

*“Conrad’s **Victory**: Probing the
Mystery of Heyst’s Actions.”*

Mahmoud Kharbutli^{*}

* Ph. D. English Literature, University of Wisconsin Madison, U.S.A.

Assistant Professor, English Department, Yarmouk University, 1984.

Abstract

Having rescued Alma from her exploiters and run with her to his island, Heyst broods on "the mystery of his actions." This paper addresses this very issue, by probing Heyst's character mainly in terms of Jung's psychology. Heyst conforms to Jung's conception of the introverted type, and his altruistic outbursts are nothing but the eruptions of the unconscious, which, for Jung, has a compensatory relation to consciousness. Moreover, within the same framework Heyst is found to suffer from neurosis, the symptoms of which are his chronic fatigue and lack of will. His mistrust of life and the resulting inability to establish any permanent human community constitute two consequences of the condition. His failure to cope successfully with reality also underscores his neurosis. Instead of dealing with reality for purposes of healthy adaptation, he is persecuted by its overwhelming personal and cultural plenitude. What happens with him is that he fails to distinguish between what is to remain objective and what has to be recognized as subjective. In other words, he fails to assert himself against the tyranny of the past and to achieve his freedom and individuality, both of which define victory for Jung and Conrad.

Of all Joseph Conrad's novels **Victory** still hangs in the air, caught, as Frederick R. Karl says, "between those... who feel it sentimentalized and melodramatic... and those... who view... (it) as one of Conrad's greatest achievements" (Karl, 1983: 23). Cedric Watts, for example, finds the novel "cumbrously, heavy-handedly, and at times ludicrously allegoric (Watts, 1983: 76). The realism of the novel seems to be seriously undercut by the "fable-like stylization" (Watts, 1983: 78) of some of its parts. What appears to lie at the root of these comments may, partially at least, be Conrad's well-established and long-recognized psychologizing predilections, which constitute the formal principle of such works as **Heart of Darkness**, **Lord Jim**, and "The Secret Sharer." And it is these predilections that this paper is going to explore in connection with Heyst, trying, by examining his character persistently and consistently in terms of one main school — Jung's in this case — to fathom the psychic forces at work and, consequently, to reclaim for him more humanity and less failure.

That Axel Heyst generates the greatest interest can hardly be contested, and he does so not only as the protagonist but also as the most enigmatic character, for, whereas the other characters are likely to be our neighbors and acquaintances, with the exception of Lena, he remains elusive, "From the first there was some difficulty in making him out." Davidson testifies to this when at the very end he says, "The truth is that nobody out there can boast of having known him well.... I doubt if he himself knew how queer he was" (P. 337). This is borne out by the various labellings with which different people formulate him: "Enchanted Heyst" (p. 4), "a puff of g'n lman" (p. 5), "a ut-uto-utopist" (p. 5), "Hard facts" (p. 5), "agent of providence" (p. 12), "the spider" (p. 16), "queer chap" and "observer of facts" (p. 49). Although these labellings underline impressionism as an everyday phenomenon, their being so discordant, almost contradictory, attests to the "difficulty" (Laskowsky, 1972: 277) of identifying him and of figuring out the "mystery of his actions" (p. 140).

On the other hand, the genesis of the name Axel Heyst is enlightening to our pursuit and should be of great assistance to our attempt to understand him. Conrad's concern in this regard is now a settled matter. Axel Heyst, a last minute change from Axel Berg, combines, as Anne Luyat-Moore shows, two characters, Axel Ahlberg and Elis Heyst, taken from two plays by Strindberg thematically relevant to **Victory**.² Moreover, studying the modifications made in the manuscript "Dollars" before it became the novel we have now, Frederick Karl concludes, "Conrad changed Berg from a retreating idealist interested in human welfare to the ironic Heyst of the book" (Karl, 1983: 24).

Axel Heyst, thus conceived by his creator as a split character - Axel Ahlberg / Elis Heyst, idealistic / ironic, conforms, in his most conscious acts, to Jung's³ formulation of the introverted type. For Jung introversion is characterized by an exaggerated dependence upon the subject's, psychic disposition, or what he calls "subjectivization of consciousness" (Jung, 1976: 234) and a corresponding and proportional "devaluation of the object." (Jung, 1976: 234) Heyst's avowed detachment from life, his profound contempt for the world, unceasing drifting, and final settling on a re-

mote, half-deserted island, which is literally and symbolically an introvert's natural habitat, all define his introversion. In defying reality Heyst says to the earth, " 'I am I and you are a shadow' " (p. 288). As an introvert, he has developed toward the object an attitude not of adaptation, which marks the extraverted type, but of superiority and reserve. He confesses to Lena, in a rare moment of openness, " 'I've never killed a man or loved a woman— not even in my thought, not even in my dreams' " (p. 174). It seems odd to have love and murder in such proximity, but the two acts, while underlying depth of passion, reveal an terms of subject / object relationship the nagging presence of an outside reality that calls for heightened awareness of and painful dependence on an object as the first step toward self-assertive reality since he symptomatically subjectivizes consciousness, tinging "the world to the hue of... [his] temperament" (p. 42).

Such a complex attitude toward reality is so pervasive that it grows into an idealistic view of the world outside, well expressed by Berkeley in his phrase "to be is to be perceived," a principle which according to Henry Laskowsky has both thematic and technical significance in **Victory**.⁴ Furthermore, Berkeley's belief underlies Heyst's introverted stance, not only epistemologically but also ethically, for the practical consequences are sure to follow. Heyst, undervaluing his object and even refusing to recognize its presence, is often surprized by the conceived enormity of reality when it forces itself upon him with a vengeance in the form of the symbolic trio, who could stand for physical as well as psychic forces, and even in the form of Lena, whose impressive reality cannot be ignored, "It [the object] continually imposes itself on him against his will, it arouses in him the most disagreeable and intractable effects and persecutes him at every step" (Jung, 1976: 236). Heyst expresses his crisis succinctly, " 'Here I am on a Shadow inhabited by Shades. How helpless a man is against the Shades! How is one to intimidate, persuade, resist, assert oneself against them? I have lost all belief in realities' " (p. 288). This is the price one has to pay for introversion. Jones rightly defines himself, " 'I am the world itself, come to pay you a visit. In another sense I am an outcast--almost an outlaw. If you prefer a less materialistic view, I am a sort of fate--the retribution that awaits its time' " (p. 312). In short, Heyst's flaw is that he often subjectivizes what is to remain objective.

In the face of such subjectively overwhelming reality, Heyst, unlike Schomberg, is crippled. Actually, Schomberg functions as a foil to Heyst. Both are threatened by the trio, but, whereas the German hotel-Keeper recognizes them, approaches them, talks to them, and then manages to disarm them and even to use them to his advantage by dispatching them off to the island to do the dirty work for him, the Swede deals with them as shadows, as incomprehensible beings of the outer space. When he faces them, he is outmaneuvered and outwitted, and, alone, he cannot figure out a line of action, "... everything round him had become unreasonable, unsettled, and vaguely urgent, laying him under an obligation, but giving him no line of action" (p. 213). "The envoys of the outer world" (p. 269), arriving at the heels of his knowledge of Schomberg's calumny, toss him into a whirlpool of psychological and mental confusion and stress and deepen his mistrust of life. Gradually he

loses both power and conviction, " 'I have neither strength nor persuasion' " (p. 289), he frequently protests. Only his disgust abides. According to Jung, this condition, called psychasthenia, is the "typical form" of neurosis in this case, "a malady characterized on the one hand by extreme sensitivity and on the other by great propensity to exhaustion and chronic fatigue" (Jung, 1976: 236).

Such a condition, coming to a crisis under pressure, pervasively inheres in Heyst's introversion. His most chronic mental activity is not thinking proper but meditation, subjective rumination of ideas, turning them around in his head, juggling them repeatedly without advancing one step forward. Such a mode of thought is appropriately called reflection because it implies bouncing back, falling back on oneself. Facts play very little role in the process, "He was sufficiently reflective" (p. 63). This, as Jung believes, is the introvert's way of thinking, "It begins with the subject and leads back to the subject" (Jung, 1976: 237). What often happens with Heyst is that he ponders his psychic condition, not facts. He is often embroiled in brooding on his place in a strange, mysterious world, just like Hamlet, while objective reality furtively encroaches upon him, continually gaining ground. Such mental processes are anemic to action, as the narrator believes, "a destructive process, a reckoning of the cost" (p. 76). Heyst himself distinguishes between his reflection and thinking, and he is aware of what he does, thus spelling out his neurosis. When under pressure he begins to be uncharacteristically practical, he confesses, " 'I don't think. Something in me thinks--something foreign to my nature' " (p. 288).

Nevertheless, this same Heyst, despite his contempt of life, his disenchantment with the world, his detachment, and his erratic ramblings, has been a survivor and has even insisted, at least once, that " 'there is nothing worth knowing but facts. Hard facts' " (p. 5). Paradoxical as this may appear, there is no contradiction in character. The explanation comes from the role of the unconscious, which, as Jung emphasizes, stands "in a compensatory relation to the conscious mind Conscious and unconscious are not necessarily in opposition to one another, but complement one another to form a totality which is the self" (Jung, 1976: 126). Heyst's sudden tributes to facts, his being known as "observer of facts", are the compensatory work of the unconscious. The more isolated from reality he becomes, the more strongly, though unconsciously, he gets attached to it, "As a result of the ego's unadapted relation to the object... a compensatory relation arises in the unconscious which makes itself felt as an absolute and irrepressible tie to the object" (Jung, 1976: 235).

And even his most uncharacteristic actions, his heroic altruism, are comprehensible within a Jungian psychological frame, once we inductively see them in the right perspective. They become more human and less fable-like. First, both heroic acts aim at rescuing people who are regarded as specimens of "distressed humanity" (p. 69). Lena's words about her plight "they are too many for me" (p. 62) ring with the "common experience of mankind" (p. 62). She, like Morrison, clings to her savior "after the manner of supplicants all the world over" (p. 68). Secondly, both acts are impulsive. Heyst rushes, as if possessed, to offer help, impelled by inner for-

ces that break, albeit temporarily, through all his defenses. He is tempted, beguiled, into action, "unchecked by any sort of self-consciousness" (p. 59). The narrator calls it a "plunge", and he underscores impulse which years ago had made him cross the sandy street of the abominable town of Delli... and accost Morrison, practically a stranger to him then, a man in trouble expressively harassed, dejected, lonely" (p. 58). Apparently, the apparatus of Heyst's unconscious altruism takes years to recharge, but it is never dead.

In this respect, the volcano serves as an emblem of Heyst's psychic make-up, and it is with good reason that they are often associated with each other since the association highlights the man's unconscious. Apart from the fact that they are two significant landmarks on the island, Heyst, like the volcano, "was also a smoker; and when he lounged out on his verandah with his cheroot, the last thing before going to bed, he made in the night the same sort of glow and of the same size as that other one so many miles away" (p. 2). On the surface both are impassive, indolent, and almost somnabulistic, but they are likely to cause thunderous commotion, to erupt when the inner part is sufficiently over-charged, over-heated, or overpressured, or alternatively when the defenses of the conscious mind wane, for then the smoke turns into "a cigar glow at night" (p. 292), and possibly into a far more apocalyptic explosion.

And it is Heyst's unconscious that explains within the same Jungian framework his volcanic altruism. What seems to govern his actions is "the awakening of an ancestral soul"¹⁵ (Jung, 1976: 93). Jung elaborates, "Just as one man may disappear in his social role, so another may be engulfed in an inner vision and be lost to his surroundings. Many fathomless transformations of personality, like sudden conversions and other far-reaching changes of mind, originate in the attractive power of a collective image" (Jung, 1976: 92-93). One symptom of this identification is a "dissolution of the personality into its paired opposition (Jung, 1976: 96), into all good or all evil. Heyst has a tendency to view himself as somewhat all good, denying his other side. Another signal of Heyst's identification is the strongly assertive suggestions of archetypal and collective patterns and figures. Heyst regards himself, as he tries to figure out the "mystery of his actions," as an archetype, having " 'a lot of the original Adam' " (p. 141). Thus, he has been tempted by Lena/Eve to break a sacred injunction by his father against any attachment to life and people. Consequently, he loses his innocence and his "paradise" (p. 142), bringing upon himself sufferings and ultimately death. Although the issue is laden with ambivalence, there is a great deal of truth in his insight, temporary as it may be, into his own psyche. Moreover, in rushing to help people in distress, first Morrison and then Lena, Heyst is a modern Samaritan.

Furthermore, the girl, whether called Alma, Lena or Magdalen, seems to arise from the collective unconscious, and she accounts for Heyst's inconsistencies as she throws him into different roles. Alma has been identified with Spencer's Lady of the House of Temperance in Book II of **The Faerie Queene**. The different contexts notwithstanding, Heyst is dubbed as a knight of the age of chivalry. With Magdalen

as her name, Heyst, who saves her from a life of prostitution and who recognizes her humanity and dignity, turns out to be another Christ or, more accurately, and anti-Christ since the relationship, though more on his part than hers, takes on a strong sexual aspect in spite of, or perhaps due to, his repressions. Moreover the name Heyst gives her is greatly significant. Cedric Watts has been able to trace the name Lena to Helena of Troy, and he regards Victory as "a parodic counterpart to the legend which prompted the *Iliad*" (Watts, 1981: 75). So, Lena turns into the fatal woman whose face, in Marlow's words, "launched a thousand ships," and whose voice, like that of the Sirens of Greek mythology, entices Heyst to his destruction. Thus, Heyst is plagued by a superfluity of roles which, by introducing simultaneity of action on various levels, seems to paralyze him, a superfluity that overwhelms him, an impoverishing abundance that preys upon itself. As a result of this situation, he acts poorly, being shattered by self-alienating, mutually-defeating roles.

On the other hand, we have hints of Lena as a mother figure, a fact which heightens her confusing plenitude. Alma brings to mind *alma mater*, the fostering mother. And Lena intimates Eveline, the name of Conrad's mother. This increasingly-corroborated mother suggestion has its roots in psychology since, as Jung points out, the identification with the collective unconscious has as its basis "longing for the mother, the nostalgia for the source from which we come" (Jung, 1976: 119). And Jung warns that this regressive longing may end up in disaster when people "purposely expose themselves to the danger of being drowned by the monster of the maternal abyss" (Jung, 1976: 119). Thus, for Jung, "Victory over the collective psyche alone yields the true value" (Jung, 1976: 119), and victory consists in drawing the line between what is personal and what is not. Measured against this standard, Heyst fails because he is greatly engrossed by the "parental imago"⁶ (Jung, 1976: 137). One may regard his altruistic outbursts as a profound and genuine revolt against his father's influence, since both instances signify a reaching out, a violation of the stated philosophy of "Look on--make no sound" (p. 142). Jung believes that the phenomenon of types has "biological foundations" (Jung, 1976: 180), and that any falsification due to parental intervention may lead to neurosis unless one corrects it by developing "the attitude consonant with his nature"⁷ of (Jung, 1976, 181). The narrator, obviously aware of this neurotic split, remarks that Heyst cannot "defend himself against compassion" (p. 65), is "not a hermit by temperament" (p. 26), and is "temperamentally sympathetic" (p. 57). Very specifically, he refers to Heyst's "betrayed nature" (p. 53). After all, Heyst's "martial moustache" (p. 207) and "fighter's muscular neck" (p. 207) belie his debility.

Such neurotics with "betrayed nature" act by impulse, as we have seen in Heyst's case, by the eruption of the unconscious against the defenses of consciousness, by a "plunge." They are seized by a weird desire to act, "Those dreamy spectators of the world's agitation are terrible once the desire to act **gets hold of them**. They lower their heads and **charge** a wall with amazing serenity which nothing but an indisciplined imagination can give"⁸ (p. 53). Jung attributes such eruption to be work of the repressed functions of the repressed functions of the unconscious, which are "susceptible to activation and outburst as autonomous com-

plexes, either in the way of **demoniacal seizures** or, more mildly, uncontrollable moods"⁹ (Campbell, 1976: xxxvi).

Heyst's philanthropic eruptions, by never culminating in permanent human communion, have all the attributes of "demoniacal seizures" and "uncontrollable moods," as if something **gets hold** of Heyst and acts through him, but only for a moment because no sooner does he act than he wakes up, is disenchanted, and falls back on his playfulness or self-pity, two new defense mechanisms. Rollo May rightly warns, "Many people hear voices, but there are few Joans of Arc" (May, 1969: 154), Defining the daimonic as "the urge to reach out towards others" (May, 1969: 146), May distinguishes between choosing one's passions and being chosen by them, between the daimonic as integrating experience and the daimonic as disjunctive possession, superficial and transitory.¹⁰ For a sustained relationship, "There is required a self-assertion, a capacity to stand on one's own feet, an affirmation of one's self" (May, 1969: 146). This is Heyst's "hollowness," as we have seen. He is embroiled by the complexity of life around him without this power of self-assertion, an observation to which Conrad himself gives credence in his "Author's note" in words that echo May's opinion. Heyst, Conrad says, has lost "the habit of asserting himself... (which leads to) excellence in life, in art, in crime, in virtue and for the matter of that, even in love" (Conrad, 1957: x).

Heyst's attacks of altruism are instances of daimonic possession because, among other things, in both cases "the daimonic remain (s) impersonal" (May, 1969: 157). He spurns this side of his, thus never attaining self-knowledge. As Park and others have argued, "Conrad evidently intends the trio to parody the impure nature Heyst has tried to escape" (Park, 1976: 159). Consequently, the neurotic polarization of the psyche and the resulting dissolution of the personality persist. In other words, Heyst, by refusing to look carefully within and to embrace what is his as opposed to what is not aborts his own individuation, which, according to Jung, aims at "nothing less than to divest the self of the false wrappings of the persona on the one hand, and of the suggestive power of primordial images on the other" (Jung, 1976: 123). Moreover, Heyst's outright rejection of dreams as "madness" (p. 209), when Lena tells him of her dream which proves to be prophetic, bespeaks the same resistance to introspection, to looking within and recognizing his own personal aspects. If, as we have seen, one side of his flaw is his subjectivization of what needs to be objective, the other side is his refusal to subjectivize what should not remain objective and impersonal. In fine, there is a confusion of objective and subjective psychic components.

Furthermore, Heyst stumbles not only in achieving self-knowledge, which is a psychological condition for human community, but also in dialogue, its outward manifestation and tool. Both, as Rollo May believes, "save the daimonic from being anarchic" (May, 1969: 155). The time Heyst spends with the religious-minded Morrison is marked by awkwardness and discomfort. He has rather tempestuously given the distressed man the much needed money but not the more needed love that "looks on tempests and is never shaken" The relation remains hazy, crude, and fra-

gile. The two men even conspire to keep it a secret, as if it were contaminated. Looking back at the episode, Heyst is rather unabashedly amused at what he terms "'the comicality of the situation'" (p. 163). If "communication presupposes community" (May, 1969: 156), here we have neither. Morrison, the more conversant of the two, seems to understand himself and the world better than the other. In fact, the experience is more enlightening to him, and this is to be accredited to his open conversation, which seems to put everything in a better perspective. By talking about his daemonic more freely than Heyst does, Morrison is able to integrate it "into the structure" (May, 1969: 156) of his life.

With Lena Heyst fails even more seriously in establishing and sustaining a community, and the dialogue here, though more pervasive, is often fragmented and artificial. It is permeated by gaps of silence, interrogation, repetitions, and facetiousness, mainly on Heyst's part. For example, when both wake up one night, one by a dream and the other by the anxiety aroused by the disappearance of his pistol, they spend a long time repeating questions and meditating, trying to make out each other's worries. Some of the questions are left unanswered:

"What was the dream?"

Heyst, with one hand resting on the table, had turned in her direction, his round, uncovered head set on a fighter's muscular neck. She left his question unanswered, as if she had not heard it.

"What is it you have missed?" she asked in her turn, very grave.

Her dark hair, drawn smoothly back, was done in two thick tresses for the night. Heyst noticed the good form of her brow, the dignity of its width, its unshining whiteness. It was a sculptural forehead. He had a moment of acute appreciation intruding upon another order of thoughts. It was as if there could be no end of his discoveries about that girl, at the most incongruous moments. (p. 207).

This foreshadows what he says to her later in the novel, "'We are strangers to each other'" (p. 209). Sending her off to sleep, he sits alone on the verandah smoking a cheroot and reflecting on the situation. It is for this lack of community that each ponders a separate plan of action, and this separateness accounts for their joint defeat at the end. When, for example, he recounts to her his interview with Jones, she, living in her own world which she has built only due to his suspicious secretiveness, broods alone on her coming struggle, hardly listening to him, "... her energy was concentrated on the struggle that she wanted to take upon herself" (p. 259). He explicitly resents any form of human community because it reveals what he does not want to know about himself. With Lena wondering why he is laughing, he says, "That's because, when one's heart has been broken into in the way you have broker it to mine, all sorts of weaknesses are free to enter--share, anger, stupid indignation, stupid fears--stupid laughter too" (p. 172). In short, he refuses to acknowledge that he as a human being, is naturally vulnerable, for self-knowledge implies "humility" (May, 1969: 157). As a result, psychic polarization continues, and Heyst remains to the very end "'a queer chap'" (p. 336), as Davidson says, a neurotic in Jung's opinion, harboring in his soul an "'an internal mistrust of all life'" (p. 336).

However, with the father staring at him from the portrait on the wall, the son, gnashed by a persistent and heartfelt sense of guilt, cannot but respond to Lena as a seductive sexual object and as a mother when he, like a child, stands whimpering before her, as if crying for help. Moreover, he is obsessed, even in his own helplessness, by his role as a savior, as a Victorian man in charge of his woman, as a medieval knight with respect to his lady, and even as a father giving her a new name. But at one point he lies "stretched at her feet and looking at them" (p. 157), "intensely aware of her personality" (p. 158). The savior is turned a suppliant. There is something paradoxical in the relationship, for, while she is pictured goddess-like above him, she feels how completely her life depends upon his approbation, at the time when he declares that he wants " 'the impossible' " (p. 173)¹² from her. Invariably she remains an inscrutable enigma in her plenitude, "But in the intimacy of their life her grey unabashed gaze forced upon him the sensation of something inexplicable reposing within her; stupidity or inspiration, weakness or force--or simply an abysmal emptiness, reserving itself even in the moments of complete surrender" (p. 158). She is often represented in such paradoxical combination, "The girl he had come across, of whom he had possessed himself, to whose presence he was not yet accustomed, with whom he did not yet know how to live; that human being so near and still so strange, gave him a greater sense of his own reality than he had ever known in all his life" (p. 164). This is the attitude of a worshiper before his goddess, but simultaneously her sexuality is overpoweringly enticing, and the father continually stares with a reproach and with the "dumb words, " 'Look on... Make no sound' ." If great action, as the narrator states somehow ironically, is best accomplished in a "blessed, warm mental fog" (p. 76), human community, as dramatized by the novel, is best achieved in clear weather, in a condition of a reasonably solid knowledge of oneself and the other.

It is because the novel stages these various levels that it has been found to suffer from impurity of genre, from a conflict of narrative forms: allegory, fable, and realistic fiction. Furthermore, there are instances in the novel where a justifiable view of history as providential is forced upon our consciousness, as in the case of Heyst's encounter with Morrison and Lena, and the appearance of the trio on the island, but there are also contrary suggestions, such as Morrison's death and Schomberg's relative success despite all the mischief he sows. Heyst, in one way or another, is aware of such complexities. This conflict of opposing worlds is undoubtedly present in the novel, but now it is seen as thematically important because it externalizes the protagonist's heartfelt crisis. He does not exactly know in what world he actually lives, and unfortunately he does not care to find out, drifting from one world to another as he wanders from one place to another. Thus, superfluity afflicts him, becoming his main problem, not only in relation to the different meanings that Lena is made to acquire and his corresponding roles, and not only in terms of the contradictory words in which he exists, but also in point of a confusion of beliefs, some conscious and others not, which govern him desultorily and inevitably determine his "mysterious" actions. Is he religious? Sometimes! But more often than not he is skeptical. Is he wholeheartedly idealistic? No! He believes in progress but raises no finger to expedite it. He cannot resent a decent feeling but is incapable of expressing any. He

does not believe in dreams, but he lives in a world of shades. Heyst could be the highest, but he is an anti-hero. The different labels attached to him underscore this confusion, though, as we have shown, they are psychologically accountable. An attitude based on the motto "Nothing matters" could be justified, could be highly intellectual and could represent a consistent way of life, but Heyst does not even have this privileged status. His neurosis is one of multiple identity. Conrad obviously believes that self-knowledge is best attained through involvement in the outer world in a Carlylean fashion, that apathy toward this world may develop into self-alienation, and that by turning one's back to the world one is turning it to oneself. Heyst's failure, in short, results here as elsewhere from lack of adequate self-assertion, from deficient will. Faced with a world of rich experience, he is supposed to make a choice which Edward said pinpoints, though in extreme terms, in his study of Conrad's letters, "... either one loses one's sense of identity and thereby seems to vanish into the chaotic, undifferentiated, and anonymous flux of passing time, or one asserts oneself so strongly as to become a hard and monstrous egoist" (Said, 1966: 13). Evidently, Heyst belongs in the first group. If, as many thinkers argue, we are living in an age of "disordered will" (Farber, 1965: 48), then Heyst's fiasco is a symptom of a twentieth century malaise that is, at least in his case, incurable.

For, while Lena is dying, having made of herself a martyr of love, Heyst, though violently shocked into the tacit realization that her mortality is a testimony of her humanity, of having lived as a human being and not as a mythical goddess, a Christian symbol, or a psychological force, remains hesitant, unable to adopt a consistent attitude or to articulate his feelings. His soul adamantly resists a much-needed confession and a wholehearted response, keeping "the true cry of love from his lips in its infernal mistrust of all life" (p. 336). Ironically, now it is he who stoops over her with a "kindly playful smile" (p. 336), as if putting up his defense against sincere redemption. He is only "ready to lift her up in his arms" (p. 336). Even his last words reflect his despair of ever being capable in his middle age of learning to love and hope. "'Ah, Davidson, woe to the man whose heart has not learned while young to hope, to love--and to put its trust in life'" (p. 338-9). He is too desperate to face the world, and his sense of age could only be an act of self-justification. His desire to be left alone is not too odd to understand under the circumstances, but it betrays his continued refusal to communicate, this time with Davidson, to give vent to his repressed feelings and thoughts. The desire could indicate his premeditation of suicide, but here there is a great degree of hollowness, since his suicide cannot be interpreted as fidelity to Lena, the answer to whose death is more life rather than less, confrontation and not escape. Actually, it is a betrayal of Lena's affirmation of life in her last words when she hands him the dagger, "'For you.... Kill nobody'" (p. 335). He soon defects to the hostile camp of nihilism by taking his own life, an act which amounts to defeating Lena's victory. Against fidelity to Eros, he stamps his loyalty to Thanatos. And against her insistence on life of becoming, he adheres to a life of being. His death, thus, remains in the background because he has not really lived. However, Lena is ironically, though unwittingly, partly responsible for his collapse, because, by deciding to defend him, she deprives him of his chance to attain manliness. By insisting on saving his life, she has somehow rubbed in his helplessness,

though one has to admit that he somehow asks for it. Jung expatiates on the situation saying:

If the situation is dramatized, as the unconscious dramatizes it, then there appears before you on the psychological stage a man living regressively, seeking his childhood and his mother, fleeing from a cold cruel world which denies him who apparently shows not the slightest concern that her little son should become a man, but who, with tireless and self-impolating effort, neglects nothing that might hinder him from growing up and marrying. You behold the secret conspiracy between mother and sea, and how each helps the other to betray life. (Jung, 1976, 148-9).

Consequently, Heyst's suicide is one more proof of his debilitated spirit overwhelmed as usual by the possibilities of life and intrigued by its supposed absurdity. " 'I suppose he couldn't stand his thoughts before her dead body' " (p. 339), says Davidson. In other words, he is too emasculate to assert himself, to stand up and make a confession of his sins and a declaration of his new birth, the resurrection of his redeemed nature and liberated soul. His suicide is nevertheless a statement of another kind, a testimony of his terminal neurosis.

These are Heyst's failings as a man, and the conclusion of the novel underlines their deadly nature in the world. The last scene highlights the momentous link between sustained human community and self-knowledge, which for both Jung and Conrad implies a freedom, not a breakaway, from the tyranny of the past, a freedom which requires both consciousness and will, and which guards against falling victim to or slipping into role playing directed by Master Time in the light of its rich repertoire. Although personal contemporaneity seems to be emphasized, the question of the extent and viability of such contemporaneity and of its relation to the past remains controversial and even inscrutable for Conrad as well as for Jung. However, for both victory consists in no less than such freedom, earned by self-assertion in action. Otherwise, nothing is to be done other than purification by fire. "Nothing," thus speaks Davidson.

Notes

1. Joseph Conrad, **Victory** (New York: Anchor, 1957), p. 4. All subsequent references will be cited in the text of the paper.
2. See "The Swedish Connection to **Victory** and **Chance**," **Conradiana**, XVIII, iii (1986), 219 - 223.
3. The choice of a Jungian approach has been motivated by the necessity of having a unified frame of reference and does not aim at effacing Freud's seminal contributions, which, I am sure, are familiar to the reader.
4. For a detailed discussing of this important thesis see Henry Laskowsky, "Essi Est Percipi: Epistemology and Narrative Method in **Victory**," **Conradiana**, IX, iii (1977), 275-86.
5. This is Jung's rendering of Leon Daudet's phrase "autofécondation interieure."

6. This is a phrase used by Jung as a substitute of "parental Complex".
7. Lord Jim is another case of such falsification.
8. The emphasis is mine.
9. The emphasis is mine.
10. See **Love and will**, PP. 154 ff.
11. Douglas B. Park argues that "Heyst's involvement reveals the essential hollowness of Heyst's detachment rather than simply betraying it." See his "Conrad's **Victory**: The Anatomy of a pose," **Nineteenth Century Fiction**, XXXI, ii (1976), 150-169.
12. Lena seems to suffer from the same paralyzing confusion, but she, as Rose Orlich argues, succeeds in developing her feelings toward "authentic love." see Orlich, "The Psychology of Love in Conrad's **Victory**," **Conradiana**, XIII, i (1981), 65-72. However, Lena's Victory backfires.

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