

## 'Look on—make no sound': engagement and withdrawal in Conrad's *Victory*

Mark Vallely

---

### I

Faith is a myth and beliefs shift like mists on the shore; thoughts vanish; words, once pronounced, die; and the memory of yesterday is as shadowy as the hope of tomorrow<sup>1</sup>.

As early as 1898, Conrad felt a sense of desolation associated with those things that bind society together. Faith, philosophy and language itself were no longer able to form a centre from which people would formulate their place not only on the temporal world but in the world here after. Religious beliefs already challenged by the ideas propagated by Charles Darwin in *The Origin of Species*, were for Conrad but myths upon which social institutions held sway in an ever loosening grip on the changing nature of the modern world. Thoughts and words by their evanescent nature could not build a secure future or hold ever fading memories.

Such a pessimistic view led to the creation of a range of characters struggling with the meaning of their own fears and desires in an amoral and irrational universe. Far from the certainty of the Victorian Age apparently comfortable in the strict yet sure beliefs of Carlyle, Ruskin and others, the turn of the century and the end of Victorianism ushered in an age of uncertainty in moral standards and belief in the core principles which direct a nation under a consensus<sup>2</sup>. By looking back at Victorianism from the Edwardian Age, Conrad began to question the principles that governed that period in history, mainly through supposedly upright and morally righteous men whose beliefs in age and empire seemed beyond doubt.

In *Victory*, the title of which is an oblique reference to that more certain age, we see a continued examination of the themes of dissolution and alienation seen in the Edwardian Age now being written about in the Georgian Age at the beginning of the First World War. That period when the threat of invasion was the obsession of those who thought the great tradition of the hero was lost, gave way to a time when ideals of the previous century met the mechanical era of modern warfare and created yet a greater chasm between idealism and reality<sup>3</sup>.

The belief amongst those who still championed the greatness of empire was that because

---

<sup>1</sup> Frederick R. Karl, Laurence Davies, ed., *The Collected Letters of Joseph Conrad*, Vol. 2 1898-1902 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986) 17.

<sup>2</sup> 'Edwardian responses to Victoria's death were a mixture of feelings; nostalgia for the order, confidence, and material well-being of the Victorian Golden Age; grief for the queen who had become a symbol of security; hope for the New Age to come; anxiety and apprehension for what that New Age might bring; deep depression at the late decline of High Victorian idealism.' Samuel Hynes, *The Edwardian Turn of Mind* (1968, London: Pimlico, 1991) 15.

<sup>3</sup> 'Over the years from 1900 to the war, the publication of invasion literature increased markedly; there were as many books and pamphlets published during these fourteen years as during the preceding thirty.' Ibid 34.

the ideal of the hero was wasting away amid an over concern with social issues, the shift in the balance of power would leave Britain open to the threat of invasion in the event of war<sup>4</sup>. That the 'great man' is strong and one, and the people need the leadership of a strong personality, became less relevant in the modern age of the 'people's budget' and the post Boer War mentality of increased vulnerability.

The development of psychology also saw a reduced emphasis upon the major religions as formulators of belief and spiritual guidance. The exposure of any transcendental force being merely myth also disposed of the prospect that an emerging hero had any spiritual or moral mandate. That all people are made up of and subject to the influences of a mysterious id and the subsequent struggle for authority described in the Freudian structure of the psychic realm, made for the humanisation of all people, even those aspiring to greatness. By this period in history we have travelled a long way since Ruskin's theories concerning truth and the strict principles of artistic creation<sup>5</sup>. For Ruskin truth, religion and art were closely associated in the expression of the divine and the meaning of man's place in a God-centred universe. However, by the Edwardian Age for many people God was removed from the centre of their world view and replaced by a systematic means of scientific analysis. This analysis would pull back the mysteries surrounding such a universe and show that all facts can be knowable and the concept of truth is irrelevant in the face of repeatedly provable information.

As we can see from the quotation at the beginning of this chapter, Conrad had already passed this point of certainty by the end of the nineteenth century. His artistic principles as declared in the Preface to The Nigger of the 'Narcissus' have a seemingly more urgent task of making the reader see and catching a moment in time that will reveal an important truth. They have little relation to the concept of a transcendental being or an attempt to associate artistic discernment with religious observance. The immutability of thoughts and language and the delicate nature of memory as a means of recording experience, appear to make all attempts at extracting a moment from the unstoppable and frenetic movement of time and space futile. In Conrad artistic production is less certain, success is not assured and yet the need still exists<sup>6</sup>. If all faith is myth and the future something to be anticipated with dread rather than joy, then the revelation of the human condition in art is less a celebration of humanity's place in a God-centred universe and more a description of solitary individuals in a solipsistic world.

From Lord Jim through Heart of Darkness to Under Western Eyes, Conrad writes of protagonists struggling with the meaning of a changing moral world. This is a world which will not conform to ideas of service, duty, the chain of command and light holiday literature. It is instead one of moral relativism, where acts of kindness mask deception and to do the wrong

---

<sup>4</sup> 'The anxieties reflected in those books are of two kinds; a growing awareness of England's isolation from continental alliances and a conservative fear that radicals, by transferring power from the traditional ruling classes to the lower classes, would weaken England's will to defend herself.' Ibid 34.

<sup>5</sup> 'The tone of unwavering certainty and moral conviction in Ruskin's writings struck a very sympathetic chord with the new rich, people like John James; their tastes and judgements were validated and given moral authority. The reader of the first volume of Modern Painters emerged happy in that conviction that to admire Turner's work was consistent with devout Anglican Christianity.' John Batchelor, John Ruskin: No Wealth But Life (London: Pimlico, 2001, first published by Chatto and Windus, 2000) 55.

<sup>6</sup> In keeping with this sense of uncertainty, not all Conrad critics accept Victory as a major novel: 'Critical reactions to Victory have always been mixed [...] In Thomas C. Moser's achievement-and-decline thesis, Victory stands as the first clear proof of Conrad's decline, a judgement seconded by Albert J. Guerard and Bernard C. Meyer. Champions of the novel like F. R. Leavis acknowledge that it cannot be ranked with Nostromo or The Secret Agent, but they appreciate its importance as a philosophical meditation on the Conradian themes of isolation and solidarity'. Owen Knowles, Gene M. Moore, Oxford Reader's Companion to Conrad (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) 390-391.

things seems right. Changing times brought more decisions and ever more difficult choices. Far from modernity making life simpler the range of problems seemed to become more complex, until in *Victory* we are presented with a character whose answer is to withdraw from human contact. Even the search for facts cannot compensate for lost illusions of love, fellowship and community. Instead, life is pared down to its basic means of existence expressed through emotions restrained by a fastidious demeanor. By *Victory* we see Conrad dealing with similar themes to those he dealt with in earlier novels. However, the answer is not contained within the heroic expression of pronouncements or revelation in the face of one's foes, it is to accept the insubstantiality of the world and react accordingly.

## II

For Axel Heyst the resolve to withdraw from contact with society is backed by parental authority. His decision to travel throughout South East Asia and his resistance to settling in one place are his ways of conforming to the recommendations of his father delivered from his father's death bed. Heyst's intention to react according to his father's philosophy and withdraw from seeking to satisfy any of the usual emotions associated with community and fellowship can be seen as an extreme reaction to finding oneself living alone. More immediately it sees a continuation in a philosophical tradition of existential determinism which began ironically in the nineteenth century with Arthur Schopenhauer, a period also of strict and certain Victorian beliefs in morality and religion.

If as Axel Heyst says, he is living on an island of shadows populated by shades, then his father casts the broadest shadow of all. His presence rendered in the image of the portrait and the words in his books represent a bleak consolation to the unrealised desires of his youth later rejected in a fit of pique. Heyst's father's recourse to philosophical beliefs, critics have closely associated with those of Arthur Schopenhauer, indicates a withdrawal from the modern world to a set of nineteenth century ideas.

According to this view, pessimism emerges from a belief that the world is a place of disorder. Any attempt at drawing reason from the morass of human activity is an artificial and inauthentic projection of willed control on a realm which cannot accept restraint, and any attempt is ultimately a vain, unrewarding and futile effort<sup>7</sup>. If nothing can be gained from uncertainty and disorder, why try to engage in a dialogue with a world which is only going to return your own summations of what it means? There is no order, only that produced by the individual. Evidence of this can also be seen in a reference to Coleridge's 'Dejection: an Ode', that further summarises the argument of whether the world has some overriding meaning or is irrational and transcendently void of purpose<sup>8</sup>. Other more rewarding activities must be found to com-

<sup>7</sup> 'Schopenhauer can also be said to have analyzed the pessimism that characterizes modern thought. This pessimism is closely linked to his theory of the will [...] Schopenhauer's pessimism was also derived from the Transcendentalist idea that there is no order or structure in the world other than that which the mind projects onto it. This led him to believe not only that life had no essential meaning or purpose in itself but that human beings were born into a world of unpredictability and uncertainty.' Nic Panagopoulos, *The Fiction of Joseph Conrad: The Influence of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1998) 13.

<sup>8</sup> 'From about 1800 onwards the mechanistic world picture calls forth despondent reactions in English literature. The fourth stanza of Coleridge's "Dejection: an Ode" (1802) may exemplify the Romantics' awareness of the plight which they had to find their various ways of transcending: "O Lady! we receive but what we give, / And in our life alone does Nature live: / Ours is her wedding garment, ours her shroud! / And would we aught behold, of higher worth, / Than that inanimate cold world allowed / To the poor loveless ever-anxious crowd, / Ah! from the soul itself must issue forth / A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud / Enveloping the Earth — / And from the soul itself must there be sent / A sweet and potent voice, of its own birth, / Of all sweet sounds the life and element!"' Torsten Pettersson, *Consciousness and Time: A Study in the Philosophical and Narrative Technique of Joseph Conrad* (Abo: Abo Akademi, 1982) 24.

pensate humanity's plight. Schopenhauer himself directed humanity to solace through the production and appreciation of art<sup>9</sup>. This was one way to reconcile the will as represented in the realm of sufficient reason with the constant threat of thwarted desire and 'deprivation'<sup>10</sup>. Whatever does not supply lasting satisfaction can only be considered the negative of humanity's authentic condition. This authenticity is a state within which desire becomes irrelevant in that satisfaction is constant and so the will for further desire becomes unnecessary<sup>11</sup>. Release from this cycle of desire, satisfaction, disappointment and desire again takes a great effort to free oneself from the expectations internalised through socialisation. To see through the practices of institutions like the family, government and religion means that one must place oneself outside the normal process of expectation all people come to accept through their roles in society.

Social expectations in this context largely mean social connections linking people in emotionally based relationships. The principal point of mass association is to satisfy these needs. The Schopenhaurian beliefs of Heyst's father dictate that no initial connection should be made in order to avoid dependence. This negation visualised through the analogy of the observers on the river bank suggests that self-definition should be achieved counter to what one is, that is an essentially social animal: 'The dead man had kept him on the bank by his side'<sup>12</sup>. Fulfillment can only be realised by not taking part in what one feels an attraction to. The philosophy of 'Look on—make no sound'<sup>13</sup>, suggests that life should be lived through another. Sensations should be experienced vicariously so that they can be better controlled. Contributing to the mass content of humanity's common needs can only entrap one in a never ending cycle of depletion and renewal of will and desire.

Even on Samburan Heyst cannot rid himself of such a situation. The furniture left after his father's death exudes a pitiful sense of desertion after so many years of use:

The elder Heyst had left behind him a little money and a certain quantity of movable objects, such as books, tables, chairs, and pictures, which might have complained of heartless desertion after many years of faithful service; for there is a soul in things<sup>14</sup>.

Even Wang cannot stop himself from the seemingly natural impulse to start a vegetable garden:

The Chinaman had found several packets of seeds in the storerooms, and had surrendered to an irresistible impulse to put them into the ground<sup>15</sup>.

---

<sup>9</sup> 'By regarding life as a work of art, [...] of which he is merely a spectator, man escapes the pain and guilt of conscious existence and returns to a state of innocence once more.' Panagopoulos 173.

<sup>10</sup> 'According to Schopenhauer, the act of willing arises from need, and therefore from deprivation or suffering. The fulfillment of a wish ends the act of willing. But no obtained object of desire can give lasting satisfaction.' Alex Scott, Schopenhauer's The World as Will and Idea (URL: [www.angelfire.com/md2/timewarp/schopenhauer.html](http://www.angelfire.com/md2/timewarp/schopenhauer.html), accessed on 27/02/2002).

<sup>11</sup> 'Schopenhauer sees the gratification of a wish or desire as negative, in that it is only a temporary deliverance from deprivation and suffering. Happiness is negative in that it does not provide lasting satisfaction. Because happiness is never lasting or complete, it is only the absence of true happiness that can become the subject of art.' Scott [www.angelfire.com/md2/timewarp/schopenhauer.html](http://www.angelfire.com/md2/timewarp/schopenhauer.html).

<sup>12</sup> Batchelor, ed., Victory 175.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid 175.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid 176.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid 181.

The first quotation suggests that even through the every day use of inanimate objects people communicate a passive identity onto objects which are lifeless until used. Wang's 'irresistible' desire to continue the life cycle of some vegetable seeds also signifies in a more active way the tendency for humanity to cultivate life in an expression of self. The 'soul in things' is a reification of personality which can also be seen as objects giving personality to the users. In certain ways we become what we own which is why Heyst finds evidence of his father's personality in the 'relics' transported from England to Samburan:

The manager of the Tropical Belt Coal Company, unpacking them on the verandah in the shade besieged by a fierce sunshine, must have felt like a remorseful apostate before the relics. He handled them tenderly; and it was perhaps their presence there which attached him to the island when he woke up to the failure of his apostasy<sup>16</sup>.

The word 'relics' signifies the extent to which Heyst senior has stamped his character and ideas upon the very things he used. In their turn they become like an aide memoir to Heyst's lapse from his father's doctrine. Through idolatry the tables and chairs become venerated objects as though for a saint. Another example of this is the portrait of Heyst's father. This not only operates as a religious icon, but also serves to make the dead ever present in a constant reminder of the beliefs Heyst should adhere to. Heyst's father is therefore mythologised through the objects he owned<sup>17</sup>.

The irony of Heyst's situation with relation to the furniture and books can be seen by considering it in the context of Wang and the seeds. Just as the seeds remind Wang of the process of creation and accordingly the capitalistic process of selling his produce: 'Heyst, following from a distance the progress of Wang's gardening and of these precautions—there was nothing else to look at—was amused at the thought that he, in his own person, represented the market for its produce'<sup>18</sup>: the furniture and books remind Heyst of death and the futility of all human enterprise.

That Heyst considers the artificiality of his part can be seen in his opinion of Wang's life:

And, looking silently at the silent Wang going about his work in the bungalow in his unhasty, steady way, Heyst envied the Chinaman's obedience to his instincts, the powerful simplicity of purpose which made his existence appear almost automatic in the mysterious precision of its facts<sup>19</sup>.

Previously, Heyst attempted to find solace in facts. Heyst's inability to remain obedient to his father's philosophy indicates how little he actually believes in it and how difficult it is to subjugate the desire for fellowship and an automatic life on a largely deserted island. However, no matter how much Heyst may desire a life like Wang's, he cannot divest himself of the opin-

---

<sup>16</sup> Ibid 177.

<sup>17</sup> Otto Rank has written on the progress of hero myths being distributed through migration: 'Leaving aside distribution of these myths, the origin of the hero myth in general is now to be investigated, fully anticipating to the directly and fairly positively demonstrable, in a number of cases'. Otto Rank, *The Myth of the Birth of the Hero: A Psychological Interpretation of Mythology*, Authorized Translation by Drs. F. Robbins and Smith Ely Jelliffe (New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1970) 4.

<sup>18</sup> Batchelor, ed., *Victory* 181.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid 181.

ions of his father and the ‘disgust of pity’<sup>20</sup> he feels for humanity<sup>21</sup>: ‘To the unknown force of negation they prefer the miserable tumbled bed of their servitude’<sup>22</sup>. From this Schopenhauerian attitude, the denial of the self is easier than to confront the forces restraining one’s will<sup>23</sup>. According to Schopenhauer<sup>24</sup> life is pain. Therefore, even in the act of negating the ‘miserably tumbled bed of their servitude’<sup>25</sup>, there can be no consolation in liberating oneself from an automatic life, but instead a constant realisation of how futile involvement is. Heyst is caught between two opposing forces. He lacks the commitment to engage fully either. With his father’s knowledge ever present in the form of books and the portrait and Wang’s simple and settled life, Heyst is like a homo duplex with a background he cannot deny and a present which is imperfect.

The withdrawal of Heyst’s father to the riverbank and Heyst himself to Samburan can be seen also by the Alfuro people’s withdrawal behind a barrier of wood to protect themselves from civilisation and the forces of progress. The arrival of the Tropical Belt Coal Company, a force of progress, forces them into regress. The life they are seemingly happy with and the suspicion of change for the better can also be found in Heyst’s confused thoughts for Lena and his inability to fully possess her charms:

But even then there still lingered in him a sense of incompleteness not altogether overcome—which, it seemed, nothing ever would overcome—the fatal imperfection of all the gifts of life, which makes of them a delusion and a snare<sup>26</sup>.

The ‘snare’ for the Alfuro people is the T.B.C.C. and the possibility of being drawn into its modernising operations. This feeling ironically divides them, but also echoes Otto Rank’s comments on the ability for myth to travel referred to earlier in this chapter. Though both of these actions are negative in approach, their extreme nature totally protects them from illusions and snares. If no progress can be made even at the expense of disillusion then the tendency to over protect oneself from any mysterious external influences prevents personal development<sup>27</sup>. Alternatively, in this case the Alfuro people may just have more intuitive knowledge as to Morrison’s experience of the coal industry than Heyst:

I thought he understood something about coal. And if I had been aware that he knew nothing of it, as in fact he didn’t, well—I don’t know what I could have done to stop him<sup>28</sup>.

---

<sup>20</sup> Ibid 220.

<sup>21</sup> ‘Although knowledge and progress, once attained, can lead to disillusionment and regret, their pursuit often constitutes a powerful animating illusion.’ Panagopoulos 170.

<sup>22</sup> Batchelor, ed., *Victory* 220.

<sup>23</sup> The very title of Heyst senior’s book, *Storm and Dust*, points to the duality of humanity’s condition. The storm expresses the forces of the will that will set people free from their myths and social customs. Dust describes the condition of indetermination and servitude to the next breeze that happens along. Each describes active and passive attitudes.

<sup>24</sup> ‘He [Schopenhauer] says that optimism is absurd. Life means suffering.’ Scott, [www.angelfire.com/md2/timewarp/schopenhauer.html](http://www.angelfire.com/md2/timewarp/schopenhauer.html).

<sup>25</sup> Batchelor, ed., *Victory* 220.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid 212.

<sup>27</sup> ‘Naïve learning may be a snare or an illusion which makes possible the attitudes of love and hope.’ Keith Carabine, ed., *Joseph Conrad: Critical Assessments, Volume III The Critical Response: The Secret Agent to Posthumous Works*, ‘Conrad’s *Victory*: Skepticism and Experience’ by Suresh Raval (Roversbridge: Helm Information Ltd.) 436.

<sup>28</sup> Batchelor, ed., *Victory* 203.



In a certain way their rejection of the Tropical Belt Coal Company is similar to Lena's feelings towards Heyst and the power of his presence in her life:

Well, you were thinking of me, anyhow. I am glad of it. Do you know, it seems to me, somehow, that if you were to stop thinking of me I shouldn't be in the world at all<sup>29</sup>.

Similarly, if the Alfuro people stop thinking about the coal company and its activities it will cease to exist. The whole notion of the dream and the power of dreams to influence the waking world have brought the company to an end. This power can be found in Lewis Carroll's Alice Through the Looking Glass<sup>30</sup>. The Red King's dream is actually the reality Alice is living. For the King to awaken would bring an end to her and all the other characters in the story. In this way the King is Lewis Carroll. The author enters the story and should he awaken from his imagination then the story will end and the characters will cease to exist. For Lena, Heyst is the author of her life in Samburan. His inability to understand her is like a dream. If he awakens to his thought then the representation he has of her will disappear. This emphasises the power of dreams in Victory. Heyst's opinion of dreams is:

Dreams are madness, my dear. It's things that happen in the waking world, while one is asleep that one would be glad to know the meaning of<sup>31</sup>.

As John Batchelor comments in a footnote in the World's Classics edition, Heyst believes dreams are not important and he is wrong<sup>32</sup>.

Though Wang's wife, the Alfuro woman, lives in a far distant corner of the compound her life on this island of dreams represents one who like Heyst cannot completely reject the world. Her distant gaze across the compound from the edge of the forest is the briefest of glimpses we get of this woman with 'her charms'<sup>33</sup>. She is like one dreamer looking across a gulf dividing her from another dream with Wang in the middle:

The woman's services to Heyst were limited to the fact that she had anchored Wang to the spot by her charms, which remained unknown to the white man, because she never came near the houses. The couple lived at the edge of the forest, and she could sometimes be seen gazing towards the bungalow shading her eyes with her hand<sup>34</sup>.

The tendency for most of the characters to withdraw to a safe distance in order to protect

---

<sup>29</sup> Ibid 187.

<sup>30</sup> "He's (Red King) dreaming now," said Tweedledee: "and what do you think he's dreaming about?" Alice said "Nobody can guess that."

Why, about *you!* Tweedledee exclaimed, clapping his hand triumphantly. "And if he left off dreaming about you, where do you suppose you'd be?"

"Where I am now, of course," said Alice.

"Not you!" Tweedledee retorted contemptuously. "You'd be nowhere. Why, you're only a sort of thing in his dream!" Robert Lancelyn Green, ed., Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through The Looking-Glass: And What Alice Found There by Lewis Carroll (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998) 167-168.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid 253.

<sup>32</sup> 'Heyst and Adam both believe that dreams have no bearing on the waking moral life: and they are both wrong.' Ibid 423.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid 179.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid 179.

themselves or the ones they love suggests a world in which progress is doubted and the fear of the unknown holds sway.

Though the philosophy of Schopenhauer appears to be very influential in the production of *Victory*, references must also be made to Nietzsche. Critics are inconclusive regarding whether Conrad read Nietzsche's work, however various critics have attempted to make a connection between Nietzsche's ideas and Conrad's novels. In contrast to Schopenhauer, Nietzsche seems to be willing to engage with the world, although not through the accepted social forms of altruism and religious observance. He was primarily concerned with language, truth and the individual in the social group. If we express ourselves mainly through language, then for Nietzsche language has become so accustomed to our every day usage that most of what we say lacks meaning<sup>35</sup>. The obvious sense in which this relates to *Victory* concerns Heyst senior's disillusion with the world after a hedonistic spree to experience all emotions and sensations:

He [Heyst's father] was a great man in his way, I don't know much of his history. I suppose he began like other people, took fine words for good, ringing coin and noble ideals, for valuable banknotes. He was a great master of both, himself, by the way. Later he discovered—how am I to explain it to you? Suppose the world were a factory and all mankind workmen in it. Well, he discovered that the wages were not good enough. That they were paid in counterfeit money<sup>36</sup>.

The association of truth with money here compares with what we need to live. Words are a means of exchange. They are directly related to the personality and speak the person. If these words cannot be accepted in the process of a transaction, then the bearer of the words can no longer speak with veracity.

In another way Heyst's father's experience directly relates to 'plain Mr. Jones' and Martin Ricardo. They have accepted Schomberg's words as 'ringing coin' and are themselves in search of money in the form of coins: 'A few small canvas bags tied up with cord, their distended roundness showing the inside pressure of the disk-like forms of coins—gold, solid, heavy, eminently portable'<sup>37</sup>. Their inability to come-up with a plausible story to explain their sudden and unusual appearance on the island shows their poverty inasmuch as they cannot express what would be taken for truth. Their moral relativism also shows how much they have strayed from social conformity and waged employment. This is again an example of Nietzsche's rejection of compromise and servitude<sup>38</sup>.

---

<sup>35</sup> 'What, then, is truth? A mobile army of metaphors, metonyms, and anthropomorphisms – in short, a sum of human relations, which have been enhanced, transposed, and embellished poetically and rhetorically, and which after long use seem firm, canonical, and obligatory to a people: truths are illusions about which one has forgotten that this is what they are; metaphors which are worn out and without sensuous power; coins which have lost their pictures and now matter only as metal, no longer as coins.' Nietzsche quoted from Said, *Commencement* 67.

<sup>36</sup> Batchelor, ed., *Victory* 195-196.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid 274.

<sup>38</sup> 'Nietzsche's ideal of a stern, hard, noble nature, with an instinct for beauty, for fineness of life, is evoked from his innate hostility to all the cheapness, compromise, and cowardness of average human nature that is conquered by life, moulded by despicable circumstances, stunted and warped, crushed even beneath itself through its lack of power.' Edward Garnett, *Friday Nights*, The Travellers Library Series, quoted from Panagopoulos 15.



They, like Heyst's father, have rejected the wages because they were not good enough and have become destroyers of systems though ones more tangible and more financially viable in the act of gambling. They, by travelling around the world, live off others and in a manner of speaking steal truth from more morally upstanding people. They in the Nietzschean world view are the 'aristocrats and conquerors'<sup>39</sup>.

---

<sup>39</sup> 'There are two moralities in society [...] the morality of the conquerors, the aristocrats, that which is a free, joyous, ascending triumph in life, and the morality of the slaves, that which is a sick, ascetic, resigned, religious distrust of life and a reliance on a life-to-come.' Edward Garnett quoted from Panagopoulos 15.

## Works Cited

### Works by Joseph Conrad

- Conrad, Joseph. Heart of Darkness and Other Tales. Ed. with an introduction by Cedric Watts. Oxford: Oxford University Press, Worlds Classics, 1996.
- Conrad, Joseph. Lord Jim: A Tale. Ed. with an introduction by John Batchelor. Oxford: Oxford University Press, World's Classics, 1983.
- Conrad, Joseph. Nostromo: A Tale of the Seaboard. Ed. with an introduction by Keith Carabine. Oxford: Oxford University Press, World's Classics, 1984.
- Conrad, Joseph. The Secret Agent: A Simple Tale. Ed. with an introduction by Roger Tennant. Oxford: Oxford University Press, World's Classics, 1988.
- Conrad, Joseph. Victory: An Island Tale. Ed. John Batchelor with an introduction by Tony Tanner. Oxford: Oxford University Press, World's Classics, 1986.

### Works by Other Authors

- Batchelor, John. John Ruskin: No Wealth But Life. London: Pimlico, 2001, first published by Chatto and Windus, 2000.
- Carabine, Keith. Joseph Conrad: Critical Assessments, Volume III The Critical Response: The Secret Agent to Posthumous Works, "Conrad's *Victory*: Skepticism and Experience" by Suresh Raval, "Conrad's Pyrrhic Victory" by Kingsley Widmer. Robersbridge: Helm Information Ltd
- Green, Robert Lancelyn, ed. Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through The Looking-Glass: And What Alice Found There by Lewis Carroll. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- Hynes, Samuel. The Edwardian Turn of Mind. London: Pimlico, 1991.
- Karl, Frederick R., Davies, Lawrence ed. with an introduction. The Collected Letters of Joseph Conrad, Volume 2, 1898-1902, Volume 4, 1908-1911. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- Knowles, Owen and Gene M. Moore. Oxford Reader's Companion to Conrad. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Panagopoulos, Nic. The Fiction of Joseph Conrad: The Influence of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1998.
- Pettersson, Torsten. Consciousness Time: Study in the Philosophical and Narrative Technique of Joseph Conrad. Abo: Abo Akakademi, 1982.
- Scott, Alex. Schopenhauer's The World as Will and Idea (URL: [www.angelfire.com/md2/time-war/schopenhauer.html](http://www.angelfire.com/md2/time-war/schopenhauer.html), accessed on 27/02/2002).

Rank, Otto. The Myth of the Birth of the Hero: A Psychological Interpretation of Mythology.  
Authorized Translation by Drs. F. Robbins and Smith Ely Jelliffe. New York: Johnson  
Reprint Corporation, 1970.