

Joseph Conrad And The Subversion Of Absolutes

Jilali El-Koudia *

* Ph. D. in Literature, Strathclyde University, Glasgow, Britain.

Lecturer of English and American Literature, University of Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdullah, Fes.

Abstract

The intention behind this research is to demonstrate that the major settings: sea, city and jungle, in Joseph Conrad's works are always interrelated in one way or another. These images are modified in the light of each other, and in this way they acquire their full meaning.

The area of their conjunction is therefore the focal point of this investigation, and here the interest lies in their function as metaphors.

The technique adopted by the author-mainly his particular manipulation of the point of view and irony-is fundamental to the understanding of their implications.

This approach of dealing with the interrelationship between sea, city and jungle offers new insights into Conrad's mind and art. By his sophisticated use of irony the writer brings the three opposed images into an interesting paradoxical unity and expresses his moral vision of the universe-a vision that no longer upholds the old concept of Absolutes.

Introduction

In his writings, Joseph Conrad makes much use of his travels in exotic places and consequent experiences, enabling him to call up a rich variety of locales. His characters, participants in a perpetual search for a meaning to existence, are exposed by their author to different social and geographical environments, in order to reveal and test their abilities.

Although Conrad's major settings are those of the sea, city and jungle, no single one of them is allowed exclusive dominion over the stories, as he always invokes the others, interweaving them in such a way as to constitute a comprehensive organic scenic pattern. Hence, to focus on the area where the three elements interrelate with each other is not just more rewarding, exposing as it does deeper layers of meaning in each, it is absolutely essential to an understanding of Conrad's moral vision.

The interrelationship between the three major settings is either explicit or implicit in Conrad's works but never absent: even when he seems to concentrate on one setting, he keeps referring to the others thus opening up an even richer range of allusions and comparisons, frequently winning for himself in the process more scope for his favourite literary device of irony.

Among other functions, irony serves the writer in regulating the way the settings interrelate and thus assumes a controlling purpose (Booth, 1972:228). The purpose of the ironic procedure (juxtaposing, without comment, opposite or merely different points of view) may also achieve "a balanced all-round view, to express one's awareness of the complexity of life or the relativity of values" (Muecke, 1978:24).

Indeed, it is this "relativity of values" or the subversion of absolute values and conceptions of the world that has become a major mark of modern literature in general and the novel in particular. However, this idea is a heritage of the Romantic Movement in the eighteenth century,, especially in Germany. Writers like Goethe (1749-1832) and Schiller (1759-1805) were quite dissatisfied with, and rebelled against, the old established order, both in art and life. They gave much importance to spontaneity and the creative power of the individual. Thus, they broke up with the rigid rules of the Neo-Classical aesthetics and the view of a world based only on rationality, its firm patterns and moral absolutes. Rather, the Romantic writers were becoming more and more aware of the complexity of the universe, which can be grasped only by the creative process. This process enabled these writers to account for the 'irrational' so far ignored by the Neo-Classics.

Therefore, a coherent and stable view of the world based on certainty and moral absolutes was disrupted and rejected by the new theory of the Romantics. This subversion of absolutes has indeed a great impact on modern literature, especially the novel, and life¹. Relativism, ambivalence, the use of irony, the multiple points of view and unresolved endings of stories clearly express this development in both art

and life. Objectivity and the belief in absolute truths can no longer be sustained; they are replaced by subjectivity and the multiple interpretations of reality.

The theoretical value of the subversion of absolutes thus explained owes so much, and is closely related, to the concept of the Romantic Irony. In order to be consistent with the new concept of reality, a complex and ever-changing reality, the artist, too, must adopt a new style and a new attitude. In his interesting discussion of the Romantic Irony, Mr. Muecke made the following remarks:

The artist is in an ironic position for several reasons: in order to write well he must be both creative and critical, subjective and objective, enthusiastic and realistic, emotional and rational, unconsciously inspired and a conscious artist; his work purports to be about the world and yet is fiction; he feels an obligation to give a true or complete account of reality but he knows this is impossible, reality being incomprehensibly vast, full of contradictions, and in a continual state of becoming, so that even a true account would be immediately falsified as soon as it was completed. The only possibility open for a real artist is to stand apart from his work and at the same time incorporate this awareness of his ironic position into the work itself and so create something which will, if a novel, not simply be a story but rather the telling of a story complete with the author and the narrating, the reader and the reading, the style and the choosing of the style, the fiction and its distance from fact, so that we shall regard it as being ambivalently both art and life (Muecke, 1978: 20).

The origin of the concept of the Romantic Irony is, as Mr. Muecke admits, to be found in Friedrich Schlegel's statement that "Irony is a form of paradox." Thus Mr. Muecke defines the Romantic Irony in clearer terms: "Romantic Irony is the irony of a writer conscious that literature can no longer be simply naive and unreflective but must present itself as conscious of its contradictory, ambivalent nature" (Muecke, 1978: 78). In his self-consciousness as an artist, his ironic view of the world and his theory of the subversion of absolutes, Conrad is very closely related to the concept of Romantic Irony.

It is also very useful to note the relationship between point of view and irony as Robert Scholes and Robert Kellog explain:

In the relationship between the teller and the tale, and that other relationship between the teller and the audience, lies the essence of narrative art. The narrative situation is thus ineluctably ironical (Scholes and Kellog, 1971:240).

Conrad's manipulation of the point of view is also highly effective in controlling the evaluation of the interrelationship between sea, city and jungle: this consists of the characters' responses, the readers' views and the author's attitude vis-a-vis the

three settings. Mr. Percy Lubbock is right to assert that: "The whole intricate question of method, in the craft of fiction, I take to be governed by the question of the point of view-the question of the relation in which the narrator stands to the story" (Lubbock, 1972:251).

The author's attitude and different voices in the story, or what Wayne C. Booth calls "the reminders of the author's controlling hand" (Booth, 1961:18), reveal the extent to which the three settings can coexist without becoming confused. Developments in Conrad's technique, in particular the sophistication of ironic modes, allow him to resolve, to a large degree, any ambivalence (rather than ambiguity which is creative and not to be resolved)-with its attendant risks of obfuscation and confusion-in the interaction of the three settings.

Part 1 : The Malay Novels

In the Malaysian novels, such as *Almayer's Folly* and *An Outcast of the Islands*, the jungle is the predominant scene, providing the principal field within which the protagonist moves. Nonetheless, the image of the city, though remaining in the background, enters the world of the jungle in many ways. It is either present in the mind of the white man or actually represented by small white communities and their trading companies' settlements which house the equipment and furniture brought from the 'civilised', urban world. To have something more than a partial grasp of the moral significance of these stories, both jungle and city have to be given their due; and the image of the sea, which links them, will assert itself as the study progresses, coming together with the other two to offer us a mode of access, not otherwise available, to Conrad's vision of life.

Both Almayer and Willems have in mind a European city which comes to be their dream and ideal world: in this way, city and jungle are linked in their minds. Their ambitions are always directed towards the world of the city, but the means of filling them are, ironically, manifest in the jungle. Thus, Almayer dreams of settling in Amsterdam and Willems longs to become a member of the bourgeois class, particularly, perhaps, to become an urban bourgeois who goes to church and to Sunday card-parties. In the context of Almayer's life in the jungle, the image of the city also comes to stand for a way out of the jungle, a refuge of order and peace from chaos and hostility.

The city in these novels is thus ironically rendered as an illusion in which the white man believes, while the jungle is presented as a real and incoherent form that can be mastered neither by man nor by his dream of the city. Hence, Almayer's division between the city of his imagination and the actual savage surroundings reflects the tension between illusion and reality, between city and jungle. Nevertheless, although illusion is always undermined by irony, it is not negated in Conrad; rather, its necessity is continually reaffirmed. In the words of Robert Penn Warren's study, illusion is indeed the mark of human achievement (Warren, 1958).

The images of settlement, river and sea also convey this conflict between illusion and reality. The settlement, containing emblems of civilisation, such as books and furniture, is contrasted with the wilderness outside. Yet, this settlement and its content are also shown in decay and disorder, which are an admission of the power and reality of the jungle:

He (Almayer) went towards the office door and with some difficulty managed to open it. He entered in a cloud of dust that rose under his feet. Books open with torn pages bestrewed the floor; other books lay about grimy and black, looking as if they had never been opened. Account books. In those books he had intended to keep day by day a record of his rising fortunes. Long time ago. A very long time. For many years there had been no record to keep on the blue and red ruled pages! In the middle of the room the big office desk, with one of its legs broken, careened over like the hull of a stranded ship; most of the drawers had fallen out, disclosing heaps of paper yellow with age and dirt. The revolving office chair stood in its place, but he found the pivot set fast when he tried to turn it. No matter. He desisted, and his eyes wandered slowly from object to object. All those things had cost a lot of money at the time. The desk, the paper, the torn books, and the broken shelves, all under a thick coat of dust. The very dust and bones of a dead and gone business (A. F. 199).

We should note the comparison of the office desk where the white man works to control the wilderness to "the hull of a stranded ship," thus bringing the image of the sea which relates to, and modifies the other elements. The analogy between ship and desk points to the concept of order they both allude to; but here this artefact so descriptive of nineteenth-century civilisation, which appears to have floated there, is as out-of-place as a piece of driftwood. It is significant of helplessness in the face of chaos as is a ship cast ashore by the immense power of the sea. Implied in this analogy therefore is a certain affinity between sea and wilderness, both representing chaos and disorder.

The function of the settlement, together with the symbolism in furniture and equipment, brings the two images of jungle and city close to each other in a revealing antithesis. However, a close reading also discloses an ambivalence in the two images which suggests that they may actually overlap on some points, and thus become to some degree similar. Conrad carefully keeps this prospect before us: at one point in *Almayer's Folly*, for example, it is shown that the three major settings may, under certain circumstances, be linked by a common affinity: "It (love) has the same meaning for the man in the forests and the sea as for the man threading the paths of the more dangerous wilderness of houses and streets" (A. F.: 171).

As for the images of the sea and river, they can stand for a window open on the West. Reflecting on both, Almayer recalls Amsterdam which his mother told him about: "...crowning all in the far future gleamed like a fairy palace the big mansion in Amsterdam, that earthly paradise of his dreams" (A. F.: 10). Juxtaposed with his dreams is his awareness of his presence in a repulsive and

chaotic scene: he is, we hear, «thoroughly recalled to the realities of life by the care necessary to prevent a fall on the uneven ground where the stones, decaying planks, and half-sawn beams were piled up in inextricable confusion» (A. F.: 12).

Very significantly, Almayer's mind frequently runs westwards for hope and consolation against the demoralizing life in these surroundings. However, the sea and the river can also take on a hostile character and so become ambivalent images in the story. To Almayer the river is «his old friend and his old enemy, speaking always with the same voice as he runs from year to year bringing fortune or disappointment, happiness or pain, upon the same varying but unchanged surface of glancing currents and swirling eddies» (A. F.: 173-174). The sea for Conrad is a metaphor for life itself, with all its various aspects, its mystery that puzzles man, and its capacity for destruction: «...it held men slaves of its charm for a lifetime, and then, regardless of their devotion, swallowed them up, angry at their fear of its mystery, which it would never disclose, not even to those that loved it most» (A. F.: 174).

Conrad's cultivation of a careful ambivalence in the relationship between these images is a masterly way of conveying the tension within which man lives, as well as his aspirations and illusions. The kinship between sea, city and jungle takes on a new measure of complexity as a result, offering us a greater insight into the realities of human existence. In this line of argument, Conrad's use of irony and multiple points of view is also revealing. For example, while the jungle stands for death and imprisonment to Almayer, to Nina the darkness of the forest «would mean the end of danger and strife, the beginning of happiness, the fulfilling of love, the completeness of life» (A. F.: 147). Towards the city, too, father and daughter have opposed conceptions: after her experience with a white family in Singapore, Nina «had little belief and no sympathy for her father's dreams» (A. F.: 151) because what she has discovered there is «scorn for scorn, contempt for contempt, hate for hate» (A. F.: 179).

So, while Almayer is building all his aspirations on his daughter, whom he sent to be educated according to 'civilised' values in order to fit her for life in Amsterdam and complete his dream of «a splendid future», she has developed a negative attitude towards so-called civilised people and their world. Moreover, despite her awareness of the similarities between the values and habits in the city and the jungle, «there was no change and no difference» (A. F.: 43), she prefers the latter, for «the savage and uncompromising sincerity of purpose shown by the Malay kinsmen seemed at least preferable to the sleek hypocrisy, to the polite disguises, to the virtuous pretences of such white people as she had the misfortune to come in contact with» (A. F.: 43).

Therefore, these images, meaning different things to different characters, point the way man shapes his existence in illusion and subjective wilfulness. What is offered ultimately by this means is a perspective in which man's lofty and absurd pretension to be able to control his obscure fate and make sense of his world is displaced by the reality of his puny, unheroic stature. Mediated as all this is through the interacting, intermodifying images of sea, city and jungle, its effect is to greatly enhance the sense of authorial detachment.

The jungle in these novels, as we are coming to see, transcends its literal meaning to a philosophical one. What these white Europeans are hoping to find is, in fact, their destiny and themselves, ignorant that what they are challenging is the universal "disorder principle" itself. Repudiated by the town of Macassar, Willems goes farther toward the jungle, caught up in his perpetual search both to find himself and to establish a certain order in his life, but unaware that his journey is to lead him to face not simply the natural jungle but the chaos inherent in his own nature.

In this sense, the jungle becomes a testing-ground for the 'civilised' man: in it, his weaknesses-which the jungle surely finds out-are betrayed. In most of his works, Conrad repeatedly suggests that the mask of civilisation simply disguises the primitive, incoherent elements in man, or what he calls "the intimate impression of the savage instincts hidden in the heart of mankind" (A. G.: 272). In *An Outcast of the Islands*, the association of the jungle with the woman, Aissa, "the animated and brilliant flower of all that exuberant life" (O.I.: 76), conveys the idea that jungle echoes something in human nature itself-something that appeals to man and with which he identifies:

I (Willems) did not know there was something in me she (Aissa) could get hold of. She, a savage. I, a civilized European, and clever! She that knew no more than a wild animal! Well, she found out something in me. She found it out, and I was lost. I knew it... I was ready to do anything. I resisted-but I was ready (O.I.: 269).

The jungle is also the 'Incomprehensible' or the 'enigma', the fascination of which finds its explanation in, and embodies some fundamental truth about, human nature and destiny. So, through his characters' quest for themselves in the face of the universal chaos, Conrad may be suggesting that it is just this fundamental truth that links man with chaos.

In the symbolism of light and darkness, Conrad adds a further dimension to his perspective of the intricate interrelationship between jungle and city. The picture of the jungle, associated with Aissa, presents itself to Willems in the combination of opposites:

He (Willems) had been baffled, repelled, almost frightened by the intensity of that tropical life which wants the sunshine but works in gloom; which seems to be all grace of colour and form, all brilliance, all smiles, but is only the blossoming of the dead; whose mystery holds the promise of joy and beauty, yet contains nothing but poison and decay....He looked at the woman. Through the checkered light between them she appeared to him the impalpable distinctness of a dream, The very spirit of that land of mysterious forests, standing before him like an apparition behind a transparent veil-a veil woven of sunbeams and shadows (O.I.:70).

The fact that the jungle embodies opposites in the symbolic interplay between light

and darkness makes it difficult to establish any equation, such as light and good (or order), darkness and evil (or disorder). This interplay is made to convey a subtle moral chiaroscuro: the jungle is not simply a place of complete moral darkness, but may reveal some knowledge about man. In **Heart of Darkness**, for Marlow and Kurtz the jungle indeed becomes a field of enlightenment, offering them some truth about themselves, their civilisation and man in general.

The subtle contrast between light and darkness also points to the opposition between city and jungle, or order and chaos. In **An Outcast of the Islands**, Willems is shown "oppressed by the hot smell of earth, dampness, and decay in that forest which seemed to push him mercilessly back into the glittering sunshine of the river" (O.I.: 67). The river, like the sea, as has already been pointed out, may stand for a window open onto the West and civilisation. However, it is also important to note that the light reflected by the river is frequently an illusory and deceiving one, thus recalling the association of city and dream or illusion.

The illusoriness and fragility of the city vis-a-vis the jungle are perhaps better expressed in Conrad's ironic use of the image of "the house of cards" in **An Outcast of the Islands**. In this novel, Nina, still young and innocent, dreams of a city like her father, a city suggested in "the house of cards" she urges Lingard to build for her-a house with several floors like those in a modern city:

'I want a house,' she warbled, with great eagerness. 'I want a house, and another house on the roof, and another on the roof-high. High! Like the places where they dwell-my brothers-in the land where the sun sleeps.' 'To the westwards,' explained Almayer, under his breath (O.I.: 196).

Conrad's device of juxtaposing the making of the house of cards by Lingard and his discussion with Almayer about their project expresses the relationship in their minds between this project and their dream of a splendid future in the world of civilisation. With extreme irony, Conrad seems to suggest that the fate of their project depends on the fate of the house of cards; and as soon as Lingard finishes the little house, "the structure collapsed suddenly before the child's light breath" (O.I.: 196). Thus, Nina, the only real thing in Almayer's life, destroys his illusion and his partner's.

Conrad's ironic treatment of the city, in attributing to it an illusory quality and showing it sharing some characteristics with the jungle, reveals his suspiciousness of the ideal, ordered image of the former-of the 'civilised principle' and its ability to superimpose itself on the wilderness. Chaos, discovered in the white man's settlement, furniture and equipment, is indeed far from endemic only in the jungle. The organised life in the world of the city exists, as it were, merely on top and is far from being the antithesis of the jungle. So, neither does the city, nor the values of the civilised man himself, have an absolute reality.

In the Malaysian stories, there are, as we have seen, many hints that there exist some points where the images of sea, city and jungle do not represent wholly op-

posed, exclusive, states, but overlap. That is, Conrad presents them initially as apparently distinct entities, and then shows that to believe, or to act as if one believed, that they were truly separate, is to reveal a very partial knowledge of reality. So, hovering over the malevolent anarchy of the jungle is the vision of the city: an insubstantial vision, as it turns out, whose "cloud-'capp'd towers (and) gorgeous palaces" (Shakespeare, 1971: 21) are finally enveloped by the invisible, destructive disorder of the jungle. Thus the image of the city as a place of sanity, civilisation and order comes mockingly to underline its own unreality in the face of chaos.

Part II: The African Stories

In "An Outpost of Progress" and **Heart of Darkness**, the city is not only a shadowy presence behind the jungle, but a force that attempts to impose itself on primitive, savage life, or to bring order where there is still chaos, and in the process to justify its cultural and scientific achievements in the face of the wilderness. So, distinct from its appearance in the Malaysian novels, here the city seems to acquire more substantiality. For the white man it is not only a dream or an escape-world but the sum of progress, which defines his reality and existence:

They (Kayerts and Carlier) were two perfectly insignificant and incapable individuals, whose existence is only rendered possible through the high organization of civilized crowds. Few men realize that their life, the very essence of their character, their capabilities and their audacities, are only the expression of their belief in the safety of their surroundings. The courage, the composure, the confidence; the emotions and principles; every great and every insignificant thought belongs not to the individual but to the crowd that believes blindly in the irresistible force of its institutions and of its morals, in the power of its police and of its opinion (O.P.: 89).

Outside urban conditions, the civilised man realises that the reality of chaos is no longer disguised. Therefore, in the absence of such conditions, the individual is forced to rely on his inner self, but his 'own self' may prove sadly deficient. More importantly, this failure of self leads on to a self-betrayal in which the individual responds to, and identifies with, the wilderness outside.

In "An Outpost of Progress", for instance, the antithesis between city and jungle is ironically expressed by the opposition between the 'habitual' and the 'unusual':

To the sentiment of being alone of one's kind, to the clear perception of the loneliness of one's thoughts, of one's sensations-to the negation of the habitual, which is safe, there is added the affirmation of the unusual, which is dangerous; a suggestion of things vague, uncontrollable, and repulsive, whose discomposing intrusion excites the imagination and tries the civilized nerves of the foolish and the wise alike (O.P.:89).

This opposition itself illustrates just how closely the 'habitual' and the 'unusual' are connected, for each implies the existence of the other. This 'habitual', or the human artefact, is an armour set against a hidden or imminent danger. However, although Kayerts' and Carrier's experience in the jungle underlines the utility of man-made conditions as a bulwark between them and the 'unusual', the latter seems stronger than the artificial wall of safety. Hence, the city is not an invincible means whereby man has totally succeeded in subduing the chaos still lurking behind order. Conrad, however, always suggests a significant distinction between the useful expedient of a 'real' city and the 'absolute' reality of chaos.

"The Return", 'a left-handed production' as the author calls it, depicts urban man's situation between an illusory safety and a permanent fear of chaos, indicating how close city and jungle can come in metaphorical terms; yet again the former seems to be distinguished from the latter, though Conrad contrives to imply that this distinction is more a matter of surface appearances. The 'perfect safety' or London in "The Return" is marked by serenity, and what is real though hidden is simply ignored-ignored, but as that implies, not totally absent:

They (Hervey and his wife) skimmed over the surface of life hand in hand, in a pure and frosty atmosphere-like two skilful skaters cutting figures on thick ice for the admiration of the beholders, and disdainfully ignoring the hidden stream, the stream restless and dark; the stream of life, profound and unfrozen (R.: 123).

Through the metaphor of "the stream of darkness", the writer shows that the city and wilderness are ultimately not wholly separable, yet they remain distinguishable. That is, whatever pertains to the city remains on the surface, while the wilderness manifest in "the stream of darkness" continues undiminished in force, ready at any moment to burst on to the surface and to overwhelm all that it finds there:

He (Hervey) saw an illimitable darkness, in which stood a black jumble of walls, and, between them, the many rows of gaslights stretched far away in long lines, like strung-up beads of fire. A sinister Loom as of a hidden conflagration lit up faintly from below the mist, falling upon a billowy and motionless sea of tiles and bricks (R.: 126).

At this moment of Hervey's vision, the city is described in terms of jungle and sea. After this vision, Hervey remains divided between the hidden chaos and the superficial safety: he is shocked by the revelation of the reality of the former, but admits his inability to continue believing in the latter:

How many men and women at this very moment were plunged in abominations-meditated crimes. It was frightful to think of. He remembered all the streets-the well-to-do streets he had passed on his way home ;all the innumerable houses with closed doors and curtained windows. Each seemed

now an abode of anguish and folly. And his thought, as if appalled, stood still, recalling with dismay the decorous and frightful silence of miles of walls concealing passions, misery, thoughts of crime. Surely he was not the only man; his was not the only house... and yet no one guessed. But he knew. He knew with unerring certitude that could not be deceived by the correct silence of walls, of closed doors, of curtained windows (R.: 136).

Although the superficial order cannot compete with the more powerful reality of the "stream of darkness", it is all that man can cling to if he is to have any degree of moral protection against the imminent chaos.

In *Heart of Darkness*, Marlow succeeds in returning from the jungle to the city, while the protagonists in the Malaysian novels and the two whites in "An Outpost of Progress" fail to do so. He returns with the knowledge he has always been aware of, but which has been enhanced by his experiences in the jungle.

As a prelude to his tale, Marlow refers to the Roman conquest of England, significantly picturing the latter as a wilderness. The city of London, alluded to though not by name, is shown in the words of the anonymous narrator submerging in a sinister darkness: "The air was dark above Gravesend, and farther back still seemed condensed into a mournful, brooding motionless over the biggest, and the greatest, town on earth" (H.D.: 45). And Marlow, thinking of the distant past, emphasises the continuing existence of this darkness: "And this also... has been one of the dark places of the earth" (H.D.:48). Brussels, the other city to appear in this novel, is also presented in a way that relates it to the wilderness: it is "the city of the dead" or "a whited sepulchre" (H.D.: 55).

The close relationship between city and jungle is perhaps better conveyed in this novel through the kinship between civilised and primitive man. The jungle operates as an outer and inner force, thus reflecting and appealing to the primitive, long-buried feelings in the civilised man's soul. Marlow repeatedly emphasises this idea: "And the intimate profundity of that look he (the helmsman) gave me when he received his hurt remains to this day in my memory-like a claim of distant kinship affirmed in a supreme moment" (H.D.: 119). At a certain moment in the jungle, Marlow betrays his inner self: "And I remember I confounded the beat of the drum with the beating of my heart, and was pleased at its calm regularity" (H. D.: 142).

While Marlow's identification with the savage is not complete, Kurtz, although he "had come out equipped with moral ideas of some sort" (H. D.:88), and to whose making "all Europe contributed" (H. D.:117), has exposed the 'jungle' within him and become a savage himself. Again, it is in the absence of restraints and artefacts which would ward off the 'inner jungle' that their usefulness is affirmed. Marlow, despite his awareness that "acquisitions, clothes, pretty rags... would fly off at the first good shake" (H. D.: 97), he admits that "when you have to attend to things of that sort, to the mere incidents of the surface, the reality-the reality, I tell you-fades. The inner truth is hidden-luckily, luckily" (H.D.: 93). This is why, on encountering the Chief Accountant, Marlow finds him-even though morally at fault-something of a

miracle, because "in the great demoralization of the land he kept up his appearance" (H.D.: 67-68).

Although Conrad seems to emphasise the inner reality, the surface reality keeps a dimension of expediency. Therefore, despite the coexistence of city and jungle, with all that they imply, they still can be individually recognised. In this view, a confusion of identity is again avoided. Marlow expresses both the significant difference between city and wilderness and the usefulness of the former as an artefact to protect man against the hidden danger:

These little things (neighbours, butcher, policeman, public opinion...) make all the great difference. When they are gone you must fall back upon your own innate strength, upon your own capacity for faithfulness (H. D.: 116).

Marlow is enlightened by Kurtz's vision, where paradoxically darkness generates light:

It (Marlow's experience with Kurtz) seemed somehow to throw a kind of light on everything about me-and into my thoughts. It was sombre enough, too-and pitiful-not extraordinary in any way-not very clear either. No, not very clear. And yet it seemed to throw a kind of light (H. D.:51).

The references to darkness and light in *Heart of Darkness* are numerous. The story starts in twilight between a luminous river and a dark city. Even after the sun sets, new lights appear along the shore illuminating the darkness. The chiaroscuro technique underscores the result of Marlow's experience. He is undecided about the clarity or meaning of Kurtz's vision: it is obscure and yet seems to throw "a kind of light."

The paradox in the above quotation about Marlow's experience with Kurtz also points to the apparent ambiguity in the interrelationship between city and jungle, or civilisation and primitive life, consecutively symbolised by light and darkness. The interplay of these two opposites and their fusion provide additional evidence of the subtle way Conrad interweaves and interconnects city and jungle.

Kurtz's vision, which survives in Marlow's mind, enters the city, and therefore embraces the whole universe; and Marlow's awareness and generalisation of it in the city is consistent with the writer's implications of Kurtz's judgement. More important is not so much Marlow's hesitation in choosing between the new truth and the superficial one, but the fact that the world is always "on the threshold of the invisible."

Marlow's ambiguous attitude towards the inner truth and the surface reality remains to the end of the story when he lies to Kurtz's Intended, though he has earlier declared that "there is a taint of death, a flavour of mortality in lies-which is exactly what I hate and detest in the world-what I want to forget" (H.D.: 82).

His final lie betrays his inability to choose between the dark truth and its suppression when it should serve some useful purpose-or perhaps demonstrates his wisdom. So, his ambiguous attitude lies in the affirmation of both Kurtz's vision and the "faith that was in (his Intended)... that great and saving illusion that shone with an unearthly glow in the darkness, in the triumphant darkness from which I (Marlow) could not have defended her-from which I could not even defend myself" (H.D.: 159). In this ambiguity indeed resides the inseparability of safety and danger, or city and jungle.

To account for Marlow's attitude we should consider Conrad's irony behind it. This rhetorical device serves the author partly to resolve the relationship between the two conflicting elements, bringing its facets, and the incongruities in life itself, under a certain control. Indeed, Conrad is one of those modern writers whose use of irony and ambiguity Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg defend in the following citation: "...to attack the modern writers for their relativistic fragmentation of the cosmos, for the irony and ambiguity which shape their fictions-as Wayne Booth has done in *The Rhetoric of Fiction*-is to betray nostalgia for a time when one was assured of certain certainties" (Scholes and Kellogg, 1971: 278). Friedrich Schlegel's concept of irony, already mentioned in the introduction, also expresses Conrad's idea, offering an explanation of Marlow's attitude: to him it is the "recognition of the fact that the world in its essence is paradoxical and that an ambivalent attitude alone can grasp its contradictory totality" (Wellek, 1955:14).

Marlow himself has expressed a realistic *modus vivendi* which will reconcile man to the surface reality and to the inner truth: "The earth for us is a place to live in, where we must put up with sights, with sounds, with smells, too, by Jove!-breathe dead hippo, so to speak, and not be contaminated" (H.D.:117). Although Marlow recognises the strong reality of the wilderness, he does not give up his belief in the value of civilisation-as-artefact; and in this respect he differs from Kurtz, who, once removed from the city, is swallowed up by the jungle.

When Marlow visits Kurtz's Intended the wilderness seems more visible than before. He feels the house and the whole city engulfed in darkness; and, above all, he can hear the echo of Kurtz's words "The horror! The horror!" almost as real and audible as he has heard them in the heart of the African jungle.

In the scene between Marlow and the Intended, the concealed "stream of darkness" and light or the surface reality become fused, just as the vision of Kurtz and the naive, innocent beliefs of his Intended are juxtaposed in the mind of Marlow. While the Intended, who stands for innocence based on ignorance, is talking to Marlow, the latter can hear at the same time Kurtz's speech, "the bewildering, the illuminating, the most exalted and the most contemptible, the pulsating stream of light, or the deceitful flow from the heart of an impenetrable darkness" (H.D.: 113-114).

Although darkness seems an overwhelming force, the fact that the wilderness is presented as "the shackled form of a conquered monster" (H.D.:96) in the city suggests the challenge and utility of the latter. What Conrad impugns and handles with irony is not the progress of human civilisation, but modern man's complacency

and his absurd faith in his artefacts to subdue the incessant "stream of darkness". However, Marlow's view of Kurtz's 'leap' into darkness is not all negative; for Kurtz has at least articulated that darkness, and, in a sense, achieved a partial victory by seeing it as it was:

He had something to say. He said it... He had summed up-he had judged. "The horror!"... True, he had made that last stride, he had stepped over the edge, while I had been permitted to draw back my hesitating foot. And perhaps in this is the whole difference; perhaps all the wisdom, and all truth, and all sincerity, are just compressed into that inappreciable moment of time in which we step over the threshold of the invisible. Perhaps! I like to think my summing-up would not have been a word of careless contempt. Better his cry-much better. It was an affirmation, a moral victory paid for by innumerable defeats, by abominable terrors, by abominable satisfactions. But it was a victory (H.D.: 159).

The metaphor in the "stream of darkness", which has been shown relating city to jungle, alludes to the element of the sea, always interweaving with them. In fact, the opening pages of *Heart of Darkness* make explicit cross-references to the three major settings, and as the novel progresses it weaves them together to make up a single and organic image-structure for its themes. The sea, "as inscrutable as Destiny" (H.D.:48), is to Conrad a great mystery and the image that most profoundly reflects reality with its antinomies and contradictions. For this reason, the sea in his writings is a centrally ambiguous and more comprehensive image: it displays the universe in its violence and its recurring threat of destruction, and at the same time, it is a testing ground that can offer man some hope in the possibility of order if he survives its formidable challenge. Thus the ambiguous image of the sea, a composite of order and chaos, serves the writer as a comprehensive symbol of reality itself. That is, in its duplicity reflecting both order on its surface and chaos beneath it, the sea is "like the image of life, with a glittering surface and lightless depths" (N. N.: 155). The sea is indeed the medium that expresses life more aptly than language itself:

The problem of life seemed too voluminous for the narrow limits of human speech, and by common consent it was abandoned to the great sea that had from the beginning enfolded it in its immense grip; to the sea that knew all, and would in time infallibly unveil to each the wisdom hidden in all the errors, the certitude that lurks in doubts, the realm of safety and peace beyond the frontiers of sorrow and fear (N. N.: 138).

The ship becomes in Conrad a symbol of order to subdue the chaos of the sea, but only if every one in its crew recognises his duty. The link between ship and sea points to the relationship between city and jungle; the former standing for order and the latter for chaos. Together the ship and the city are safeguards against the restless "stream of darkness" undermining man's fabricated security. In *The Nigger of the "Narcissus"*, the shore is significantly compared to a large vessel:

The lights of the earth mingled with the lights of heaven: and above the toss-

ing lanterns of a trawling fleet a great house shone steadily, like an enormous riding light, burning above a vessel of fabulous dimensions. Below its steady glow, the coast, stretching away straight and black, resembled the high side of an indestructible craft riding motionless upon the immortal and unresting sea. The dark land lay alone in the midst of waters, like a mighty ship bestarred with vigilant lights-a ship carrying the burden of millions of lives-a ship freighted with dross and jewels, with gold and with steel (N. N.: 162).

Thus, Conrad skilfully interweaves the three major images to convey his vision of a dark truth for ever vibrating beneath the artifices of civilisation and in the heart of man. In the city the wilderness intrudes in the form of the "stream of darkness", which, in its danger and restlessness, also suggests the mystery of the sea beneath whose deceptive ordered surface lurk dark powers.

Part III: The Vision of the City

Again, in **The Secret Agent**, although the city is the main background of the story, it is very important to note how the sea and jungle metaphors are not abandoned by the author. More important, in his "Author's Note" to this novel, Conrad perceives London as a setting that encompasses other settings: "a monstrous town more populous than some continents... There was room enough there to place any story, depth enough there for any passion, variety enough there for any setting" (S.A.: xii).

In his "Author's Note", too, he contrasts sea with city, the former being the "reflector of the world's light," the latter the "devourer of the world's light" (S.A.: xii). Nevertheless, the sea, as has already been shown, usually assumes ambiguous implications, reflecting both order and chaos. In **The Secret Agent**, it is its negative side which is more emphasised and serves better the writer's purpose in his presentation of the city. The latter is shown engulfed in what might be called a sea-ambience, supplied by recurring images of fog, rain and mist. People, too, are presented as though walking on the edge of an abyss and are even compared to fish. Walking in a gloomy and wet street, the Assistant Commissioner evokes the image of a sea creature: "he might have been but one more of the queer foreign fish that can be seen of an evening about there flitting round the dark corners" (S.A.: 147). In the same way, the anarchists are referred to as fishes: "he's (Sir Ethelred) sitting all alone in his room thinking of all the fishes of the sea" (S.A.: 215). Mr. Verloc, the secret agent, is like "a sprat... thrown away sometimes to catch a whale" (S.A.: 216).

The city, being in great part expressed through the many-layered significance of the sea, comes to seem to share its chameleon moral nature. Hence, it is that the writer, in order to dramatise the character of the urban environment, employs and underlines the menacing and negative side of the sea to show that even in his most elaborately contrived sanctuary, man is still, metaphorically speaking, in peril on the deep. Although the sea is present more as a metaphor than a material reality, its value in terms of the interrelationship under study is far from peripheral. The city de-

pendes ironically on its apparently contrary image to establish its wider function as a subversive agent undermining man's moral security precisely where it should be least vulnerable. In a very real sense it is the city which is the secret agent, as these interpenetrating images make clear.

The image of the jungle contributes perhaps even more to the subversively sinister ambience of the city. The following description of Brett street suggests the way the two images interweave:

Brett street was not far away. It branched off, narrow, from the side of an open triangular space surrounded by dark and mysterious houses, temples of petty commerce emptied of traders for the night. Only a fruiterer's stall at the corner made a violent blaze of light and colour. Beyond all was black, and the few people passing in that direction vanished at one stride beyond the glowing heaps of oranges and lemons.... The adventurous head of the Special Crimes Department watched these appearances from a distance with an interested eye. He felt lighthearted, as though he had been ambushed all alone in a jungle many thousands of miles away from departmental desks and official ink-stands (S.A.: 150).

Brett street is also depicted in a scene of contrasts between light and darkness, thus recalling the description of the forest in the Malaysian novels. Furthermore, here the manipulation of the chiaroscuro technique conveys an atmosphere of moral degeneration, where even the individual is unable to retain his identity:

On going out the Assistant Commissioner made to himself the observation that the patrons of the place had lost in the frequentation of fraudulent cookery all their national and private characteristics. And this was strange, since the Italian restaurant is such a peculiarly British institution. But the people were as denationalized as the dishes set before them with every circumstance of unstamped respectability. Neither was their personality stamped in any way, professionally, socially, or racially.... One never met these enigmatical persons elsewhere. It was impossible to form a precise idea what occupations they followed by day and where they went to bed at night. And he himself had become unplaced. It would have been impossible for anybody to guess his occupation (S.A.: 149).

This picture given at length manifests the link between the lawlessness of the jungle and the moral anarchy of the city. The dividing line between policeman, the so-called guardian of law and order, and anarchist, the agent of chaos, is disturbingly fluid: "The Assistant Commissioner, as though he were a member of the criminal classes, lingered out of sight, awaiting his return. But this constable seemed to be lost for ever to the force. He never returned: must have gone out at the other end of Brett Street" (S.A.: 150-151).

From what has been said it is clear that, central to the interrelationship of these

images is the link between order and chaos. Darkness, a common characteristic of the three major settings, has, of course, moral implications in Conradian terms. In *Chance*, Conrad says: "Darkness and chaos are first cousins" (C.: 210). The city, the supposed symbol of light and order, is, to remind ourselves of Conrad's "Author's Note" already quoted, "a cruel devourer of the world's light." Mr. Verloc's living quarters are "hidden in the shades of the sordid street seldom touched by the sun, behind the dim shop with its wares of disreputable rubbish" (S.A.: 38-39). The secret agent himself is haunted by fear of darkness: "he felt horribly wakeful, and dreaded facing the darkness and silence that would follow the extinguishing of the lamp" (S.A.: 158). Characters in this novel are generally shown struggling against an ugly and black environment, where even light itself is more inclined to obscure than to clarify. The invocation of chaos which is present in each of the three settings is well illustrated in this symbolic use of light: whether natural like the sun-light or artificially produced by lamps, it never clarifies things. The London sun heightens-surprisingly-the sinister image of the city, casting on people and things a baleful suggestion of blood and blood-letting:

And a peculiarly London sun-against which nothing could be said except that it looked bloodshot-glorified all this by its stare. It hung at a moderate elevation above Hyde Park Corner with an air of punctual and benign vigilance. The very pavement under Mr. Verloc's feet had an old-gold tinge in that diffused light, in which neither wall, nor tree, nor beast, nor man cast a shadow. Mr. Verloc was going westward through a town without shadows in an atmosphere of powdered gold. There were red, coppery gleams on the roofs of houses, on the corners of walls, on the panels of carriages, on the very coats of the horses, and on the broad back of Mr. Verloc's overcoat, where they produced a dull effect of rustiness (S.A.: 11-12).

Reality under such a light is blurred and distorted: living beings as well as objects are deprived of their shadows which testify to their substantiality and distinguish their individuality. Thus, the urban scene is designed to convey an image of unreliable appearances and an atmosphere of menace. Everything seems to be wrapped in fog or mist, including light itself, a dissolving, deliquescent mass of darkness which evokes the image of the sea:

(The Assistant Commissioner) got up, unfolding himself to his full height, and with a heaviness of step remarkable in so slender a man, moved across the room to the window. The panes streamed with rain, and the short street he looked down into lay wet and empty, as if swept clear suddenly by a great flood. It was a very trying day, choked in raw fog to begin with, and now drowned in cold rain. The flickering, blurred flames of gas-lamps seemed to be dissolving in a watery atmosphere. And the lofty pretensions of a mankind oppressed by the miserable indignities of the weather appeared as colossal and hopeless vanity deserving of scorn, wonder, and compassion (S.A., Penguin: 88).

The pervasive atmosphere of darkness, fluidity and formlessness becomes an ex-

pression of cosmic chaos, central to Conrad's moral vision of the universe. Stevie represents man struggling in the midst of this chaos, trapped in the confusion that seems to typify his existence:

Mr. Verloc, getting off the sofa with ponderous reluctance, opened the door leading into the kitchen to get more air, and thus disclosed the innocent Stevie, seated very good and quiet at a deal table, drawing circles, circles; innumerable circles, concentric, eccentric: a corruscating whirl of circles that by their tangled multitude of repeated curves, uniformity of form, and confusion of intersecting lines suggested a rendering of cosmic chaos, the symbol of a mad art attempting the inconceivable. The artist never turned his head; and in all his soul's application to the task his back quivered, his thin neck, sunk into a deep hollow at the base of the skull, seemed ready to snap (S.A.: 45-46).

The leitmotif of Stevie's circles in *The Secret Agent* also significantly reveals the author's preoccupation with writing, or the task of the artist in general, as an expression of man's attempt to bring order into universal chaos.

Anarchism, as dealt with in *The Secret Agent*, is also a symptom and a sign of order and chaos. In a letter to John Galsworthy, Conrad writes à propos of the subject of this novel:

After all, you must not take it too seriously. The whole thing is superficial and it is but a tale. I had no idea to consider Anarchism politically, or to treat it seriously in its philosophical aspect; as a manifestation of human nature in its discontent and imbecility (Jean-Aubry, 1927: 32-33).

Though we must always be on our guard against Conrad's disclaimers, we can accept that anarchism is not intended by the author to be defined politically: not limited in its meaning, therefore, it enhances the metaphor of the jungle within the city.

The Assistant Commissioner, the head of the Metropolitan police, is the archetypal guardian of law and order against anarchism. However, the police force itself is treated with irony: it is "the edifice of legal conceptions sheltering the atrocious injustice of society" (S.A.: 80). Following his experience in a primitive land, (for "his career had begun in a tropical colony"), even in the city, the Assistant Commissioner seems still to be situated in the midst of the jungle. In his office the objects that attract attention are those reminders of the jungle:

At headquarters the Chief Inspector was admitted at once to the Assistant Commissioner's private room. He found him, pen in hand, bent over a great table bestrewn with papers, as if worshipping an enormous double inkstand of bronze and crystal. Speaking-tubes resembling snakes were tied by the heads to the back of the Assistant Commissioner's wooden armchair, and their gaping mouths seemed ready to bite his elbow (S.A.: 97).

While the Assistant Commissioner represents law and order, he is seen disturbingly frequently in the context of jungle savagery.

The Professor, on the other hand, is wholly subversive, and it could be said that he is a particularly pitiless savagery which is pushed to an extreme where it becomes fully representative of the forces of destruction. He sees the mass of mankind swarming "numerous like locusts, industrious like ants, thoughtless like a natural force, pushing on blind and orderly and absorbed, impervious to sentiment, to logic, to terror, too, perhaps" (S.A., Penguin: 74). Moreover, he hates social organisation and is always planning to destroy "the great edifice of legal conceptions," repudiating any kind of morality or authority; he declares: "My device is: No God! No Master!" (S.A.:306). In his preoccupation with perfecting a detonator in order to annihilate the established order, the Professor echoes Kurtz's very words: "Exterminate, exterminate!" Furthermore, to underline his embodiment of the lawlessness and savagery that link anarchism to the chaotic nature of the jungle, Conrad depicts him against a background of jungle elements: "...with severe exultation the Professor thought of the refuge of his room, with its padlocked cupboard, lost in a wilderness of poor houses, the hermitage of the perfect anarchist" (S.A.:306). He is also shown passing along an alley, which calls forth the image of the jungle and its metaphorical properties of decay and confusion:

On one side the low brick houses had in their dusty windows the sightless, moribund look of incurable decay-empty shells awaiting demolition. From the other side life had not departed wholly as yet. Facing the only gas-lamp yawned the cavern of a second-hand furniture dealer, where, deep in the gloom of a sort of narrow avenue winding through a bizarre forest of wardrobes, with an undergrowth tangle of table legs, a tall pier-glass glimmered like a pool of water in a wood (S.A.:82).

Ironically, "the only human being making use of the alley besides the Professor," is Chief Inspector Head of the Special Crime Department; thus the two opposite spheres they represent are brought together in an alley with strong overtones of the jungle.

The conjunction of these two spheres, police and anarchist, is epitomised in the job of Mr. Verloc who deals with both. In other words, being involved with both the defenders of law and order and their opponents, Mr. Verloc comes to represent the common area where they meet.

Indeed, the author insists on their coexistence: they know the tactics of each other and, despite their differences, they act according to the same laws and conventions. Or, as Karl Yundt expresses this idea to Ossipon:

you revolutionists... are the slaves of the social convention, which is afraid of you; slaves of it as much as the very police that stands up in the defense of that convention.... The terrorist and the policeman both come from the

same basket. Revolution, legality-counter moves in the same game; forms of idleness at bottom identical (S. A. : 69).

In other terms, the police are both dealing with-and thus acknowledging-the power of the jungle; the very existence of the police proves the jungle's existence.

The presence of the jungle within the city in **The Secret Agent** is also implied in the frequent references to animal-imagery, butchery and cannibalism. In his essay "The Symbolic World of **The Secret Agent**", Mr. Avrom Fleishman examines these references in detail. In moral terms, the coexistence of city and jungle is also expressed through the identification of civilised and primitive man. This theme is significantly summed up in the climactic scene in the novel, Mrs. Verloc's murder of her husband:

Into that plunging blow, delivered over the side of the couch, Mrs. Verloc had put all the inheritance of her immemorial and obscure descent, the simple ferocity of the age of caverns, and the unbalanced nervous fury of the age of barrooms (S. A.: 263).

All in all, despite Conrad's irony in insisting on the kinship between civilised and savage, city and jungle, he does not ironise the value of the city out of existence. What Conrad maintains is that they coexist, and consequently, whatever man has achieved in the world of the city can never be regarded as proof of his absolute capacity to master the entropic forces in the universe. By the same token, the two elements are preserved from confusion or interchangeability.

Conrad's regulation of this interrelationship between sea, city and jungle is rhetorically illustrated in the constant distance that remains between him and his material, an effect that is largely dependent on his sustained and brilliant deployment of irony. Conrad is quite explicit about his intention to maintain this distance. In his "Author's Note" to **The Secret Agent**, he declares:

Even the purely artistic purpose, that of applying an ironic method to a subject of that kind, was formulated with deliberation and in the earnest belief that ironic treatment alone would enable me to say all I felt I would have to say in scorn as well as in pity. It is one of the minor satisfactions of my writing life that having taken that resolve I did manage, it seems to me, to carry it through to the end (S. A.: xi).

Many critics have, of course, discussed Conrad's use of irony in this novel, pointing out the way it provides him with a highly sophisticated instrument for controlling the world of the novel as a whole.

Conclusion

From what has been said, it is clear that these settings considered individually do not have one given and exclusive moral colouring, though our initial impression may well be that this is precisely what they do have. Reality is, in fact, rendered by the very fact of the interpenetration of their respective moral significance.

Conrad is, therefore, not going to present us with the image of the city as an unqualified testimony to man's creative and order-inducing powers. That would leave us with a crudely optimistic conclusion about man's capacity to outface the entropic forces of an unruly universe. Instead we find that, over the face of this urban image, spreads the menacing power of the jungle; and up through city-foundations seep the challenging waters of the ocean which can destroy man but which can also give him his chance when he openly and courageously confronts its power. As Stein says in *Lord Jim*:

'yes! Very funny this thing is. A man that is born falls into a dream like a man who falls into the sea. If he tries to climb out into the air as inexperienced people endeavour to do, he drowns-*nicht wahr?*.... No! I tell you! The way is to the destructive element submit yourself, and with the exertions of your hands and feet in the water make the deep, deep sea keep you up" (L.J., Dent: 156).

By requiring each image to be modified in the light of the other, Conrad repudiates both an easy optimism and an equally facile pessimism. It is, in fact, not the case that the jungle dominates, though it is easy to get the impression that this is so: the counter-suggestion in the image of the city is never far away; and the sea representing at once both the worst and the best prospect open to man is present in every story, a constant intruder upon the integrity of the other two images.

By a brilliant deployment of irony, Conrad compels these three opposed images into a powerful, paradoxical unity-and reveals that this is in truth the nature of the moral universe. Moral absolutes may be denied but a moral balance or equilibrium is certainly not.

Notes

1. For further understanding of the principles of the modern novel and its relation to the subversion of absolutes, I strongly recommend Joseph Conrad's "Preface" to *The Nigger of the "Narcissus"* and Henry James's "The Art of Fiction,"

Also, it is of vital importance to take into account the influence of modern psychology on the novel and its new techniques to express the new complex view of reality. I find Professor J.W. Beach's *The Twentieth Century Novel* (1932) very illuminating in this respect. These are a few extracts from his chapter entitled "The Modernists":

"When we speak of the new men, we must start with Conrad, who began writing in the eighteen-nineties, before James was through and before Dreiser had begun. For Conrad was the great experimentalist of his day. He was as ill content with ready-made ways of putting a story together as with ready-made ways of interpreting character. And he did more than any one else to limber up the stiff machine of fiction.....

The new men are naturally affected by the new psychology. Modern psychology does not conceive the soul as something which can be adequately rendered in terms of a single dramatic action with a highly simplified issue. It is not something to be caught in the net of neat intellectual definition.....

The new writers are as much concerned as the old ones with the psyche as the focus of life experience. Only, with their modern conception of the psyche, they grow more and more impatient of the quaint little patterns into which the old psychological novelists had tried to force this protein creature, and their disposition to ignore all sorts of things that go to make up human personality. And the new writers have felt the need to break up these conventional patterns. They have wanted new technical devices, new procedures, for rendering the psyche. In general the new features of their technique are expressions of what is called the romantic as opposed to the classic spirit in art" (Beach, 1932: 332-334).

Bibliography

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Beach, J.W. | The Twentieth Century Novel. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1932. |
| Booth, Wayne C. | A Rhetoric of Irony. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1972. |
| | The Phetoric of Fiction. Chicago: The university of Chicago Press, 1961. |
| Conrad, Joseph. | The Works of Joseph Conrad in Twenty Volumes. London: Grant's Edition, 1925. |
| Fleishman, Avrom. | "The Symbolic World of The Secret Agent " in The Secret Agent edited by Ian Watt. London: The MacMillan Press, 1973. |
| Jean-Aubry, Gerard. | Joseph Conrad: Life and Letters. London: William Heineman Ltd., 1927. |
| Lubbock, Percy. | The Craft of Fiction. London: Cox and Wyman Ltd., 1972. |
| Muecke, D.C. | Irony. London: Methuen Co. Ltd., 1978. |
| Scholes, Robert and Robert Kellog. | The Nature of Narrative. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971. |
| Shakespeare, William. | The Complete Works. Edited by Peter Alexander. London and Glasgow: Collins and Clear-Type Press, 1971. |
| Warren, Robert Penn. | Selected Essays. New York: 1958. |
| Wellek, Rene. | A History of Modern Criticism: The Romantic Age. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955. |