach the readers, and audiences. Events in fairy tales are conceived in such a thrilling manner that the reader unconsciously identifies himself/herself with the main hero; and so are O'Neill's in the story, *Beyond the Horizon*. The captivating unfolding of the conversation between Robert and Ruth succeeds in involving the audience, and allows him/them to witness the magic effect of love untying the knots of frustration, and loneliness. Moreover as, for instance, Walt Disney "invented" the concept of *Snow-white Syndrome*, so, too, did O'Neill: the *Horizon Syndrome*, as witnesses this quote:

> Any reader of the literature of the United States in the first quarter of the twentieth century will recognize in the title's imagery what might be called the "Horizon Syndrome", an affliction that manifested itself in countless inspirational poems, stories and short plays in precisely the way O'Neill used it – to suggest boundless aspiration for a somewhat vaguely defined freedom of spirit (T. Bogard, 1972: 125).

Travis Bogard's use of the key phrases "boundless aspirations", "vaguely defined freedom of spirit" is suggestive of the great dilemma which prevailed in most of the first half of the twentieth century. It is, by the same token, metaphoric of the population torn between modernity, and the effects of the Industrial Revolution: a population gone astray, and incapable of reasoning rationally. Their tormented spirits led them to states of non-satisfaction of whatever they had, and wherever they were, creating thus an overwhelming restlessness.

These psycho-social torments have constituted the core of Conrad's and O'Neill's works. Indeed, these ailments are not just themes of literature, and drama; they represent the integral part of the authors' inner life, the reason for which their narratives are autobiographical; and their rhetoric is embedded in every single word, and utterance they use. Taking O'Neill separately, one is inclined to say that his career as a narrative writer and as a dramatist bears a variety of objectives the main objectives of which are to translate the socio- political life of his fellow citizens of the 1900s. Another not less important one resides in deconstructing the impact of the European, and mainly the British domination of the American theater, and giving it a new American landmark: an American theater proper. His subtle discernment of the American worries, and their inclusion among his dramatic narratives led him to strike the deal. His ability to bring well-off citizens to the theater, and watch the plays depicting the miserable life of the majority of the population foreshadowed his success in creating a new and a real American theater where the *haves* find themselves urged to have some compassion for the *have nots*, as suggests this citation:

> People who have suffered do not need these reminders. They already feel the divine compassion. But there are those who have not been touched by misery. These may well suffer, by proxy, for a few hours in a theater. It will do them good. It will have a humanizing effect. Thus to taste vicariously a bit of life's bitterness (Mark W. Estrin, 1990: 53).

The above citation definitely purports to shed light on O'Neill's aesthetics concerning the didactic characteristic of his narratives. He is implicitly bringing to the fore the socio-economic

worries of the American citizens, and gathering them in one place – the theater – and urging them to realize how appalling inequality, and injustice can harm the innermost of the individual through tragedy, and dramatization. The latter two aspects of the plays give more voice to O'Neill. In a nutshell, what Conrad has written about the human condition, O'Neill has transferred it onto the stage, combining this way literature, and drama into complementary fields.

Furthermore, literature and drama encompass the most humane philosophical insights related to situations likely to upset humans, and their surrounding environment. Even when an individual does not have the feeling of belonging to a place or a group of people, he must by no means haste; for, what is missing to reach a perfect harmony with one's environment may just be a detail. So one has to be thoughtful, and must ponder over his situation; and surely the resolution for this problem will come by itself. At first, Robert has been driven mad by the idea of refusing to belong to the farm, and his family members. And with the feeling of the power of love, everything is settled.

Right at the turn of the twentieth century, Conrad invoked this other facet of belonging characterized by a strong refusal to remain with one's parents. Conrad's story, *To-morrow*, unfolds symbolically or perhaps metaphorically the foundations of the family romance as viewed by some scholars of the time, namely Sigmund Freud, and Emile Durkheim. For the former, the running away from home is an obligatory phase in the development of the child. As the child grows physically and mentally, his vision of the world grows, and so ineluctably the view he has of his parents' changes more than grows, as clarifies this citation:

> It is quite essential that that liberation should occur and it may be presumed that it has been to some extent achieved by everyone who has reached a normal state. Indeed, the whole progress of society rests upon the opposition between successive generations. On the other hand, there is a class of neurotics whose condition is recognizably determined by their having failed in this task (J. Strachey, 1909: 237).

Clearly enough, the psychoanalytic interpretation of the *Family Romance,* as viewed in the above citation, throws light on the necessity of the individual to leave , albeit temporarily, his family home, and members to really experience, and have a more realistic image of what life – the outside life, or the life at large – is really like. Following and always hanging at one's mother's skirt does not resolve the life complexities outside the family boundaries. The encounters with people and hardships he will certainly come across will ineluctably have a great impact on his personality, and will for sure forge a new world vision in him. In case he overcomes all these hardships, the family romance he has undertaken will have many happy returns for him, and will make him much fitter for adult life than the one who has remained at home in the warmth of the family environment.

For the latter, the approach is different but the aim is identical. Durkheim posits that a society member who has acquired a quite healthy and harmonious *Primary Socialization*, it is essential that -- however for this latter step to be more thorough – the individual separates from the family; and the State has a role to play to assure an acceptable well-being for the society. Failure to lead these instructions to term, the *Secondary Socialization*, which, in a way is a social contract, is at stake, and it is likely to abort (In: M. A. Lamanna, 2002: 124).

In view of the extrapolation given to thematic and problematic issues shared by Conrad, and O'Neill, it is discernible enough that these two authors have excelled in their writing tasks paying particular attention to the linguistic mastery of language, and the overall metalinguistics of the knowledge which they are communicating to their readers, and audiences. The grouping and/or association of Conrad's impressionist literary device in the making of his narratives, and O'Neill's expressionist dramatic device in his plays converge with the Bakhtinian perspective which displays a variety of critical literary techniques. It follows from this that the deep reading of the two works underlies a paradigm of allegorical texts. The literal interpretation of Conrad's *To-morrow,* and O'Neill's *Beyond the Horizon,* which seems to depict casual life experienced by

casual characters, reveals, in fact, very profound psychosocial and worldly hardships that are contingent upon the desolation, as well as the well-being of the entire humanity.

These two narratives which we define as allegorical consolidate the relation of complementarities between Conrad and O'Neill. Because they experienced as big problems during their life as those of the humanity – at least in the West – they were more alert of the cruciality of the alienating modern life, and everything it entails. The early vision they translated into their work as sensitive professional authors sorted them out as authors of the avant-garde.

Considering Conrad and O'Neill as avant-garde authors underpins a variety of foresighted visions as regards the fundamentals of human existence as striated by the adverse effects of Industrialization, and the overall consequences of modernity. The aesthetic paradigm which serves as the basis for their dramatization of complex epistemological and ethical problems urges the readers/audiences to share the complex philosophical views they have about the worldly life, and the metaphysical realm of human ability to find ways out of embarrassing and overwhelming situations.

The theme of belonging – and to some extent its indissociable term happiness – which at first sight seems standing aloof, represents an integral part of the conflictual schemata of the early twentieth century socioeconomic upheavals. These, at their turn, construct the collective conscience, and the "collective memory" which "give sense to belonging", as posits Martin Shulz in his work entitled *Politics of the Past: Use and Abuse of History* (2009). Though the concept of belonging (and happiness) refers both to a physical locality, and to the living conditions therein, the latter proves to be a *sine qua non* condition for the social relationships, and emotions (N. Lovell, 1998: 1). And this constitutes the core of Conrad's and O'Neill's works which raise paramount and pressing questions related to the confiscated promotion, and well-being of the populations. The reading of Conrad's novels and the viewing of O'Neill's plays bear

the wisdom of experiencing happiness through people's acceptance of the real life they are living in their localities.

I think it convenient to say it goes to Conrad's and O'Neill's credit the fact of giving more significance to the oft-repeated negative consequences of the Victorian unbridled industrial onslaughts, or *Mechanical Age*, as referred to by the Scottish intellectual Thomas Carlyle (In: Denise Evans, 1997) than has heretofore been recognized. Following Carlyle's vision of the modern world, the *Mechanical Age* should be accompanied by some political arrangements, and useful reforms likely to compensate what is wanting for human happiness (T. Carlyle, 1829: 5), and retrieve the sentiment of belonging so necessary for the human stability, and promotion. The mechanisms at work to change the overwhelming socioeconomic situation were initiated by authors of sides of the Atlantic, Europe, in general, and England, and the United States of America, in particular. The ironic and satirical handling of so important issues as these were brought to the fore by authors like, among others, Charles Dickens with his work, *Hard Times* (1854); William Blake's *The Chimney Sweeper* (1794); Elizabeth Gaskell's *North and South* (1855); Thomas Hardy's *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874); and the American side, Mark Twain's highly satirical work, *The Gilded Age* (1873). Except for Thomas Hardy's work, the other authors' works were written in approximately during the same period – a life span of, say, twenty years – to show that they could not but react in denunciation of the then indescribable global weariness.

The polarity Modernism's expected positive advancement, and the effective and almost deadly outcomes it entailed constituted the converging point between the above-mentioned authors (but not only), and Conrad, and O'Neill. The common ground they are fighting on and for is pivotal on the resolutions they are all likely to grab as regards people's angst, poverty, injustice, and environmental degradation. To this, indubitably, is closely related the theme of belonging, and happiness. In view of the traumas Conrad and O'Neill depicted in their works, it

is crystal clear that their protagonists – and through extrapolation, the entire Western population – have been made to plunge into abysmal life worries. It is equally clear that these modernity flaws befallen on them are not the result of their choice; consequently the feeling of not belonging to their respective communities emerges violently in their spirit overwhelming them, and depriving them of life happiness. By the way, can anybody be happy if he does not belong? Can he be happy if he requires the rudiments of subsistence, necessary for one to lead a decent life? One cannot be happy with scarcity, and unavailability, as posits Aristotle in his *Ethics*, "for happiness does not lack anything, but it is self-sufficient" (1984: 1853). Among the things happiness does not lack is belonging; because failure to belong creates maladjustment, and severe pathology. A need which at first is only material is likely to develop into a psychological need with all its implications. Belonging is such an elusive term that people do not give it its due social importance. The lack of scientific, social, and psychological significance of the term, belonging has simply and utterly been added to the nebulous repertoire or register of the individual's emotions.

Moreover, for a person to perfectly blossom in his/her life, it is imperative that not only he or she, but the whole community, realize or know what it means to belong. The latter must doubtless lean on this crucial concept because it is cardinal to the welfare, and the well-being, first of the society member, then of the society as a whole. Belonging should be dealt with from various perspectives, namely, historical, social, political, and psychological.

Historically, belonging links the individual with his ancestors, and this enables him to resolve the question of "where have I come from?" And obviously when one knows where he has come from, he will, for sure, know where he can head, if need be. Sociologically, belonging informs precisely which social group/community one is part of. Politically, and this is by far a complex field to define; nevertheless, one gets pride in belonging to an advanced/developed society, and this, of course, implies that the members of this society are active, and they

persevere in their work, as opposed to one who is good at finding excuses for prevaricating, and procrastinating. The latter is the one for whom applies or suits the famous adage/expression "All talk and no trousers". Finally, the last perspective is psychological. Given the relative recency of this field, still too many components are missing to this new human science as it requires a minimum level of literacy from the part of the individual. Harboring so complex emotions or thoughts as the association of belonging, and happiness happens to be contingent on the overall society evolution, and its [society] ability to move positively forward.

To clearly value the concept of belonging, it is indeed worthy referring to B. Malinowski's work, *A Scientific Theory of Culture and Other Essays* (1960) where it is given to understand that this feeling is ranked among basic psychological needs. As such, it means that society has to respond to it from the cultural perspective. That is, society foundations have to provide the individual with another biological need which is health. It is sometimes wrongly believed that health tends to be more related to the body (soma): hence a healthy individual. However, this represents only a half part of the individual, the other part being psychic. And here lies the psychological understanding of the nexus between the terms healthy, and belonging. No one can pretend to ignore the intrinsic need of belonging in an individual to be truly healthy both somatically, and psychically. Belonging in a place and to a community procures the feeling of assurance, and ease, and it ultimately makes an individual endowed with love, patriotism, and all that can help him contribute to the welfare, and the well-being of the community/society where he belongs.

Failure in bathing society members in the atmosphere of togetherness, and belonging is not without dramatic consequences. To begin with, let's look critically at Conrad's and O'Neill's abandonment of their native countries. Why hadn't Conrad remained in Poland, and keep his Polish citizenship? The same question is valid for O'Neill's parents.

Impossibility of attaining togetherness, and belonging should not always be viewed as the cardinal cause for moving from one place to another, and from one community to another. According to anthropological researches, humans, overall, have an innate predisposition for changing places. Some call it uprootedness, others relate it to human curiosity to explore the world, and still others call it a *Roving Behavior* like W. H. Mc. Neill who maintains that:

> Roving Behavior had an important role in human (and prehuman) evolution. Humankind could not have become the earth-girdling, dominant species we are without the migration that followed successful discovery of new possibilities made manifest by such moving (McNeill, 1978: 3).

As McNeill has so well defined this population move, it is clear that there is no tragedy in this, and it must merely be viewed from the behavioral perspective. However, the movement we can rightly refer to as dramatic and catastrophic can be related without exaggeration whatsoever to the postcolonial politics relative to the consensus reached by the European powers of the twentieth century to remove their military forces from their colonies.

Following the perusal of Conrad's narrative, *To-morrow*, and O'Neill's play, *Beyond the Horizon*, the inclusion of the theme belonging in their respective works is not random or innocent in the sense that this very topic appeals to our minds the diverse outcomes of the long centuries of imperialism, and colonialism. Believe it or not, the relevance of this precise point cannot be dissociated from the overall schema of the present chapter. Surely, at the time of Conrad, and O'Neill, the probability of decolonization was not the least expected, and it was completely excluded from the Western Powers' ideological agendas. However, the above-mentioned works depicting two protagonists wallowing in deeply personal feeling of not belonging, and therefore the feeling of lonesomeness show how this enduring situation moves from a specific case to a more generalized one. That is, not belonging and its outright negative consequences are at the very heart of the moves of the third-world populations in this very onset of the twenty first century.

The reference being made to postcolonial politics is, in a way, intended to be the cardinal cause of the rebellion of the third-world populations. What Conrad and O'Neill foreshadowed by the abandonment of the characters' homes, and families is later on, in the late 1950s, and the early 1960s, confirmed by the seminal work of the Martinican author, and theorist, Frantz Fanon, entitled *The Wretched of the Earth* (1963). Fanon's work proved to be a prophecy, which unfortunately came true, just like Conrad's, and O'Neill's. For Fanon, the post-independence socio-political turmoil did not emerge accidentally. On the contrary, they were the logical entailments of the would-be freedom fighters who denied their populations the right to elect democratically their leaders for their future life, and destiny. After grabbing the power, they established custom- made governments, and kept tight reins on the illiterate and ignorant citizens. In an attempt to explicate the roots of the nightmare befallen on the natives, Fanon says,

> Powerless economically, unable to bring about the existence of coherent social relations, and standing on the principle of its domination as a class, the bourgeois chooses the solution that seems to it the easiest, that of the single party. It does not yet have the quiet conscience and the calm that economic power and the control of the state machine alone can give. It does not create a state that reassures the ordinary citizen, but rather one that rouses his anxiety (F. Fanon, 1963: 164, 165).

The view, indeed, cannot be any clearer. A nation is governed not by violence, brutality, and corruption, but by a sound economy, and a real know-how which unluckily can neither be given nor bought, as the famous adage says "God give them wisdom that has it".

The feeling of not belonging and its root causes of legalized injustices, and unfairness get, through time, more and more convincing, and at the same time regrettable. The anticlimax of the situation which should logically lead to the overturn of these fake political leaders, simply aborted, and the natives contented them with abandoning their homes, and countries. Are they right or wrong? We just cannot tell as this phenomenon is profoundly embedded in the world's politics of the highly advanced societies. Fanon's resurgence of criticism as regards the ill-fate of the third-world populations lies in the inability of the leaders to generate any economic

development likely to satisfy their citizens. If there should be any sort of production at all, it is just enough for the governing class, as illustrates this other quotation,

> Since the bourgeoisie has not the economic means to ensure its domination and to throw a few crumbs to the rest of the country; since, moreover, it is preoccupied with filling its pockets as rapidly as possible but also as prosaically as possible, the country sinks all the more deeply in stagnation. And in order to hide this stagnation and to mark this regression, to reassure itself, and to give itself something to boast about, the bourgeoisie can find nothing better to do than to erect grandiose buildings in the capital and to lay out money on what are called prestige expenses (Fanon, F.,1963: 165).

Again, this quotation emphasizes how the third-world henchmen have so successfully made use of the little literacy they grasped from their colonizing masters to domineer their illiterate, and ignorant fellow citizens. The populations' poison rightly proved to be the meat of the nearsighted henchmen. By the way, can there be a more efficient strategy than ignorance, and illiteracy to perpetuate both the submission of the populations, and the governance of the ruling class?

The outburst of the psychodrama gnawing the third-world populations from their innermost selves is no more than a legitimate response to their being deprived of the feeling of belongingness. Their flagrant dispossession of their right to lead a decent life from the part of their leaders constitutes "The last straw that broke the camel's back". Indeed, the newly independent countries in Africa and elsewhere have from the early 1960s transformed the populations' dreams of independence, and liberty into incommensurable nightmares. The populations are thus made to abandon their homes, their scarce possessions, and their native lands hoping to be welcomed by their earlier colonizers. The situation of the third-world populations is similar to Freud's *Death Drive – Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920)--where he posits that "the goal of all of life is death" (Freud, S.,1920: 160). Individuals living in endless life worries and anxieties do wish for death as a resolution for their despicable life.

As a matter of fact, this situation is characterized by the big population moves mainly from Africa to Europe which, for them is the promised Canaan, the land Prophet Abraham

promised to the Jews when they left Egypt for the Middle-East during the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries B. C. These victims – despite themselves – are almost continuously tormented, and are definitely convinced that the belonging link between them and their native countries definitely broken.

More importantly, this death drive is ambivalent in itself. That is, it represents death for the ones leaving their homes, and many of them die during the journey, but the survivors are more or less likely to start a new life. New life doors will open to them, though this is not always the case. Surviving the hardships in their respective countries is a resurrection in itself. And this alludes to Bakhtinian vision of life carnivalization, where death engenders a new life.

The rebellion of these despaired populations in the third-world countries has truly elucidated the monologic stance of the prevalent dictatorships in these regions. It shows how submissive and fearful these populations have been for more than half a century. Their readiness to break what, in Bakhtin's metalanguage, is archaic, is very comparable to the very principle of carnival. The submission and the fear – and to some extent the cowardice – of the autochthons helped the monologic relationships and the autism of the governments thrive till only recently. The defiance of authority of the third-world populations during what has come to be known as the *Arab Spring* has attempted to free them from the yoke of their aging and uncreative tyrants. Whether they have overcome their oppressors or not is not evident, and it is too early to pronounce; but the certain and successful outcome of their revolt is that their leaders have been uprooted, and dethroned. Some have been killed; some others imprisoned; and still others vanquished. The tyrannized populations have, as of now, given a new meaning, a new sense to their lives by looking into the future:

> They present the victory of this future, of the golden age, over the past. This is the victory of all the people's material abundance, freedom, equality, brotherhood. The victory of the future is insured by the people's immortality. The birth of the new, of the greater and the better, is as indispensable as inevitable as the death of

> the old. The one is transferred to the other; the better turns the worse to ridicule and kills it (M. Bakhtin, 1984: 256).

The above citation makes it clear that the oppressed people who were lullabied for so many years to let their tyrants – to borrow Fanon's expression – fill their pockets, have now awakened, and are determined to head forward in unity, welded into one mass that no one can subvert. The past and the fake history imposed to them have yielded to a blossoming future, though not very easy to attain. Similarly, it can be said that Bakhtin's endeavor to favor the present and the future over the past equates closely the will to change the past by the future as advocated by the seminal work of Freud *Totem and Taboo: Resemblances Between the psychic Lives of Savages and Neurotics* (1949). According to Freud, for the savage family members to get liberated from the tyranny of the family head—though the context was more about sexual practices – they had to proceed to the parricide; that is the killing of the father – which is symbolic of the past – so to start life anew (1949: 186, 187).

Following Bakhtin's interpretation of the literary elements which he views/qualifies as archaic and obsolete, the latter "elements are preserved in it [literature, and therefore life] only thanks to their constant renewal, which is to say their contemporization" (Bakhtin, M., 1984: 106).

In view of this quote, what has made the archaic elements – which in fact equate the injustices, and lack of consideration of the populations – perpetuate is fear, cowardice, and mainly corruption. The secret complicity between the Western powers, and the henchmen of the formerly colonized territories gave rise to breeding centers of maltreatment, and humiliation of the defenseless citizens – defenseless because of their illiteracy, and ignorance. The establishment of the monologic situation hindered the truth to appear. As Socrates put it, for truth – the reality of the life of these humiliated natives – to reveal it, there must be a confrontation, collision, and a quarrel or rebellion. For Socrates "Truth is not born nor is it to be found inside

the head of an individual person, it is born between people collectively searching for truth, in the process of their dialogic interaction" (Bakhtin, M., 1984: 10). The henchmen and their accomplices had succeeded only for a time the adoption of a monologic conduct by brutalizing the natives, and denying them the possibility of existing as other consciousnesses with equal rights, and equal possibilities. The rebellion of the natives leaving their countries because of overwhelming feeling of refusing to belong has cast light on the truth concerning the intense disdain the natives were confined in. The destruction, rather than the deconstruction of the monologic policies, and their supplantation by dialogic ones unravel a great deal of life mysteries which were hitherto unknown. These, too, denounce the malevolent authors of this large modern population move.

Because Conrad and O'Neill are not strangers to these social flaws, and injustices, they have consciously oriented their literary and dramatic works to the depiction of characters whose role is to bring to the fore what the new modern era has ultimately brought to the humans. Here again, the point revolves around the disappointment of the Western populations in general in relation to their expectations concerning the dream they imagined as a result of the Industrial Revolution, and the new technologies made at hand. Conrad's literature and O'Neill's drama have traced their way through this constant carnivalization in the sense that the hardships experienced by their parents have become their own hardships. The death of their parents did not mean the death of the flaws. Sure, life is followed by resurrection; however, this resurrection is not certain to be promising. The confrontation Conrad and O'Neill have created in their characters is concerned with the individual, and his other undetachable part which is the self.

Their characters have immersed themselves not only in intrinsic conflicts but in extrinsic ones as well. Captain Hagberd and his son Harry in Conrad's novella, *To-morrow,* and Robert Mayo in O'Neill's play, *Beyond the Horizon*, illustrate the extent to which an individual can suffer from unavowed internal conflicts, and how the latter can hinder the sound growth, and

promotion of the individual in his intimate life. This hindrance, as shown in the two works, creates a deep feeling of not belonging, and therefore the envy of running away from home, and him. Harry's and Robert's handling of their situations is by no means unique in its kind. For, this situation is not only experienced by these two characters as individuals; on the contrary, it is also lived by so many people just like them. Again we can proceed to an extension of this feeling of not belonging, and its subsequent outcomes to entire communities, and populations; hence its symbolic representation, and the realization of the deep philosophical character of the carnival: the overturning of the situations utilizing rebellious practices. The hitherto docile and obedient children now rebel against first their parents, and then the community where they are supposed to belong: the tabooed family and social barriers are now being dismantled one by one, giving way to a new life. Carnivalization in literature, and consequently in life, conveys the idea of setting things upside down leading to renewal. One may not bear giving roots in one place; and this wish and decision to leave for another place will probably give rise to a completely different, and why not a better life.

Invoking carnivalization in literature, not at large in streets or public places, conveys a kind of dissonance. Its present day performance appears paradoxical when compared to the pre-renaissance period when villagers and city-dwellers were given the right to subvert social and political hierarchies. Following Bakhtin's reasoning, the argument as regards the forceful shift of carnivals from authorized practice to confinement in literary and philosophical contexts get clearer, as witnesses this quotation:

> As the spirit of carnivalization was denied expression in the street spectacles, it was gradually observed from that time onwards by literature and literary genres like parody for instance or satire started performing the same kind of perversion and degradation of the official roots of the social hierarchies that were earlier done through carnival performances (In: Sayan Chattopadhyay, 2018: 12).

The issue the Indian Professor Chattopadhyay raises in this quotation lies in the obligatory transformation of the Western ideologies which, at the advent of Renaissance and the

ensuing awakening of the popular consciousness of the Enlightenment period, felt seriously threatened, and their goals at stake; and therefore they proceeded to the prohibition of the public performances of carnivals. These carnivals were known for their gathering of all the different social classes of the population including the rich, and the poor, and the learned, and the less learned alike. The confinement of the carnivals within the boundaries of literature and the social sciences in general, and their reduction into parodies, and satires make it somehow difficult to grasp the message the author is developing in his artistic work.

Additionally, the psychosocial issue of belonging proves its universal aspect in that it is dealt with not only by Conrad and O'Neill, but by other scholars as well. The case of Samuel Beckett's dramatic narrative entitled *Waiting for Godot* (1948) can rightly be viewed as a dramatization, and a continuation of Conrad's narrative, *To-morrow*. Conrad and Beckett focusing their attention on this social phenomenon of waiting for someone – be it a parent, a relative, or just a friend – opens new avenues of interrogations related to the existence of the human beings. Waiting for someone who does not come, or perhaps never will, has a traumatizing impact, and it plunges the individual into a profound loss, and despair. Although the person waiting kills him/herself with the idea of possibly seeing again the faraway and missing individual, he/she always entertains him/herself with the possibility of meeting again. The characters Vladimir and Estragon in Beckett's play are in no way different from Captain Hagberd in Conrad's narrative. They are all three endlessly waiting, and waiting; and in the meantime they have just contented themselves doing trivial activities. Captain Hagberd busied himself exchanging casual words with his female neighbor, a certain Bessie Carvil, about a clothesline he advised her to fix at her back garden, not in the garden facing his cottage. As the narratives unfold, the reader is implicitly informed that the resulting weight of waiting embodies the paralyzing trauma of Conrad's and Beckett's characters. Their quotidian life is limited to a

presence devoid of any sense of activity, and life, underlying this way their estrangement, and nothingness, and the absurd response of the modern life.

Following the correlation existing between Conrad's work, and those of O'Neill's, and Beckett's, this reinforces the aesthetic relationship, and the complementarity of the theme being tackled. The mutual sharedness of the vision of the theme belonging among three authors in three different localities, and three different time periods complies with Bakhtin's dialogic relationship between texts of different horizons, underpinning the obligatory inclusion of the chronotope principle. What Conrad had developed right at the turn of the twentieth century, O'Neill complemented it in the 1920s, and it was still complemented by Beckett in the late 1940s. These three works – and certainly others – had highlighted the nefarious and traumatizing outcomes of human existence at the aftermaths of modernity.

Conclusion

All in all, the problematic issue raised in Conrad's, and O'Neill's works concerning the feeling of belonging, and its ensuing consequences is viewed more as an aesthetic strategy than a mere presentation of a theme. Their relying on literary devices as Impressionism for Conrad and Expressionism for O'Neill determines their standpoints, and stances as modernist authors dealing with modern concerns of the Western society – and through inference to the world population. Their ability to make their characters tackle human-related issues positions them apart from their readers, and audiences. And the latter are given free will to attribute any interpretation(s) whatsoever to the narratives. This is the reason why we have allowed ourselves to extrapolate the issue beyond the horizon of our personal interpretive abilities. In a nutshell, pondering over Conrad's and O'Neill's works procures the readers/audiences insightful enlightenment likely to build knowledge.

Furthermore, we consider it necessary to stress the human value of the concept belonging, or belongingness, as it is used by some authors like Roy F. Baumeister, Mark R. Leary (in: Rita Zukauskiene, 2007). According to these, and to a large number of others, an individual does need the feeling of belongingness through interpersonal attachment, and especially with the family members, and the native country where he belongs. This provides him with a fundamental motivation to better his life, and by the same token, the living conditions of his community. The psychological feature such as belongingness is by far more vital than any other physiological and biological needs – with reference to the cultural anthropologist Bronislow Malinowski. For, they procure the individual the healthy balances that will, for sure, help him head forward.

What has occurred with the individual and the populations who have experienced the situation of not belonging is that they are strayed in their struggle through their lives. Not belonging is an overwhelming obstacle the consequences of which are insurmountable, and they jeopardize not just the individuals, but also the whole communities/countries. For more than a half century, the above-mentioned third-world countries have not, and perhaps never will advance a step forward because the populations are submerged by affective traumas, or traumatic neuroses, as Freud labels them.

Nonetheless, what seems to exaggerate the impact of the theme belonging are the new Cultural Studies which wrongly handle this very sensitive feeling, merging it quite flatly with immigration. From, say, the 1940s with Bernard Lewis, the Anglo-American Orientalist author, and the 1990s with Samuel P. Huntington, the prevailing world issues raised in the Cultural Studies deal with specific matters like identity, origin (belongingness), not of the major nations, but of sluggishly developing nations, and especially the minorities localized in the Orient -- borrowing Edward Said's appellation.

The mainstream Western ideology in charge of the World Order and their Supremacy tends to fancy creating obstacles meant to deter the backward nations from getting rid of their backwardness, and heading forward. The shallowness of knowledge of the latter countries contributes largely to their fixation in the overall world development busying themselves with trivialities, forgetting, or pretending to forget, because accomplice, the prerogatives of political and economic advancement; hence the upside-down situation of these countries, and the paving the way of these populations' moves.

In the light of the painful aspects of human condition as raised in the works of both Conrad, and O'Neill, the readers/audiences accompany these authors through their entrance into the internal life of the modern man who is torn between the polarity of misery and well-being, illusion and reality, and conscious and unconscious. These elements, in turn, help unravel the fundamentals of human existence which constitute their life philosophy, and they lead unconsciously the readers/audiences to expect the profound impact of human worries other than belongingness, and identity. The theme of *Human Regression*, another highly sensitive existential issue, will be dealt with in the following chapter of this here thesis.

Chapter Five:
The Theme of Regression in Conrad's and O'Neill's Works

Introduction

A chief aspect, among others, of this thesis resides in caring for its various chapters to form a harmonious unit/whole not independent or scattered parts each one developing a theme not related to the other. It must have at its heart the form of architectonics – to borrow Bakhtin's term – that general science of ordering parts into a whole. The present chapter, as informed by the previous conclusion, deals with a theme not distinct from the previous one; it is *Human Regression*, and it is its complement. Both have derived from the outcomes of modern life, and modernity in general.

Conrad's and O'Neill's works, overall, bear insightful knowledge likely to enlighten the readers' and audiences' minds as regards the precautions to make use of in case psycho-sociological pathologies appear, and how to "circumvent" the predicament. Among the Conradian themes discernible in O'Neill's plays, *human regression* occupies a prominent position in the works of the two authors. This human regression, as a theme closely related to modernity, predominates over the social life of the Westerners especially after the havoc of the Great War of 1914 – 1918. Just as a reminder, the outbreak of World War One was the outcome of some interrelated circumstances, and factors, of which are imperialism, nationalism, propaganda, and arms race. So let's just imagine how the future conflicts would be.

Though the theme of human regression is prevalent in almost all of Conrad's narratives, and O'Neill's plays, we select *Heart of Darkness* (1899) for the former and *The Hairy Ape* (1921), and The Iceman Cometh (1939) for the latter. With reference to Bakhtin's literary device of chronotope, a span of 22 years separates the production of these two works (Conrad's and O'Neill's), and their settings are very distant from one another. *Heart of Darkness* was published, as mentioned above, in 1899, and it covered the Belgian and the resulting massacres

of the natives in the Congo. *The Hairy Ape,* in 1921, and it covered the socio-political events in America right after WWI. And finally The Iceman Cometh, in [1939] 1946. It conveys perhaps the most humanistic rescue operation of a ragged gang of alcoholics in a New York City tavern run by Harry Hope. O'Neill's endeavor lies in giving a second chance for this tavern's habitués – where he himself belongs – to break with their pipe dreams and their death wish, and face life as is with no prevarication and procrastination.

Despite the distant settings, and times of these narratives, their common denominator is the late nineteenth century imperialism which unleashed the savage military forces of the then European Powers on the African countries, and its metamorphosis into an upside-down and generalized conflict among the same Powers in the early 1900s.

Although Conrad and O'Neill did not overtly involve themselves in those conflicts, their works constitute a source of new avenues of investigation compelling the readers, and audiences to delve deeper into the gist of these modernity-related ailments of which is the *human regression*. To thoroughly grasp the message of Conrad's and O'Neill's narratives, it is important to attempt to describe rather than define this complex topic as posits the scholar George Siemens in his work entitled *Knowing Knowledge*,

> More than that, the categories of human thought are never fixed in any one definitive form; they are made, unmade and remade incessantly; they change with places and times (G. Siemens, 2006: 13).

According to Siemens, bothering oneself to define a term like *human regression* is not worthwhile for the mere reason that this concept – if concept can be called – is contingent upon the overall socio-political environment determined by places and times; that is, specifying the '*where'* and the '*when'* of an action. The human regression Conrad experienced with the making of his novella, *Heart of Darkness,* at the turn of the twentieth century surely differs from the one experienced by O'Neill with his plays, *The Hairy Ape,* and *The Iceman Cometh* of the post

WWI. Despite their different historical contexts, and the causes that led to it [the war], the outcome is the same: *the human degradation*.

Conrad, O'Neill and Human Regression

Compositionally, and for the sake of drawing landmarks to this concept, we believe it necessary to elucidate the various usages of it, and then select from them the one, or the ones, that suit appropriately the field of analysis of this chapter. To begin with, the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of current English (1974) defines *Regression* as the process of returning to an earlier and more primitive form or state. Another more general view of the term *Regression* is still usually found in the dictionary *English and English* (1958). It defines *Regression* as

> …a return to earlier or less mature behavior, or, manifestation of more primitive behavior after having learned mature form, whether or not the immature or primitive behavior had actually formed part of the person's earlier behavior (In: Saul Scheidlinger, 2015: 3).

It is quite apparent in the above quotation that the human regression as defined tends to be much closer to Freud's overview of the concept (regression) – which in a way equates the pathology of fixation -- limited to individual psychotherapy than to the recent development of group psychotherapy. None the less, the lack of landmarks or progression from the individual to the group psychotherapies should not constitute a drawback or flaw in the overall works of Freud in the early twentieth century: what he did was (to) set the cornerstones for a promising new science he coined as psychoanalysis.

A still more specialized definition of the concept *Regression* is put forward by the Encyclopedia Dictionary Larousse (1974). Etymologically, it is a Latin word – *Regressio* – and it denotes the idea of going back, a diminution, and a return to an earlier state. Psychoanalytically, it conveys the notion of returning to an earlier phase of libidinal development which manifests

itself in pulsative gratifications and/or satisfactions. The latter neglect the historical/social changes in the life of an individual (Larousse, 1974: 1194).

In view of the above definitions of the term *Regression*, there is still some haziness lurking over this already complex and ambiguous term making the readers somewhat strayed in grasping its very meaning. This is the reason why we join George Siemens's (2006) approach of explaining rather than defining this term. The more we delve into Conrad's narrative, *Heart of Darkness,* and O'Neill's plays, *The Hairy Ape*, and *The Iceman Cometh,* the more we get closer to our objective of elucidating the notion of *Regression,* psychoanalytically, and sociologically.

From the psychoanalytic perspective, and as mentioned earlier, *Regression* refers not simply to any earlier state or behavior, but a specific one. It represents the core of the term in that the individual returning to an earlier state has already been instructed, formed, or simply shown how to behave acceptably with reference to Freud's *Civilization and its Discontents* (1929). At times, indeed, Freud's psychoanalytic reasoning mingles with that of sociology. For an individual/society member to behave healthily in the society where he belongs, it is imperative that he control his libidinal energies, and keep some of his drives, and impulses at bay: the very essence of life in society demands these frustrations. And this creates a malaise in the individual who feels discomfort in civilization and/or society. Accordingly, "the animal man becomes a human being only through a fundamental transformation of his nature" – by changing his pleasure principle by the reality principle (the society laws, constraints and order) (Herbert Marcuse, 1966: 12).

The sociological implications to be found in Freud's endeavor as regards drives and impulses underpins a more thorough crystallization of society constraints, and regulations or social facts, as Emile Durkheim refers to them. According to Durkheim, for a society member to plainly develop in his society, it is equally imperative that he, too, control his insatiable appetites

which are destructive to society harmony. Failure to overcome these appetites, the author is likely to be accused of infringement, and consequently to be punished not by his ego, but by the regulations in force, preventing thus the case to become anomic (Emile Durkheim, 1880, 1890).

Considering the society member/individual in this psycho-sociological context, it is clear that the frustrations imposed by civilization, and the social constraints are at the origin of a sound and healthy behavior. The individual's liminality/awareness as regards the sanctions he is likely to endure for his lack of conformity and respect of these rules compel him to behave rationally in the light of the society consciousness, and morality. Failure again to give due attention to these boundaries, the expected outcome is not more, not less than regression which can be either individual or collective, and in the latter case it is collective, and it is the human regression.

On the whole, human regression, as depicted in Conrad's and O'Neill's works, requires us to draw a link between these authors' aesthetic portrayals of this concept from Bakhtin's perspective as well as his principle of *The Surplus of Seeing*. As has already been stated, Conrad's and O'Neill's renderings of their respective events took place at different times, and in different localities. The objective of this underpins the gathering of information/knowledge of one time/space event, and another gathering of information/knowledge of another time/space event. In other words, this practice is intended to show not the similarity between Conrad's and O'Neill's renderings, but their complementarities; that is their surplus of seeing: the addition and/or the association of what these two authors have seen each one from his own time and space. This strategy aims to provide the readers/audiences with more complete information concerning this psycho-social phenomenon that is the human regression.

For a better elucidation of the human regression at the time of Conrad's production of the narrative, *Heart of Darkness,* it is important to at least proceed to an overview of the then socio-historical background. Amid the nineteenth century, a combination of events, which at the

beginning were positive because they were scientific, gradually led humanity to an almost chaotic situation. At that time, Europe was experiencing the extraordinary development, and expansion of the Industrial Revolution. The negative outcomes the revolution entailed thrust thinkers of the time to react vividly against the exploitation of workers – men, women and children – by the unscrupulous capitalists, and the owners of the means of production. Among these thinkers emerged Karl Marx, and Frederich Engels who bore a heavy blow to the capitalists, and their exploitation of the proletarians. Overall, they offered a significant, powerful, and multi-dimensional critique of modernity. Their economic philosophy of historical materialism consists in dividing the population into conflicting social classes. For Marx and Engels, social classes rest upon how much and how little property one has accumulated. Life, according to them, revolves around the race to material acquisition, and "the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle (Marx and Engels, [1848] 2018: 14).

Following Marx's and Engels's treatise about the unbridled capitalism during the early Roaring years of the Industrial Revolution worldwide, it becomes evident that this situation alludes to Freud's work *Civilization and its Discontents* (1929) where it is unfortunately clearly asserted that the supposedly civilized man gets rid of his civilizational virtues in exchange for property, and power. The symbolic imagery of "Man is to man a wolf," provided by Freud, foregrounds the spreading of human regression all through the modern world. The "Civilized society", Freud argues, "is perpetually menaced with disintegration through this primary hostility of men towards one another (Freud, S., 1929: 25). This hostility among men can be viewed as one of the major causes of the human regression as it reveals their real greed for material acquisition, as illustrates this other citation by Freud,

> The possession of private property gives power to the individual, and hence the temptation arises to ill-treat his neighbor; the man who is excluded from the possession of property is obliged to rebel in hostility against the oppressor (ibid: 25).

Allusion, here, is made to the economic philosophy of Marx, and Engels which is meant to convert the private property to collective property: hence the principle of the economic system *Communism*. Its noble objective to end once for all the exploitation of man by man, and his delivering from the evil of regression has failed in an utter manner that shows the absurdity of life. The complexity of the resolution of human regression proves to be even more complex in view of the incomprehensibility of the human nature, and existence.

The second not less important thinker is Charles R. Darwin, the British biologist, who developed astounding theories about the origin of man, and ascertained that his struggle in life is subordinate to his ability, and fitness to impose him in society. However, it should be noted that not all the knowledge of social Darwinism emanates specifically from Charles Darwin himself, and his prominent work, *Origin of Species* (1859). In fact, and without pinpointing every detail related to the mistaken use of the term Darwinism – as this is not the object of this reference – some thinkers have straightforwardly appropriated the term Darwinism in their various researches whenever they deal with man, competition, and the struggle for existence. According to James Allen Rogers, what the other thinkers were thinking in a whisper, Darwin came, and cried out the same ideas as those of his contemporaries. More than that, he gave them a scientific support, as suggests this citation,

> Darwin made it more difficult to dissociate his new discovery in biology from older patterns of social thought. It was not what Darwin said that had little impact, but it was the manner in which he said it that led those, who were looking for scientific support for opinions already held, to infer that he meant what they already believed (J.A. Rogers, 1972: 268).

In terms of the themes embodied in this phrase, *Social Darwinism* of Darwin's, the above quote reminds us of R. Barthes's idea of the plurality of a text, and its different avenues of meanings. That is, a text – here a phrase – has as many interpretations as it has readers, and the text/word/phrase endorsed to its author can by no means serve the purpose of convicting him of

whatever implication. The multiplicity of meanings and/or interpretations is to be endorsed to the reader, as Barthes posits,

> A text is made of multiple writings, drawn from many cultures and entering into mutual relations of dialog, parody, contestation, but there is one place where this multiplicity is focused, and that place is the reader, not, as was hitherto said, the author. The reader is the space on which all the quotations that make up writing are inscribed without any of them being lost; a text's unity lies not in its origin, but in its destination. Yet, this destination cannot any longer be personal: the reader is without history, biography, psychology; he is simply that someone who holds together in a single field all the traces by which the written text is constituted…the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the author (R. Barthes, 1977: 148, in: Graham Allen, 2000: 75).

We are given to understand from this quotation that the task of the author consisting of developing his texts into an artistic work has ended, and that all the ensuing interpretations are reported to the reader – rather than the consumer – who takes the entire responsibility. An author – the origin – handling his work to the reader – the destination – presupposes his death, and oblivion. The work becomes the sole property of libraries/bookstores, and readers, and the relationship between them is open to debate.

Darwin's theory the *Natural Selection* coming at this time/moment of the nineteenth century reinforced the Orientalists' vision of the non-European, and the Oriental in general. The Orientalist literature depicting the Orient as an exotic place, and its peoples as indigenous, backward, and ignorant served as a justification to invade overseas countries (E. Said, 1989). Moreover, the imperatives of the Industrial Revolution hastened the elaboration of a social theory that would contain the discontents of their fellow European citizens, and enfranchise them from any external accusations whatsoever. The latter were duly convinced of the good deeds their capitalists were undertaking to help the indigenous to discover the righteousness of Christianity, and the miraculous results of school instruction. This, obviously, was only a mask, and a lure for their tempestuous strategy gilded with the humanist notions of the Victorian Era they fought for, and for which they even killed their monarchs (Sean Kelsey, 2003: 338; and Petr

Kropotkin, 2011: 335 – 344). The disguise/mask was attributed the name of *The White Man's Burden*. The years 1884 – 1885 were the fateful years for the overseas indigenous societies. The Berlin Conference unanimously agreed on the partitioning of the African nations, and the scramble for the African continent. Soon, however, the secret was revealed, and so, instead of coming to the rescue of the indigenous, the European imperialists propagated misery, and death. The obscure strategy of the whites consisted of dispossessing the blacks of their lands, and proceeding to the plundering of their natural resources so necessary for the development of their Industrial Revolution (D. T. Osabu Kle, 2005).

The implications of the ideology of *The White Man's Burden* turned out to be a backlash – or more commonly the return of the boomerang—to the white imperialists/colonizers. Their would-be willingness or eagerness to civilize people without their being summoned for such a sticky business proved by far and large their decadence to human regression: a humanist, by so doing, loses his humanness, and he unconsciously becomes an enemy to humanity. Additionally, the fact of going so far away from their advanced native countries (Europe) where law, and order seem to prevail has made them behave instinctively rather than rationally. Psychoanalytically, any individual departing from the constraints of – the repressive—civilization is likely to surrender to his Id drives, and impulses. The principle of delayed gratification and that of sublimation will be supplanted by the instant gratification, and then, neither his Ego nor the Superego can deter him from behaving savagely and beastly simply because – for him—the repressive civilization has squandered its essence in these colonies which they qualify as dark and savage places. The lawlessness -- according to the colonists—which prevails in these faraway territories has resuscitated their bestial instincts: their consciousness is submerged by their unconsciousness giving it free a way to appear on the surface (James Strachey, 1961) , and transforming the human being into a mere biological being, not different from a beast. Just as a reminder, the deep psychoanalytic character of the concept *Sublimation*, viewed as a defense

mechanism, calls upon the principle of transformation rather than repression, as posits the Norwegian philosopher Peter Wessel Zapffe,

> Through stylistic or artistic gifts can the very pain of living at times be converted into valuable experiences? Positive impulses engage the evil and put it to their own ends, fastening onto its pictorial, dramatic, heroic or even comic aspects (Nietzsche, and Zapffe, 2015).

Following Zapffe's interpretation of the concept *Sublimation* as a defense mechanism – to help the individual avoid the state of being overwhelmed by neurosis – we are given to understand that a negative drive or impulse coming to the surface – of consciousness – ought not to be repressed into the unconscious; on the contrary, it should be profoundly dissected, and later on, transformed into something pertaining to the field of artistry. A concrete but simple instance of this can be the fact of transforming the upsetting and recurrent idea of breaking into a bank by becoming a novelist, and write books about bank robberies, or simply by becoming a banker or a safety agent himself where he would track robbers, and arrest them.

Conjointly, from the sociological perspective, and as has already been informed, the stepping of society members on humanist principles, and the society conventions, and constraints leads indubitably to the state of anomie. Anomie is a state where social facts have merged with insatiable appetites/instincts, giving – sociologically – way to infringement of society harmony, and welfare, showing clearly the distinction of the normal from the pathological (E. Durkheim, 1982). These phenomena, according to Durkheim, have departed from normalcy and have evolved into pathological phenomenon.

Considering Conrad's narrative, *Heart of Darkness* from the thematic perspective, its hallmark remains indisputable. It is indeed an inexhaustible source of insightful impressions. The deeper we delve into the core of the story, the more subtle and complex facets of modernity overflow to our mind, making us ponder again and again over the richness of the ideas it embraces. After a period exceeding a century after its publication, most readers, and especially

researchers, agree that *Heart of Darkness* remains a staple text of literary modernism (Brian W. Shaffer, in: David Bradshaw, 2006: 314).

A large number of highly distinguished critics of the rank of Edward Said, Ian Watt, Norman Page, and probably others, claim that the thematic developed in Conrad's work is just appropriate to the time and place of the *fin de siècle*. It was indeed the time of the awakening of Europe, and their practical technologies reached their acme. Because it was a time of modern prosperity, and because the Europeans became aware of their superiority, and supremacy in relation to the non-Europeans, this situation gave rise to an offensive imperialist ideology which proceeded to the tyrannical treatment of the inferior races, mainly in Africa.

Africa, as Carl Cavanaugh Hodge asserts, represents a set of unprecedented and unexpected assets for the European commerce, and their roaring industry:

> The sense of both opportunity and limitation among the European Powers in particular prompted a competition that came to focus of the continent of Africa, because it was large, comparatively close, and, above all, defenseless (C. Cavanaugh, 2008: xliii).

In a sense, Hodge's use of the term "defenseless" in the above quotation justifies, to its own right, the European onslaught on the African continent, and it implicitly alludes to Darwin's ingenious phrase *The Survival of the Fittest*. Indeed, according to the eminent cultural anthropologist Henry Louis Morgan (Ancient Society, 1877), not all societies succeeded in evolving through the three major stages of human development: from savagery to barbarism, and to civilization. Morgan's "idea that evolution proceeded from simple to complex forms" (Morgan, 1985: 3, 5, 6) is illustrative of the peoples who are referred to as backward. Instead of fighting against savagery, and ignorance, these backward peoples have immersed themselves in unintelligible religious dogmas, and emotional nature rather than rationality: hence their present state of prey in front of the ever-developing nations in the world.

Nonetheless, the astounding characteristics of Conrad's novella, *Heart of Darkness,* and according to the recent readings of his works, Conrad has shifted his attention from the oft-repeated and relatively old topics as ethnicity, and the resulting racism, and this definitely gained him an undisputed momentum. Rather than focusing his attention on the Europeans maltreating the indigenous, Conrad showed more concern as to the reasons why these Europeans behaved likewise. This is absolutely a new approach meant to depict the inner conflicts in his story characters. It is an approach which has, for sure, preceded Freud's, Jacque Lacan's, Otto Rank's, and others' psychoanalytic findings. Given Conrad's "exposure" to the burgeoning imperialism of the nineteenth century, and its sore outcomes – not to mention his own distressing early life – he has intrinsically appealed to his own vision of the individual's inner consciousness, and thinking. We therefore cannot possibly assume that Conrad was marked by Freud, and his disciples, and put into use their metalanguage, as witnesses John Tessitore in his work entitled *Freud, Conrad, and Heart of Darkness* (1980):

> Conrad uses his work to examine civilization and its discontents, a phrase which I do not casually borrow from Freud, for some thirty years later Freud was to put into analytical prose the very issues which Conrad had explored in his little novel. The kinship between these two men is enormous. This is not to imply that either was familiar with the other's work, indeed, evidence points to the contrary. (It is unlikely that Conrad encountered Freud's writing until well into the twentieth century while Freud may never have read Conrad at all (John Tessitore, 1980: 31).

The message Tessitore issued in this citation makes it clear that there was no professional relation whatsoever between Conrad, and Freud, even though they were contemporary scholars. The point is just that Conrad had his own vision of psychoanalysis without, attributing it the term psychoanalysis, and he has used his own literary diction to refer to Freud's terminology. This is quite enough for the reader to adopt his perceptive vision of his story characters' behavior. Conrad is a "Freud" in his own right.

Though Conrad's narrative, *Heart of Darkness*, is the product of the *fin de siècle*, one must by no means assess it as a compilation of events reflecting the European practices and ideology. On the contrary, it involves the whole impressionistic approach of the author on the making of his work. The surface and the visual images one can depict from the exegesis of Conrad's texts run much deeper into what constitutes this author's world vision, philosophy, and epistemological and ontological approach relative to his conception of the human nature, and the human existence. Conrad has stepped into a new form of enlightenment, an intellectual revolution the aim of which, if it is not to solve the humanity's problems, it would at least be an attempt to bring them to the fore, and urge the readers to lean closer on them. The readers perceiving the events unfolding in the narrative, *Heart of Darkness* underpins the subjectivity of interpretation, and the individuality of the construability of knowledge. That is, the display of the terms *self,* and *other,* and the relation between them in Conrad's work provide the reader only with bulk knowledge devoid of any sort of persuasion. It is the reader's task to make this knowledge his own.

Conrad's philanthropic inclinations rooted in his existential philosophy underlie their closeness to the art of painting whose core is surrounded by haziness, and ambiguity. Conrad and his contemporary French impressionist painter, Claude Monet, do share quite a few features as regards the handling of their respective works. What Monet tried to achieve in his work was to capture the fleeting effects of light in his drawings, making them this way unclear, and foggy. Though, grossly, the viewer is aware of the object of the painting, he is unable to precisely describe any detail of it. Monet has done the deed, it is now up to the viewer to grasp the knowledge its author intended to transmit in a fragmentary way (Chris Brown, 2016). Similarly, Conrad's concern in his literary/artistic movement of the late nineteenth century – though he rejects the idea of being called an impressionist – lies in his ability of providing the reader with knowledge without mentioning specifically what this knowledge is about: hence his strategy of

blurring the contents of his abundant works, and keeping himself aside of his reader's interpretive ability, and capacity. The thrill in Conrad's narratives is maintained by getting his writing artistry rid of any explicitness as it kills illusion. Knowledge, as produced by Conrad, appeals to a new form of art, and aesthetics of fiction that eschew the commonly Victorian-related techniques, and topicality.

Human Regression as depicted in Conrad's works, and mainly *Heart of Darkness*, is viewed as an attempt to bring clarity to his own conception of the human nature, and existence. The inclusion of human aspects as the immorality of the white invaders of the black communities in Africa and elsewhere, and the moral struggle between sanity and insanity makes Conrad's literature a source of not just information but also as a source of human-based knowledge, and philosophy. Literature, as posits Bakhtin, is another form of information, and "communication, and, as such, another form of knowledge (M. Bakhtin, 2002: 66). What Conrad has brought to his readers is symbolic of his own vision of the decadence of humanity in its atavistic state.

This state owes its relevance to his readers' approval or disapproval of it, and this is indicative of his impressionistic use of language. This strategy consists of a subjective analysis of the diction, and images he has used to inform the reader with this complex theme of human regression. In so doing, Conrad wishes to demarcate himself, and his work from any sort of philosophical or literary hegemony – an attempt to influence his readers. In fact, Conrad has just done his work, as he has so plainly explicated his intention in the preface of his narrative entitled *The Nigger of the Narcissus* (1897), "My task which I am trying to achieve, is by the power of the written words, to make you hear, to make you feel – it is, above all, to make you see. That – and no more, and it is everything" (J. Conrad, 2012). This statement, as a matter of fact, epitomizes both the implications of the impressionistic device adopted by Conrad, and his presentation – only presentation – of facts to his readers. The conclusions to draw are neither Conrad's nor Marlow's, but only the reader's.

Given the relatively brief account of Conrad's work, *Heart of Darkness*, in relation to the human regression, this represents only a personal undertaking of events/situations in progress in his own space, and time. It is personal, and as such, it is partial knowledge: it has more than probably taken its roots from works that have preceded it, and it will probably pave the way for future development of similar topics as they all deal with human existence, and its endless malaise.

Though the theme of human regression pertains to the large fields of philosophy and existentialism, the approaches different scholars adopt differ only in form, not in content. Accordingly, O'Neill, too, has adopted a more developed form of informative and communicative literature which consists of putting on the stage his personal concerns as well as those of his plays' characters. Conrad's reliance on the written language – *the power of the written word* – to tackle the human regression equates O'Neill's approach with the difference that the latter has relied on verbal techniques, and all the aspects embedded in the act of dramatization. Indeed, O'Neill's concerns imbued with Conrad's themes find another echo in ever-increasing audiences entertained almost daily by the Provincetown players in New York Theater of the 1920s.

More often than not, pinpointing *differences* as regards time and space, and *similarities* as regards the topic is intended to explain, and illuminate how Conrad's and O'Neill's works have treated this modernity-related theme of human regression. As has already been stated, the valuing of this thematic depiction resides not in its theme *per se*, but in the aesthetics the two authors have appealed to provide readers, and audiences with, say, fragmented knowledge. The knowledge is fragmented in the sense that Conrad's and O'Neill's endeavors represent only personal views of the facts entailed by modernity, and that the object of this research consists in grouping or gathering these two views in order to form a whole with reference to Bakhtin's concept of *The Surplus of Seeing* (M. Bakhtin, 2002: 35). This helps us build a more thorough

image that includes both Conrad's vision, and that of O'Neill to conceive or construct a whole out of the different fragmented situations they have experienced individually.

O'Neill's appeal to dramatic devices to pave his way in the specific context of the American literary scene reinforces the objective of our research in shifting from the attitude of Conrad influencing O'Neill to that of Conrad being complemented by O'Neill: hence my reliance on Bakhtin's dialogic approach. The other issue in O'Neill's dramatic narratives, though open to debate, lies in breaking with the early Greek and Roman types of theatrical performances. Theater has, indeed, changed overtime. The exploitation of the theater in the Medieval Ages of the fifteenth, and the sixteenth centuries by the Church provided the then audiences with morality plays where the hero had to overcome evil. The plays were in nature allegorical "where characters and events represented or symbolized other ideas, and concepts (Heather Carroll, 2013). The topicality the "Christian" theater was undertaking comprised themes like *The Seven Deadly Sins, Death*, *Virtues*, and even *Angels,* and *Demons* – anything that would take over man's soul (ibid: 2013) …and anything that would perpetuate the Church domination over the illiterate populations of Europe.

O'Neill, as an early twentieth-century playwright, has made it his task to demystify the hitherto unchallenged human existential issue, and the human behavior because of the great impact of religion, and the prevailing darkness of mind. Because this mythical apprehension of human life pertains to human history, this same history has the power to disintegrate, to make it disappear completely, or at least alter, and distort it (Roland Barthes, 1991: 116 – 119).

The "assumption" that the American theater of the early1900s was left behind in relation to the European theaters, and specifically to the British one, and that it was a kind of backwater was gradually being disintegrated, and supplanted by a real (American) one. O'Neill also made it his concern, just like his predecessors, to deconstruct the tabooed vision of the American

Puritans that both theater and novel were “dangerous” for the American society for the simple, but unfounded reason, that novels inculcated “immoral” ideas in the heads of young people (Peter B. High, 1986: 27).). And this alludes to the “well-known” U.S. Postal Inspector, Anthony Comstock, who initiated the New York Society for the Suppression of vice and the Comstock Act of 1905.

The American Puritanism following the Revolution of Independence of the second half of the eighteenth century showed its reluctance to yield to the new waves of thought that were generated by the overall technical, social, political and intellectual changes of the Industrial Revolution – including the French Revolution of 1789. It is these changes that made up the new modernist vision of life, and transformed – upside down – all values. The American Puritan Particularism was self-effacing, and was gradually giving way to new ways of thinking. It was a revolution based on arts, and ideas, not on dogmatic assumptions, and beliefs. Empiricism, too, played a determining role in the establishment of new knowledge. For, the latter pertains to the “branch of epistemology” which “ disregards the concept of instinctive ideas and focuses entirely on experience and evidence as it relates to sensory perception” (in: F. M. Anayet Hossain, 2014, Abstract. As a reminder, Empiricism was first put forward in John Locke’s *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. The American Puritanism was forced to yield to the demands of scholars definitely determined to break the centuries-long hindrances, and obstacles for a sound human evolution and knowledge. Conrad and O’Neill must rightly integrate this modernizing movement that swept the Western world where thinkers like “Ibsen and Nietzsche, Schopenhauer and Zola, Freud and Bergson were transforming fundamental Western ideas (Richard Ruland, and Malcolm Bradbury, 1991: xii).

Because O’Neill had meant his plays to be iconoclastic when he began to write his dramatic narratives, these experiences – a heavy-drinking sailor, the ugly underside of society,

the world of cheap hotels, and sailors' bars – "were his first material. They helped to change the old characters of melodrama into realistic characters (Peter B. High, 1986: 225)."

And as previously mentioned in H. Carroll's video/lecture about drama, drama deals with simultaneously or combines two distinct kinds of conflict, the first being social or political, the second, and by far the most suitable and the most related to the modernity ailments, and worries, being the internal conflict. The latter occurs between the character and his/her own thoughts or actions (H. Carroll, 2013); and failure to give it due consideration, its author is likely to be overwhelmed, and through time he/she will become a neurotic for whom life would have no sense.

Though the American authors have, as of the late nineteenth century, attempted to overturn the entertainment tendency of the theater into an artistic one – like, for instance, Bronson Howard's *The Banker's Daughter* (1878), and William Dean Howell's *The Henrietta* (1887) – it was O'Neill who truly shook the very foundations of the American drama, and theater, both thematically and technically, as witnesses P. B. High,

> In fact, O'Neill often uses the new philosophy of Freud to deepen his dramas. He was one of the first playwrights to study the struggle inside a character's mind between conscious motives and unconscious needs. While most of his plays are realistic in form, he experimented with anti-realistic techniques. He sometimes "distorted" reality in order to "express" the inner meaning (or a problem) in a play. *The Emperor Jones* (1920) and *The Hairy Ape* (1922) are important examples of this expressionism (P. B. High, 1986: 225).

Unlike Conrad who had initiated his own psychological treatment of events, and characters, O'Neill had constructed his psychology (by) relying on Freud's principles, and metalanguage to depict, and unravel the reasons leading to the human regression. The artistic/aesthetic strategy O'Neill called for – expressionism – does not in fact differ much from Conrad's impressionism in that the two techniques are closely related to the arts of painting, and music.

As O'Neill's concern in playwriting is bound to the mental and spiritual outcomes of modernity, and to a larger extent to the Industrial Revolution, and the exploitation of the proletarians, the mode of expressionism fits best the situation. Because drama is a form of literature that has to be performed orally in front of the audience (H. Carroll, 2013), expressionism "represents external reality in a highly stylized and subjective manner, attempting to convey a psychological or a spiritual reality rather than a record of actual events (Dicos Encarta, 2009). O'Neill's appeal to the theater/literary device expressionism is very suggestive of the attitude to adopt when facing a problem/conflict. The latter can be understood, and settled by means of expression, and communication. Additionally, expression and communication are means by which the roots of human regression, and its related anxieties can be identified, and therefore treated, and this constitutes the very principle which prompts O'Neill's eagerness to delve into the heart of the overwhelming worries of his fellow American citizens. More importantly, O'Neill addressing his audiences with matters related to their existential conditions procures a twofold satisfaction: one about the hopeful sigh of the spectators experiencing a catharsis, the other of the playwright who has positively triggered the awakening of their consciousness, as witnesses Carol Byrd in her conversation with O'Neill,

> I do not write with a premeditated purpose. I write of life as I see it. As it exists for many of us. If people leave the theater after one of my plays with a feeling of compassion for those less fortunate than they I am satisfied. I have not written in vain (Mark W. Estrin, 1990: 52).

As has already been referred to in the general introduction that the tragic moods of Conrad's works find an echo in O'Neill's dramatic narratives, the idea of the human regression is also discernible in O'Neill's play, *The Iceman Cometh*. Dissecting a social flaw like human regression in literature and drama is one thing but providing solutions for it is by far much more important. Indeed, most critics, and readers as well, agree that the conclusions to draw from Conrad's and O'Neill's works are the humane teachings, and overall hermeneutics which have primarily resulted from their personal exposure to life hardships and psychic torments, and then

from what is believed as shared among all humans: the collective conscience or consciousness. The latter concept which reverberates with Emile Durkheim's sociology (Domina Petric, 2020: 1), and its limitation to a national collective consciousness has ultimately proved to be much larger, and it includes all the shared beliefs, ideas, and emotions of all humans. Hence the phenomenon of human regression goes beyond the boundaries of a nation; and this constitutes its universal characteristic. None the less, in order to avoid any sort of misunderstanding and misinterpretation, Durkheim's collective consciousness should not be confused with Carl G. Jung's the collective unconscious which is consists of "a second psychic system – the first one being personal – of a collective, universal, and impersonal nature which is identical in all individuals. This collective unconscious does not develop individually but is inherited"; it is made up essentially of stereotypes (C. G. Jung, 2008: 99). Though modernity has stained human nature human nature with almost indelible ills, there is always a way for deliverance, as suggests Travis Bogard, in his Contour in Time (1972),

> In drawing a picture of men bound in life and death /…/ O'Neill relies on Conrad for one further suggestion that men caught in a common destiny find in their relationship with one another a bond that gives value to their existence (T. Bogard, 1972: 41).

As a backing, or rather reinforcing, of T. Bogard's view expressed in the citation above, I Would straightforwardly appeal to Robert Falls, the Artistic Director of the American Cultural Magazine "Goodman Theater". Falls has set himself to provide his readers with a grandstand view of O'Neill's play, *The Iceman Cometh* (1939) which he qualifies as the most complex, the most unwieldy, and the most daunting in the sense that he proceeds to the illumination of the crystallization of the concept of the human regression in the American society. In his article entitled *Why the Iceman Cometh?* Robert Falls has from the start proceeded to the depiction of the various characters that people the bar and the society hardships, and ailments which have gather them in that place: the Harry Hope's Saloon which in a way symbolizes a microcosm. These bar's *habitués,* Robert Falls says, are animated by dreams – pipe dreams as they are

referred to in the play – and their uncontrolled sinking of their problems and sorrows in alcohol all day long: hence their escape from reality and refuge in illusions (Wilson Laffolett's "reality and recreation of reality"), as viewed by Conrad.

As a matter of fact, Conrad's characters do not differ much from O'Neill's – at least in this play, *The Iceman Cometh*. In *The Nigger of the Narcissus,* the reviewer, Nick Burningham (1999) maintains that the overall atmosphere reigning over the sailors is gloomy and despondent, as reported in this citation,

> It is /…/ a story of troubled inter-personal relationships, an exploration of compulsion and neurosis – most of the characters can be seen as either weirdly hysterical or Hollywood heroic /…/ even in a ship romping across tropical seas before a favorable monsoon Conrad sees dark despair and regret: "like the earth that had given her up to the sea, she [the ship] had an intolerable load of hopes and regrets" (N. Burningham, 1999).

The above citation draws allusion to the convergence of ideas of both Conrad and O'Neill in the construction of their respective narratives, *The Nigger of the Narcissus*, and *The Iceman Cometh.* This is reflected by the consideration of their story settings as microcosms: first, the boat Narcissus gathers a gang of sailors filled with despair and regrets; and second, Harry Hope's bar, or the Hell Hole, gathers another gang of neurotic alcoholics, all of whom are at a loss.

Seen from the philosophical perspective and with reference to the early twentieth century advent of the notion of historical materialism, one is tempted to say that this situation has only made the gap between humans and their creator wider. The fact that people are more prone to live materially and/or bodily than spiritually, it is almost evident that they get into insurmountable states of mind as they find themselves at the margin of society due to their incapacity to provide themselves with necessary needs. And as a man has detached himself from spiritual comfort and confidence, he has become despaired and strayed, and all the ways are dead blocked: suggesting that man has trodden in the path leading to human regression. This very situation and state of mind have impacted the innermost existential thoughts of both Joseph

Conrad and Eugene O'Neill, leading them to nearly end their lives. In order to deconstruct these dark and gloomy feelings, I would briefly refer to the work Alain Daniélou entitled Gods of Love and Ecstasy / the Tradition of Shiva and Dionysus (1992):

> /…/ a way is always open, however, for a man to return to his proper role of cooperating with the divine plan. This way as taught by Shivaism, has nothing to do with false virtues, or with artificial moral or social problems in which modern religion and society take such delight, and whose precise aim is to deceive the soul, keep man from seeking true values, and this leads him to suicide. The way of Shiva – Dionysus is the only way by which humanity can be saved (A. Daniélou, 1992: 9).

As can be expected, the humane teachings which virtually make up the core of Conrad's and O'Neill's works closely converge with Shiva and Dionysus understanding of humans' bents and inclinations. Robert Falls's commentary on the play, The Iceman Cometh, cannot solely rest upon character depiction as social outcasts and society drop-outs whose lives are devoid of any meaning whatsoever. On the contrary, he instantly raises a relieving feature O'Neill has introduced in his play, The Iceman Cometh: hope – the hope that is as likely as not to awaken them from their disillusionment and back them up to face their miserable life and start a new life, and reconcile with happiness. To Robert Falls, the grandeur of O'Neill's play, The Iceman Cometh, goes beyond all expectations, as this citation suggests,

> Mammoth in structure and epic ambition, The Iceman Cometh is both an absorbing theatrical journey and an x-ray to the human condition, replete with all its ambition, joys, and inexorable terrors (R. Falls,

The grandeur of O'Neill's play, The Iceman Cometh, as viewed by Robert Falls, underpins the perplexity of human existentialism permeated with antagonistic forces of ambitions and joys clashing with unyielding terrors. The juxtaposition of these conflicting elements of the human condition appeals to psychoanalytic understanding of human-related traumas likely to undermine the negative consequences of the human regression; and this is the aim O'Neill has set himself to attain in his play, The Iceman Cometh.

Moreover, Neena Arndt, an assistant dramaturge at Goodman Theater, and a teacher at Boston University raised a couple of points relative to O'Neill's play, The Iceman Cometh. In her article entitled *A Hopeless Hope: Eugene O'Neill and The Iceman Cometh*, she put emphasis on the fact that the play in question retraces to a large extent the private life of its author in that the protagonists acting in the play and its setting [New York in 1912, when O'Neill hit bottom] all suggest overtly or covertly that the play's core is about the miserable life of O'Neill all the time. This, indubitably, characterizes the play, The Iceman Cometh, as an autobiographical work. Additionally, Neena Arndt sheds light on an element which, from the ontological perspective, constitutes a weakness in the individual to struggle for his liberation from pipe dreams and illusions: despair, or as she has so well formulated this feature, a hopeless hope (N. Arndt, in: Robert Falls, 2012).

In fact, Neena Arndt expresses her skepticism as regards the Harry Hope's *habitués* in their ability to take over their despicable and appalling fates. Her reference to Theodore 'Hickey' Hickman right at the beginning of the play urging his fellow-comrades to cast off their dreams and illusions is characteristic of the profundity of the message Eugene O'Neill wishes to transmit to his audiences who are wallowing in indescribable living conditions pervading in the American society in the first half of the twentieth century. Failure to have the necessary courage and cunning against the problematic nature of life (Bruno Bettelheim, 1989), one falls into despair and the vice of alcohol and drugs. Ultimately, Neena Arndt illustrates the defeat of these drunken misfits in the following citation,

> It's [Harry Hope's bar] the last harbor. No one here has to worry about where they're going next; because there is no farther they can go/…/ The men cannot and will not give up their illusions, and Hickey's instructions and plan become shrill and desperate (ibid, 2012: 5).

Overall, the reviewers' and the critics' analyses of Conrad's and O'Neill's works tend to highlight to a large extent the twofold relatedness of the themes in their respective narratives and

the contents of these themes in relation to the still-nebulous inner selves of the protagonist – man. Man, though depicted as civilized and learned, cannot help falling into despair and debasement which are prejudicial to healthy conduct. Because both authors had hit bottom at an early age, and so will many others in the course of their lives, they managed willy-nilly to overcome hardships and forge their power to generate meaning for their life. O'Neill's moral to draw from his play, *The Iceman Cometh*, lies in not imprisoning oneself in his past professional titles and material accumulation, ignoring his present, and forgetting his future, as William Falkner has put it, approximately, man mustn't merely endure life ailments, he must prevail.

Epistemologically and ontologically speaking, the theme of human regression overlaps with the overall decadent existential conditions in Europe, as well as in America. The social disparities resulting from modernity had thrust the authors of the second half of the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries to rebel against the hypocritical sociopolitical ways of life, especially for the British for whom the Victorian Era was synonymous to welfare.

Human regression in its deep meaning encompasses all that is abnormal as regards the healthy behavior of society members. The Europeans and the Americans living under the pressure of the demagogic and surrealist well-being triggered a kind of generalized alert against the aesthetic hegemony of excess, and artificiality, and the prevailing social atmosphere: hence the emergence of the *Aesthetic Movement*, also known as *l'Esprit Décadent*, initiated by the French author Charles Marie Georges Huysmans, and the Belgian artist, Felicien Rops. Charles Baudelaire's work, *Les Fleurs du Mal (The Flowers of Evil)* of 1857 was very symbolic of the ever-increasing malaise and rottenness in the Western societies, and it sparkled similar ideas in England as well as in America.

When *The Decadent Movement* finally reached England in the late nineteenth century, it evolved as a rebellion movement against the British society which tormented the British

population as a result of the Industrial Revolution, and the injustices imposed by the bourgeois capitalists whose only concern was to increase their capitals, and accumulate more property. The rebellion also expressed its discontents about the fake Victorian Culture which repressed sexuality, and encouraged a morality that was characterized by harshness, and imperialist tendencies. Among the British authors at work behind this decadent movement, we can mention, among others, Arthur Symons, Ernest Dowson, Lionel Johnson, Oscar Wilde, and John Gray (Marju Reunenan, 2012: 5, 6, 7). The then Romanticism as a literary movement was yielding way to Modernism with its diverse suffocating topics leading to human regression.

Eroticism and the Carnivalesque in Conrad's Fiction and O'Neill's Drama

A typical form of the society regression is the people's rebellion against and the rejection of the moral or religious restraint especially as regards sexuality, and eroticism which led to the development and the propagation of brothels as a form of literary and dramatic themes. Though we cannot virtually link this brothel literature and drama to Modernism, it can be said that it has developed to its peak during the Progressive Era in the American history stretching from the 1890s to approximately the 1920s. The emergence of this social phenomenon in both Europe and the United States is symbolic of the social discrepancies as a consequence of the rapid multi-dimensional changes during industrialization, and urbanization. Prostitution and the brothel literature were viewed – rightly or wrongly – as an easy solution to the ever-increasing differences between social classes: the rich were becoming richer, the poor poorer (David Peck, 1997). The debauchery imposed on women in the wake of the Industrial Revolution was indicative of the difficulty to find a job – because of the continual large waves of immigration -- with a reasonable salary to cover the needs of the worker. More importantly, whether the shortage of jobs and the very low wages could be used as justifications to resort to prostitution for survival or just for selling their bodies, and sexes for pleasure will remain a subject of social controversy.

Conrad, and especially O'Neill, had witnessed how deep this social ill had impacted the Western society in its entirety. The handling of the phenomenon was ambivalent, and paradoxical. On the one hand, it was considered antisocial, and condemnable, on the other, it was tolerated, and it was viewed as a sort of entertainment for the society members: hence the reason for its reaching its peak, and its inclusion in the overall culture of the Western society. Because the gist of this social ill, prostitution, underpins the society hypocrisy, O'Neill felt compelled to produce a dramatic play, *Anna Christie* (1921), the aim of which is to elucidate his stance in relation to this phenomenon of the *Fallen Women* from decency to indecency.

From the carnivalesque perspective, this situation is only transient, and it can be interpreted as a social ill not more or less serious than another ill. Its resolution will undoubtedly give rise to another one, and so forth, as suggests O'Neill himself,

> In the last few minutes of Anna Christie, I tried to show the dramatic gathering of new forces out of the old. I wanted to have the audience leave with a deep feeling of life flowing on, of the past which is never the past – but always the birth of the future – of the problem solved for the moment but by the very nature of its solution involving a new problem (in: Dr. Katie N. Johnson, 2015).

O'Neill's psychoanalytic approach in displaying social events, or rather social ills, in front of his growing audiences throws light on a new set of words and phrases whose aim is to show the profundity of "the shadows of the souls of man bewildered by the disharmony of his primitive pride, and individualism at war with the mechanistic development of society" (T. Bogard, 1972: 241). O'Neill's use of the term *fallen,* in *Fallen Women* – even though he was not its initiator – suggests the decadence of the individual from a socially-accepted status to another mean one, highlighting his/her inner confusion, and humiliation in his/her *self-love*.

Moreover, O'Neill's immersion in the production of dramatic narratives depicting prostitutes in brothels, and bars gathering all the despaired underdogs of the cities is metaphoric of and alludes not only to O'Neill's life as a young man but also to the modernity-related human

regression, and decadence. The year 1912 – preceding his plays about prostitutes*: The Web* (1913) and *Anna Christie* (1921) – is particularly dramatic and decisive at the same time in the life of young O'Neill:

> Behind him [O'Neill] lay a life of incredible hardships and depravity of spirit. Early that year [1912], he had attempted suicide. He was twenty four; he had a two-year-old son he had never seen, and in October, he was to divorce the boy's mother (T. Bogard, 1972, 15).

The image portraying O'Neill himself is typical of the despaired society drop-outs, and uprooted individuals of the early twentieth century when the outcomes of Modernity were the most crippling, and agonizing. The left-behind citizens could find no better place than a bar, and a brothel, and the wide open arms of prostitutes for consolation, and experience the love they have been deprived of. According to Katie N. Johnson, an associate Professor at Miami University, O'Neill has had relatively close ties with this underworld of prostitution, as suggests this citation,

> O'Neill is known for his fascination – both personal and artistic – with prostitutes. His early one-act play, *The Web* (1913) involved a prostitute character and no fewer than 14 *fallen* women appear in O'Neill's oeuvre, with 5 more prostitutes mentioned, but never appearing, on stage (Katie N. Johnson, 2011).

Although prostitution is not solely limited to nineteenth and twentieth centuries, O'Neill has proceeded to its dramatization thematically, and aesthetically. Anxious about the creation of a typically American theater dealing with typically "American" social concerns, O'Neill excelled in his theatrical profession to succeed in turning the casual and old dramas into art in its own right. In order to achieve this goal, he has devised new theatrical effects combined with the common everyday slang language "to shake his audiences from the spectator's habitual, lethargic "suspended disbelief" and to cause them to believe, to involve themselves directly, fully, committedly with the action" (T. Bogard, 1972: xiv).

Nevertheless, the staging of these sensitive modern themes which O'Neill shares with Conrad must by no means give way to despair and escapism. They must instead serve the purpose of awakening the readers/audiences to courageously fight against them, and keep wringing meaning for their life. Besides, the aesthetic strategy O'Neill adopts whenever he tackles his psycho-sociological topics informs the spectators of the transiency of these upsetting events. The knowledge encompassed in Bakhtin's concept of the carnivalesque helps unravel the mystery of resolved social ills giving rise to other ills indefinitely. No matter how unsettling and disorienting these ills seem to be, one must not give up; as says O'Neill, life is flowing on.

As regards the complementarities discernible in both Conrad's and O'Neill's works, their literary and dramatic narratives bear insightful images – images of human regression – right from the beginning. Conrad's novella, *Heart of Darkness,* dealing with the overall theme of imperialism, among others, hints at behavioral elements from the part of the European colonizers which gradually shifted from civilized to uncivilized. Because, for them, Africa is a dark continent peopled with backward and ignorant indigenous, and where there is neither law nor order, they, too, fall into the trap of backwardness. The fact that they are now thousands of miles away from civilization which – as a reminder – is repressive has turned them into, perhaps, more savage individuals behaving instinctively. This metamorphosis is apparent in Conrad's character, Kurtz, who, supposedly, represents the white superior race of Europe, as suggests this subtle description of him:

> The original Kurtz had been educated partly in England, and – as he was good enough to say himself – his sympathies were in the right place. His mother was half-English, his father was half-French. *All Europe contributed to the making of Kurtz*. /…/ He began with the argument that we whites, from the point of development we had arrived at, must necessarily appear to them [savages] in the nature of supernatural beings – we approach them with the might of deity. Italicization added (Joseph Conrad, 2013: 90).

Given Conrad's commitment as regards the European imperialism, and colonialism in the overseas territories, he proceeds to disparaging and belittling his story characters who symbolize the greatness of and supremacy of the Western society. The aesthetic presentation of Kurtz reinforces – through the events of the novella – his decadence, and decline from the position of a deity to that of a mere criminal that has surrounded his dwelling with posts on the top of which he has attached the skulls of the murdered indigenous (J. Conrad, 2013: 104, 105): an image smashing the humaneness of Kurtz, and his mirroring of the Western civilization, and ideals.

Similarly, it can be said that Conrad's appeal to the impressionism approach to tackle the phenomenon of the human regression equates O'Neill's expressionist endeavor – as it is performed orally in front of the audiences – in that he, too, right from Scene One of his dramatic play, *The Hairy Ape,* has included a set of visual images alluding to human regression. The theater-goers perceiving the images of "the lines of bunks, the uprights supporting them, across each other like the steel framework of a cage" (E. O'Neill, 1989: 207) are informed of the working conditions of the firemen in their forecastle, and their lack of consideration. O'Neill's ability to reproduce similar appearances of the firemen's beds stuffed in their quarters on board their ship right in front of the audiences using the technical display of theatrical props cannot be any more convincing.

Furthermore, and in order to throw more light on this psycho-social phenomenon of human regression, O'Neill has gone a step further in exaggerating, and distorting of the living conditions of the firemen on board the ship. Comparing the steel bunks of the liner crew to the steel framework of a cage foreshadows the exploitation of the "despicable" firemen by their rich employers, and ship owners. The distortion of the human existence, as it is unfolding in O'Neill's play, *The Hairy Ape,* is metaphoric of not just the apes in the menageries, but also of all the humans all through the span of their evolution going back to the Neanderthal man. The image of the Neanderthal man as presented by anthropologists describes the early man moving

with his head, and chest bending forward, as illustrated by O'Neill: "the ceiling [of the cage] crushes down upon men's heads. They cannot stand upright" /…/ the men themselves should resemble those pictures in which the appearance of Neanderthal man is guessed at (E. O'Neill, 1989: 207). This, obviously, is a stark exaggeration, and distortion of human existence showing man burdened with the social ills of modern times. This, too, represents the aesthetic handling of the complex human manifold characteristics.

Conrad's and O'Neill's concern about bringing to the fore the generalized inhumanness in both Europe and the United States gains more and more momentum in their literary and dramatic works. For the former, human regression, and the resulting savagery is personified by the imperialists/colonists proceeding to the physical elimination of the indigenous solely to pillage the material resources of their countries. The deadly deeds have turned the supposedly enlightened Western individual into a hollow body devoid of any sense of compassion towards the other individuals outside the Metropolis. Being convinced of the lawlessness of these overseas territories, the imperialists are made to sink deeper into internal conflicts. Conrad's portrayal of his story character, Kurtz, wallowing in boundless bewilderment is suggestive of these conflicts. Kurtz is completely confused, and he cannot distinguish between who or what to take care of: himself or the collected ivory which constitutes the reason for his coming to Africa (J. Conrad, 2013: 111). For the latter, his presentation of the phenomenon of human regression is, I would say, more daring in that it breaks the image of the Western bourgeoisie, and the industrialist capitalists exploiting not only the workers of the periphery but also their own fellow white citizens. The strategy developed by O'Neill in his play, *The Hairy Ape*, consists in juxtaposing the hell-like living conditions experienced by the American people in this modern period of the early twentieth century, and those experienced specifically by the team of the firemen living in their promiscuous forecastle, and working on board their ocean liner.

Though life in continental America is harsh, and almost unbearable, O'Neill draws/presents a picture of life on board the firemen's liner that shows the disintegration of the workers from the state of humans to that of moving objects or robots in the performance of their duties, as illustrates this quotation,

> A line of men, stripped to the waist, is before the furnace door. They bend over, looking neither to right nor left, handling their shovels as if they were part of their bodies, with a strange, awkward, swinging rhythm. /…/ then from these fiery round holes in the black a flood of terrific light and heat pours full upon the men who are outlined in silhouettes in the crouching, inhuman attitudes of chained gorillas (E. O'Neill, 1989: 222, 223).

The above quotation absolutely posits that the exploitation of people in general and workers in particular cannot be dissociated from the overall decadence, and regression of humanity. The greedy capitalists and the owners of the means of production are inclined to sacrifice individuals/workers for the sake of accumulating property. And it is this accumulation of property that drives these wealthy people out of their wits, praising material possession, and condemning proletarians with no scruple whatsoever. For O'Neill to convince his audiences of the demoniacal human regression, his play actors presented them with the most cruel and atavistic image in which they showed the coal shovels of the firemen as being integral part of their bodies, as illustrated in the above citation. Let's just imagine for a second the inhumanness of the supposedly civilized humans!

As Conrad's protagonist, Kurtz, hankers after his collection of ivory no matter how, O'Neill's Yank – a character in the play, *The Hairy Ape* – is driven mad by the persistent idea of belonging and yet-not-belonging. The situation Yank finds himself confined in the transatlantic liner is indeed utterly confusing. On the one hand, he is the foreman over the team of the stokers in the machine room; on the other, he is ill-treated by the young lady Mildred, the heiress of the steel company.

The strong physical appearance of Yank has acquired him the position of supervising the activities of his fellow workmates on board the ocean liner, and because of this, he seems to enjoy himself bullying them: "Yank. (Shaking his fist upward – contemptuously) Take it easy dere, you! Who d'yuh tink's runnin' dis game, me or you? When I git ready, we move, not before! (E. O'Neill, 1989: 224). The idea of "positioning" Yank as a successful worker in a society which O'Neill exposes in front of his audiences is ambivalent in that it procures the individual a dream world – a world that gives him the sensation of being well, and especially the sense of belonging. Nonetheless, the world during industrialization and technical progress seems to hinder Yank and his team to achieve this goal. For industrialization has dehumanized them, and reduced them to mere objects nobody cares for. Their job consisting of feeding the stokehole with ardent coal proves to be more hellish than hell itself; and this produces a shocking effect on the theater-goers. Yank, acting as the main hero in the play, *The Hairy Ape*, and fighting body and soul in an alien and ungrateful world, closely relates to the absurdity of the hero Sisyphus – in *The Myth of Sisyphus* – who fights against the ordeal imposed on him: his passion for earthly life, and his greed for boundless material possession caused him to sink into torturing torments, and alienation (Albert Camus, [translation from] *Le Mythe de Sisyphe*, 2014: 144). The image of the absurd sense of actual life is worthy of allusion to the popular adage saying, approximately, "dancing for the blind."

Among the aggravating circumstances of this ordeal, the workers have no right for recognition from the part of their employers. Not only are these workers utterly exploited, but they are also made to experience their own abasement of dignity, and self-esteem. They are even viewed as animals: "Inhuman attitudes of chained gorillas" (E. O'Neill, 1989: 223); "Say, is dat what she called me – a hairy ape?" (ibid, 1989: 230). Yank and his workmates working on the ocean liner as stokers represent a microcosm where the members are inflicted by frustration, lack of consideration, and the feeling of nothingness. The microcosm inside the theater is a strategy

O'Neill has appealed to in order to attain his aesthetic objective by using dramatic techniques and imagery. The sequences of the play, *The Hairy Ape,* unfolding before the theater audience is metaphoric, in its own right, of not just the American community but the entire industrialized Western countries during modernity in the early twentieth century. The play clearly proceeds to the stigmatization of the social classes, and the society.

The aesthetic rendering of the issue of human regression in the play, *The Hairy Ape,* is made even more enthralling through the recurring production of the image of Yank sitting in the position of *The Thinker*, a sculpture by the French artist Auguste Rodin (O'Neill, 1989: 226, 227, 250, 251). This makes it indeed unnecessary to query O'Neill's use of the above reference four times in his play. It is as clear as daylight. Presenting the protagonist, Yank, before the audience sitting just like Rodin's sculpture is suggestive of the pensive state of Yank – a state of mind that is lost in bewilderment, and in the inability to react positively to this overwhelming situation.

Though O'Neill has expressly referred to Rodin's sculpture *The Thinker*, one must deduce that Conrad, too, has, in a more covert way, inferred to it in the sense that the literary device impressionism with which he has built his narratives bears the intention of leaving the reader alone in his task of wringing meaning from the written texts. And if we are asked to schematize or dramatize this scene – the scene of the pensive reader – one would, with no difficulty draw the same picture as Rodin's.

More importantly, however, the reference being made to Rodin's statue *The Thinker* and not to another reference represents the core of the theme human regression addressed by both Conrad, and O'Neill. The interpretive ability of the reader of a novel, and the theater- goers seeing a play rests upon his ability of contemplation of the (audio) visual images unfolding before his/her eyes. *The Thinker* resting his chin on his hand while sitting, naked, on a rock, in the open, carries all the characteristics of an individual pondering over his existence in silence,

and alone. And the aesthetic value of this contemplation makes the works of Conrad and O'Neill (and of course of all authors and artists) incomplete. Each work will be said complete only in the mind of the reader or the spectator.

Additionally, the pensive feature of Conrad's and O'Neill's works, in a way equates the notion of carnivalesque of Bakhtin. The play characters, the readers, and Rodin's sculpture of *The Thinker* are all experiencing the harshness, and the rottenness of the modernity-related socio-political ills of the turn of the twentieth century. Even though they are submerged both socially and mentally, they stand firm, and resist to escapism, and despair. The regression following the nefarious outcomes of industrialization, and the insatiable appetites of the bourgeois capitalists should not be given more importance than it actually deserves, for it is only transient, and it will give rise to a new rebirth, a new, and a better way of life, as Rodin suggests:

> Guided by my first inspiration, I conceived [another] thinker, a naked man seated on a rock, his fist against his teeth, he dreams. The fertile thought slowly elaborates itself within his brain. He is no longer a dreamer; he is a creator (Kristi Puchko, 2015).

The description Rodin is making of his statue bears all the symptoms –social and mental—of the American, and the Western societies during the Roaring years of industrialization which have abased, and turned the proletarians into despicable machines. This very image of the machine man cannot be any better expressed than by the silent movie by Charlie Chaplin playing the role of a mechanic (with reference to the Fordian assembly lines, later coined as Fordism). When, in the evening he left the factory homeward, he kept doing unconsciously the same gestures of fastening and loosening bolts all along his way (YouTube . com). The diction used by Rodin, too, is metaphoric of the dispossession of the society members of all they had, albeit too little. They are naked; they are seated on a rock; and they are anxious about their life; there is almost nothing left for them. Although Conrad and O'Neill have, each one his own way, contributed to the denunciation of the misfortune befallen on the Western society members, other artists like

woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger, the Nobel Prize winner, Bob Dylan, and surely others, have rebelled against the sociopolitical injustices, and inequalities of the 1900s. Guthrie is an authentic author, in his own right; he has produced folk songs that clearly depicted his fellow citizens' plights. Some of his folk songs his admirers/fans graded as timeless – because of their continual impact on people worldwide – are*: I ain't got no Home in this world Anymore, Worried Man Blues,* and *Blowin' down this Road.* The latter song is perhaps most expressive than all the others in that it shows the irony, and the absurdity of life: as though the sociopolitical ailments did not suffice, the American had to endure the harshest natural catastrophes, the dust storms following the Great Economic Depression. The artistic response to those who imposed human regression and abasement comprises a diversity of theme songs, and ballads of spiritual death, and rebirth. For Guthrie, "A folk song is what's wrong, and how to fix it, or it could be who's hungry, and where their mouth is, or who's out of work, and where the job is, or who's broke, and where the money is, or who's carrying a gun where the peace is" (Benjamin Wright, 2012).

In fact Guthrie and O'Neill do not differ much from one another. Their concerns converge, and bring to the fore what has led to the human regression in this modern history of mankind. The reduction of the human beings to the state of instinctive animals – the apes for O'Neill – and their search for only survival is not predetermined by fate; on the contrary, they should rebel against their oppressors, and reverse the balance of power. That, and only that, can bring them revival, and happiness.

Viewing (the) human regression from the lens of Marxist capitalism, both Conrad and O'Neill converge in their literary and dramatic strategies to include elements fabricated by the bourgeois owners of the means of production in all their diversity. While Conrad introduced –in his novella, *Heart of Darkness* – Kurtz as a European ivory collector in faraway colonized territories, O'Neill focused his attention and that of the theatergoers on the crying exploitation,

and exposure of stokers in appalling working conditions. Though Conrad's Kurtz is better-off than O'Neill's Yank, both characters personify the pitiless hegemony of their employers: the gruesome European economic system for the former, and the arrogant steel heiress for the latter. The mingling of Conrad's impressionistic approach with O'Neill's expressionistic one follow the same trajectory – a trajectory that foregrounds the imperialist and colonialist class, work, and power. Indeed their gaze at their employees is belittling, and despicable, and this constitutes the very foundations of their exploitative hegemony, and the overall consciousness that supports it.

Kurtz and Yank suffer from the domination of their masters, and this reduces them not only to the position of slaves but to the position of animals, and objects – the mechanized robots (in the case of Yank). The modernity-related human regression tends to be dialectical in nature. On the one hand, it has resulted from the conflicting social classes of the bourgeois capitalists, and the proletarians based on the discrepancies between the *Haves*, and the *Have nots*. On the other hand, this regression is sustained by other factors exceeding the material limitations. In the context of the United States, human regression goes beyond capitalist exploitation of the workers; it is much deeper and more complex, as suggests this quotation,

> The references to workers as "slaves", though not peculiar to the United States, carried particular resonances in Yank's nation, the only one to achieve industrial take-off alongside the presence of a huge slave labor force. Most broadly, the drama in The Hairy Ape turns critically on a vicious parody of the blackface tradition which in the U.S. literally focused on the black-white issues rather than on imperialism (David Roediger, 1996: 40).

O'Neill's appeal to the expressionist device in his dramatization of the relationships between the workers as slaves, and their capitalists as masters is symbolic of the challenges imposed by the human nature, and existence; and this also constitutes the core of Conrad's existential philosophy. The conceit elaborated by these two authors leads to the disintegration, and then to the demise of their protagonists (Kurtz and Yank). Their inability to stand firm, and control their internal conflicts compelled them to yield to the dehumanization caused by modernity, and

industrialization of the late nineteenth century, and the early twentieth century. They were thrust into a twofold alienation: an alienation from their respective societies, and another from their innermost selves. Kurtz ending his agony with the terms The Horror! The Horror! (J. Conrad, 2013: 133) is suggestive of his decline from the position of an active white European representative to that of a sheer insane and delirious character. Similarly, Yank is viewed by his mistress, Mildred Douglas, the steel works heiress, as a gorilla, and a hairy ape because of his physical appearance: a worker of a strong body stature sooted by the crackling coal of the stokeholes of the Ocean Liner. To really mark the theater audiences of the disillusionment of Yank, and his fellow stokers as regards their feeling of belonging to this new age of industrialization, and their active participation therein, O'Neill concludes the Eight Scene of his play, *The Hairy Ape,* with a hair-raising image which expedites Yank's decline from a highly-spirited stoker to a zoo bestial creature conversing with a gorilla inside a cage in the menagerie,

> (Yank walks up to the gorilla's cage and leaning over the railing, stares in at its occupant, who stares back at him, silent and motionless /…/ then Yank begins to talk in a friendly confidential tone), say, yuh'r some hard-looking guy, ain't yuh? I seen lots of tough nuts dat de gang called gorillas, but yuh'r de foist real one I ever seen. Some chest yur got, and shoulders, and dem arms and nuts! I bet yuh got a punch in either fist dat'd knock 'em all silly! (This with genuine admiration. The gorilla as if he understood, stands upright, swelling out his chest and pounding on it with his fists). /…/Ain't we both members of the same club – de hairy apes? /…/step out and shake hands. I'll take yuh for a walk down Fif' Avenoo /…/ come on brother (E. O'Neill, 1989: 251, 252, 254).

O'Neill's image gathering the caged gorilla and Yank conversing together, and their seemingly mutual understanding coalesce with his exaggeration, and distortion techniques of reality whose aim is to awaken the audiences from their passivity, and urge them into a reaction against the social ills. The audiences are implicitly required to retrieve their identity as human beings, and break the discrimination, and marginalization that have caused their regression from human beings to human-like beings. It is, indeed, clear that for Conrad and O'Neill to reach such an accomplishment, they have to rely on their aesthetic device which consists of choosing strong and appropriate diction, and imagery. The inclusion of thrill and magic in their words has made

their literary and dramatic works convincing, and timeless. Choosing the right words in a work of art is preponderant in the making of their narratives, and it is contingent upon its success. More importantly, with words an artist can penetrate deeply into the innermost of an individual, and get him to proceed to his identification with the story characters, and the experience of the mood of the story, as illustrates Freud in his work entitled *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis (2012),*

> With words one man can make another blessed, or drive him to despair; by words the teacher transfers his knowledge to the pupil; by words the speaker sweeps his audience with him and determines its judgments and decisions. Words call forth effects and are the universal means of influencing human beings (S. Freud, 2012: 5).

The above quotation by Freud really highlights the values, and the impacts words can have on the lives of the individuals both at work, and at home. Words are indeed the elements with which conversations and literary/artistic works have been made possible. With the appropriate usage of words we make our thoughts which at their turn make up our existence in relation to the other society members to whom we belong. With words and language we give life to our reflections, sentiments, fantasies, and imagination. Viewed from the scientific and the philosophical perspectives, language takes deeper trends as regards its diversified qualities in the expression of man's ability to express himself artistically in various fields of his life.

Conclusion

We will summarize with some conclusions that in the length of this chapter, Conrad and O'Neill can be said to be mutually complementary in that their respective literary and dramatic narratives go beyond the surface exposition of events related to the global theme of human regression as an outcome of modernity, and industrialization of the Western world of the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries. Besides, with their appeal to the aesthetic approaches – impressionistic and expressionistic strategies -- they have initiated a new field of

knowledge in their novels, and dramas: knowledge about the internal life, and conflicts among their protagonists.

The unfolding sequences of Conrad's and O'Neill's works depict the fundamentals of human existence in accordance with their philosophy, and they raise pressing questions to help elucidate why humans surrender to anomic situations, and how lawlessness drives them unconsciously to rebel against the "repressive" civilization. Because humans have lost spiritual harmony with their environment, and because they are constantly overwhelmed by epistemological and ethical problems, they gradually regress to their atavistic state. The social ills compiled in this chapter are definitely and indubitably related to individual psychopathology, but, which, through time, and recurrence expands into group psychopathology. The manifestation of primitive behavior of Conrad's and O'Neill's story characters will be complemented by a not less important and all-encompassing issue that determines the liminality of relationships among the world races, as will be seen in the following chapter.

Chapter Six:
Ethnicity in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness,* and O'Neill's *The Emperor Jones*

Introduction

The aim of the present chapter lies in moving a step deeper into Conrad's and O'Neill's life philosophy embedded in the collective consciousness of all humans. Just because the core of this dissertation pertains to the field of literature, this does not mean that we dissociate it from the other fields of knowledge, all of which constitute the rock body of human existentialism. Indeed, it has become almost axiomatic in the field of literature –which to Bakhtin is synonymous to life, and by the same token, it embraces other fields of knowledge --that an author cannot just rely on his fictional renderings to address his readership, and audiences with issues likely to heighten his world aspirations, and dreams in the form of novel or drama. The reader and/or the spectator have to refer to, or lean on the author's non-fiction work part which constitutes non-negligible assets for his letter-writing/correspondence, and (auto) biographies.

For a better illustration of this multi-dimensionality of humanity-related topicality such as race relations, the topic under study, creating fictional narratives, and theatricals need closely relate to philosophy, and anthropology, among other fields, as suggests this citation by Bakhtin:

> Our analysis [this endeavor] must be called philosophical mainly because of what it is not: it is not a linguistic, philosophical, philological, literary or any other particular kind of analysis…On the other hand, a positive feature of our study is this: [it moves] in spheres that are liminal, i.e., on the borders of all the aforementioned disciplines, at their junctures and points of its intersection (M. Bakhtin, 2003:13).

Following the underlying assets in this citation, they will, from foresight, enable the reader, and the theater-goer to construe a viable interpretation of the literary/dramatic work; hence the possibility of literature overall to rid itself of restrictive features of formalism (Amandeep Rana, no date, no page number).

The magnetic bond, uniting O'Neill to Conrad –race relations, but not only – undergirds their inclination to deeply explore moral, societal, and in a nutshell existential themes which make out the hallmark of their dramatic/literary profession. The aesthetic characteristics of Conrad's novels, and O'Neill's plays – impressionism for the former and expressionism for the latter – contribute plainly to their creation of a pessimistic and inconclusive feeling in their readers and/or spectators. Among the elements which fuel this impression of debasement, modernity, and the irrational greed of western populations – resulting from the Industrial Revolution – are the most crucial ones.

Conrad, O'Neill, Ethnicity and their Critical Reception

While perusing their personal correspondences, the reader realizes to what extent Conrad's and O'Neill's lives have not been spared the trouble, and the quotidian worries of the unbridled fury of the early twentieth century. Their common denominator of immigration has compelled them to live on the margin of societal life. Conrad and O'Neill have all along their childhood, and early manhood undergone insurmountable ailments due to severe sentiments of lonesomeness merged with that of belonging-yet-not-belonging (Norman Page, 1986; Travis Bogard, 1972). The subsequent overwhelming state of mind has thrust both of them on the verge of committing suicide (1878 for Conrad, in: Norman Page, 1986: 3; and 1912 for O'Neill, in: Travis Bogard, 1972: 4). Mentioning biographical elements like these may appear trivial, but on second thought, their being burdensome foreshadows Conrad's and O'Neill's literary/dramatic renderings as far as the phenomenon of race relations is concerned. Race relations are viewed by many as the fundamental causes for the tormented overall human life, and the thriving of this phenomenon rests solely upon prejudices which modern humanist efforts cannot, or perhaps does not wish to efface, as suggests this citation,

> Such occurrences, experts maintain, are often the results of negative racial stereotypes that have permeated [American] society for generations. These

> stereotypes include the beliefs that racial minorities are less intelligent and more prone to criminal behavior than white ones. People are exposed to such stereotypes early in life and they can become part of a person's world view even though he or she may genuinely believe that prejudice is wrong (Mary E. Williams, 2001: 15).

The unconstructiveness of race relations as evidenced in the above citation takes its roots in the Westerners' assumptions, and canons that anyone not belonging to their Metropolitan geography is unworthy of their consideration, and is therefore backward and inferior, or as he is sometimes referred to as *the under man.*

Given the prevailing aspect of this sociopolitical issue of race relations, it can be said that it overlaps with another not less important issue of power relations, the former being perhaps the root cause of the latter. Moreover, the relationship between this issue, and the works of Conrad and O'Neill – respectively *Heart of Darkness* (1900), and *The Emperor Jones* (1920) – underpins their denouncement, or at least their eagerness to awaken their readership/spectatorship from their passivity, and worse, from their unconscious submission to forces that have turned their lives into torment.

Though the overall tackled field of research revolves around Imperialism foregrounding the supremacy of some, and the inferiority of others, Conrad's and O'Neill's works have opened up new channels of thought the purpose of which is to lay flat these unfounded assumptions of domination. Additionally, for *Heart of Darkness,* and *The Emperor Jones* to contribute with efficacy in the resolution of this now-worldwide racial/racist phenomenon, it would simply be judicious to lean a little closer on the human relations shift from the fiction world to that of reality, trying to break for sure the vicious circle of prejudice exaggerations, and misunderstandings, as put forward by Mary E. Williams in her work entitled *Race relations: Opposing Viewpoints* (2001).

The socio historical backgrounds where *Heart of Darkness* and *The Emperor Jones* unroll have given rise, and opened up new horizons of denunciations of the assumptions imposed by the white supremacists as regards their refusal to accept the non-Westerner as only their equal with the same rights, and duties. *Heart of Darkness* can be said to have paved the way to the multifarious manifestations of the African populations as regards the post-coloniality, and the erroneous post-independence of the formerly-colonized countries. To the bitter surprise of all, the then United Nations Organization joined the racist approach of the post Great War Superpowers – USA, USSR – in their handling of the race relations, as witnesses this quotation,

> Members of the United Nations which have or assume responsibilities for the administration of territories whose peoples have not yet attained a full measure of self-government recognize the principle that the interests of the inhabitants of these territories are paramount, and accept, as a sacred trust the obligation to promote to the utmost, within the system of the international peace and security established by the present charter (73) the well-being of the inhabitants of these territories… (In: Shafiqur Rahaman, 2017: 10).

The race relations – at least in Africa – following the above-mentioned citation cannot be any clearer, and the UN Members have proceeded to their institutionalization, and they are not any different from the ever-famous citation by Carl Marx saying that the Orientals "cannot represent themselves; they must be represented" (The eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte, In: Edward Said, 1978: xii).

Although scholars assert that Conrad's works and especially *Heart of Darkness* – which represents the hallmark of his writing career – has been overworked, this remains only an assertion, and as such, a reader and/or researcher ought not to view it as an obstacle or limitation to his research work. As Barthes has affirmed, a text is plural, and that this plurality of meanings, and interpretations of writerly texts is always proportionate to the number of readers to whom we ascribe certain subjectivity:

> This text is a galaxy of signifiers, not a structure of signifieds; it has no beginning; it is reversible; we get access to it by several entrances, none of which

> can be authoritatively declared to be the main one /…/ the systems of meaning can take over this absolutely plural text, but their number is never closed, based as it is on the infinity of language (Roland Barthes, 2002: 5, 6).

Because an art work does not have the privilege, and the monopoly of truth, and conclusiveness, as indicated in the above citation, it cannot be said of this work to be overworked, analyzed, or whatever. What an interpretation can confirm, another (one) can refute.

Another issue we intend to bring to mind is the aspect of precedence existing between the concept of race relations, and the art works by Conrad, and O'Neill. If we follow Bakhtin's identification of literature as being an integral part of human life, and consequently the same life can serve the purpose of impetus for literary and artistic works. The principle of precedence can be said to be on its wane; that is, literary works can be viewed either as a logical outcome of socio-historical events/phenomena, or simply a vivid fount of elements that would incite the readership/spectatorship to ponder a certain number of queries being at the source of the tormented society members.

As has already been stated in the previous socio-historical background of the two authors, Conrad, and O'Neill, the advent of the modern era, and its complexities did not help relieve or alleviate these authors' already complex lives. Beginning with Conrad, his running away from his native country at an early age did not meet his expected wishes; that is, the submission of Poland as a weak and inferior race to the powerful and hegemonic forces of Russia, Prussia, and Austria, and its subsequent catastrophic outcomes on the Polish society (Richard Niland, 2009). Conrad's forced exile to France, and then to England in the 1870s only contributed to the worsening of his trauma, and the creation of a traumatizing feeling of betrayal in relation to his Polish ancestry, as indicates the following citation,

> I live mostly in the past and the future. The present has, you easily understand, few charms for me. I look with the serenity of despair and the indifference of contempt on passing events. Conrad's nostalgic yearning is rooted in the Polish national experience with its refusal to accept the present as the fulfillment of

> history, looking to a lost past while revealing an uncertain faith in the future (Richard Niland, 2009: 4).

Definitely, these features characterize an overwhelmed individual, lost in his bygone past, and his unpromising future, and of course an uncared-for present. As a relieving strategy, Conrad resorted to sea-writing as an escape from his life hardships, and which, later on, constructed his worldwide-acknowledged life philosophy embracing all the elements that caused the traumas of the human beings against one another, but most edifying of all are the conflicts individuals face within their inner selves – an approach that paved the way to the modern sciences specialized in the psychology and psychoanalysis of the characters in the field of literature.

One of the chief tenets of Conrad's world philosophy, and the resulting conduct of the protagonists in his literary renderings lies in his shifting from worldly human concerns to what revolves in the human consciousness with authors, and with oneself, and ultimately why human race relations turn to tragedy. Conrad posits that "what makes mankind tragic is not that they are the victims of nature, it is that they are conscious of it" (Richard Niland, 2009: 67). The acquisition of consciousness of the drifting mankind in these modern times, and the traumas they engender in relation not just to the literary protagonists, but also to the readers altogether.

The strategy adopted by Conrad to attain this literary consciousness of both the protagonists, and the readers undergirds the subtle inclusion of realism within his fiction narratives by means of well-thought-of aesthetic techniques of impressionism. This critical literary device – in vogue around the twentieth century – insists that, in view of the then sociopolitical arenas, "the world is not and cannot be perceived with perfect objectivity" (Dean Weavis, 2002: 34) leaving this open space for subjectivity, and multitudes of interpretations. The point in this is that Conrad builds his narrative, *Heart of Darkness*, among others, of which the prevailing political matters, the diverse societal systems, epistemological assertions, and ontological aspirations are left for the readers' appreciations: hence Conrad's cultivation of

doubt, ambiguity, and inconclusiveness in his writerly texts. Impressionism as a literary technique provides readers with ideas/situations in a bulk way devoid of any kind of explicitness or limit likely to help decipher the gist of the problematic (Norman Page, 1986: 43).

Stating Conrad appealing to the aesthetic literary device impressionism does not in any way demonstrate that he has compartmentalized his writing genius in this technique. What we would like to heighten in this endeavor is that Conrad, in the process of building his narratives, solely stays aside of the events in progress as a witness telling the public/readership about these events without specifying his personal standpoint. And this obviously draws a link between what Conrad does as an author, and what Claude Monet, the famous French painter, does as an artist, as suggests this citation,

> When you go out to paint, try to forget what objects you have before you – a tree, a house, a field or whatsoever. Merely think, there is a little square of blue, here an oblong of pink, here a streak of yellow, and paint it just as it looks to you, the exact color and shape, until it gives your own naïve impression of the scene before you (Lorraine Mary York, 1982: 12).

The parallel being drawn between these two artists at work shows their lack of concern as regards the working technique they have adopted: Impressionism – in literature for Conrad, and in painting for Monet. More importantly, their sole concern lies in the efforts they make to produce a piece of artwork; what should follow this production once handed to the public, its appreciation or lack of it, is the concern of this same public. As a consequence, Conrad dealing with the theme of race relations in his narratives has ultimately to be taken on by his readership for whatever he wishes to make of it. Conrad as an impressionist author, or simply as an author, has got the globality/entirety of his readership all through the world to appropriate his existential vision, and his overall philosophy.

The reception of Conrad's works has been highly graded in Europe – especially England and France—as witnesses this statement,

> Conrad in France opens with André Gide's unsentimental, brief memoir showing us a Conrad impatient with the seaman's tag, who "proved singularly awkward in straightforward narratives; nowhere except in fiction did he feel perfectly at ease". The praise that he exacts from Gide is that "No one had lived more wildly than Conrad, no one, afterwards, had submitted life to such a patient, conscious and elaborate transmutation into art" (Hugh Upstein, 2006: 1, 2).

The above quote, and the book it is taken from, evidence the positive reception in France of Conrad as an individual, and as an emeritus proponent of the most humane queries arising mainly from the multi-faceted outcomes of the turn of the twentieth century of which Imperialism, Social Darwinism, and the failure of the humanist philosophies are the most crippling causes for the promotion of overall humanity. Conrad's recurrent theme of jeopardized and sometimes lost liberty and the man's struggle for its recovery thrust the real individual, not just the fictional character, into a merciless world he cannot understand and control. Life in Conrad's works is stained with absurdism, turning thus the human efforts vain; and this has logically led Conrad to adopt the psychological approach as an attempt to decipher the inner conflicts of the human beings.

Following the French reception of Conrad's works, the American elites and their cultural centers did not only greet Conrad open-handedly in 1923, but appropriated his person as well as his writing career. Because the American writers of the turn of the twentieth century and the Polish-British Conrad have mutually influenced one another, Conrad, for the Americans, has become "a master literary figure". Conrad bewitching the American society has been manifested in Lancelot Mallios literary work entitled *Our Conrad* which definitely shows the American appropriation of everything that is Conradian, as illustrates the following,

> It [the book Our Conrad] offers more than just a study of the reception of Conrad's work in North America, showing how various American writers used Conrad to negotiate "the relationship between Americanness and the larger global

> developments" and how writers of the American South, in particular used Conrad to explore their own particular issues of identity (In: Robert Hampton, 2012: 178).

It is clear from the above citation that the sociopolitical concept race relations have greatly impacted the Southern American writers in their search for identity. Furthermore, race relations, as a literary topic, rouse the most apathetic readers to question the root causes of such sociopolitical phenomena as these, and to consciously set themselves for their settlement, if settlement can be.

Conrad's inclination to denounce almost overtly the Eurocentric prejudices in *Heart of Darkness* is embedded in his very consciousness of a young Polish citizen compelled to abandon his partitioned native country on the grounds of race relations. Whatever he says about his characters Marlow, and Kurtz as enlightened Europeans whose mission is to inculcate civilization, and Christianity in the minds of the Congolese, Conrad deliberately pushed them to the ridicule by turning them into atavistic creatures rather than humans. Their departing from Continental European life, and consequently from law-abiding social structures made them lose all sense of community, and became more irrational in their conducts than the savage autochthons. While conversing about Kurtz, the ivory trader in the Congo, with his crew members on board the Nellie, Marlow presents Kurtz as having a dual personality: Kurtz as a has-been, that is, when he "was once a principled man of substance, driven to the wilderness by his ambition to fulfill 'immense plans'"; and Kurtz how he has really become, and has precipitated his demise under the weight of the dense Congo forest which he could neither comprehend nor control (Harold Bloom, 2009: 18).

Considering the phenomenon of race relations as merely synecdochial to imperialism would mean to wane the core value of the concept, and dispossessing it of its multi-dimensionality. The theme of race relations, as referred to or maybe inferred to in Conrad's work, *Heart of Darkness*, has drawn in its wake a great deal of opposition, and reaction from the

part of the African authors of the post-independent countries. Chinua Achebe's work, *Things Fall Apart* of 1959 is an example of this. And this case has undoubtedly deprived Conrad, and his works from an eventual scholarly reception in Africa.

While following Achebe's narrative, *Things Fall Apart* up, it is important to highlight the contribution of overall literary theories in their companionship with readers to help them peruse art works. The plurality of texts, as posited Roland Barthes (2002), is synonymous to the availability of a great variety of interpretations, and viewpoints: "Reading is nothing more than a referendum"; consequently, an individual reader reading a text faces two alternatives: either accept the text, and therefore consider it as knowledge acquisition, or simply reject it (R. Barthes, 2002: 4).

The case of Achebe accusing Conrad as a bloody racist, and a [spoilt] child of British imperialism, and calling him filthy names are merely viewed as a personal and subjective interpretation of a work of art – terms denied to Conrad. It is indeed Achebe's own right to rebel against Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. This is the reason why the critic Stanley Cavey maintained that "what is not criticizable /…/ is not a work of art" (2005: 297). Focusing our attention on the fact that Conrad's literary renderings are more aesthetic than thematic, we conclude that his appeal to the technique of impressionism rids him of any sort of blame and, responsibility concerning the centuries-old race relations. What a human race imposes on another or a race submitting to the hegemony of another race more enlightened, and therefore more powerful both intellectually and militarily does not incriminate Conrad, the writer, in any way whatsoever. Impressionism consists in producing impressions/images/sensations without – not just necessarily – impregnating them with any personal view of judgment. The judgment lies in the individual reader's ability to wring meaning from these impressions and/or sketches. Conrad's literary profession is not meant to target any living or dead person – and through extrapolation, society, as witnesses the following,

> Conrad's techniques [of which impressionism] represent the way human beings obtain knowledge, and therefore his narrative techniques function both in a practical manner to move the narrative along and in a philosophical manner to identify epistemological processes, which then in turn lead to important social, political, and ethical concerns (John G. Peters, 2001: 2).

As explicitly expressed in the above quotation, Conrad's concern(s) in devoting his life to literature as an art revolve(s) around his ability to provide his readership with knowledge, and only knowledge. To this characteristic we add the ever-famous statement – which singles out Conrad as the most lauded author of the Western literature – my purpose is "to make you hear, to make you feel – it is before all, to make you see" (Joseph Conrad, [1897] 1914, no page number).

O'Neill's *The Emperor Jones*: Its Historical and Formal Sources of Inspiration

Following this brief presentation of the theme of race relations, and the reception of Conrad's works in Europe, American, and Africa, we believe it opportune to draw a parallel with the works of a not less prominent playwright, Eugene O'Neill. The play we have chosen to profoundly dissect this sociopolitical phenomenon of race relations is *The Emperor Jones* (1920).

Considering the theme of race relations from the aesthetic perspective, it must be noted that the two authors under study, namely Conrad, and O'Neill, have appealed to the already mentioned literary/dramatic devices Impressionism, and Expressionism. Though these techniques look different, their point of convergence remains the same, and each one of them follows a strategy to attain this goal. Conrad's use of impressionism comes to mean and/or suggest that his work, as an author, consists of providing his readership with impressions from the external world (M. B. Masal, 2012: 1), hence the gist of his literary tool. What, in fact, Conrad has done as regards the tackling of race relations in his novella, *Heart of Darkness,* lies in presenting to his readers/public what he has observed in the Belgian King Leopold II's Congo Free State. The

verb "observed" being used in this statement is momentous in the sense that it requires a certain consciousness of inquisitiveness, a necessary quality for any man of letters, and art. Race relations in *Heart of Darkness*, as revealed by Conrad's narrator, Charlie Marlow, have only been depicted as they first appeared to him from the time he set foot in the Congo till he met Kurtz, the European chosen individual assigned to the collection of ivory. Depicting Kurtz as master of the Congolese remains only an account of Marlow's journey. The 'how' and the 'what' of the matter is neither Conrad's nor Marlow's: it just remains the responsibility of the reader. Consequently Achebe's virulent attacks, and criticism to Conrad, I am afraid, do not have their raison d'être.

As an intellectual, Achebe cannot be said that he ignored the humanity-old racial conflicts that determine the existence of races in the world. Equally, it cannot be said that he did not get any knowledge of the famous phenomenon of Social Darwinism wherein the survival of races/individuals is conditioned by their own ability to survive hardships (Justin K. Mogilski, 2016:1). As regards the authenticity/fidelity of this social theory, that would be another point to debate, but one sure thing is that the harrow of the mid-nineteenth century European Powers excelled in usurping Darwin's theory as it served as an alibi/excuse –a scientific excuse – for their hegemonic politics of the time. And for that usurpation, Conrad cannot be held responsible, can he?

Considering, now, the inclusion of O'Neill's *The Emperor Jones* as a scene where the concept of race relations is profoundly embedded, O'Neill has made it his aim to attain. Following Conrad's aestheticism, O'Neill as a playwright has, too, appealed to an appropriate dramatic device, Expressionism. At its literal meaning, it conveys the idea of presenting the inner thoughts of an individual (Justin K. Mogilski: 2016:1) and/or a character/actor on stage in a theater. And this is what distinguishes prose from drama. The character in a play has the ability to express verbally his ideas/thoughts in front of the audience, and this is sometimes

complemented with some specific physical characteristics which the author of the play introduces in the performance of the different events. Expressionism as a dramatic technique is more psychological than social in that it deals with internal conflict or problem between the character and his or her own thoughts or actions (Heather Carroll, M.ed, no date).

The turn of the twentieth century had a twofold characteristic: economic and political, and to some extent a combination of the two. The economic situation of the time knew dramatic and substantial changes – a change from rural life to urban/city life – which did not spare the placid life of the middle and the lower classes for whom survival was not always at hand. The pitiless exploitation of not just of men and women, but also children proved inhuman, and no longer bearable, giving way to the emergence of a group of intellectuals referred to as muckrakers. They were authors whose works consisted in targeting big businesses to denounce the illegal practices of the owners of the means of production. The American muckrakers were determined to combat the ills of society, and they were known worldwide for their famous saying, "The pen is mightier than the sword" (Debra J. Housel, 2008: 28). Among these we can mention Mark Twain (*The Gilded Age*, 1873), Upton Sinclair (*The Jungle*, 1906), Ida M. Tarbell (*The History of the Standard Oil Company*, 1904), and Lincoln Steffens (*The Shame of the cities*, 1904).

Politically, or perhaps more appropriately the economic policy, the concerns of the various businessmen were directed not towards the overall promotion of the factory workers, and their working conditions, but themselves as they were the source of the technological development, and all. The accumulation of wealth, as posit Karl Marx, and Frederich Engels, has turned human ties into mere materialistic ones, as witnesses this quotation,

> It [the bourgeoisie] has resolved personal worth into exchange value, and in place of the numberless indefeasible chartered freedoms, has set up that single, unconscionable free trade. In one word, for exploitation, veiled by religious and

> political illusions, it has substituted naked, shameless, direct, brutal exploitation (Karl Marx, and Frederich Engels, 1969: 16).

Though the Industrial Revolution has opened up new avenues in various fields related to technological advancements, new philosophical concepts, and sensible betterments in the overall way of living of the humans, it has set at bay all those sensitive and warm relations not just between humans, but and worst of all between the members of the western family effacing almost completely its sentimental veil, and reducing the centuries-old nexus ruling the family to an abject money relation. Hence the feeling of the more you have [material possession], the more you are worth it. Additionally, this led to the emergence of the haves and the have nots-- in other Marxian terms, the bourgeoisie, and the proletariat – which, through time ended "in the icy water of egotistical calculation" (ibid, 1969: 16).

The resulting embittered social classes – and by extrapolation the racial relations – adopted political strategies of which the imposition of a one-way discourse over the thwarted minorities in general, and the bustling proletariat/lower classes in particular. In Bakhtinian perspective, this antagonistic fait accompli can be explicated as follows: "While the ruling stratum tries to posit a single discourse as exemplary, the subaltern classes are inclined to subvert this monological closure" (The Bakhtin Circle, 2000:1). The point being elucidated above is very interesting for many reasons. First, it shows the hegemony of the dominating – not necessarily ruling – class over the subaltern/proletariat class, and the ensuing consequences likely to manage the whole set of relations of society. Second, it deals with the rejection of the conditions of confinement by the members of the lower class by means of subverting the imposed monological discourse the objective of which lies in granting the dominant class all the dreamt-for privileges.

Bearing this consideration in mind, and referring to Bakhtin's assimilation of literature to life, it is given to understand that the subversion of the imposed economic compulsions, and the political restrictions will be carried out by those people whom we can call the defenders of the

marginalized, and the oppressed, that is: the intellectuals, the playwrights, and the authors of artwork are just like the muckrakers of the turn of the twentieth century.

As has already been stated in this thesis, the socio historical backgrounds relating Conrad and O'Neill are more than analogous in that the time and place of these authors stand as witnesses of the advent of a new era called modernism and modernity, and of the emphasis on the questioning of all that was traditional and archaic. Following Conrad's undertaking of the theme of race relations in his novella, *Heart of Darkness* wherein he appealed to the literary device Impressionism, O'Neill, too, could not help dissecting the sociopolitical environment of the turn of that century, and the closely related conditions of performance of drama when the latter dealt with the almost-tabooed social phenomenon of the black population. As a sociopolitical construct, the terms race relations – or maybe just race – create an insurmountable dilemma that tears apart the profundity of the human existentialist value. That is, the racial consciousness which the blacks acquired during the Harlem Renaissance of the early twentieth century rendered the situation even more critical, as witnesses the following:

> Black writers of the Harlem Renaissance attempted to counter these images [stereotypical images] by portraying black characters which developed out of their tragic circumstances of their complex fate of being Americans and Blacks at the same time (In: Black Nationalism and African-American drama, p 22).

This quote shows clearly the evolving features of the Blacks in the USA. The Black racial consciousness is simply departing from that of *Antebellum* America to another of the modern era. This positive evolution has been reached thanks to the early civil rights they obtained following the Civil War of the mid-nineteenth century.

It must equally be noted that the dilemma experienced by the Black community in the US happens to be almost identical to the one experienced by the white immigrants from Europe, especially the Irish immigrants. This characteristic, among others, is, for sure, what made O'Neill lean on the life hardships of the Blacks, and identify himself with them. O'Neill, as a

white Irish immigrant, is viewed simultaneously as white and black according to the people bearing judgments on his person (Shannon Steen, 2000: 352). This ambiguous social status has largely contributed to the forging of O'Neill as an eminent playwright known by the Americans, and the world populations.

Importantly, O'Neill's rise to eminence in play-writing has not emerged from the vacuum. On the contrary, O'Neill, just like Conrad, must be viewed as a pioneer and an avant-garde author setting foot on a very risky and dubious field of literature, and drama the aim of which undergirds the denunciation of sociopolitical practices prevalent before and after the turn of the twentieth century. Indeed, the then politics of the Western Empires, namely England, France, and the USA in particular, which initially were meant to completely dominate the overseas weak societies started gradually shifting from external domination to tensions among these powers themselves, and that led to the apocalyptic World War One in 1914. (Jennifer McCormick, No date, p. 1).

Another parallel complementing the convergence of Conrad's and O'Neill's works consists in focusing their attention on time and place of their narratives/plays. Because Conrad and O'Neill are immigrants dwelling in great Western Powers, respectively England and the USA, it is all but evident that they cannot do without venturing in sociopolitical domains of their host countries. The race relations which constitute the core of this chapter can be said to be at the origin of most of the imperialist hegemony over the overseas territories. We must convene – albeit to a certain point – that the imperialist hegemonic practices in these far-away countries dissociated from the theory elaborated by Charles Darwin –*Social Darwinism* – would not have been that cruel and that pervasive (Shannon Steen, 2000: 146). Had Herbert Spencer not labored and attributed a human interpretation – that is shifting from the animal survival to the human survival – the colonial politics could not have convinced their populations to accept with no comment the invasion of territories which were not theirs.

Furthermore, the fact that Conrad and O'Neill had ventured on those troubled waters was not without their cognizance of the nefarious consequences that might convict their professional careers. Realizing the extreme delicacy of the matter, Conrad and O'Neill were determined to construct their own commitment as regards the dangers weighing and threatening the state of race relations, not solely for their own sake, but for all humans' sake. Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (Joseph Conrad, 2013) and O'Neill's *The Emperor Jones* (Eugene O'Neill, 1920) implicitly demonstrate how wisely these respective authors have proceeded in founding their intellectual devotion towards denunciating the imperialists treading on the liberty and overall race relations of peoples whose sole sin was their social difference. The choice of the respective backgrounds for *Heart of Darkness* and *The Emperor Jones* – the Belgian Free State of the Congo for the former, and an island in the West Indies for the latter – convicts none of the British or the Americans as imperialist forces. The common denominator for both artworks underpins the tackling of the phenomenon of race relations as stereotyped by the prevailing beliefs of the majority of the westerners at the turn of the twentieth century. Again, without these racial/racist prejudices, the Europeans would certainly find a better way – not the imperialist way – of obtaining the raw materials so necessary for their roaring Industrial Revolution: if only they could control their attitude towards the non-Europeans for whom the most notorious example of racism was institutionalized (Peter A., 2017: 1).

The fact that Conrad and O'Neill have experienced by themselves the incredible upheavals of the modern era, the entirety of their intellectual renderings have deeply been permeated by the changes occasioned by this new era: hence the autobiographic aspect of these renderings, as witnesses Frederick Crews in the *New York Review of Books* of March1, 1984: "Much of Conrad's fiction is, avowedly or otherwise, more or less autobiographical" (In: Norman Page, 1986: xv). Similarly, the same can be said of O'Neill, as argues Louis Sheaffer in

his biography, *O'Neill, Son and Playwright*, reporting a conversation between O'Neill and his friend George Cram Cook:

> "You're the most conceited man I've ever known, you're always looking at yourself". O'Neill replied, "No, I just want to be sure I'm here".
>
> The mocking half truth reveals a deeper substance: O'Neill used the stage as his mirror, and the sum of his work comprises an autobiography. In many of his plays, with a bold directness of approach, he drew a figure whose face resembled his own, and whose exterior life barely concealed a passionate, questing inner existence (Louis Sheaffer, in: Travis Bogard, 1972: xii).

The above quotation ascertains to a likeable extent the involvement of Conrad and O'Neill in their narratives, and dramas. And this justifies their appeal to the literary/dramatic devices Impressionism and Expressionism wherein the readers/theater-goers are urged to ponder over the images which constitute their writing careers. Their personal involvement in themes like race relations, even though they have assigned this role to their characters/actors, makes their respective works replete with scenes implying their presence all through their narratives. When we read Conrad's novella, *Heart of Darkness* and watch O'Neill's play, *The Emperor Jones*, we feel we are in relation with their respective lives – provided, of course, that we are aware of their biographies. Another element that may be judicious to include in this context would be their inclination to their psycho-sociological insights all through their renditions, and the ensuing ironizing effect of the European imperialism, and their deceptive civilizing mission in their colonies.

Considering Eugene O'Neill, the pioneer of change in the American theater, his topicality underlies his being an avant-garde playwright, and as such, it is given to understand that he has proceeded to the utter deconstruction of the said American theater. As a second generation immigrant in America, O'Neill was clearly aware of the injustices befallen on the black communities in continental America all the more so since he was reared in an intellectual family:

his father, James, was a well-known play performer all over the country; and O'Neill's world and existential vision was shaped by his father (Barbara Gelb, 1986, no page number).

The pre-O'Neill theater had it that play-writing underwent severe restrictions as far as the tackling of the inclusion of the Blacks in the theater was concerned. The old and known practice for such theatrical performances rested on what was commonly called blackface. The latter consisted of a white actor playing the role of a black man. For so doing, the white actor had to color his face black, and thus the deed was done. Those performances were referred to as minstrel, and they were not confined in theater stages. Most of them, if not all, were performed in the open, in churches, schools, and social organizations, as suggests this quotation,

> During its [minstrelsy] heyday, from the 1840s to the end of World War One, it was the major exponent of entertainment in America /…/ In America it took place before, during and after the emancipation of the Negro slaves and spread across the continent both with professional white and Negro groups (both using blackface and with minstrel shows produced by churches, school and social organizations (Minstrelsy, 2016:1).

The blackface practice in minstrelsy can be said to be accentuated by the spreading of the black codes and the Jim Crow laws during *post-bellum* America. As a reminder, the above mentioned codes and laws refer to the majority of the white Americans, especially in the southern states, who denied the slaves the rights they were granted during the Emancipation Proclamation, and the subsequent constitutional amendments that came to reinforce the laws in favor of the slaves. The unconstitutionality of these pervert conducts proved their utter bitterness on both the political and social levels.

Politically speaking, although the 15th amendment –by far the most important one as it maintains that the black American is free, mature, and therefore has the right to share in the making/building of a new democratic nation – "forbade the states to deprive any citizen of the vote because of 'race, color or previous conditions of servitude', the result is the breaking of the national citizenship of the black freedmen (in: Michel Rézé and Ralph Bowen, 1998: 156 – 161).

From the social perspective, this disintegration of the national citizenship of the blacks – not just the slaves – represented perhaps the weightiest burden the supposedly-freedmen had to support. The 'legalized' violation of the laws, imposed upon Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, stigmatized the black communities, and turn their quotidian life into torture, especially with the creation of the secret criminal associations of which the Ku Klux Klan.

The blackface in minstrelsy should not solely be confined in the field of entertainment; on the contrary, it should be interpreted in the wider field of sociology, and politics, and it should not be given the right to search for mitigating circumstances. The black community in the US and elsewhere should attain a consciousness on race relations, and therefore on power relations. The blacks ought to stand face to face with the whites as the latter are the source of the marginalization and segregation of this minority, which in reality is not a minority (15 million black Americans in 1950) (African-American Population, 1950, no page number). The blacks, for their survival, have to reappropriate their sense of self-love, and acquire boldness to impose themselves as equals, not as subordinates to the whites, as witnesses this quotation by Frantz Fanon,

> Not only must the black man be black; he must be black in relation to the white man. Some critics will take it on themselves to remind us that this proposition has a converse. I say that this is false. The black man has no ontological resistance in the eyes of the white man (F. Fanon, in: Kevin J. Wetmore et jr.98421, 2012, no page number).

The message conveyed in the quotation urges the blacks to realize their submission to the whites is not predestined, and that race relations, too, can be an impetus that can lead them to an awakening likely to stop, if not reverse the dominant submissive relationship. As the Hegelian principle of the dialectic relationship has been deconstructed, so, too, must the black vision of the civilized, and the primitive.

Considering this brief account of race relations, and the subtle connotations of the blackface in American theatrical performances, Eugene O'Neill's contribution to mitigate/undermine this racial/racist practice singles him out as both an avant-garde playwright, and an iconoclastic scholar in his own right. Swerving from the traditional itinerary of the American drama, which, before the coming of O'Neill, consisted only in imitating the European drama especially the Shakespearian tragedies, was not an easy task at all. For O'Neill's personal subjugation to the then almost dogmatic sociopolitical rules helped him set foot on a tumultuous and insecure field of drama as it symbolized the deeply anchored race relations in the American society. Overall theater and particularly blackface minstrelsy was a device – if device can be called – to assure the perpetuation of the dominant-submissive relationship.

The early modernist era of the twentieth century definitely served as the writing setting of Conrad's narratives, and O'Neill's dramas. The acme of the Industrial Revolution which led the European and the American Powers to the realization of undreamed-of technological advancements finally ended in the general crush of World War One, causing, this way, endless waves of injustices all over the Occident. In a nutshell, the 1914 – 1918 war utterly changed the face of the world in all domains without exception, as witnesses Professor Jack S. Levy in his work entitled *The First World War: Causes, Consequences, and Controversies:*

> The war triggered profound changes in the workplace, the family, and gender relations throughout the West. The experiences of the war also generated new literature, poetry, art, and film that defined our images of what the Great War was like, and indeed shaped our more general images of war (Jack S. Levy, 2015: 1).

Dealing with the theme of race relations in the works of Conrad and O'Neill in the modern era of the twentieth century, we would focus our attention on Professor Jack Levy's subtle statement saying "War also generated new literature, poetry, art…" With Bakhtin's assertion that literature is nothing but life, we can rightly affirm that the lives of the individuals were shaken to their roots, and because Conrad and O'Neill personally witnessed those

catastrophic outcomes of the Great War, their professional careers, as author and playwright, were indeed greatly impacted by that overwhelming situation.

The early decades of the 1900s which were characterized by a would-be satisfactory socioeconomic development proved later on to be a smoldering fire that foreshadowed the global unrest of the American society. The black Americans, later on termed as African Americans, hankered after a social and political betterment as they had served in the American army to fight against the Germans in Europe. According to historians, the African American – "The Harlem Hell fighters" – contribution in defeating the Germans proved fairly satisfactory, but in vain. The Western imperialists were known for their forked tongue and ungratefulness as suggests the historian, the Pulitzer Prize winner, A. Scott Berg,

> Based on their sacrifice and loyalty, African American greeted the end of the war with hope that the country would reward them with greater democratic rights and opportunity. Instead, race relations across the country worsened. Racial violence erupted throughout the nation in 1919, demonstrating that the end of the war had brought anything but peace, or democracy (A. Scott Berg, 2017: 33).

This quote evidences the disloyalty of the imperialist governments towards populations – a disloyalty which, for them, is an intelligent strategy to perpetuate their hegemonic strategy over the "colored" peoples – the non whites. What the white Americans did for their colored fellow citizens became a practice likened by other imperialists in Europe/the case of Algeria (but not only) following World War Two is an illustration of this history.

If we were to compare the handling of the concept of race relations in the cited works of Conrad and O'Neill, we would reckon that the former author's endeavor is more extensive than that of O'Neill's, that is, it is more inclusive as far as the human beings are more or less subjected to the intricacies of these race relations. Conrad's commitment as regards his undermining of the imperialist practices tends to act as a catalyst for the world readers. Equally important, Conrad's appeal to the technique of Impressionism urges this readership to grasp the

impressions he has about the unleashed savagery of the colonizers over the colonized without necessarily invoking his desire/wish to help the indigenous awaken and acquire consciousness to fight for their freedom. Conrad's philosophical underpinnings and his insightful existential vision of man and his self get even more foregrounded when we make use of his ever-famous statement saying "My task /…/ is, before all, to make you see" (J. Conrad, 1897: no page number). Indeed, making people see is very suggestive of his willingness to shift from his personal experience, and his life-long hardships to a more embracing strategy whose aim is to get his readership to involve themselves in matters that concern human beings in general. In other words, Conrad has by now acquired a mature consciousness to project what at the onset seems only private and personal to the other members of the community, and even to the larger world populations. Conrad has had enough of confining himself in personal endeavors, and escapism to the seas, and therefore he has thought it judicious to extrapolate his life reminiscences to his overall readership, as suggests this citation:

> An earlier series of sketches, *The Mirror of the Sea*, published in 1906, also draws on some of his personal memories as a seaman, but his tendency in these sketches is to generalize rather than to document his own particular experiences (Lynda Prescott, 2004: 177).

Considering, now, O'Neill's handling of the theme of race relations, we would claim that the scope of study tends to be relatively more restrained in both time and space. That is, O'Neill's emergence in the world of dramaturgy – with all the acknowledged changes he has brought to the American theater – is surrounded, or perhaps conditioned by his own hardships regarding the whereabouts of his existence as a second generation Irish immigrant. Even though O'Neill, just like Conrad, indulged in sea traveling and writing, this practice did not really prove to be a panacea for their lonesomeness in faraway adoptive countries. His social status as a naturalized Irishman in the United States grew more overwhelming than that of Conrad in England. The entire life of O'Neill seems to be haunted by the term "hotel".

Being born in a hotel room at Barrett House in New York, and ironically dying in another hotel room at Shelton, in Boston (Mark W. Estrin, 1990: xxv, xxxiv) serves ineluctably as a foreshadower for his uprootedness, instability, and quest for identity. We believe O'Neill's resorting to drama rather than to literature most appropriate for him in the sense that when we lean more deeply into his life, O'Neill needs externalizing the ailments that have befallen on him. In other words, in view of the traumatizing life hardships, O'Neill needs to undergo a treatment we would qualify as psychoanalytical when the patient is allowed, and still more encouraged, to talk about his past experiences, and life. Playwriting for him is synonymous to a "talking cure" or "catharsis"– to use Freudian metalanguage. As the critic Edwin A. Engel put it,

> He [Eugene O'Neill] chronicled and dramatized his private agonies with a singleness of purpose that imparted to his life work remarkable power and unity. His weak point was his inarticulateness. He seldom succeeded in expressing what ailed him; in finding, that is, an equivalent in words and action for the feelings that tormented him (Edwin A. Engel, in: Article, 1962: 687).

As Engel has so well presented O'Neill's state of mind as being unable to comprehend the various elements which ailed him and tormented him, it gets clear enough that O'Neill's play writing cannot be without consequences – consequences related to his exposure to the great society changes in the United States during the 1900s.

As has already been stated, O'Neill undergoing the effects – usually negative – of race relations has indeed procured gist to his mill. As he has personally been subjugated by the segregating practices of the white Americans, O'Neill has been compelled to venture in a sort of protest drama, consisting of deconstructing the prevailing racial/racist conducts. Because, again, O'Neill was wrongly assimilated to the black American community despite his whiteness, he could not contain his internal rebellion. As a peculiar dramatist endowed by highly elaborate psychological knowledge, O'Neill proceeded to the sublimation of his destructive and rebellious feelings into the very humane art of building theatrical narratives, as witnesses this journal article,

> As a keen observer and gifted dramatist, he experienced brotherly disharmony and racial injustice perpetrated and publicly practiced in American society. He was a strong believer in the dignity of human beings regardless of race, color and status. He, therefore, rose up to confront such threatening issue by addressing it in some of his plays about African American, who for centuries were victims of white oppression, bigotry and discrimination (Journal Article, no date, p 141).

It is indeed worthy of note that race relations in general, and social injustices, in particular, reside at the heart of the social protest phenomenon. The question, maybe, why people protest in different places and times sounds like a responseless riddle, and social scientists have only just leaned over it for probable convincing resolutions. From the sociological perspective, one answer among others, to this intriguing question, as posit Berkowitz (1972), and Lind, and Tyler (1988), lies in: "Classical theories proposed that people participate in the protest to express their grievances stemming from relative deprivation, frustration or perceived injustice" (in: Jacquelien van Stebelenburg, and Bert Klandermans, 2013: 887).

In view of the above identification of the social protest, we can make a straightforward link between this phenomenon, and the personal life dilemmas experiences by the two authors understudy, Conrad, and O'Neill. Because their exile conditions did not come out of their choice, but, on the contrary; it can be said that their exposure to these multidimensional flaws – Conrad fleeing the unjust partitioning of his native country, Poland, by Russia, and its then allies, and O'Neill's parents running for their survival to the United States following the potato famine in Ireland in the mid-nineteenth century – had greatly impacted their innermost of their lives: hence the weighty burden of traumatizing past experiences on any individual. From the outset of Conrad's and O'Neill's professional careers, there is always, in the air, that nexus between the construction of their narratives, and dramas, and the fact that their scholarly renderings are stamped out by inarticulateness of their lingering past, as witnesses H. Bradley,

> No one can deny that in a sense we depend on past experience. For, apart from any other consideration, it is from past experience that in the main our minds are filled. And generally to suppose without the past we should have an intelligible present seems obviously absurd (H. Bradley, 1908, in: Richard Niland, 2009: 68).

In addition to this, it is just not possible for anyone to deny the fact that Conrad, and O'Neill had almost through their life been filled with the corrupt sentiment of deprivation and everything this sentiment entails. The arbitrary race relations and the ensuing injustices heightened – as already mentioned – Conrad and O'Neill to the position of avant-garde scholars the objective of which lies in transforming the narrow scope of personal life hardships to the much larger and politically-imbued scope of communities, and even to world populations. By so doing, Conrad and O'Neill did manage to bewilder the world readership, and the theater-goers, and to assuage, albeit temporarily, their fears, and grieves.

In order that O'Neill's dramatic vision be fulfilled, his appeal to aestheticism cannot be any more appropriate to the global events of the modern times of the twentieth century. In dramatizing Conrad's themes, especially race relations in his drama, *The Emperor Jones* (but not only), O'Neill relied on expressionism as a key "to achieve a psychological or spiritual reality rather an objective reality recorded objectively in logical sequence." (Eugene O'Neill, 2005). Additionally, this aesthetic approach helped O'Neill in his deconstruction of the canons, and assumptions of the pre-modernist era, but still, it helped him react against the negative consequences of the Industrial Revolution like materialism, complacent bourgeois prosperity, rapid mechanization, and the urban-related social incongruities (E. O'Neill, 2005: no page number).

In an attempt to properly understand O'Neill's playwriting, especially his 1920 play, *The Emperor Jones*, and its related topic of race relations, it is important to retrace the temporal and spatial itinerary of the black actor representation in turn-of-the-century minstrelsy. To some reasonable extent, it can be said that Minstrel Theater constructed its topicality from the earlier *antebellum* period, and that following the Civil War. The non-reception and the non-acknowledgment by the Southern whites in the United States of the rights embedded in the

Emancipation Proclamation that was contrived by President Abraham Lincoln in 1863 to free the slaves in the Southern Plantations ultimately gave rise to adverse conducts like the Black Codes or the black laws, and the Jim Crow Laws, and these were reinforced by secret repressive organizations –Ku Klux Klan, and the White Knights of Camellia – to terrorize the black communities (Irving L. Gordon, 1969: 183).

The literary and dramatic undertakings of race relations in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and O'Neill's *The Emperor Jones* have enabled the readership, and spectators to delve even deeper in this socio-anthropological phenomenon of race, and racism that were purposefully intended to ridicule not just the blacks, but every social group that is not Western. Believing that the above mentioned Black Codes, and similar segregationist practices resulted from the imperialist hegemony of the American and European Powers of the turn of the twentieth century would mean undermining the phenomenon, and especially the sufferings, and the ordeals imposed on the overseas indigenous populations. According to the American psychoanalyst and mythologist, Joseph Campbell, in his intensive study entitled *The Timeline of African-American History* (2014); these racial/racist conducts had been legalized by the first European Americans in Massachusetts, and Connecticut, respectively in 1641, and 1650. Almost two hundred years before the coming to existence of the famous concept of Social Darwinism, the early European settlers had already preceded Charles Darwin's and Herbert Spencer's vision of the backward people outside the European frontiers. Besides, Joseph Campbell maintains that physical punishment like whipping, branding, and torture was a quotidian practice in the New England colonies as of the 1640s. And the reason for the affliction of this ordeal on slaves in America was based on their consideration that the blacks constituted their material property, and that they were not human beings. Additionally, he argues that the first Black Codes were introduced in Boston to control blacks by denying those rights or freedom (Joseph Campbell, 2014: 33, 34).

From the hermeneutic perspective, we are tempted to affirm that the making of the play, *The Emperor Jones,* in the 1920s was very challenging as regards the modernity-related assumptions and conventions in that O'Neill professionally behaved so audaciously as to wage controversy about the white and black race relations. The 1920s which for some were the glamorous Roaring Twenties, for the others they were the seething twenties. Though, overall, the American citizens were witnessing the materialistic development of the Industrial Revolution, the social life was not that enjoyable. The low-income American citizens, most of whom were the ex-slaves, and blacks, found it difficult to make ends meet, especially in the period spanning from the Great War to the post-economic depression period (Irving L. Gordon, 1969: 209). O'Neill's immersing in deconstructing the very principles of minstrelsy in their unfair representation of the blacks in theatrical performances paved the way to a social awakening concerning the complicated and esoteric topics as race and racist relations, and the unfairness they entailed. The dramatization of the play, *The Emperor Jones,* was meant, with no apparent doubt, to appeal to the theater-goers more emotionally rather than intellectually. And here lies the very core of his dramatic device of Expressionism.

Depicting Brutus Jones, the Emperor, whirling about in the dense and unfriendly forest, not knowing where to direct, and worse, showing him stripping himself down to almost naked, provides the spectators with stunning images the objective of which is to get them to identify with the helpless and hopeless black actor, Jones. The identification process, as intended by O'Neill, was attained in terrifying conditions; that is, Jones flees his palace from dusk till dawn, and dives into the immense forest which in reality is his own subconscious, giving free rein to his reminiscences of all the traumas he had experienced in his native country, America (Eugene O'Neill, 1920).

Compositionally, in choosing a black/African-American for the main actor in his play, *The Emperor Jones*, at the time of rigorous minstrelsy suggests plainly O'Neill's subversion

towards the foundations of this theatrical institution for which a black performance is strictly limited to a white actor painting – with theatrical make-up – his face black, and that was it! Race relations and the then minstrel performances had it that nothing could matter more than not giving whiteness – on behalf of blackness – its due respect and importance, as suggests this citation,

> At the same time, black face minstrels were the first self-consciously white entertainers in the world. The simple physical disguise – and elaborate cultural disguise – of blacking up served to emphasize that those on stage were really white and that whiteness really mattered (David R. Roediger, 1999: 117).

Roediger's quote about the whiteness that matters underlies the existence of power that compels the blackness to submit to this power. Consequently, the relation between races is the relation of power, and that means that the weak has no other alternative than acquiescing, has he? After second thought, the Social Darwinist phrase "The Survival of the Fittest" is the sole responsibility of the unfit.

Conrad's and O'Neill as Muckrakers

Notwithstanding what might result from the subjugation of the blacks, and the colored, the sensible *sine qua non* for the liberation of the African-American lies in their intellectuals' ability to proceed to protests, and this is what O'Neill, and others have set themselves to do. In the wake of O'Neill's ideas as regards the decrying of the American social conditions as of the 1900s, a great many other scholars –journalists, writers, playwrights, and even musicians referred to as muckrakers – felt deeply concerned by the oppressive atmosphere befallen on them, and on their fellow citizens.

To begin with, Theodore Dreiser (1871 – 1945) proceeded to a stinging indictment of the American society in his novel, *An American Tragedy* (1925). The American society had lost its values right from the beginning of the reconstruction period in the mid 1860s. Some

unscrupulous Americans – the carpet baggers and the scalawags—were only interested in appropriating possessions. Another not less important author, Upton Sinclair (1878 – 1968) criticized the jungle-like atmosphere of the early 1900s in his novel, *The Jungle* [1906] (2018), as witnesses this citation,

> With the instant success of The Jungle, Sinclair took his place in the ranks of the "muckrakers", a term that Theodore Roosevelt coined in 1906 to refer to a group of journalists who devoted themselves to exposing the ills of industrialization. The Jungle raised a public outcry against the unhealthy standards in the meat packing industry and provoked the passage of The Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906 (Sparknotes, 2002: 1).

As evidenced in this quotation, the atmosphere is that of a jungle: industrialists and manufacturers were solely concerned by gathering money, closing their eyes on the civil health, and welfare. And so, the concept of race relations can be said to pertain to a variety of sociopolitical fields of which the main one is sociological, the other economical. From the economic perspective, race relations relate to the field of economy, and the conflict therefore must not be viewed as race relations but rather as class relations as the relationships lie in providing the owners of the means of production – the industrialists and the manufacturers – with services which are almost exclusively physical as most of the workers/proletariats are illiterate. Economically speaking, and following the Marxist tradition dealing with the problem of social unfairness it is more appropriate and more convincing to handle the matter in terms of class, not of race, because white populations, too, face the same social ailments, as shows this citation,

> The point that race is created wholly ideologically and historically, while class is not so wholly created, has often been boiled down to the notion that class (or "the economic") is more real, more fundamental, more basic or more important than race, both in political terms and in terms of historical analysis (David R. Roediger, Kendrick C. Babcock, 1999: 7).

The above citation makes it crystal clear that the heart of the topsy-turvy sociopolitical situation in the United States at the turn of the twentieth century rests upon the just choice of terms class

instead of race if we are willing to resolve the problem because this problem, which is not economical, can be eradicated by imposing strict laws to regulate, and control economy. The resolution of class relation can be attained as it does not rest on prejudices.

As regards the other side of the sociopolitical relations, race, and not class, relations, they are very complex, and very sensitive because – as mentioned earlier – the conflicts repose on false prejudices regarding Social Darwinism, which, by the way, indicts wrongly Charles Darwin. Among the stunning elements which have, for sure, made race relations even more abstruse and still more complicated to grasp for ordinary citizens, are the stubbornness of the white Americans, and their mocking air of superiority, and the constant hammering of their supremacy. These have inexorably led the whites to push a bit too much the bottle stopper – giving rise this way to an overwhelming psychodrama. Denying an African-American the right to translate his own feelings, and expressions on theater stages is just enough to raise contempt, denunciation, and protest all through the American nation. Painting black the face of a white actor to play the role of a black actor, and speak of matters concerning the black community constituted the last straw that made O'Neill react, and break the shameful and misbegotten tradition cultivated by minstrelsy for decades. Indeed the practice of this kind of entertainment was very symbolic of the construction of social boundaries meant to separate the backward blacks from the whites to preserve the white racial purity (Eric Lott, 1992: 23).

Race relations, overall, as tailored by the whites, and as perceived by the African-American community took on an academic and aesthetic resurgence fueling an immense wave of indignation among other intellectuals like the New Yorker black author James Baldwin (1924 – 1987). Concerning his early private life, and just in a nutshell, Baldwin has perhaps experienced the harshest injustices as poverty, racism, physical and psychological abuse; all of which have, in a way, compelled him to confine himself at Fireside Pente Coastal Assembly as a youth minister. Years later, in the late 1940s, he settled in Paris, and dedicated himself body and soul to a

literary commitment which brought in its wake a series of the most praised works ever about his exploration of racism between the blacks and the white Americans, showing covertly the real reason of his being there. Among these works, we can cite *Nobody Knows My Name* (1961), *The Fire Next Time* (1962), and *Blues for Mister Charlie* (1964). Besides, one of the most challenging and intellectual/philosophical statements/remarks he made of the old American theater was "Black people ignored the theater because the theater had always ignored them" (James Baldwin, 1969, in: A. Scott Henderson, P. L. Thomas (Eds.), 2014: 30).

Race relations, or rather racism, in the works of Baldwin addressed both human frailties, and sensibilities, and especially the injustices, and their subsequent psycho sociological traumas imposed on the African-American population from the very first day of their embarkation from Black Africa to the New World. Today's scholars almost universally rate Baldwin's novels, and plays related to racism (race relations) as very highly hermeneutic, as witnesses this citation,

> Pedagogically, his plays should find their way into the American theater canon and be studied regularly in general theater history and analysis courses. They capture an important part of American secular and theater history (James Baldwin, 1969, in: A. Scott Henderson, P. L. Thomas (Eds.), 2014: 38, 39).

In a word, these lines are meant to pay homage to the great author and playwright James Baldwin for his rigor, and perseverance without which he would not overcome both his harsh life, and chiefly the liberation of the theater from its confinement in the hands, and politics/ideology of the white Americans. Baldwin rightly deserves to be ranked in the same position as that of Eugene O'Neill before him.

The continual perseverance and determination of the modernist writers – some of whom have already been mentioned – on the American scene have proceeded to a better elucidation of the complex and esoteric phenomenon of race relations by awakening their readership as well as the theater-goers from the long period of stasis. The matrix of power around which race relations

were revolving ultimately swerved sharply to a more political racism than to economic inequalities raging in the United States of America. The early three decades of the twentieth century proved to be the most dramatic times in American history, putting altogether the blacks and the whites in the same seething pot, as argues Irving L. Gordon in his reviewed version of *American History*: "The mood of most Americans veered swiftly from confidence to despair" (1969: 404).

Race/class relations as tackled by Conrad, and then dramatized by O'Neill in his plays inform the readers/audiences of the common denominator grouping these authors, and the ones mentioned in this chapter. This grouping trait is multi-faceted in the sense that almost all of them have issued from immigration – the first or the second generation immigrants – and this underpins the very hardships they have personally been through within their families proper, and in their corresponding social spheres. Their host country has not always proved host; on the contrary, their new social conditions have only been amplified: hence their eagerness and devotion to resort to raking the muck that has lain before them. The American protest literature, or what is commonly referred to as muckraking is not new in its kind, and it has set an objective to attain: keeping up with the highest national ideals, 'castigating' the nation when it falls short, and pointing the way to a better collective future, as reports historian Brendon Lindsay about the correspondence between President Thomas Jefferson, and a friend of his, named Abigail Adams, the wife of his predecessor, John Adams:

> Abigail Adams: even in one of the freest and happiest governments in the world, restless spirits will aim at disturbing it.
>
> Thomas Jefferson: The spirit of resistance to government is so valuable on certain occasions, that I wish it to be always kept alive. It will often be exercised when wrong but better so than not to be exercised at all. I like a little rebellion now and then. It is like a storm in the atmosphere (Brendon Lindsay, 2002: no page number).

By extrapolating the sociopolitical phenomenon of race/class relations to those existing between the governor and the governed, Jefferson's conversing with his friend Abigail Adams gives to ponder over the necessary emergence of protest conducts from the part of the governed citizens especially if the governor is blinded by his outright domineering attitudes and an insatiable appetite for power and material possessions (Emile Durkheim, 1890 – 1900).

The usurpation of the human rights resulting from the unbridled race relations has worsened the atmosphere reigning over the sociopolitical life in the early twenties. Though Conrad and O'Neill can be said to have initially immersed in protest literature, and protest theater, their contemporaries took the lead after them, associating at times literary and dramatic protest to thwarted mobs in certain large urban areas, as witnesses this citation,

> By mid-July 1919 there had been three serious race riots, at Charleston, Arizona, South Carolina, involving white navy personnel, at Bisbee, Arizona, involving black troops, and at Longview, Texas. These riots were investigated with varying degrees of thoroughness by the Navy Department, the War Department and the Justice Department and were seen as little more than temporary swellings of normal Southern racial tensions (Mark Ellis, 1994: 41, 42).

Because race/racial relations have become the Federal Government's concern, and because it is the imperialists' wont to undermine the legitimacy of the oppressed peoples' decrial of the white injustices, Mark Ellis has issued a very subtle comment on the handling of the existential survival of the blacks by the white supremacists. For the latter, the blacks' upheavals are transitory swellings, or blisters, that will soon flatten – no need to worry about! This persistent negligence, as we expect, will surely have far-reaching effect on the race relations not only between the white American populations, and the African-Americans, but also with the colored Americans.

At the level of ideology, going through Conrad's narratives which deal with race relations – *Heart of Darkness, Lord Jim, The Nigger of the Narcissus,* and others – we can say that Conrad's handling of this sociopolitical phenomenon was attributed more globalized

underpinnings in the sense that race relations were imbedded in the imperialists matrix of the mainstream hegemonic philosophy of the Western Powers. That is, the latter powers which symbolized the technologically advanced white supremacy convened to conquer the overseas backward indigenous for the supply of their Industrial Revolution with necessary raw materials to which were added some fetish collections like ivory, cocoa, gems and the like (Patrick Zliltener, 2013: 297, 298).

Conversely, O'Neill's tackling of the race relations is less generalizing; that is, the playwright has reduced/limited the worldwide scope of the phenomenon to that of a specific nation that is the United States of America. The dramatization of race relations in New York stages – especially *The Emperor Jim*, and *All God's Chillum Got Wings* – was enough to stir the formerly admitted Judeo-Christian assumptions, and canons. O'Neill did manage to doubly challenge the white American cultural heritage, first by breaking the theatrical practices of Minstrelsy, and second by bringing to the fore the never-thought-of possibility of a white woman to marry an African-American which, for Gerald Horne, the author of *Paul Robeson: The Artist as Revolutionary*, was an ultra-sensitive issue of so-called "mixed race" liaisons (G. Horne, 2016: 26).

Bearing this in mind, we have deemed it necessary to emphasize O'Neill's expressionistic endeavor to intellectually subvert the established ethnocentric vision of the white American society by foregrounding the human existential contradictions meant to be dynamic, rather than static. Subsequent to this gradually-creeping subversion of all that was related to Western whiteness, the fading economic American dream was metamorphosed into a visibly-crippling sociopolitical unrest, giving rise to more profound and more radical protest movements as that founded by the Jamaican-born Marcus Mosiah Garvey: ANIA, The Universal Negro Improvement Association in 1914 (maap. Columbia.edu, no date, p2). The core of this sociopolitical movement – referred to as Garveyism – consisted in encouraging "African-

American economic and political independence, and the unity of all people of African descent" (ibid, p2). The subversion of the white symbols initiated by Garvey, among others, was soon complemented by other intellectual leaders like W. E. B. DuBois with their new thoughts as a result of the black community disillusionment following the return of the black veterans of the Great War in Europe, as argues Bryan Stevenson, the founder, and Executive Director of the *Equal Justice Initiative*, a human rights organization in Montgomery, Alabama,

> In the face of this persistent message of racial hierarchy, and despite being denied full citizenship, meant African Americans fought for the United States and for the aspirations that conditions would improve. Instead, black soldiers who served in the armed forces from the Civil War to World War II, during the height of racial terror and violence, faced hatred and racism even in "peace" time (B. Stevenson, 2019: 8).

Bryan Stevenson boldly points at the ungratefulness and the denial of acknowledgment of the sacrifices of the black soldiers from the part of the "white" Federal Government Officials. The latter simply cannot bear imagining the blacks being their equals, and that would utterly disrupt the social order, the race relations, and the gender anomalies all of which were built on the untouchable white supremacy; in a nutshell, the whites are terrified by the possibility of black empowerment, and social equality.

The most enthralling aspect of the present chapter, and to a great extent the whole thesis, undergirds the profundity of the existentialist theme of race/class relations. These relations, for sure, represent Conrad's most human-related topic as it can be viewed under various analytical lenses. This Conradian theme, as it were, has entailed in its wake a variety of sensitive existential trends the aim of which is to urge readers/audiences to ponder over and subvert the hitherto accepted sociopolitical assumptions. Race – class relations, as dealt with by Conrad, and later on by O'Neill, and others, find their bearings in proceeding to an iconoclastic deconstruction of the untold British Victorianism which had not only distinguished between working classes, but also between the socially-constructed gender relations. Did gender inequalities at the time of

Victorianism not lead a great number of housewives to hysteria? Did authors and dramatists like the Norwegian Henrick Johan Ibsen not react body and soul against the constructed gender anomalies in his artistic works, namely *A Doll's House* (1879), among others, as illustrates this quotation,

> Ibsen began writing in prose instead of verse and began attacking modern, realistic social problems in his plays /…/ Many of his plays contain criticism of marriage, portraying dominant, complex female characters who are trapped in unhappy situations by the constraints of strict Victorian traditions (Shakespeare theater, no date, p3).

This quote definitely throws light on Ibsen's commitment to reacting/rebelling against the old and skeptical romantic traditions and encounters which were mostly imbued with generalized sociopolitical hypocrisy. Ibsen's task was to break these pseudo-moralistic practices, and he set himself to respond to the new life imperatives of the modernity of the turn of the twentieth century.

These race/class relations cannot rightly and solely be attributed to Conrad, and O'Neill as earlier authors have already immersed themselves in not just delving into the root causes of these human apprehensions, but in awakening people's collective consciousness about these psychosocial ills. Did Karl Marx and Frederich Engels not ironize on the fallacious male/female relations during the roaring years of the Industrial Revolution during the reign of Queen Victoria by opposing dialectically the terms producer and reproducer? This is illustrated by the British left-wing political activist, Lindsey Ann German, arguing: "The male bread winner going out to work, and the female homemaker responsible for child rearing, and work in the household, all because women can bear children (Cited in: Sheila McGregor, 2013, no page number).

Another not less stunning rebellion against established life conventions, and mores came from the part of Sigmund Freud who described the Victorian era as an era surrounded by myths, and stereotypes, hypocrisy, prudery, and repression, and above all as a breeding center of

neuroses. It was indeed the confinement of women inside their homes and the routinized domestic chores that drove them to hysterical conduct contrary to the alleged insanity by the patriarchal system. Though Europe and especially England were prosperous at that time, the class/gender relations were at their worst position as they were backed by religion and patriarchy: overall middle-class women were assigned to compulsory domesticity while the men/husbands gave themselves to fornication under the cover of breadwinning and family Godly supervision. To show the life-long ordeal the middle class women were made to submit, the critic Patricia Blanca shows how precarious and perilous their lives were, and she argues that "most middle class women spent their entire lives in their parental home till about age twenty-five, and then in their own home until their death" (P. Blanca, 1975: 5; in Catherine Lemmer, 2007: 33). And to show the objectless and nothingness of the Victorian women, F. M. L. Thompson adds – pushing the already-dramatic situation to the ridicule – "that middle class daughters were brought up to regard marriage and motherhood as their main purpose in life (F. Thompson, 1988: 59; in: Catherine Lemmer, 2007: 33).

What indeed makes the distinction between race, class, and gender relations ultimately lies only in their scope; that is, they vary from their geographical extension and location to the societal groups within a given community, and to the different family members the aims of whom result in either a collective or individual psychodrama. Following the subdivisions into which race relations have been divided, we redirect anew this sociopolitical phenomenon to the context of the United States of America as an enhancement and as a complement to the dramatic works by Eugene O'Neill. Though the American case is rightly one of racial differentiation – the white race and the black race – it would be more philanthropic to handle the problem as different social groups living in the same country the future of which rests upon the responsibility of all.

The United States of America as a relatively new nation is characterized by social conflicts from the very day of its existence dating from the early seventeenth century. Their

belonging to the European supremacy prior to their settlement in the American continent, and the principles of the Manifest Destiny in the mid-nineteenth century created superior attitudes which hindered them from considering the black population their equals; hence the source of the centuries-long social ailments to the present day.

Aside from the literary and theatrical movements as regards the continual growing of the social unrest, other more radical social protest movements emerged on the national scene, and other protest leaders like Marcus Garvey, and W. E. B. DuBois, among others, appeared on the sociopolitical arena. "These intellectuals and civil activists" fought "for the elevation and the emancipation of the Afro-American community and the reclamation of the civil rights and equality for blacks in the American society" (Divesh Kaul, 2010, Abstract).

Marcus Garvey, the British-Jamaican immigrant, is viewed as one of the twentieth century cultural figures who initiated the basis of the Black Nationalist Thought of the nineteenth century and who, later on, inspired the separatist/nationalist movements like the Black Moslems in the 1960s (Sabrina Zerar, 2009: 194). Though intellectually we tend to attribute the motives of one author to an earlier one, we cannot rightly doubt Marcus Garvey's originality of the reasons of his protest endeavor. No author can be given complete authority over a given topic as literature overall does not bring anything new. According to M. M. Bakhtin, no theme/topic is in no way new, it has already been encountered in the previous narratives, and genres (M. Bakhtin, 1981: 88).

Although the reasons for Garvey's protest for the civil rights of the African-American in the United States of America meet with those of Frederick Hegel's, each one is expressing his individual consciousness about the universal existential ailments. That is, it should not be surprising to see Hegel handling the intertwined relations between the notions of land and soil with that of the people; and then this is taken over again by Garvey, and others. The point is, in

Bakhtin's metalanguage, these two situatednesses are in fact complementing one another in its own historical time and place (M. Bakhtin, 2007: 130).

Race relations in the United States following World War One and especially World War Two changed to the better as regards the emancipation of the black soldiers and their acquisition of a new form of social/racial identity, as illustrates this citation,

> The patriotic service of the African American soldiers, the war's lofty aims for democracy, and rapid demographic changes all contributed to opening a new front in the battle for civil rights. Likewise, these changes fostered the "Harlem Renaissance" and a positive self-image for African Americans, often described as the "New Negro" (Nathan w. Gergel, 2011: iii).

As evidenced in this citation, the black soldiers participating in World Wars One and Two and their acquaintance with other races like the French and the Asians led to the momentous emergence of an existential renaissance in Harlem, New York. The Harlem Renaissance Era constituted the retrieval of the pride and awareness of their belongingness to ancestral roots in the African continent, and more importantly, the breaking of the Jim Crow Laws instituted by the white officials in the Southern states at the time of Reconstruction around the turn of the twentieth century.

What rightly has infuriated the early twentieth century intellectuals and overall protestors of the rank of Garvey is the biased political discourse of the then officials saying one thing, and doing a completely opposite one. That is, and just for the sake of an example, President Woodrow Wilson (1913), in his address to the allied forces in Europe, showed his eagerness to elevate the morale of the soldiers and his insistence on the preservation of justice and the democratic principles, but in point of fact, the president could not sincerely have meant that. It is a case of a forked-tongue discourse. A few decades earlier, during the Progressive Era, Wilson was among the white American officials who helped "institute the racial segregation at the level of the Federal Government during the first term of his presidency" (Cited in: Zerar Sabrina, 2009: 201).

The use of the word "forked-tongue" above is highly metaphoric and symbolic of the Manifest Destiny Era when the white officials were oftentimes seemingly trying to settle the conflicts between them and the Indians only to break the promises and unleash their soldiers to proceed to genocide. For this reason, the American autochthons did not and probably still will not have confidence in the white invaders. The vulnerability which characterizes race relations in the United States, but not only, lies in the government officials pronouncing speeches replete with prejudices related to the African-Americans, including the colored people. A politician claiming, on the one hand, to defend justice and democracy abroad while, on the other (hand) proceed to downright repression on his fellow citizens is well highlighted by the American scholar, Glen Gendzel. For Gendzel, this practice lends to irony as a result of the double discourse labored by the officials. He wonders whether the democracy the Americans fought for abroad will ever prevail at home (G. Gendzel, in: Stephen J. Whitfield, 2004: 19).

The matter with race relations is so profound that we are not likely to reach a resolution as soon as these relations are faced with a total absence of sincerity and willingness to resolve once for this entire phenomenon. Race relations, as viewed by the post modern philosophy, are merely excuses for the world powers to keep the world nations under their domination. When the Indian philosopher, Prem Rawat, was asked about peace in the world, he simply retorted that peace has never been anything unattainable; on the contrary, it is the leaders of these world powers who refuse to have peace. Having peace – which is not at all difficult, according to Rawat – would mean the ruin of the Western economy, especially military economy and their supremacy (Prem Rawat, in: Myanjan TV). The evidence of race relations and their apocalyptic outcomes lies in the fact that the overall humans on this planet focus most of their attention on their differences and putting aside their similarities as human beings living on this same planet Earth.

The segregation practices in the United States of America are yet another obviousness of the marginalization, and belittling of the African-Americans. Is it really so compelling for the American whites to stop behaving so beastly towards their human equals? How long will it take them to realize that almost the entirety of the laws in their political constitution is contradictory with the Declaration of Independence of 1776? Have the American citizens at least once not celebrated the almost divine aspects of this declaration? Just as a reminder, it says – not said,

> We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness (Thomas Jefferson, 1776).

The race relations imposed on the African-Americans, and which many protestors decried, can never do justice to the black community because of their inhuman and monstrous practices, as argue Michel Rézé, and Ralph Bowen,

> The heart-breaking situation of black families that resulted from the trade in slaves was dramatized in Harriet Beecher Stowe's best seller, Uncle Tom's Cabin (1852), a book which did much to awaken Northerners to the horrors of slavery (M. Rézé, 1998: 169).

As Stowe's seminal work did contribute to the awakening of the northern whites to the inhuman treatment of the southern slaves, it, too, led to the emergence of more sociopolitical protestors on the American scene like Martin Luther King, Jr. in the 1960s. Martin Luther, let it be reminded to all, was among the prominent initiators, like Nelson Mandela, and Mahatma Gandhi, who resorted to the non-violent philosophy to counter the excessively armed and vicious Western oppressors worldwide. He was best known for his 1963 'prophetic' speech "I have a Dream,"

> I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self evident, that all men are created equal." I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slave-owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood (Martin Luther King, Jr., 1963; in: Michel Rézé, 1998: 168).

This quotation really evidences Luther's wisdom as regards his refusal to bear any kind of grudge towards all the whites who for centuries had not ceased harming them to the present day. This speech is prophetic in its own right as it invites the young black and white generations to turn over a new leaf on the disastrous injustices the black community had endured. Martin Luther is urging the young generations to come and sit round a table for discussion; for discussion is the only sure and safe way of resolving social flaws. The dream Martin Luther had was a dream of rebirth and renewal and the reconstruction of society based on the very principles of the Declaration of Independence.

Conclusion

To conclude this relatively long chapter, we can say that the theme of race relations under study is perhaps the most epistemologically and ontologically related topic to human existentialism. Race relations definitely represent the core of the multifarious ailments befallen on humans, and this is what brought together intellectuals of diverse horizons, ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Joseph Conrad and Eugene O'Neill are examples of these.

Race relations whom we complement with class relations and gender have constituted the gist of Conrad's and O'Neill's works. The handling of such existential topics undergirds the overt and covert impact of exile, urbanization, industrialization, and imperialism.

The works cited in this chapter – whether they were Conrad's, O'Neill's or others' – retrace the historiography of this sociopolitical phenomenon of race relations. Over a span of a few generations, we are given to figure out how these intellectuals' works have contributed to the understanding of this phenomenon and by the same token its own deconstruction.

Aesthetically, in order to achieve this twofold objective of clarification and deconstruction, Conrad and O'Neill appealed to impressionism and expressionism respectively. For Conrad and O'Neill to give their works a universal significance, they not only focused their

attention on the absurdity of existence and the alienating forces of the modern life of the early twentieth century, but they also pin-pointed the cruelty and the incomprehensibility of authoritarian power.

Ultimately, this chapter has put forward some resolutions – albeit tentatively – to these ever-increasing race/class/gender relations. Among these, the humans must be eager enough to undermine their own greed, superiority, and to always remember that the humans are the image of God –at least for those who have faith in religion – and as such they ought to show awe towards them. Humans, too, ought to emphasize the traits which attract one to another rather than on those which repel one from the other.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

> *When the last aqueduct shall crumble to pieces, the last airship to the ground, the last blade of grass have died upon a dying earth, indomitable by his training in resistance to misery and pain, shall set this undiminished light of his eyes against the feeble glow of the sun.*

The above quote borrowed from Conrad's essay "Henry James: An Appreciation" included in his book of essays, *Life and Notes* finds an echo in William Faulkner's Nobel Prize Speech (1950), the key note of which is endurance, and the will to prevail. Faulkner Taking his cue from Conrad, Faulkner the following resounding words:

> It is easy enough that man is immortal simply because he will endure: that when the last ding-dong has clanged and faded from the last worthless rock hanging tideless in the last red and dying evening, that even there will still be one more sound: that of his puny inexhaustible voice, still talking, I refuse to accept this. I believe that man will not merely endure: he will prevail."

If this conclusion synthesizing the results of this research starts with this dialogic relationship between Conrad and Faulkner in the form of essay, a genre qualified by one critic as a genre whose major feature is the "mind speaking to mind," it is because as early as 1922 he was able to recognize Conrad as the progenitor of O'Neill's drama, and also because a similar claim can be made about the dialogic relationship that Faulkner holds with Conrad. In classifying the dialogic relationships between Conrad, and the American cultural critics, and author like Faulkner, who mis/appropriated Conrad's works to conduct their discussion about American culture, politics, and society, I shall start with the Southern writers because it is these writers who display the best this mis/approapriation as a cultural mediator. In their writings, Bakhtin's classification of the types of double-voiced discourse fully applies.

Faulkner's novels provide the best illustration, for they show nearly the whole range of the types of discourse as their author progressively develops his autonomy as an author. In the first place, it has to be mentioned that Faulkner started to read Conrad at very early age when he was

just 12. Critics point out that Faulkner took to Conrad as a result of his mother's recommendation of the latter's fiction as "manly fiction." This mother's recommendation of special books to read for her son author for a mother to her son with ambition become a man of letters speaks of the special stature that Conrad had achieved in the *South* by the time Faulkner entered the literary scene. This research has started with the affirmation that Mencken is the one cultural figure that triggered off the cultural debate in the United States of America. Apart from the essay "Conrad" written with a New England audience in mind, Mencken also wrote another seminal essay "The Sahara of the Bozart" included in Prejudices: Second Series (1920), which seeks to explore the cultural waste of the Post-Bellum South. According to Van Wyck Brooks, who to say the least do not always agree with Mencken of the state of the arts in the United States, Mencken's essay is the major factor that contributed to the "birth of the new Southern Literature." In denouncing the philistinism resulting from literary Puritanism and crass materialism that found its way from the North to the South, the lack of a viable literary tradition, the enervated Bourbons or Southern planters seeking a returning to the political stage, crusading moralism giving rise to censorship laws such Congressional Acts as the Comstock Act, Mencken saw the necessity of the cultural salvation through an aesthetic vision of the South as best embodied in writers like Conrad.

The aesthetic salvation of the North, which to keep to the truth, did not find its first formulation in Mencken. We also found in such Progressive authors and essayists such as DuBois, in his *Spirit of Black Folk*. But in Mencken, the cultural salvaging is predicated on the mediation of Conrad as the one author who provides the best remedy to all the ills undermining the quality of life and culture in the Post-Bellum South. It is this call for the regeneration of the American letters in the South through the appropriation of Conrad for the good cause that Faulkner's mother seems to have heeded in her recommendation of Conrad's fiction as "manly fiction" to her bookworm son who was nourishing an ambition to become an author on his own.

With such a literary father figure adopted as a model, Faulkner came to write, for example, *Soldier's Pay*, *The Sound and the Fury*, and *As I lay Dying*.

The above-mentioned novels show how Conrad shaped in various degrees Faulkner's vision of the world. The first type of double discourse that Bakhtin refers to in his *Dostoevsky's Poetics*, that of imitation can be found in *Soldier's Pay* patterned in terms of both plot, characterization, and tropes on Conrad's fictions, such as *The Nigger of the Narcissus* and *Youth*, to mention only these two works. For example, *Soldier's Pay* retraces the return of a World War I a disenchanted and fatally injured veteran from the battle field of war-torn Europe. The leitmotif of the novella is "waiting" (a word repeated more than 40 times in the novel) for the approaching death of the hero, attended by a Southern community which desperately clings to its hero an embodiment of residual Southern ideology threatened by the advent of modernity. We remember that for Bakhtin the heroes of novels are primarily ideologues. The strong resonance of Conrad's *The Nigger of the Narcissus* cannot be lost for the reader of Conrad's novel whose hero is suggestively called James Wait, a last ailing recruit on the *Narcissus* a denizen of sailing ship on its last homebound journey from Bombay. "Wait," like Faulkner's fatally injured hero Mahon, is attended to by the other sailors as they battle with the natural elements on the *Narcissus* to which the crew and its captains clung to as a remnant of the old sailing ships and the brotherhood associated with them, both threatened by massive steamship and its modernist emergent ideology. So though both Conrad and Faulkner may have patterned their works on the mythos of the Nostos, or return characteristic of epic romances such as Homer's *Ulysses*, the parallels in plot and theme between Faulkner's *Soldier's Pay* (1926) and Conrad's *The Nigger of the Narcissus* are so close that the transposition of discourse to the Southern cultural context can be characterized as an imitative relationship.

The reduction of distance between the two author's discursive voices is such that we can speak of a fusion or mergence if we come to realize that even Faulkner's hero, Mahon, is so

portrayed in such broad strokes that he functions as an abstract but central figure of absence or device to use formalist criticism than a life-like character. More importantly Faulkner's hero's name recalls Conrad's chief mate of the *Judea,* Mahon in *Youth.* The latter we remember insisted that his name "should be pronounced Mann." Hence, Faulkner's imitation of Conrad's works in *Soldier's Pay* extends even to the mode of writing. Conrad's and Faulkner's heroes stand for the figure of modern Everyman in grips with modernity and its threat to residual but still persistent and once hegemonic old world views.

As Faulkner's reading of his literary father becomes stronger, his imitation of Conrad gives place to stylization, just as is the case in *The Sound and the Fury,* the one novel that has made Faulkner a worldwide famous literary figure. Indeed, Faulkner's borrows the title novel from Shakespeare's *Macbeth* to evoke the tragedy of the Post-Bellum South, but the central place in the discourse of his novel is held by two figures inspired by Conrad's *The Secret Agent*. Benjy or Benjamin, the young idiot, and his sister Caddy, of the Compson family, their speech and their habitus are stylized respectively on Conrad's Stevie marked by the same idiocy and his protecting, loving sister, Mme Verloc. Though as said above, Faulkner's novel aptly borrows its title from Shakespeare to signify on Macbeth's sudden realization of the theatrical futility of human violence, it bears a stronger relationship to Conrad's novel in terms of narrative strategy. Faulkner's use of stream of consciousness, particularly in the case of Benji reminds of those circles that Stevie compulsorily draws, "circles, circles, innumerable circles, concentric, eccentric, a coruscating whirl of circles that by their tangled multitude of repeated curves, uniformity of form, and confusion of intersection lines [which] suggested a rendering a cosmic chaos, the symbolism of a mad art attempting the inconceivable." It is this Conrad's/ Stevie's/ "idea" of a mad art attempting the inconceivable that Faulkner transposes into a narrative strategy of stream of conscious to express the anarchy unleashed in the Post-Bellum Southern mind and consciousness. So in *The South and the Fury* (1929), Faulkner evokes Conrad's

characters and idea of art whilst avoiding the pitfall of imitation through the observation of a stylized distance with regard Conrad's character models and his "idea" of art (in Bakhtin's sense of the word of the positioning of idea as hero) the better serve his own purpose, which is the unveiling of the anarchic state of the Southern mind through the stream of consciousness narrative strategy.

It is in *As I Lay Dying* (1930) that Faulkner somewhat leaves the imitation and stylization behind him for a more refined or subtle type of double-voiced discourse with Conrad that Bakhtin calls hidden dialogicality or dialogism. In this type of double-voiced discourse, Bakhtin tells us "The second speaker is present invisibly, his words are not there, but deep traces by these words have a determining influence on all the present and visible words of the first speaker." Indeed, the reference to Conrad's discourse about the demise of the old world order and its attached ideology in *As I Lay Dying* is not so explicit as in *Soldier's Pay* and *The Sound and the Fury*. Though Faulkner suggests a Greek narrative frame through the title, borrowed from Homer's *The Iliad*, it is the traces from Conrad's *The Nigger of the Narcissus* that sustain dialogicality or conversation between Conrad and Faulkner. These traces in Faulkner's novel can be identified in the central female agonizing character carried like a burden on a long burial land journey original home undertaken by a whole family from the South (whose name the Bundrens strangely sounds like "burden") facing a storm revealing social tensions similar to the ones that the crew reveal in *The Nigger of the Narcissus*. The conversation with Conrad in Faulkner's novel best shows in the intersection of race, class, and gender in the Bundren family conceived as an ideological apparatus similar to the one constituted of the race-mixed, ego-centric crew of *The Nigger of the Narcissus*. Such an apparatus (the word is Althusser's) sustains a residual ideology in the face of the emergent ideology of modernity between which Faulkner's to navigate by introducing for the first time that imaginary homeland called the Yoknapatawpha.

More importantly, this conversation with and expansion of Conrad's *The Nigger of the Narcissus* serve as a medium to trigger a hidden polemic with some of the Southern Agrarian authors noted for their invested interests in the patriarchal and agrarian cavalier picture of a Pre-Bellum harmonious and organic Southern community at whose apex are the Southern Lady and gentlemen planters. The way that Faulkner uses Conrad to conduct his critique of this restorative type of nostalgia largely accounts for some Southern authors such as Frances Newman who in her novel *The Hard Boiled Virgin*, for example, rejected Conrad as "the Prince of Prose," a reference to Satan, and a "Polish Siren" who brought out the perdition a whole "Lost Generation" of exile Southern writers on the English and French rocky shores of the Atlantic. For authors like Newman, Mencken's idea that the South is an artistic desert is simply a misnomer, for the South has indeed a tradition of its own that should be celebrated and preserved. So, it should be emphasized that both the pros and cons in the debate of the state of the arts in the South inescapably resorts to Conrad as a medium or cultural mediator. In the case of Southern cultural critiques and authors, this critical rapprochement of Conrad whether to "abrogate" or "appropriate" (the words are Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Giffiths and Helen Tiffin's) his vision of man and the world has much to do with the historical and cultural affinities between Poland and South. It is this similarity of contexts texts that have enabled the "birth of new South literature," a literature best represented by Faulkner.

If I have so far emphasized the gradually process of appropriation Conrad's fiction by Faulkner for whom the Polish-born, British author is "this man [the Nostromo who] has overturned all literature," it is in order to foreground a similar process of appreciation by O'Neill, not as a fiction author but as a dramatist. To synthesize the results of this research with regard to the double discourse that O'Neill develops in relation to Conrad, I would say that O'Neill's relation with Conrad just as the one that Faulkner holds with the same writer starts as an exercise in imitation. Imitation, it has to be remembered, is a double-discourse wherein the

first author in this case O'Neill has such a reverential attitude toward the discourse of the second author (Conrad) that he observes no distance whether in the "idea" or theme nor in the style of rendering that idea often in a tragic form.

The most typical example of imitation in O'Neill drama is the early sea play, *Bound East for Cardiff* (1916). This play, it needs to be stressed, was originally entitled *The Children of the Sea*, the same title under which first American edition of *The Nigger of the Narcissus* was published in 1911 and that O'Neill according to Travis Bogard had read in the same year. In public announcement O'Neill often attributed his attraction to the sea and sea adventures to his reading of the sea novels by Conrad whose sea life in his own words was made possible by the reading of American novels by Maryat and Cooper. In this conclusion, I would agree with Bogard when he claims that it is O'Neill familiarity with sea life as recounted rather than his proper experience which made possible the latter's writing of sea plays like *Bound East for Cardiff*. Following this summary of my findings about the role that Conrad played as a cultural mediator in the debate about the state of American culture in general and American literature, and drama in particular, I would say that the relationship that O'Neill's *Bound East for Cardiff* holds with *The Nigger of the Narcissus* is of the order of imitation. Indeed, in this play O'Neill observes such a little distance to his predecessor's discourse and its referent the dying sea order prevalent in the age of sailing seamanship that he had originally named his play after the first American edition of *The Nigger of the Narcissus*, that is *The Children of the Sea*, a title which also recalls Conrad's essay "Tales of the Sea" which celebrates Conrad's two famous American sea novelists Maryat and Cooper.

Besides O'Neill's original intention to name his play after Conrad's first American edition of *The Nigger of the Narcissus*, that is *The Children the Sea*, arguably to capitalize on the commercial and artistic success of Conrad's novel in The United Sates, O'Neill also borrows the obituary tragic idea of a dying sailor on a tramp steamer Glen bound for Cardiff. O'Neill's

central character Yank recalls Conrad's James Wait in that both lie dying whilst their shipmates attend to them. A tragic mood prevails in both works, with O'Neill choosing to focus on the dialogue between Yank and Driscoll, the most loyal friend on the tramp steamer. The tragic inevitability as regards the dying Yank is symbolized by the compassionate Driscoll, whose anglicized shortened surname in Gaelic language significantly means "descendant of the messenger" or "message bearer." The equivalent of "Driscoll" in Greek and Roman mythology would be Hermes and Mercury, Gods of shopkeepers, merchants and travelers. The Gaelic name "Driscoll" also recall the Archangel Michael who in Christian tradition is said to supervise angels of death working with people who lie dying or agonizing.

The imitation of Conrad's shows up particularly strong in the evocation of the compassion that Belfast another Irish character displays to the ailing and agonizing James Weight in *The Nigger of the Narcissus* through the loving relationship between the Irish Driscoll and the dying yank. The imitative drive can also be seen in the fog that shrouds the tramp steamer Glencairn as soon as it sails from New York docks for Cardiff on a week long journey that starts with the fatal fall of Yank from a latter as he makes his way from the forecastle to the deck for his shift. Moreover, the navigation of the Glencairn in the high seas through a thick fog blanket in the evening is too close to the Narcissus voyage through the storm to make a stylistic variation on Conrad's novel. What is more, put in the context of World War I and warfare on the seas between the British Navy and the German U-Boats make the Glencairn's voyage as dangerous as that of its counterpart in Conrad's novel. The threat posed by unchained natural and human elements to homebound sailor characters on British ships (the Narcissus for Conrad and the Glencairn for O'Neill) inspire the same fear of tragic death the same heightened sense of exile.

O'Neill's imitation of Conrad's works turns into stylization with the publication of *Hairy Ape* in 1922. In this play, we meet the title hero Yank, who significantly bears the same name as the hero of *Bound East for Cardiff*. In the *Hairy Ape*, Yank is certainly not a dying sick sailor as his

namesake is in O'Neill's previous play. However, he echoes in much more subtle way Conrad's *The Nigger of the Narcissus* because of O'Neill's adaptation of a different strategy of characterization borrowed from the expressionism whose hallmark is the reflection of inner psychological states through physical features. We are told in this play that Yank is a dark and beastly man who has a kinship with the Neanderthal because of his stoop, a physical deformity and dark complexion which arguably owe a lot to the low-roof ceiling of the stow room where he shovels coals to the furnace of the steamer. Through this acquired physical deformity, Yank resembles the dark complexioned James Wait of the Narcissus, with the heavy weight (the oral-aural pun on the word "wait" has to be noted) of his trunk on his shoulders. It is in such expressionist technique of characterization making psychological phenomena visible in physical features which make the discourse in O'Neill's *Hairy Ape* assume the shape of a double-voice discourse of the type that Bakhtin calls stylization.

The ideological burden or weight that both characters suffer bear in both Conrad's *The Nigger of the Narcissus* and O'Neill's *Hairy Ape* has been fully analyzed in this research. It is identified in the themes of "belonging" and "regression" to which two separate chapters were devoted. To reinforce further the research result that "belonging" and "regression" are central themes, something not remarkable in itself because of what scholars particularly the Marxists call the phenomenon of alienation in the modern world, I would refer to the same themes or motifs that Conrad's *The Nigger of the Narcissus* and O'Neill's *The Hairy Ape* as another evidence of the stylization in the latter. We remember that James Wait in response to his mates' complaints about his inclusion in the crew of the Narcissus introduces himself by affirming to all to hear including the captain that "I belong to the ship." This re-iterated sense of belonging to the sailing type of ship soon to be abandoned for steamships is just an illusion for belonging to what Victor Turner calls "communitas." This "communitas" as represented by the ailing and dying Wait is a

community at loose-ends, doomed to extinction by the historical process of industrial and its maritime avatar the steamship wherein sailors are just cogs in the machine.

The strong affirmation of belonging to a ship steered by Old Singleton and carrying a dying sailor shows how hard for the whole crew described as "the perpetual prisoners of the sea" to stop claiming themselves as members of a type of a community that no longer exists. We can help but point out the tragic irony of the Narcissus and its crew imprisoned in the ship somewhat in the manner of Plato's prisoners in the myth of the cave. This is the reading that O'Neill seems to have made his own in making the symbolically named hero Yank claim that he and the whole crew "belong" to the steamers that they feed with coal. "Well den, we belong and dey don't. Dat's all," he tells his ship mates. In response to their applause, he goes on to add "As for dis bein' hell – aw nuts! Yuh lost your noive, dat's what. Dis is a man's job, get me? It belongs." Plato's myth of cave is also invoked in this play to underline the false consciousness or alienation of Yank soon to be sent on the avenging road by a representative member of those he excludes as outsiders in the person of Mildred Douglas, the very daughter of a tycoon of steel. Mildred hurts him by dismissing him as a disgusting beast during her descent into the stoke hole, thus deflating his mistaken sense of belonging which he seeks to recuperate as soon as his mission in the transatlantic liner is over. The rest of the play as far as Yank is concerned is patterned on the tragic trajectory of those typical heroes , whose ill-fated quest for a community in a world forsaken by God is fully analyzed by Lukacs in his *Theory of the Novel*. The "regressive" Yank nicknamed Hairy Ape desperate of finding an organic community in an industrial world of alienated individuals and societies ends his ill-fated journey by going to the zoo and getting himself strangled by a gorilla. This is the self-same tragic story that Conrad tells us in *The Nigger of the Narcissus* in the evocation of the crew's desperate but tragic attachment to a world order condemned to disappearance by the historical evolution of capitalism. Such close relationship in discourse about a residual ideology in Conrad's *The Nigger of the Narcissus*

and O'Neill's *The Hairy Ape* is typical of the double-discourse that Bakhtin calls stylization, which in some of its aspects tends toward hidden dialogicality.

This hidden dialogicality finds its full expression in O'Neill's *The Iceman Cometh* (1939), which not only evokes Conrad's short story "To-Morrow" but the one-act play based on it and that Conrad published under the title *One Day More*. *One Day More* and "To-morrow," we remember, tell the story of Captain Hagberd, whose son Harry has run away from home to his father's and mother's despite. For more than 16 years, day in and day out Hagberd has been waiting for the return of the prodigal son, following the trail of his movement to Colebrook where he is reported to have been seen. In Colebrook a seaside town, he builds two cottages with fenced front and back gardens, one of these cottages hired to a blind old boat builder called Josiah Carvil attended by his daughter Bessie. The play focuses first on the dialogue between Bessie and Captain Hagberd, through which we learn about Hagberd's pipe dream that he has only "one day more" to wait for the return of his son, for whom he has saved money and furnished the cottage. He even foresees the marriage of his returned son with the hard worked Bessie, whom he progressively included in his pipe dream. We are given to understand that both Hagberd and Josiaph Carvil are handicapped, the former mentally and the other physically.

The irony is that Hagberd's hope of his son's return is so high and persistent that he expects to become true at a future date, "to-morrow" and never in the present time. Hence, he falls as a tragic victim to a unidirectional temporality that when his son finally comes back home, he does believe that it is just a hoax, that his arrival is announced for "to-morrow," that in his own words, that he "has one more day to wait." It is suggested in his discussion with Bessie that Hagberd has been so outraged with his wife for being so "impatient," that is to hurry up things, that he has put an end to her life. And he nearly does the same to his son at whom he throws a spade in his persistence to enter of a man, his father, who believes that "It's all to-morrow, without any sort of today."

What is remarkable in O'Neill's *The Iceman Cometh*" is that he expands Conrad's one-act play, *One Day More*, patterned on his short story "to-morrow" into a play of novelistic dimension. According to Gérard Genette, literary or dramatic expansion besides omission and other techniques constitutes some of the formal features of intertextuality that is dialogue. The hidden dialogue of O'Neill and Conrad is revealed in *The Iceman Cometh* right at the beginning of the play by setting its action in a five-storey tenement on the Downtown West side of New York, symbolically owned by "Harry Hope" who since the death of his wife, also significantly named, Bessie, has become a recluse. Harry Hope's tenement serves as both a hotel and saloon and has become a sanctuary to 12 male failures, and three women of ill-repute, or as they called in the play "pavement women." Each and every one of these characters indulge in their own pipedreams as they wait for Theodore Hickman, nicknamed Hicky, a hardware salesman, to turn up, and stand drinks all round, a thing which he regularly does every six months to have a good time and relax.

However, when Hickey turns up in Harry Hope's Saloon qualified both as a "morgue" and a "Saloon of No-Chance" he displays himself as a changed man wishing to convert the Saloon patrons or customers, who suffering from a shared disability of facing the grim present indulge in some sort of restorative nostalgia and high hopes of a promising future. This theme of disability to face the present and the indulgence of pipe dreams inspired by Conrad's *One Day More* is given a larger scope, we would a cosmetic dimension, in *The Iceman Cometh* which include a cast of no less than 12 characters and three women of ill repute listed as follows: Ed-Mosher a former circus man; Pat McGloin, a former Police Lieutenant; Willie Oban, a Harvard Law School alumnus; Joe Mott, a one-time proprietor of Negro gambling house; Piet Wetjoen, a general and a one-time leader of a Boer commando; Cecil Lewis, a one-time Captain of British infantry; James Cameron, nicknamed Jimmy Tomorrow, a former Boer War correspondent; Hugo Kalmar, a one-time editor of Anarchist periodicals; Larry Slade, a one-time Syndicalist-

Anarchist; and Rocky Pioggi, night bartender, and Parrit. To these characters, are added, three street walkers called, Pearl, Margie, and Cora, as well as Chuck Morello, a day bartender; Theodore Hickman, nicknamed Hickey who is a hardware salesman, Moran, and Lieb. Like their counterparts in Conrad's *One Day More*, each and every one of these characters suffers from the incapacity to distinguish between their own illusion of past glory and a promising future, and their present grim reality.

Overall O'Neill's play can be regarded as an expanding supplement to Conrad's *One Day More*, with symbols borrowed mainly from the Bible to deflate the modern man's illusion of a heroic past, and a rosy tomorrow. *One Day More* seems to be patterned on the parable of the prodigal with an inverted accent on separation rather than homecoming, father-son reconciliation, and divine grace. As for *The Iceman Cometh*, the cohort of twelve main characters refer to Christ's Twelve Disciples and their meeting of the bar-restaurant find an echo in the Last Supper or Lord's Supper. However, O'Neill, just like Conrad, inverts the Biblical situation by turning Theodore Hickman, that is to say the servant of God the father, into a death-giving figure. Before coming to his regular meeting with his friends, Hickman kills his wife, Evelyn, and the dreams that she is associated with. It is the same pipe dreams and vainglory that he tragically fails to kill in his friends. This hidden dialogue of O'Neill and Conrad has at its source for both authors a strong tragic sense of disillusionment with modernity, and its emphasis on progress. So, the same dialogue can be said to be conducted with a post-modern tragic note, particularly in the case of O'Neill who produced his play during the Great Depression, and at the eve of World War II. The Theodore Hickman (the servant of God) might well be intended as a reference to Theodore Roosevelt and Delano Roosevelt who offered respectively the Fair Deal and the New Deal as a panacea for saving America from the economic and social crisis. So in the last analysis, it can be said that it is Conrad who serves as a medium through whom O'Neill conducted a hidden polemics with his American fellow contemporaries about the success and

failure of the so-called Progressive Presidents' salvage plans by giving his play a cosmic, tragic dimension.

Another result of this research is that the appropriation of Conrad by American culture critics and authors is due to the fact that his works speak in many voices of many American issues like immigration, and anarchism. The case of *Amy Foster* is typical because in speaking of the culture shock of the outcast, immigrant, Yanko in England at the turn of the nineteenth century, and the beginning of the twentieth century when Britain passed the Alien Act (1905) to restrict the immigration from Eastern and Central Europe, particularly that of the Jews. The popular anti-immigrant or anti-foreigner underlined in *Amy Foster* is a reflection of the popular hostility that led to the enactment of the Alien Act of 1905. "Is this America?" Yanko exclaims in this short story at the time of his wreckage on the Canterbury shores. Such a rhetorical question cannot but resound in the ears of the American readers, for or against the restriction laws of immigration, which like the British immigration laws of the time are also the expression of popular hostility of what Mencken calls Anglo-Saxonism. Similarly, the story of anarchism told in the Secret Agent is also accentuated in such a way as to find an echo in American marked among other things by the first Red Scare of the 1920s, and 1930s. In short, we have a thematic accent in Conrad's discourse that make his works read as American.

Apart from the works already mentioned, we can also refer to the question of the moral courage and pacifism in *Lord Jim*, a work that particularly finds an echo in President Wilson's second campaign slogan "He kept us out of war" or his famous phrases "There is such a thing as a man being too proud to fight. There is such a thing as a nation being so right that it does not need to convince others by force that it is right," uttered in response to German provocation. *Almayer's Folly* has also an American accent in its development of the themes of miscegenation, and race separation. Set close at home, *Nostromo* cannot leave the American audience indifferent in the way it evokes the South American revolution in the context of the Dollar Policy, the

Roosevelt Corollary Doctrine, and the global extension of Western capitalism. It is this American accent given to concerns such as self-determination, and the Russian threat in Conrad's works that makes them the site of controversial debate amongst American cultural critics, and authors.

This research will close just as it started with a quote from Mencken's Conrad included in Prefaces where he claims that "Conrad has no [American] party." Indeed, Conrad has no party, for as this research has tried to argue he "belongs" through appropriation and abrogation to all parties, notwithstanding the ideologies for which these parties stand North and South and East and West of the United States and across social and racial lines. In short, he is the "Nostromo" that is to say "the man of the situation" or the cultural mediator in whose terms the different and various ideological sides conduct their debate about the major political, social and cultural issues of their time. The centrality of Conrad in the American cultural debate is such that he is ionized in the American through the creation, for example, of the first Conrad across the Atlantic, ahead of his British canonization by F. R. Levis in *The Great Tradition* in the late 1940s.

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This research explores the literary connections between Joseph Conrad and a selection of American authors across three generations, from James Fenimore Cooper up to Eugene O'Neill. The purpose is to shed light in the placement of Conrad in the American literary tradition. To this end, the dialogic or intertextual approach inspired by Mikhail Bakhtin and Julia Kristeva is used but with a significant inflection of the paradigm of dialogism or intertextuality by the new insights provided by the recent theories of gift exchange such as the ones elaborated by Lewis Hyde and Georges Bataille. The research significantly shows that though our modern cultures are overrun by monetary gains, literature remains the domain par excellence wherein the gift community survives the onslaught of the cash nexus and the commodification of human life.