

A STYLISTIC STUDY OF THE LANGUAGE

OF JOSEPH CONRAD'S NOVELS

by

Farouk Mahmoud Abdel Mooti

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ADJECTIVES AND OTHER MODIFIERS

When F.R. Leavis objected to what he called Conrad's "adjectival insistence", (1) he threw into sharper focus a critical viewpoint that many a critic before him had put forward. Max Beerbohm had already written "The Feast" in which he parodies, among other things, the adjectival excesses of Conrad's early style. (2) John Shand had also noted Conrad's "continual use of three adjectives to qualify one object" (3), a fact which Shand believed to be responsible for the "slow, heavy and rather involved style" of the early period. More than three decades later, the same observation was made by David Daiches who criticised Conrad's earliest style for being "a little lush, perhaps, a little over-adjectived." (4) On the other hand, there were those who, like Constance Garnett, believed that Conrad's adjectives were "so chosen, fastidious, often ironical." (5)

It is true that adjectives can be used in such a way as to bring out their "ironical", suggestive or even symbolic connotations, but it is also logical to assume that the verbal structure of a writer's imagery is the result not so much of adjectives alone as of the interplay of various types of modification. In other words, an investigation of a writer's adjectives must of necessity touch upon his use of other modifiers. This, however, does not mean that the present chapter proposes to examine Conrad's imagery in detail, for what one is mainly concerned with here is the pecu-

(1) Leavis, 1962 : 177
 (2) See p. 81 supra.
 (3) Shand 1960 : 14 - 9
 (4) Daiches 1960 : 63
 (5) See p. 77 supra.

liar way Conrad uses his adjectives and certain other modifiers for the achievement of his artistic ends.

"The Lagoon" (1897) is Conrad's shortest story. It is made up of some 5,600 words. What makes it of special importance for us is the fact that it is replete with adjectives. This, however, did not prevent Conrad from telling Miss Watson, "I am right glad you like the "Lagoon". To be quite confidential I must tell you that it is, of my short stories, the one I like the best myself." (1) Such a letter proves that Conrad consciously indulged in the stylistic peculiarities of the early works. The first part of the present chapter is a linguistic analysis of Conrad's adjectives in this short story. Here, also, certain other types of modification for which Conrad seems to have had marked predilection will be examined. I will then consider the extent to which "The Lagoon" is representative of Conrad's style in the full-length novels. This part concludes with a brief comparison of this stylistic peculiarity of Conrad's with some of his contemporaries' practice in this field. The second part focuses attention on the artistic significance arising from the novelist's distinctive manipulation of adjectives and other modifiers in his various novels.

After some four introductory sentences we come across the first descriptive passage in "The Lagoon":

The white man rested his chin on his crossed arms and gazed at the wake of the boat. At the end of the straight avenue of forests cut by the intense glitter of the river, the sun appeared unclouded and dazzling, poised low over the water that shone smoothly like a band of metal. The forests, sombre and dull, stood motionless and silent on each side of the broad stream. At the foot of big, towering trees, trunkless nipa palms rose from the mud of the bank, in bunches of leaves enormous and heavy,

(1) L.L. Vol. I, p. 202 (Letter dated 14th March 1897)

that hung unstirring over the brown swirl of eddies. In the stillness of the air, every tree, every leaf, every bough, every tendril of creeper and every petal of minute blossoms seemed to have been bewitched into an immobility perfect and final. (p. 187)

The first thing to note about this passage is Conrad's determination to modify every noun with an appropriate adjective or string of modifiers. The adjectives used are those of colour, shape, light, motion, sound and size. In addition, there are general adjectives whose subjective nature reflects the narrator's mood or personal opinion.

In the first sentence, we get two adjectives: one of colour, white; the other of shape, crossed. White is a central adjective that can be used both attributively and predicatively. (1) As such, it directly characterises the referent of the noun, man. On the other hand, crossed is a participial adjective that modifies part of the man's body: his arm. Although both adjectives are used attributively, one notes that whereas white refers to a permanent characteristic of the man, crossed can only refer to a temporary condition of the man's body. The two adjectives are used objectively by the narrator to report the factual details concerning the physical attributes of the white man. In other words, they are adjectives with concrete reference that are not coloured by the narrator's subjective evaluation of the character in question.

The second sentence contains two adjectives occupying the attributive slot, straight and intense, a string of co-ordinated adjectives in the predicative position, unclouded and dazzling, and a post-modifying participial clause, poised low over the water.

(1) Quirk et al., 1974 : Ch. 5 and 13

The main difference between the attributive adjectives is that, whereas straight is an adjective of space with concrete reference, intense is an intensifying adjective that has something unmistakably subjective about it. The "glitter" might seem quite intense for the white man, but for a native Malay it would have nothing extraordinary or intense about it. On the other hand, the co-ordinated predicative string, unclouded and dazzling, contains two adjectives of light of the type V-ed and V-ing participle respectively. Both adjectives refer to a temporary condition of the sun on that particular occasion. The same applies to the post-modifying participial clause whose deleted subject is identical with the head of the main clause.

Contrasted with the adjectives of light of the first two sentences, those of darkness abound in the three sentences that follow. The noun forests is modified by the supplementive adjectival phrase, sombre and dull. That these two adjectives are contained within two commas indicates the non-restrictive quality of this type of modification, for they reflect only the mood of the narrator. After all, forests cannot be inherently "sombre and dull". These in turn are followed by two adjectives of motion and sound occupying the predicative slot in, "The forests ... stood motionless and silent." Here again the impressionistic mood prevails. As opposed to the temporary nature of the preceding four adjectives, in the modification of the noun stream and trees the narrator resorts to attributive adjectives, broad stream, big towering trees, with concrete reference which are meant to give a factual reporting of the inherent qualities of the modified nouns in terms of space and size. He soon reverts to adjectives of a subjective and temporary nature in the post-posed string of co-ordinated modifiers, "bunches of leaves heavy

and enormous", which is followed by a post-modifying relative clause, that hung unstirring over the brown swirl of eddies, containing two adjectives, unstirring and brown, the participial being an adjective of motion, while the central adjective brown is one of colour.

The last sentence of the passage contains three postmodifying prepositional phrases: "In the stillness of the air, every tendril of creeper, every petal of minute blossoms," together with a string of postposed co-ordinated adjectives "an immobility perfect and final". Both types of postmodification, the prepositional phrase with periphrastic genitive and the postposed string of adjectives, are of a restrictive nature, the former being more so than the latter which admits of some subjective interpretation. Besides, in perfect and final we get that sort of intensifying adjective similar to that in "intense glitter" of the second sentence.

A close scrutiny of the adjectives used so far in the above quotation will reveal that most of them, especially those of light and darkness, are easily apprehended through the visual sense, while others like silent and heavy are accessible to the auditory or tactile senses respectively. Such alternate use of adjectives relating to the different senses is obviously intended to help the novelist give a certain degree of precision to the narrator's impressions, a precision that is further stressed through the extensive use of other types of modification.

More important still is Conrad's synaesthetic device of yoking two or three adjectives belonging to disparate spheres of sensation. Describing the darkness of the forests, the narrator says:

Darkness oozed out from between the trees, through the tangled maze of the creepers, from behind the great fantastic and unstimulating leaves; the darkness mysterious and invincible; the darkness scented and poisonous of impenetrable forests. (p. 189)

Here we get five attributive adjectives and two strings of postposed modifiers. Of these, three are general adjectives: tangled, fantastic, and impenetrable; one - the participial unstimulating - is an adjective of motion, while great is an intensifying adjective. However, the absence of a comma in "great fantastic and unstimulating leaves" makes the function of the intensifying modifier great ambiguous. It would appear that Conrad meant the three adjectives to be modifiers of equal status to the noun leaves, but the absence of the comma after great makes it seem to modify the general adjective fantastic.

With the postposed adjectives mysterious and invincible we have two general modifiers, of which the latter materialises the noun darkness by according to it attributes that are peculiar to animate beings. Besides, in the "darkness scented and poisonous", we get adjectives that belong to the senses of smell and taste respectively. The important thing to note is that whereas "the darkness" can be described as "mysterious", it can only be described as "scented" and "poisonous" by transferring to it attributes which are peculiar to other spheres of sensation than ^{the} sight. Thus the participial scented and the general adjective of taste poisonous are made to modify not the flowers or snakes roaming in the darkness of the forests, but the darkness itself (1).

(1) One further example of the transferred adjective occurs where the narrator speaks of "the black stillness of the night" (p. 193). Here also the adjective black is transferred from the noun night to the noun stillness. In other words, Conrad solidifies the "stillness" of the night and gives it attributes peculiar only to the noun night. The transposition of sensations from one sphere to another adjoining it, in this and similar examples, is indicative of the metonymic strain in Conrad's imagery which is, for the most part, of a metaphorical nature.

when he
 Conrad follows the same technique/ transposes a modifier from its appropriate noun to another noun closely associated with it. In his description of the narrow creek the narrator says:

"Here and there, near the glistening blackness of the water, a twisted root of some tall tree showed amongst the tracery of small ferns, black and dull, writhing and motionless, like an arrested snake." (pp.188-9)

Here the V-ing premodifying adjective glistening is made to describe the blackness rather than the water itself. Still, the glistening water can be visually apprehended in the presence or absence of darkness, whereas there can be no glistening darkness without water. On the other hand, the predicative adjectives black and dull, writhing and motionless belong to three different spheres of sensation, for whereas black is an adjective of colour, both writhing and motionless are adjectives of motion. The colour adjective can be only apprehended visually, while the other two are accessible to the tactile sense. Dull is a general adjective of a subjective nature. The blackness of the forest renders the precision of sense impressions somewhat questionable, hence the apparent dichotomy of writhing and motionless. Apart from this, we get some four modifiers attributively used "twisted root, arrested snake, some tall tree, small ferns", the first two being participial, while the remaining two are adjectives of size, one of which is further modified by the quantitative some. Of the other types of modification we get the periphrastic genitive in the prepositional phrases: of the water, of small ferns.

Just as the narrator uses adjectives to bring out the contrast between the brightness of the sea under the shining sun and the darkness of the Malay jungle, he uses an amalgam of modifiers in this juxtaposition of the broadness of the river and the narrowness of the creek. This he achieves in the following two quotations:

→
The white man, turning his back upon the setting sun, looked along the empty and broad expanse of the sea-reach. For the last three miles of its course the wandering, hesitating river, as if enticed irresistibly by the freedom of an open horizon, flows straight into the sea, flows straight to the east - to the east that harbours both light and darkness. (p. 188)

→
The narrow creek was like a ditch; tortuous, fabulously deep; filled with gloom under the thin strip of pure and shining blue of ^{the} heaven. Immense trees soared up, invisible behind the festooned draperies of creepers. (p. 188)

In the first passage the two central adjectives occupying the attributive slot empty, broad modify the noun expanse which is further modified by the periphrastic genitive of the prepositional phrase: of the sea-reach. Obviously, they are adjectives of space that directly characterise the referent of the noun. The participial attributive adjectives wandering and hesitating have a temporary quality about them. Besides, here Conrad uses adjectives peculiar to human beings; a river might be described as "wandering" but not as "hesitating" unless in a purely figurative sense, hence the subjective nature of the last two adjectives. One also notes that Conrad co-ordinates the first two with the coordinator and which is replaced in the latter example by the comma. This can be attributed to Conrad's preoccupation with rhythm (empty and broad, wandering hesitating); a preoccupation that shows up in his use of balanced adjectival phrases like black and dull, writhing and motionless as in the previous example. The two adjectives add a touch of languorous slackness to the movement of the phrase. Postmodifying prepositional phrases abound here as in the passages quoted earlier: of its course, of the open horizon. A postmodifying relative clause: that harbours both light and darkness adds the finishing touch to one of the short story's highly adjectived passages.

As opposed to the "empty and broad" sea, the creek is described as being "like a ditch". In this first sentence of the second quotation we get two predicative adjectives "tortuous and fabulously deep", one V-ed participial postmodifying clause filled with gloom and two periphrastic genitive prepositional phrases of pure and shining blue of heaven. (1) The use of the adjunct fabulously to modify the adjective deep betrays the highly subjective - and therefore temporary - nature of the predicative string of adjectives, which contrasts with the permanent nature of the adjectives modifying the sea. In the encompassing gloom of the forest, the narrator could only trust to the truth or illusion of his sensations. Likewise, the permanent characteristic of the attributive immense contrasts with the temporary nature of the postposed modifier invisible which suggests that the trees were temporarily invisible on account of "the festooned draperies of creepers", which last phrase contains a participial adjective festooned and a postmodifying prepositional phrase of creepers.

The narrator's preference for postposed adjectives is reflected in his description of the factual, objective attributes of the Malay Arsath and his woman, Diamelen. Of the various types of modification, used in the following two quotations, the postposed adjective is the one that is forcefully foregrounded: (2)

He (Arsath) was a man young, powerful, with broad chest and muscular arms. He had nothing on but his sarong. His head was bare. His big, soft eyes stared eagerly at the white man... (p. 190)

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- (1) In "The thin strip of pure and shining blue of the heaven" Conrad drops the definite article before pure, something that can be attributed to the fact that in Polish no such article is used.
- (2) Postposing of adjectives is strongly recommended when the noun is modified by a string of co-ordinated modifiers as in the examples from Conrad, or when the adjective requires complementation of some sort as in "The boy anxious to fulfil his duty ..."

She lay still, as if dead; but her big eyes, wide open, glittered in the gloom staring upwards at the slender rafters, motionless and unseeing. She was in a high fever, and evidently unconscious. Her cheeks were sunk slightly, her lips were partly open, and on the young face there was the ominous and fixed expression - the absorbed, contemplating expression of the unconscious who are going to die.
(p. 191)

The postposing of the three strings of adjectives: "a man young and powerful, her big eyes wide-open, motionless and unstimring" seems to have been dictated by more than one grammatical factor. In the first place, the modifiers young and powerful, being central; could be used either predicatively or attributively without much difference on the semantic level. Here they are postposed mainly for rhythmical reasons. On the other hand, the postposing of wide-open, motionless and unstimring underlines the temporary nature of the modifiers used. The woman's eyes were so described because that was how the narrator saw them, under the menace of her approaching death, which the narrator could easily perceive. Here, too, the visual and tactile senses of the narrator are the means of apprehending the permanent and temporary attributes of the character concerned.

Another major device used by Conrad is the appositive phrase which is made up of a repeated noun phrase followed or preceded by a string of adjectives. In the above quotation, for instance, the noun ^{expression} complexion is attributively modified by ominous and fixed, two general adjectives of a subjective nature. This is soon followed by the appositional phrase "the absorbed and contemplating expression of the unconscious" which also contains two further adjectives of a more subjective nature than the others. This is dictated by what might be termed association of sensations. The narrator's impression of the woman's "ominous and fixed expression" triggers off in his mind a similar impression of the "absorbed and contemplating expression" of people about to die.

The recurrence of the heavily adjectived appositive phrase in this short story is one of Conrad's stylistic mannerisms. In such phrases we come across adjectives running either in tandem or in troika. Of the first we get examples like: (1)

"Astern of the boat the repeated call of some bird, a cry discordant and feeble, skipped along over the smooth water ... (p. 188)

→
"A plaintive murmur rose in the night; a murmur saddening and startling,... (p. 194)

→
"A murmur powerful and gentle, a murmur vast and faint; (p. 199)

"A breath of warm air touched the two men's faces... a breath loud and short like an uneasy sigh of the dreamy earth." (p. 199)

Of the second (those running in troika) we have:

"... the inspiration and the wonder of death-of death near, unavoidable and unseen.... (p. 193)

"... Like a sombre and forbidding shore - a coast deceptive, pitiless and black" (p. 201)

From the syntactic standpoint, the underscored adjectives constitute a series of strings of postposed modifiers. Semantically, they are general adjectives of a greatly subjective nature. We also note Conrad's alternate use of amplifiers like powerful, vast, discordant, and downtoners such as feeble, faint and gentle.

Besides, while the main emphasis in the first three examples is on the auditory sense (cry discordant, murmur startling), in the fourth example of the first group two spheres of sensation are involved: the tactile (a breath of warm air touched), and the auditory (a breath loud and short). On the other hand, emphasis in the second group shifts from the auditory or tactile senses to the visual: death near, unavoidable; a coast deceptive, pitiless and black.

(1) It is noteworthy that the postposition of adjectives in the following examples is conducive to that feeling of nostalgia and sadness which is in keeping with the narrative tone. Notice also how postposition of modifiers helps Conrad do without the post-modifying relative clause, for which he seems to have had little predilection.

Sometimes the appositive phrase contains a sequence of balanced postposed strings of modifiers as in:

... the earth enfolded in the starlight peace became a shadowy country of inhuman strife, a battlefield of phantoms terrible and charming, ignoble or august, struggling ardently for the possession of our helpless hearts. (pp.193-4)

Here the seemingly contradictory nature of the postposed modifiers: terrible and charming, august or ignoble is meant to parallel the white man's "fleeting and powerful disturbance of being" (p. 193). In his fear from, and wonder at, the darkness around him the white man's sense impressions become blurred resulting in a chain of subjective, but quite inconclusive, modifiers. One notes also Conrad's tendency to use nouns as modifiers in the starlight peace, a tendency that is reflected on a larger scale in the full-length novels to be discussed later.

A more important characteristic of Conrad's adjectival practice is his tendency to use adjectives in place of adverbials through a process of grammatical conversion (1). When the narrator tells us: "The land and the water slept invisible, unstirring and mute", (p. 193) we notice that the intransitive verb slept has been converted into an intensive one so that it can be followed by an adjective instead of an adverbial. The three predicative adjectives become complement to the subject the land and the water, and are accessible to the three senses of sight, touch and sound respectively. The same tendency is found in examples like, "It flowed cold and gray into the darkness" (p. 201), "the juragan sat moody" (p. 204), and "She came... rapid and leaving no trace" (p. 197), where intransitive verbs like flow, sit, come are used in such a way as to bring out the intensive relationship between the subject and the

(1) For a detailed discussion of this point Cf. Quirk et al., 1974 ; Chapter 14

adjective in question. Indeed, it is characteristic of Conrad that instead of saying, "The man slept peacefully", he would invariably say "the man slept peaceful, etc." A closer examination of such sentences will reveal that rhythm seems to have been one of the main reasons determining Conrad's choice, for the use of adjectives in place of adverbials in the above examples makes the utterance end on a dying fall quite in harmony with the slack and nostalgic tone of the passage under consideration.

The narrator's sophisticated and extravagant use of the different types of modification is balanced by Arsat's controlled and primitive manipulation of the various types in his description of episodes and natural scenery. The following two quotations from Arsat's speech highlight the difference between his descriptive method and that of the narrator:

Unseeing, we spoke to one another through the scent of flowers, through the veil of leaves, through the blades of grass that stood still before our lips; so great was our prudence, so faint was the murmur of our great longing. (p.196)

There was silence behind us. That neck of land is narrow. Before I heard my brother fire the third shot I saw the shelving shore, and I saw the water again, the mouth of a broad river. We crossed a grassy glade. We ran down to the water. I saw a low hut above the black mud, and a small canoe hauled up. I heard another shot behind me. (p. 200)

The participial adjective unseeing of the first sentence functions as the sole realisation of a verbless clause. As such, it is a supplementive adjective clause (1). Apart from this, we note the dramatic quality of the balanced prepositional phrases, each

(1) In most cases the supplementive adjective clause can be replaced by a corresponding adverbial. When it follows the subject, the supplementive adjective clause can be regarded as a reduced relative clause. Thus in "Arsat, motionless and shadowy, ... was speaking in a low voice", the supplementive clause can be expanded into a relative clause: "Arsat, who was motionless and shadowy, ... etc."

containing a periphrastic-genitive postmodifying phrase. This dramatic quality is further enhanced through the inversion of the predicative adjectives so great, so faint, a procedure that is meant to reflect the Malay's agitated mental condition.

Although Arsat has a modifier of some sort or other to apply to each of the nouns used: the predicative narrow in "that neck of land is narrow", the attributive grassy in "a grassy glade" as well as low, black and small in the penultimate sentence, the general adjectives used refer to concrete qualities of the objects modified. Besides, no attempt is made to describe natural scenery with strings of modifiers running in tandem or in troika as usually happens with the narrator. Nor does he indulge in the use of appositive noun phrases that are heavily adjectived in sentences like, "there was silence behind us", which would have invariably been followed by something like "the silence ominous and forbidding" in the narrator's speech. This shows that the difference in individual perspective entails a corresponding difference in the types of modification used.

Of adjectives used in place of adverbials we have Arsat's "In a little while I shall see clear enough to strike--" (p. 203) which is similar to the adjective slow in "He drove slow" where the adjective form is preferred in colloquial usage to the more appropriate adverbial slowly. Although both clearly and clear can be used as adverbials in the context, Conrad's choice of the adjective form is significant in that it points to his fondness for adjectives functioning in place of other parts of speech. Clear here is definitely an adverbial since it focuses attention on the action of the verb see, rather than on any physical or psychological attributes of the man, as in "The Juragan sat moody",

where the emphasis is laid not on the action of the verb but rather on the mood of the character concerned.

Even when he uses the synaesthetic type of modification Arsat is still far from being as sophisticated as the narrator is liable to become under similar conditions. Arsat tells the white man: "I heard the sweetness of her voice," (p. 198). The postmodifying periphrastic genitive of the prepositional phrase of her voice which can be only apprehended by the auditory sense modifies a noun sweetness which is accessible only to the sense of taste. A further dimension is added when he uses the verb hear which can hardly collocate with the direct object sweetness. This type of modification is nevertheless quite suggestive and very much in keeping with the emotional mood of the love-lorn Malay.

From the foregoing analysis one can list Conrad's types of modification in order of frequency as follows: adjectives (302, of which 240 are used by the narrator and 62 by Arsat), the post-modifying prepositional phrase with periphrastic genitive (171, 101 by the narrator and 70 by Arsat), the postposed string of modifiers (28, 26 by the narrator and 2 by Arsat), the non-finite post-modifying participial clause (24, 21 by the narrator, 3 by Arsat), the adjectived appositive noun phrase (14 of which three are Arsat's), the postmodifying relative clause (14 equally divided between the narrator and Arsat), the supplementive adjective clause of which (3, /one is by Arsat), the transferred adjective in synaesthetic combinations like the black stillness of the night (4, 3 by the narrator and one by Arsat), and the quasi-adjectival function of the preposition like and comparatives such as as...as, as if, and as though which, though sparingly used by Conrad in this short story, figure largely in some of his other works. (1)

(1) Conrad's comparisons are discussed in the next chapter under the heading: "The Lexis of Uncertainty".

Of all these types of modification the adjective is the most important from the stylistic viewpoint for three main reasons. First, it is the type with the highest rate of frequency. Second, it is the major constituent in at least five of the other types: the postmodifying prepositional phrase (where adjectives are embedded sometimes side by side with the periphrastic genitive), the postposed string of modifiers, the appositive noun phrase, the supplementary adjective clause and the synaesthetic combinations. Third, it is the one type that is most controversial in terms of definition, syntactic function and semantic classification. Hence further discussion of the characteristics of Conrad's adjectives would not be out of place.

Although Conrad uses adjectives in a variety of syntactic positions he shows a marked predilection for postposed modifiers. This, added to his tendency to use adjectives in place of adverbials, can be said to set him apart from other novelists as will be presently shown. Next in order of preference are those attributive adjectives which he uses freely. Predicative adjectives are less extravagantly used. Still, they are greater in number compared to his sparing use of adjectives as heads of noun phrase, or as the main realisation of a verbless clause as in supplementary adjective clauses. The Quirk Grammar would call adjectives like young and powerful central because they can occupy attributive position, premodifying nouns, or predicative position especially after intensive verbs like seem. Such adjectives accept premodification by the intensifier very, and are susceptible to comparison in its inflexional or periphrastic forms. Other adjectives that fail to measure up to one or other of these four tests, they call "peripheral adjectives". (1)

(1) Quirk et al., 1974 : 233

Of adjectives that can function only attributively one may cite those which Conrad derives from verbs such as fringing, shining, floating, overhanging, murmuring, and ruined. For whereas departing is a participial adjective in "The red brilliance of the departing day-light" (p. 192), it is part of the predication in "the day-light which was departing". Again, while ruined is an attributive adjective in "he who repairs a ruined house", it is of doubtful function in "the house was ruined" (1). Conrad had that knack of extracting the appropriate adjective from other word-classes, be these verbs, nouns or adverbials.

His predicative adjectives comprise items like alone, still, near, feared, faint, as well as adjectives requiring complementation such as fond of, afraid of, afraid to and invisible to. Most of these adjectives, whether attributive or predicative, could be easily postposed by Conrad. (2)

- (1) Bolinger, 1967 : 5 - 15, would attribute such uses of the participial adjective ruined in "ruined house" to what he calls "relics of the ancient perfect tense" (p. 5). He also argues that most of the attributive adjectives are not based on "be-predication" as is currently believed by transformational grammar, since the attributive shining in "The man's shining face" can be said to be based on "The man has a shining face" and not on "The man's face is shining". Others like "The daily newspaper" are held to be based not on "The newspaper is daily", but rather on "The newspaper appears daily". He also believes that attribution can be based on conjunction where a superficial glance would take it to be based on relative-clause transformation (p. 14). Bolinger, however, fails to convincingly explain cases like the attributive main in "The main reason" which cannot be based on any of the suggested alternatives.
- (2) Roberts, 1964 : 90 - 2, suggests three main functions: "the attributive, the predicative and the appositive". Still, while some adjectives can be said to be attributive only or predicative only, no adjective can be said to be appositive only since all adjectives can be postposed.

On the semantic level, Conrad's adjectives can be viewed in terms of kind, nature and sphere of sensation. As regards kind, his adjectives can be general (including those subject to objective measurements as well as those with abstract reference). Of the first we get high, heavy and big; of the second we come across items like gnawing, pleasant and ugly. In addition to the general adjectives, we get those of colour (red, blue), shape (crossed), space (broad, narrow), size (big, small), light (bright, glistening), darkness (sombre, dull), motion (unstirring, motionless), sound (ringing, murmuring), taste (poisonous), smell (scented), age (young, old), and denominal adjectives like (Malay, wooded). (1)

In terms of nature, adjectives can be regarded as either permanent or temporary. Those of a permanent nature refer to an unchanging or stable characteristic of the nouns they modify, while those of a temporary nature highlight an accidental or casual feature of the nouns in question. It is worth noting that the Quirk Grammar acknowledge such semantic features where they divide adjectives into inherent and non-inherent (p. 266). On the other hand, Bolinger calls those adjectives of a permanent nature "characteristic", while the others are called "occasion" adjectives (2). Generally speaking, those adjectives that can occupy both the attributive and predicative slots are of a more permanent nature than those restricted to one or other position, though there might be occasional exceptions to this rule. Besides, attributive adjec-

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- (1) I have here stretched the rules laid down by the Quirk Grammar^{authors} who divide adjectives into those of colour, size, age, shape and denominal adjectives like British, and wooden. Obviously, works of fiction admit of further classifications in this particular respect.
- (2) Bolinger, 1967 : 3 - 5, cites the example "The only navigable river" as a case of the adjective expressing a characteristic quality, as opposed to "The river navigable" where navigable is an occasion adjective referring to temporary qualities of the river on a particular occasion.

tives are more susceptible to permanence than the predicatives which, like postpositive modifiers, are usually of a temporary nature. Still, there is no hard and fast rule in so far as this classification is concerned. "The young and powerful man", "The man young and powerful", "The man is young and powerful" does not necessarily mean that the attributive adjectives of the first example are of a more permanent nature than the postpositives or predicatives of the other two examples. In the final analysis, it appears to be a matter of individual preference or situational context, in some cases at least. (1)

Conrad's adjectives can also be viewed in terms of the spheres of sensation to which they belong. We have the five senses of sight, sound, touch, taste and smell. Most of the adjectives can be apprehended either visually or tactually or by both senses at the same time. Some can be apprehended by the auditory sense only such as whispering, loud. Those of smell and taste can be only experienced by the respective senses.

One can now tabulate the linguistic features of the adjectives used by Conrad in the following five sentences in something like this:

A - Conrad's sentences:

1. To the warnings of the righteous they oppose an offensive pretence of disbelief. (p. 190)
2. The white man moved his outstretched legs a little. (p. 192)
3. ... they could hear the voices of the boatmen ringing fitful and distinct on the calm water. (p. 193)
4. Arsat, motionless and shadowy, ... was speaking in a low and dreamy tone. (p. 194)

(1) Bolinger, 1967 : 3 - 4, is faced with the same semantic dilemma where he tries to distinguish between the characteristic adjective stolen in "The stolen jewels" and the postposed adjective in "The jewels stolen" which he calls "action adjective". Bolinger's analysis shows that while postposition can underline the temporary quality of the modifier used, it cannot be taken for a sure indication that such is always the case.

5. Over the lagoon a mist drifting and low had crept,...(p. 201)

B - Linguistic features

Adjective	Syntactic function	Semantic classification		
		Kind	Nature	Sphere
righteous	head of noun phrase			
offensive	attributive	"	permanent	visual
white	"	colour	"	"
outstretched	"	general (objective)	temporary	"
fitful) distinct)	predicative	general (subjective)	"	auditory
calm	attributive	sound		" & tactile
motionless) shadowy)	supplementive adj. clause	motion general (subjective)	"	tactile & visual
low and) dreamy)	attributive	sound general (subjective)	permanent	auditory
drifting) low)	postpositive	general size	temporary "	visual "

The chart clearly indicates that the semantic connotations of adjectives play a major role in determining their overall linguistic characteristics, for though attributive adjectives are said to be of a more permanent nature than predicatives or postpositives, it is clear that much depends on the inherent semantic connotations of the word as on the situational context in which it is used. Thus, the attributive outstretched in the above example cannot be said to refer to a permanent feature of the white man's legs, since his legs could be outstretched at one moment and crossed at another. Again, faint in the sense of "giddy" can be used only predicatively, whereas faint (indistinct, feeble) can be used both attributively

and predicatively (the faint murmur, the murmur was faint).

Further, there are differences of opinion as to whether adjectives like shadowy are to be regarded as general items subject to objective measurements or as subjective ones requiring no such measurements. Despite such inevitable inadequacies, which can only reflect the limitations of linguistic description, the suggested classifications are meant to put into relief the peculiarities of modifiers as used in works of fiction (1), where issues relating to the kind, nature and sphere of sensation of the modifiers used are essential for the understanding of the artistic effects achieved through the use of the various types of modification.

This investigation of "The Lagoon" gives rise to two closely related questions. First, to what extent is "The Lagoon" representative of Conrad's novels which are, after all, the main concern of the present study? Second, how far does Conrad's adjectival practice distinguish him from his contemporary novelists in this particular field? To answer these questions by giving a numerical account of the modifiers used in two or three opening or closing chapters of some novels would be misleading, for the simple reason that Conrad's modifiers abound in descriptive passages which are sporadically distributed in his works, while "The Lagoon", being his shortest story, has this advantage of compressing Conrad's stylistic mannerisms within some 17 pages. After careful consideration, I have come to the conclusion that the best solution is to choose at random five descriptive passages from Conrad's novels, and then give a rough count of modifiers in/^{four}contemporary works.

(1) The Quirk Grammar divide adjectives on the semantic level into inherent, non-inherent; stative, dynamic; and gradable, non-gradable" (pp. 265 - 7). This classification into dynamic and stative, gradable and non-gradable" is of little significance in works of fiction. The same observation applies to Ross's classification of adjectives into transitives and intransitives, animates and inanimates. Cf. Ross. 1969 : 352 - 60

It is hoped that the contrast of the chosen passages and "The Lagoon" will give us a pretty good idea of the degree of similarity between the short story and the full-length novels, while the comparison of the rate of frequency of modifiers in "The Lagoon" and in the four works of Conrad's contemporaries will help us make a fairly accurate assessment of his fabled singularity in this field.

Here first are the passages from Conrad's novels:

She came, of course. To her he was something new, unknown and strange. He was bigger, stronger than any man she had seen before, and altogether different from all those she knew. He was of the victorious race. With a vivid remembrance of the great catastrophe of her life he appeared to her with all the fascination of a great and dangerous thing; of a terror vanquished; surmounted, made a plaything of.

...

He had all the attractiveness of the vague and the unknown; of the unforseen and of the sudden, of a being strong, dangerous, alive, and human, ready to be enslaved. (O.I. p. 75)

He was attracted by Giselle, with her candid gaze and white throat, pliable, silent, fond of excitement under her quiet indolence; whereas Linda, with her intense, passionately pale face, energetic, all fire and words, touched with gloom and scorn, a chip of the old block, true daughter of the austere republican, but with Teresa's voice, inspired him with a deep-seated mistrust. Moreover, the poor girl could not conceal her love for Gian'Battista. He could see it would be violent, exacting, suspicious, uncompromising - like her soul. (N. p. 524)

With her back to the door, she was doing her hair with her bare arms uplifted. One of them gleamed pearly white the other detached its perfect form in black against the unshuttered, uncurtained square window-hole. She was there, her fingers busy with her dark hair, utterly unconscious, exposed and defenceless - and tempting. (V. p. 288)

The night following from the eastward the retreat of the setting sun advanced slowly, swallowing the land and the sea; the land broken, tormented and abrupt, the sea smooth and inviting with its easy polish of continuous surface to wanderings facile and endless.

...

The calm was absolute, a dead, flat calm, the stillness of a dead sea and of a dead atmosphere. (R. p. 5)

—
 Perhaps it was that which made me feel lonely,
 since I was neither masked, nor disguised, nor
yelling, nor in any other way in harmony with the
bedlam element of life.

•••
 I was as young as before. Inconceivably young -
 still beautifully unthinking - infinitely recep-
tive. (A.G. p. 7 - 8)

A close look at the above quotations will reveal that Conrad's stylistic mannerisms which have been pinpointed in "The Lagoon" can be easily found in the full-length novels. The example from An Outcast abounds in postpositives, postmodifying prepositional phrases, as well as adjectives functioning as heads of noun phrases (the unforeseen, the sudden). The quotation from Nostramo is also rich in postpositives, and supplementive adjective clauses. On the other hand, while the quotations from Victory and the Arrow of Gold are not as heavily adjectived as the two preceding examples, the quotation from The Rescue is rich in postpositives and appositive noun phrases. The underscored items in the above quotations make it quite plain that Conrad's notorious adjectival practice outlived the so-called experimental stage of the early style. It could be argued that the ratio of the various types of modification dwindles in the novels of the middle period, especially The Secret Agent, and Under Western Eyes, the fact remains that Conrad's predilection for postpositive adjectives, heavily adjectived appositive noun phrases and adjectives functioning in place of adverbials, shows up in his manipulation of modifiers in all his works. The ratio might increase or decrease in one novel rather than another; but this is dependent, in the last resort, on the cumulative artistic effects the novelist is out to achieve. Thus, a novel abounding in dialogue like Under Western Eyes can hardly be expected to be as full of modifiers as is, say, An Outcast where Conrad's description of the exotic surroundings favours the use of various

types of modification. Nor can one expect a novel like The Arrow of Gold with its Marseilles background to be as rich in modifiers as is Victory which has for a background the fascinating world of the Malay jungle.

To determine Conrad's "singularity" in regard to his contemporary novelists, I have made the following rough count of the various types of modification in Conrad's "The Lagoon" (17 pages) and the first 17 pages in James's "The Pupil", Ford's The Good Soldier, Bennett's Hilda Lessways and Galsworthy's "The Juryman". (1)

Work examined	Types of modification									total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
"The Lagoon"	302	171	28	24	14	14	3	4	5	565
"The Pupil"	203	26	1	8	-	6	-	-	1	245
<u>The Good Soldier</u>	234	80	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	318
<u>Hilda Lessways</u>	271	54	4	2	2	10	2	-	-	345
"The Juryman"	175	34	8	7	-	9	10	-	-	243

1 - adjectives; 2 - postmodifying of-phrase; 3 - postposed string of modifiers; 4 - post-modifying participial phrase; 5 - post-modifying appositive phrase; 6 - post-modifying relative clause; 7 - supplementive adjective clause; 8 - transferred adjective (in synaesthetic combinations); 9 - adjectives in place of adverbials.

From the chart we know that Conrad uses almost double the number of modifiers used by any of the four contemporary novelists, which simply means that Conrad is the most descriptive novelist of the group. He is somewhat unique in his use of the post-

(1) James, 1963; Ford, 1962; Bennett, 1913; Galsworthy, 1918.

modifying appositive phrase, the transferred adjective, less so in his use of postposed modifiers and adjectives in place of adverbials.

On the basis of the foregoing comparison one can safely assume the difference between Conrad and his contemporaries to be in the main one of degree rather than kind. His contemporaries were no strangers to postpositive modifiers. The fact that Conrad overindulged in this practice might be ascribed to the influence of French on his English, especially where postposition seems to be rather enforced or superimposed as in "Almayer stepped homewards with long strides and mind uneasy." (A.F. p. 14) Still, in the majority of cases postposition of modifiers is a perfectly legitimate device aimed at serving the aesthetic aims of the stylist in Conrad. Most important of all, this comparison has proved that Conrad's descriptive practice is distinctive not only for what F.R. Leavis called Conrad's "adjectival insistence", but also for his excessive use of the post-modifying prepositional phrase, the appositive phrase, the post-posed and transferred modifiers, and almost every other possible type of modification. It has shown, that is, that Conrad is the most pictorial novelist of the group.

What Constance Garnett said about Conrad's adjectives being, among other things, "ironical" might as well be taken as a fitting judgement of his descriptive practice as a whole. However, one should

bear in mind that this is only one of the many uses to which most of the types of modification can be put. Indeed, my main contention in this part is to prove that, in addition to serving the novelist's ironic purposes, this stylistic peculiarity of Conrad's was part and parcel of an artistic technique that aimed at rendering in vivid detail, through the medium of the written word, those character portraits, tableaux and scenic images with which the novelist's impressionistic mind teemed.

In his essay "Impressionism in Fiction" Ford defines impressionism as "the frank expression of personality" (1). The impressionist does nothing but give us "the fruits of his own observation and the fruits of his observation alone." The impressionist, however, is not a man who merely reports his experiences, but rather one that renders them with the specific purpose of leaving a very strong impression on the reader's mind. A writer merely reporting the shooting of one of his characters might put it this way: "He saw a man aim a gun at him", while an impressionist would say: "He saw a steel ring directed at him." In the first, the writer gives a mere verbal statement of what actually happened; in the second, the writer shows us what happened by replacing the statement with an image that highlights the first impression the man had on that particular occasion. The second method exploits to the full the suggestive and symbolic qualities of language, something that seems to have been of special interest to Conrad the novelist.

Literary criticism usually examines images in terms of metaphor, simile or metonymy. Both metaphor and simile are based on the principle of similarity between two or more items, while metonymy underlines the contiguity between one item and another. In

(1) Ford, 1964^a : 33 - 72

purely linguistic terms, both metaphor and simile can be viewed as the literary equivalents of the paradigmatic relationship existing between certain items or structures, whereas metonymy parallels the syntagmatic relationship between one item and another. Conrad's images are largely based on the paradigmatic relationships between items. In other words, they are heavily dependent on metaphor and simile rather than metonymy.

As already pointed out this is not meant to be an exhaustive study of Conrad's imagery. Others have already attempted something of that sort (1). Here I am concerned not so much with the tenor or concept behind the image as with the verbal structure of the vehicle of the image. I should also distinguish between images of individual characters, portraits; images representing a group of characters in a situation of some dramatic or structural significance, tableaux; and scenic images derived mainly from natural surroundings. Further, one has to keep in mind that Conrad draws a distinction between the verbal structure of the narrator's images and that of his characters. With Conrad, changing moral perspectives entail a corresponding change in the verbal structure of the image used. A character's provenance or emotional mood is likely to affect the way he sees things. In his moments of surging hope, Almayer sees the world around him in a light totally different from that of his moments of despair. The half-savage Aissa sees Willems in purely sensuous terms, something which is quite in keeping with her character and social background. Conrad's scenic images, on the other hand, reflect the interaction between nature and man, for Conrad usually evokes images that project nature's sympathy for, or indignation at, certain human actions.

(1) Cf. Dowden, 1970 ; Yelton , 1967

The very titles of Conrad's novels are suggestive of the novelist's fondness for modification in one or other of its types. Thus, while a Dickens would entitle his novels "David Copperfield, Oliver Twist, Nicholas Nickleby, etc., Conrad would modify most of his titles. The premodifying s-genitive used in Almayer's Folly refers to the main theme of the novel. The postmodifying genitive is used in An Outcast of the Islands, The Nigger of the "Narcissus" and The Arrow of Gold to refer to the main characteristic or symbolic qualities of the characters concerned, who are respectively known as Willems, Wait and Dona Rita. Even the title Nostromo is said by one critic to be derived from the Latin (sic) *nostro-uomo* (our man or servant). (1) In a like manner, the noun premodifier is used in Lord Jim, while the attributive adjective is used in both The Secret Agent and Under Western Eyes. It is worth noting that this last novel was to be originally entitled Razumov, but then Conrad had second thoughts about it and gave it the title Under Western Eyes.

It is also characteristic of Conrad to attach some sort of modifier to almost each of his principal characters. Willems is always modified by an adjective functioning as the head of an appositive postmodifying phrase. He is thus ironically described as Willems, "the smart, the successful, the clever, or the confidential clerk of Hudig & Co.", while Nostromo is continually referred to as "the incorruptible, the invaluable, the illustrious, his worship, or the man in a thousand". In the same way, Heyst is repeatedly identified as "the Swedish Baron", while Captain Anthony is described as "the son of the poet". The recurrent use of such modifiers enforces their unmistakable ironic implications.

(1) Palmer, 1965 : 146. Nostro-uomo, however, is Italian, not Latin.

Irony is also achieved through the repetitive use of attributive adjectives like enchanted and great as when Conrad refers to Heyst as "enchanted Heyst" or to De Barral as "the great de Barral". This insistence on attaching a modifier of some sort to his principal characters betrays the novelist's determination to poke fun at the former's romanticism and the latter's self-complacency. The same ironic intention is behind Conrad's use of the postmodifying appositive phrases to describe some of the self-styled anarchists of The Secret Agent. Ossipon is always referred to as "the ex-medical student", while Michaelis is often described as the "ticket-of-leave apostle". And in both Almayer's Folly and An Outcast the reader is constantly reminded of Tom Lingard's vanity and naive sense of self-importance through the novelist's continual repetition of his name followed by the postmodifying appositive phrase "Rajah Laut", or "king of the seas".

The impressionistic method of description is the dominant artistic technique in the first two novels. In both Almayer's Folly and An Outcast the reader is shown things not only from the point of view of the omniscient narrator but from those of the characters concerned as well. Almayer's despairing mood in the opening pages of the novel makes him see his natural surroundings as witnesses to, if not as helpless partners in, his overwhelming tragedy. Almayer, the omniscient narrator tells us, neglected his dreaming to watch one "of those drifting trees". The tree,

swung slowly round, amid the hiss and foam of the water, and soon getting free of the obstruction began to move down stream again, rolling slowly over, raising upwards a long, denuded branch, like a hand lifted in mute appeal to heaven against the river's brutal and unnecessary violence. (A.F. p. 4)

Almayer's interest in the fate of the tree is motivated by the similarity which he perceives between the tree's struggle against the brutal current and his own struggle against his merciless

misfortune. The images that follow stress this feeling of togetherness between man and nature. Almayer sees a symbolic relationship between the tree "raising upwards a long, denuded branch" and a spent swimmer's "hand lifted in mute appeal to heaven". He sees also this covert relationship between "the river's brutal and unnecessary violence" and what might be termed "the brutal and unnecessary violence of his own fate". The attributive modifiers mute, brutal and unnecessary are carefully chosen to reflect the way Almayer saw things in his distress, while the overt relationship between the inanimate tree and the animate hand makes the similarity between man and nature quite unequivocal.

Almayer's prolific imagination enables him to underline the close relationships, be these overt or covert, between the various parties. Remembering the haggling between Hudig and Lingard, Almayer is quick to detect the similarity between the two men and "-- two mastiffs fighting over a marrowy bone (A.F. p. 8). The man's life-long obsession with gold is reflected in the way he uses more than one relative clause to postmodify the magic word on the first page of the novel, as well as in sentences like "..., while above all rose the musical chink of broad silver pieces streaming ceaselessly through the yellow fingers of the attentive Chinaman" (A.F. p. 6) where both the auditory and visual senses participate in apprehending the image of the "broad silver pieces" musically flowing through the fingers of Hudig's henchmen.

In contrast to Almayer's highly subjective sense impressions, the omniscient narrator's portrayal of Almayer's daughter, Nina, is heavily dependent on modifiers with concrete reference.

She was tall for a half-caste, with the correct profile of the father, modified and strengthened by the squareness of the face inherited from her maternal ancestors - the Sulu pirates.

...

She stood there all in white, straight, flexible, graceful, unconscious of herself, her low but broad forehead crowned with a shining mass of long black hair, etc. (A.F. pp. 16 - 7)

Here the insistence is on the physical attributes of the woman, which are brought out through the interplay of different types of modification. In the first sentence the predicative tall is followed by a postmodifying prepositional phrase, which in turn is succeeded by two reduced relative clauses: "modified and strengthened..., inherited from her maternal ancestors, etc." The second sentence contains a string of predicatives in the first part, while the latter is made up of two co-ordinated attributives low but broad, together with the postmodifying participial crowned which is further followed by some two prepositional phrases containing three attributives: shining, long black. The physical contours of the woman are visually experienced, and the modifiers used are indicative of the narrator's fairly objective intentions.

However, in his description of Nina's sense impressions of Dain Maroola the stress is laid on the sensuous aspect of the young Malay's character. On first meeting him, Nina "saw an erect lithe figure of medium height with a breadth of shoulder suggesting great power" (p. 55). Attributives like lithe and great add sensuous dimensions to the woman's otherwise factual description of her future lover. In their first meeting Nina also sees that,

The squareness of lower jaw, the full red lips, the mobile nostrils, and the proud carriage of the head gave the impression of a being half-savage, untamed, perhaps cruel, and corrected the softness of the almost feminine eye, that general characteristic of the race. (A.F. p. 55)

While attributives like lower, full red, and mobile draw attention to some further sensuous characteristics of the man, postpositives like half-savage, untamed, perhaps cruel highlight the temporary

side of the man's nature. The woman's subjective judgement of the man complements her factual rendering of his physical traits.

The same preoccupation with the sensuous aspect of Malay characters is to be found in An Outcast, where Willems's sense impressions of Aissa are shown us in the following manner:

The next moment he was passing her close, walking rigidly, like a man in a trance. He heard her rapid breathing and he felt the touch of a look darted at him from half-open eyes. It touched his brain and his heart together. It seemed to him to be something loud and stirring like a shout, silent and penetrating like an inspiration. (pp. 68 - 9)

Here, however, Conrad's synaesthetic vision is brought into play. Both the tactile and visual senses are involved in this strange combination of the noun touch and the of-phrase in "touch of a look". A third dimension, the auditory sense, is added in the last sentence where the look is replaced on the paradigmatic level by "something" that can be experienced by the auditory and tactile senses respectively as is obvious from the use of postpositives loud and stirring, silent and penetrating. One also notes the intellectual nature of the structures used; the look is at one time similar to a shout, at another it is like an inspiration.

The same synaesthetic vision is at work in the description of Willems's delight in his new-found love which left him wrapped up "in the soft and odorous folds of air heavy with the faint scent of blossoms and with the acrid smell of decaying .Life:" (p. 74), where the attributive adjectives of touch and smell soft and odorons modify the folds of air. The important thing to note is that the image materialising the air into folds accessible to our senses of touch and smell would not be realised without this obvious manipulation of premodifying adjectives like soft, acrid, decaying leaves, as well as postposed adjectives like heavy followed by its complementation.

Although Conrad capitalises on the sensuous aspect of characters like Nina and Dain in Almayer's Folly, and Aissa and Willems in An Outcast, in his portrayal of other characters the stress shifts from the sensuous to the exotic, despite the fact that we are shown these last characters from the impressionistic viewpoint of the speaker. Almayer's vision of Babalatchi, for instance, is rendered as follows:

This delay gave Almayer time to notice and greatly wonder at Babalatchi's official get-up. The statesman of Sambir was clad in a costume befitting his high rank. A loudly checkered sarong encircled his waist and from its many folds peeped out the silver hilt of the kriss that saw the light only on great festivals or during official receptions. Over the left shoulder and across the otherwise unclad breast of the aged diplomatist glistened a patent leather belt bearing a brass plate with the arms of Netherlands under the inscription, "Sultan of Sambir". Babalatchi's head was covered by a red turban, whose fringed ends falling over the left cheek and shoulder gave to his aged face a ludicrous expression of joyous recklessness.

(A.F. p. 93)

In such a passage, various types of modification combine to give us this colourful image of the one-eyed statesman of Sambir. The modifiers used belong to one sphere of sensation only, the visual, a fact which is further stressed through the careful choice of other word-classes. Thus, in addition to attributives like checkered, silver, brass, red, we get adverbials like loudly, and verbs like glistened which are all accessible to the sense of sight.

Sometimes Conrad manages to use modifiers for the construction of memorable tableaux. Of these one may cite that important meeting between Babalatchi, Abdulla, Willems and Aissa. In the course of that meeting Willems,

stretched his hands over the fire, looked round, and called out -
"Aissa!"

She must have been near, for she appeared at once within the light of the fire. The upper part of her body was wrapped up in the thick folds of a head covering which was pulled down over her brow, and one end of it thrown over from shoulder to shoulder

hid the lower part of her face. Only her eyes were visible - sombre and gleaming like a starry night."

Willems, looking at this strange, muffled figure, felt exasperated, amazed and helpless.
(O.I. pp. 127 - 8)

This tableau representing Willems, the muffled figure of his Malay paramour, in the presence of the one-eyed statesman, Babalatchi, and the Arab trader, Abdulla, is of great structural significance. The woman's muffled figure stands for the unbridg^eable gap between her and the white man. It is Aissa's decision to put on her veil in the presence of Abdulla, contrary to Willems's outspoken wish, that convinces the white man of the deep-seated convictions that separate them. It is no exaggeration to say that after this memorable scene the relationship between the Malay woman and her white lover takes a turn for the worse. The verbal structure of the tableau is made up of two distinctive parts. In the first place, there is the image of the black hooded figure with the glistening eyes which is brought about through the use of verbs like wrapped up, postmodifying prepositional phrases and some three postpositive adjectives. Then there is that image of the dark night with its shining stars realised through the exploitation of the "similarity" relationship between the two images. In the background there are those figures of the white man with his outstretched hand, Babalatchi with his one-eyed face and Abdulla with his native robes.

A similar tableau is that representing Lakamba and Babalatchi during one of their tête à tête meetings in the audience chamber of the Rajah's house.

They were both puzzled and frightened by the unexpected turn the events had taken. The Rajah, sitting crosslegged on his chair, looked fixedly at the floor; Babalatchi was squatting close by in an attitude of deep dejection.

"And where did you say he is hiding now?", asked Lakamba, breaking at last the silence full of gloomy forebodings in which they both had been lost for a long while. (A.F. p. 127)

The image of Lakamba and his henchman, Babalatchi, as reproduced in the above tableau is the result as much of the use of the predicative adjective crosslegged as of the progressive verb was squatting. Other modifiers, such as the postmodifying prepositional phrase of deep dejection and the postposed adjective "full of gloomy forebodings" add the finishing touch to one of the remarkable scenes of Conrad's first novel. The class-relationship between the two Malays is brought out in vivid detail.

Running side by side with those individual portraits and tableaux are those scenic images which reflect the close connection between man and the various elements. Such scenes are characterized by the relative density of almost all possible types of modification. Depicting one of the numerous love scenes between Dain and Nina, the omniscient narrator tells us:

→
apparently
Standing there alone, as if separated from the world; the heavens, earth; the very water under him swallowed up in the thick veil of the morning fog, he breathed out the name of Nina before him into the limitless space, sure of being heard, instinctively sure of the nearness of the delightful creature; certain of being aware of his near presence as he was aware of hers.

...

Over the low river mist hiding the boat with its freight of young passionate life and all-forgetful happiness, the stars paled, and a silvery-grey tint crept over the sky from the eastward. There was not a breath of wind, not a rustle of stirring leaf, not a splash of leaping fish to disturb the serene repose of all living things on the banks of the great river.

(A.F. pp. 68 - 9)

The passage embodies the close interaction between Dain and the various elements of nature. In the first part, the man's sense of uniqueness that makes him feel superior to, and forgetful of, the world around him is paralleled in the second part by the absolute calm and stillness of wind, leaves and fish. One notes also the rhythmic movement of phrases like: "sure of being, sure of the

nearness, certain of being", and "not a splash of, not a breath of, not a rustle of". Further, there is the lovely image of the water realised through the use of the postmodifying V-ed participle swallowed up and the prepositional phrase of the morning fog, as well as that of the paling stars covering the sky with that "silvery-grey tint" which depends for its effectiveness on the blending of the denominal attributive silvery and the colour adjective grey. This one-to-one relationship between human beings and nature is a distinctive feature of all those love scenes between Dain and Nina in Almayer's Folly, and Willems and Aissa in An Outcast.

Although people like Brierly, Stein and the French lieutenant manage, each in his own way, to diagnose the romantic side of Jim's nature, this conclusion is foregrounded in the opening chapters of the novel by the omniscient narrator who shows us Jim's imaginative faculties at full swing in passages like the following:

... he was sent at once to a "training-ship for officers of the mercantile marine".

...

He could see the big ships departing, the broad-beamed ferries constantly on the move, the little boats floating far below his feet, with the hazy splendour of the sea in the distance, and the hope of a stirring life in the world of adventure.

On the lower deck in the babel of two hundred voices he would forget himself, and beforehand live in his mind the sea-life of light literature. He saw himself saving people from sinking ships, cutting away masts in a hurricane, swimming through a surf with a line; or as a lonely castaway, bare-footed and half-naked, walking on uncovered reefs in search of shellfish to stave off starvation.

(L.J. pp. 5 - 6)

Unlike Almayer or Willems whose imaginative natures are mainly realised through their respective speech, Jim's imagination is shown us at work through this meticulous recording of his imagined exploits at sea on board the training ship. The resulting images are linguistically realised through V-ing postmodifying phrases in the first part, together with a combination of non-finite subordinate

phrases and some few attributives or supplementive adjective phrases in the second.

However, when the omniscient narrator ventures to pass judgement on Jim, the modifiers used smack of a certain subjectivity reminiscent of Conrad's adjectival practice in the earlier novels. The narrator tells us that once at sea, Jim could not go back, "because there is nothing more enticing, disenchanted, and enslaving than the life at sea" (p. 10). He further declares that Jim "was gentlemanly, steady, tractable, with a thorough knowledge of his duties" (p. 10). The same insistence on seemingly contrastive adjectives which has already been attested in "The Lagoon" is resorted to in the description of Jim. Still, modifiers like enticing and enslaving; steady and tractable bear witness to the enigmatic nature of the young sailor who, to both omniscient narrator and Marlow alike, "passes away under a cloud, inscrutable at heart, forgotten, unforgiven, and excessively romantic" (p. 416).

On the other hand, Marlow makes it clear that he is trying to interpret for his listeners "in slow speech the instantaneous effect of visual impressions" (p. 48). One such impression is that of the Patna sailors at the start of the novel. The skipper of the Patna is seen as "a monstrous bulk with large purple cheeks", while the other three are described as follows:

There was a sallow-faced, mean little chap with his arm in a sling, and a long individual in a blue flannel coat, as dry as a chip and no stouter than a broomstick, with drooping grey moustaches, who looked about him with an air of jaunty imbecility. The third was an upstanding, broad-shouldered youth, with his hands in his pockets...

(L.J. p. 40)

Although Marlow can be quite versatile in his use of modifiers - the chap is premodified by a string of attributives of an objective nature, together with the postmodifying prepositional phrase, while

the second individual is modified through a combination of attributives, and comparative phrases - there is a striking difference between Marlow's factual descriptions and the omniscient narrator's lyrical tone in passages like:

She held on straight for the Red Sea under a serene sky, under a sky scorching and unclouded, enveloped in a fulgor of sunshine that killed all thought, oppressed the heart, withered all impulses of strength and energy. And under the sinister splendour of that sky the sea, blue and profound, remained still, without a stir, without a ripple, without a wrinkle-viscous, stagnant, dead. (L.J. pp. 15 - 6)

The temporary nature of the impression recorded is thrown into relief through the excessive use of postposed adjectives such as scorching and unclouded, blue and profound where both the tactile and visual senses are involved. The postposed adjectives combine with the postmodifying V-ed participle phrase enveloped in a fulgor of sunshine to produce the image of the sky on that particular occasion. Still, in such passages one gets the feeling that the stress is laid as often as not on the visual aspect of things.

Indeed, one of the major differences between the descriptive technique in novels like Almayer's Folly, An Outcast, Victory and The Rescue and that of novels like The Secret Agent, Lord Jim, Chance, The Arrow of Gold, Nostromo, Under Western Eyes is the relative absence in the novels of the second group of that sensuous evocation of nature characteristic of the style of the omniscient narrator in the first group novels which deal with the Malay Archipelago. In his description of Jim's affair with Jewel or Nostromo's illicit relationship with Giselle, Conrad fails to bring out the close and sensuous interaction between man and nature peculiar to those love scenes of Nina and Dain, Willems and Aissa, or Heyst and Lena. It could be argued that the love theme in those last novels is not as central to the artistic design of those novels as

it is in the novels of the first group. Still, while this can be applied to the love theme in Lord Jim or Nostromo, it can hardly be true of the love theme in The Arrow of Gold. It would be more accurate to say that the omniscient narrator felt a certain fascination for the Malay jungles, and that his enchantment with the exotic setting reflected itself in the way he recorded his impressions of it.

In the novels of the second group Conrad tries to make up for his loss by concentrating on those aspects of nature that highlight the tragic design. Thus, in Lord Jim Marlow describes in detail the final scene between Jewel and Jim prior to his (Jim's) surrender to Doramin after Gentleman Brown's cold-blooded murder of Doramin's son, Dain Warris. Jewel reminds Jim of his past promises to her, exhorts him to take up arms against that sea of evil, or at least "fly" with her to where no one could touch him. To all this Jim characteristically retorts by saying that there is no escape for him and that nothing can touch him any more, thus emphasizing his decision to pay for Dain's life with his own. At this, Marlow tells the privileged reader,

She flung herself upon his breast and clasped him round the neck.

"Ah! but I shall hold thee thus, "She cried....
'Thou art mine!'

She sobbed on his shoulder. The sky over Patusan was blood-red, immense, steaming like an open vein. An enormous sun nestled crimson amongst the tree-tops, and the forest below had a black and forbidding face.

"Tamb'Itam tells me that on that evening the aspect of the heavens was angry and frightful. I may well believe it, for I know that on that very day a cyclone passed within sixty miles of the coast, though there was hardly more than a languid stir of air in the place. (p. 413)

Marlow's emotional involvement with Jim's fate and his unmasked sympathy for him is reflected in the way he evokes the sinister change that came over the sky and forests of Patusan following Jim's

suicidal decision. The image created is mainly effected through attributive adjectives like blood-red, immense, enormous, black, forbidding and predicatives like angry and frightful. The very choice of the adjectives is in keeping with the bloody end in store for Marlow's romantic hero. Thus, adjectives of colour are restricted to the two types: red and black. The rest of the adjectives show up nature as a reluctant witness to the white man's tragedy. This is why the forests 'wear' black and the aspect of heavens looks "angry and frightful".

Contrasted with the preceding passage which is rich in suggestive and symbolic modifiers, the following passage in which Marlow describes a moment of serenity during which Jim declares his deep attachment to Jewel appears at an obvious disadvantage:

"He (Jim) did not tell me what it was he said when at last he recovered his voice. I don't suppose he could be very eloquent. The world was still, the night breathed on them, one of those nights that seem created for the sheltering of tenderness, and there are moments when our souls, as if freed from their dark envelope, glow with an exquisite sensibility that makes certain silences more lucid than speeches. (p. 304)

Apart from the stillness of the world and the tenderness of the night, Marlow tells us nothing else about Jim's love for Jewel and its impact on his natural surroundings. The whole thing takes from him just one sentence, which is relatively poor in the various types of modification that such passages usually teem with in novels like Almayer's Folly or An Outcast.

The omniscient narrator takes over in Nostromo, where modifiers with concrete reference are abundantly used for the description of the South American Republic of Costaguana. The peninsula of Azuera is described as "a wild chaos of sharp rocks and stony levels cut about by vertical ravines" (p. 4), while the Cordillera is seen as a "clear-cut vision of dark peaks rearing their ^{steep} slopes

on a lofty pedestal of forest rising from the very edge of the shore" (p. 6). The narrator's main concern is with the visual aspect of his distant impressions of the fictitious republic, and the modifiers used can be only relegated to one sphere of sensation.

The same insistence on the visual aspect of his impressions shows up in the way the narrator paints for us our first real vision of the much talked about Nostromo. He is introduced to us as "A horseman mounted on a silver-grey mare" (p. 124). He then takes off his hat "a grey sombrero with a silver cord and tassels" (p. 125) to greet the party in the carriage (Mrs. Gould and company). All the time the narrator lays special emphasis on the denominal attributive adjective silver which is also used to describe the tiny "silver buttons down the seam of the trousers" and "the silver plates on headstall and saddle" (p. 125) of the man with the "unapproachable style," the famous Capataz de Cargadores. This repetitive use of the denominal adjective silver is not without significance, for it helps associate Nostromo with the very thing that would be the main cause of his downfall long before he is entrusted with his fateful mission on the Golfo Placido. The adjectives are not here for the sake of adding a colourful touch to the portrait of the Capataz; they serve as symbols in the overall design of the novel.

On the other hand, the word silver is constantly used by Conrad as a noun in connection with the San Tomé mine. In such cases the two adjectives shining and incorruptible are used to refer to two of its inherent qualities. On the Great Isabel Nostromo tells Martin Decoud: "And silver is an incorruptible metal that can be trusted to keep its value for ever...." (p. 300). This is why when the dying Nostromo tells Mrs. Gould: "Senora, shall I tell you

where the treasure is? To you alone.... Shining! Incorruptible!" (p. 560), we are dealing not so much with a case of misplaced modification as with one of transferred adjectives, for here Conrad makes his protagonist describe Mrs. Gould with the same two adjectives that are as often as not associated with the silver of the mine. There is more than one way to interpret the use of the transferred adjective in the above example. It may be that Nostromo, turned cynical, is poking fun at the whole theory of human incorruptibility, in which case the transferred adjectives become more ironical than otherwise. It could also be argued that Nostromo, in his last moment of illumination, perceives the true worth of Mrs. Gould, and rightly applies to her person the same adjectives, which experience has shown to be the fitting description of that precious metal that was too much of a temptation for the great Capataz to resist.

On their own, adjectives can be manipulated in such a way as to help the novelist build up the tragic effect he is after. The closing chapter of the novel opens with Captain Fidanza, formerly the Nostromo of the first two thirds of the book, going down the side of his schooner "calm, unbending ; deliberate in the way he sat down in his dinghy and took up his sculls". (p. 546) On the face of it, the supplementive adjective clause seems to be nothing but the description of a man's state under certain circumstances. We do not feel the same about it, however, when we know that the man is setting out on one of his surreptitious nocturnal visits to the treasure he had appropriated for his own use during the turmoils of the civil wars. It is when we get a hint of the man's moral deterioration that we appreciate Conrad's choice of the adjectives used. It is simply that Conrad wants to enhance the impression of the man's corruption by intimating that he has become a

confirmed rogue, who no longer feels any qualms about his guilt, for he is now calm, unbending and deliberate in all that he does. The one-time incorruptible man of the people has become a master of deception and fraud. He has even outwitted his masters who taught him the art of being incorruptible in theory and a consummate rogue in practice.

Such a procedure is important because the novelist knows that Nostromo has won to his side the majority of his readers. Conrad himself cannot help, now and again, showing his admiration for his picturesque hero. This careful choice of adjectives helps justify the tragic end the novelist has ^{in store} for him. On the other hand, when Conrad tells us that Nostromo was angry with Giselle because she could not hear "the clanking of his fetters, his silver fetters" (p. 546) the denominal adjective serves as a further reminder to the reader of the man's guilt. It also underscores the fact that the man himself was quite conscious of the reason of his fall.

The novel is rich in tableaux. There is that one representing Nostromo, Decoud and Hirsch, the Esmeralda jew, in the lighterful of silver against the sombre background of the Golfo Placido. There is also that tableau depicting Barrios with his bottle against the background of army barracks with father Corbelan ministering to the spiritual needs of the troops (Barrios's soldiers). There are further those two controversial tableaux in the closing chapter of the novel, the one representing Nostromo on his death bed with Mrs. Gould, as well as that other depicting Nostromo with the Marxist photographer just before Nostromo breathes his last.

Of Mrs. Gould and Nostromo the narrator tells us,

It was thus that, cloaked and majestically hooded over her evening costume, this woman (Mrs. Gould), full of endurance and compassion, stood by the

side of the bed on which the splendid Capata~~2~~ de Cargadores lay stretched out motionless on his back. The whiteness of sheets and pillows gave a sombre energetic relief to his bronzed face, to the dark, nervous hands, so good on a tiller, upon a bridle and on a trigger, lying open and idle upon a white coverlet. (p. 558)

Here the tableau is the cumulative result of the interplay of V-ed postmodifying clauses, prepositional phrases, attributive and predicative adjectives. One notes also this contrapuntal variation on the kind of modifier used. The whiteness of the bedding is contrasted with the bronze face of the dying man, while the man's dexterity with bridle and trigger is contrasted with his idle and helpless state on his death bed. The dialogue between the two characters ends with Nostromo declaring that he dies "betrayed". His refusal to say "by whom" has given rise to a controversy that is far from settled to date.

Equally controversial is that tableau of the photographer "small, frail, bloodthirsty, the hater of capitalists, perched on a high stool near the head of the bed with his knees up and his chin in his hands" (p. 562) and the dying Nostromo in the grip of impending death. The image of the man is effected through the use of a series of postposed adjectives, together with one postmodifying V-ed clause and some three prepositional phrases. To the photographer's urgent queries regarding the treasure and Dr. Monyghan, Nostromo's only reply is "a glance of enigmatic and profound inquiry" (p. 563). Here attributive adjectives like enigmatic and profound are suggestive in that they sum up some of the characteristics of the hero's life, for his very existence in this world has been enigmatic, but his experience has been varied and profound; and whereas his life has been a short one, the sufferings he has been through have proved to be as atrocious as those short shudders testifying to the most atrocious sufferings of his last moments in

this world of contradictions. For the reader Nostromo passes away under a cloud just as Jim does for Marlow.

Although both Victory and The Rescue abound in images of individual characters and portraits, it is in his evocation of the Malay jungle with its fascination and close interaction with human beings that Conrad manages to exploit those disparate spheres of sensation in a manner reminiscent of the lush style of the early novels. Describing Samburan where Heyst and Lena take refuge the narrator puts it this way:

The bulk of the central ridge of the island cut off the bungalow from sunrises, whether glorious or cloudy, angry or serene. The dwellers therein were debarred from reading early the fortune of the newborn day. It sprang upon them in its fulness with a swift retreat of the great shadow when the sun, clearing the ridge, looked down, hot and dry, with a devouring glare like the eye of an enemy. But Heyst, once the Number One of his locality, while it was comparatively teeming with mankind, appreciated the prolongation of early coolness, the subdued, lingering half light, the faint ghost of departed night, the fragrance of its dewy, dark soul captured for a moment longer between the great glow of the sky and the intense blaze of the uncovered sea. (p. 185)

Three spheres of sensation are involved here: the tactile (hot sun, devouring glare), the visual (cloudy sunrise, swift retreat, great glow, intense blaze), and the olfactory (the fragrance of its dewy dark soul). The modifiers used comprise adjectives of colour (dark, cloudy), of motion (swift, lingering, faint) general adjectives like angry or serene, and the post-modifying V-ed participial phrase: captured for a moment longer.... The description parallels the euphoric mood of the Swede Heyst and the English Lena who "moved, silent in the great stillness, breathing the calmness, the infinite isolation, the repose of a slumber without dreams." (p. 190)

On the other hand, Lena's death is followed by a tableau highlighting nature's sympathy with the girl's tragic end in a manner

highly reminiscent of the earlier passage from Lord Jim.

Over Samburan the thunder had ceased to growl at last, and the world of material forms shuddered no more under the emerging stars. The spirit of the girl which was passing away from under them clung to her triumph convinced of the reality of her victory over death. (p. 406)

Prominent among the verbal elements of this tableau are modifiers like material, emerging and post-modifying phrases like of the reality of her victory. These combine with verbs and nouns in creating that tableau of a nature paying homage to one of Conrad's most appealing tragic heroines.

The interplay of the various sense impressions is also foregrounded in the novels of the late period. In The Arrow of Gold Allegre is said to have once replied "in his silkiest tone" (p. 28) where the tactile and auditory senses are brought together. On the other hand, Blunt speaks "in that curiously flavoured voice of his" (p. 30), where the two senses of taste and sound are combined.

A more telling example is Conrad's technique of making his modifiers effect that curious fusion of concrete objects and abstract notions as in:

In the fullness of its life her face preserved a sort of immobility. ^{or} The words seemed to form themselves, fiery, pathetic, in the air, outside her lips. Their design was hardly disturbed; a design of sweetness, gravity, and force as if born from the inspiration of some artist; for I had never seen anything to come up to it in nature before or since. (p. 85)

Although the images created are the result as much of verbs like form and born as of the various types of modification, the fact remains that it is modifiers such as fiery, pathetic, and post-modifying of-phrases like design of sweetness that give life to such descriptions wherein the abstract notion of word is concreted in the most striking way.

Again, there is this concretion of abstractions in the following sentence:

The mistral howled in the sunshine, shaking the bare bushes quite furiously. And everything was bright and hard, the air was hard, the light was hard, the ground under our feet was hard. (p. 65)

There can be no doubting the role played by modifiers in the overall imagistic pattern of the tableau. Here, as elsewhere in Conrad, the narrator never lets an opportunity pass without giving full rein to his prolific power of evocation.

It should be clear by now that the verbal structure of Conrad's imagery is largely made of adjectives and the other types of modification. Still, one should also remember that in a great number of cases it is the combination of modifiers and other constituents of the sentence that produces the required image and help achieve the novelist's aesthetic ends.

It has been suggested earlier that Conrad's excessive use of adjectives and other modifiers was mainly due to the fact that he was an impressionist recording the experiences of an eventful life, and it is no mere coincidence that M. George, who is critically identified with the young Conrad, should always remind the readers of The Arrow of Gold that he is merely recording his impressions. On page 13 he tells his readers, "You may think ^{that}/I am subtilizing my impressions," and on page 66 he tells us that "the visual impression (of Dona Rita) was more of colour in a picture than of the forms of actual life", while later on he declares that he had to make those notes of his experience whose events "are concerned not only with the nature of the facts but with the intensity of my sensations." (p. 88) That this recording of his impressions should heavily depend on modifiers is quite in keeping with Conrad's

belief that "I possess an inalienable right to the use of all my epithets." (1) Besides, it seems reasonable to assume that whereas facts can be directly recounted, sensations or impressions can only be shown. Bearing this in mind, the reader will no longer wonder at Conrad's "adjectival insistence."

(1) LL, Vol. II, p. 73. (Letter dated Monday, August, 1908 to Arthur Symons.)

Chapter VII

THE LEXIS OF UNCERTAINTY : LIKE, AS IF AND AS THOUGH

Back in 1896 H.G. Wells was one of the first critics to express ambivalent views about Conrad's second novel, An Outcast of the Islands. On the one hand, he considered the novel to be "the finest piece of fiction that has been published this year". On the other, he took Conrad to task over his sentences which Wells believed to be "not unities", but "miltitudinous tandems," adding that the novelist "has still to learn the great half of his art, the art of leaving things unwritten" (1). An Outcast was followed by short stories like "The Lagoon", "Karain" and "The Return" which were scathingly attacked by Conrad's critics for what F.R. Leavis was later to call Conrad's "adjectival insistence". The publication of Conrad's third novel, The Nigger of the 'Narcissus', however, was acclaimed as an artistic tour de force by the novelist who had apparently started to "learn the great half of his art", the art of leaving things unsaid. Since then, Conrad's achievement in The Nigger has been commended, among other things, for the way he plays down the adjectival excesses of the earlier works, as well as for his clever manipulation of the suggestive resources of language (2).

On a careful perusal of The Nigger, I have come to the conclusion that the reduction in the number of modifiers used in this short novel, as opposed to those of the earlier works, was accompanied by a striking rise in the number of the items I have chosen to classify under the term: "the lexis of uncertainty".

(1) Wells, 1896 : 509 - 10

(2) Guerard, 1958 : 92, describes the Nigger as Conrad's "first major symbolist experiment".

These are subordinators like as...as, as if, as though, and adverbials or conjunctives such as like. A count of these in the novels before and after The Nigger has convinced me that in lessening his dependence on modifiers in the novels that followed The Nigger, Conrad has seen to it that this should be compensated by the use of a stylistic feature that would render his meaning as suggestive as it is expressive. If adjectives and other modifiers can make the reader hear, feel and see "an impression conveyed through the senses", the lexis of uncertainty is there to help him capture that "magic suggestiveness" essential for the perception of reality (1).

The first part of the present chapter is mainly a linguistic description of the various items of the lexis of uncertainty used by Conrad in The Nigger. This is followed by the results of my statistical investigation of this feature in the different novels. A count of this feature in some four novels by Conrad's near contemporaries, Forster, Bennett, Ford and Henry James, will help establish his uniqueness. The second part is an assessment of the artistic ends achieved through this stylistic device.

All writers use some or all of these lexical items with a view to establishing some sort of analogy between two or more items of the discourse. The relationship thus effected aims at adding a certain degree of vividness to the descriptions or impressions the writer wants to convey to his readers. The fact remains, however, that when a writer overindulges himself, as Conrad does, in the use of such items, this practice is bound in the long run to leave the reader with the feeling that the writer is either unable to hit on the right adjective or word, or that he deliberately resorts to this device to create an atmosphere of uncertainty, mystery or

(1) N.N. pp. ix

mystification. In my opinion, the second alternative holds good for Conrad. (1)

The first time Conrad uses like in a quasi-adjectival function in The Nigger is when he introduces the crew of the ship "Narcissus" to his readers. Here the narrator, who is himself one of the crew, tells us that the "silhouettes of moving men appeared for a moment, very black, without relief, like figures cut out of sheet tin" (p. 3). The adjective like (2) is used predicatively in the sense of "having the appearance of or similar to". The analogy is between the moving men and figures cut out of sheet tin. The comparison is original; its source is the arts. On the syntactic level, the narrator's use of the adjective like underlines the professed or obvious comparison between the two items. Semantically, however, the comparison is not a precise one. The narrator is obviously interested in conveying his impressions of the moving crew who are described as being "very black, with ^{out} relief". It is this contradiction between the blurred and indistinct impression of the moving silhouettes, and the concrete and well-defined contours of the "figures cut out of sheet tin" that makes the comparison somewhat disappointing from the semantic standpoint. Indeed, it is a signal example of Conrad's mixed metaphors. On the one hand, it could be argued that Conrad is advisedly using the mixed metaphor or analogy. It is true that at the start of the voyage the crew of the "Narcissus" seem to be too much preoccupied with their trivial personal problems to command the admiration of the narrator, hence his description of them as shadowy figures lacking the distinctness or the heroic qualities characteristic of real

(1) The linguistic analysis in this chapter is based on The Quirk Grammar, the O E D and Fowler, 1926.

(2) Henceforth reference to like as an adjective implicitly means that it is equivalent in meaning to the transitive adjective 'similar to' or 'resembling in this respect'.

sailors. On the other hand, once the "Narcissus" is in distress, especially when it runs into foul weather during the famous storm scenes, the crew relinquish their indolence and face up to the storm in a way that justifies the narrator's hint at that latent concrete aspect of their character which is conveyed by the second half of the analogy: "like figures cut out of sheet tin". Both the subject and predicate of the analogy are susceptible to the visual sense.

The different characters are introduced through comparisons drawn from the narrator's varied spheres of experience. Old Singleton is presented as being, among other things, "tattooed like a cannibal chief", while his white skin "gleamed like satin" (p. 6). In this instance like is used both as an adjective and adverbial. In "tattooed like a cannibal chief" like is an adjective while in the second analogy it is an adverbial equivalent in meaning to "after the manner of or similarly to" (1). Semantically, the analogies are less original than those of the previous example. The last one associating white skin with satin is one of those cliches or overdone comparisons frequently used in the literature of the period. This, however, can be taken as an indication of the unsophisticated and down-to-earth aspect of the narrator's experience. The source of the analogy in both cases being the east or dark Africa, where chiefs are tattooed and whiteness is connected with local materials such as satin. Here again the visual sense is the means of apprehending both parts of the analogy.

Young Belfast is described as having eyes that "danced" while, "in the crimson of his face, comical as a mask the mouth yawned

(1) Any subsequent mention of like as an adverbial will simply mean that it is used in the sense of "similarly as" or "after the manner of".

black, with strange grimaces" (p. 8), the analogy between the mouth and the mask is realised this time through the adverbial of comparison as. Here, however, we get a complex image that admits of further discussion. For one thing, the use of the adverbial as in "comical as a mask" gives a certain degree of emphasis or absoluteness to the attribute or qualification which both the mouth and the mask have in common, i.e. their comicality. The meaning is quite clear despite the suppression of the antecedent as in the subordinate clause comical as a mask. The fact remains that the two modifiers comical and black can easily collocate with the noun mask, whereas here the adverbial as puts the emphasis on the comical relationship rather than the colour relationship between the two items. The source of the analogy is the arts; the narrator is apparently drawing on his experience in the east. (1) The sense of sight is still the only means of apprehending the effected analogy.

Two sequences of images follow this one. Belfast, the narrator tells us, "shrieked like an inspired dervish" (p. 8), while Belfast himself tells his fellow sailors that his adversary rushed at him "like a mad bull" (p. 8). In both cases like functions as an adverbial. The first analogy is susceptible to the auditory sense; the second to the visual. The contrast between the narrator's original analogy and Belfast's commonplace or lifeless comparison is a pointer to the wide gap between their respective spheres of experience. The east is the source of the narrator's analogy, while Belfast's is drawn from the animal kingdom. We also note the ironic quality of the adjective inspired. A dervish's shrieks are not so much the result of divine inspiration as of uncontrolled hallucinations.

(1) The narrator's method of relating his experiences to his immediate neighbourhood testifies to the strength of the metonymic strain in Conrad's imagery. The technique is similar to Marlow's in both Lord Jim and Chance.

Of the Russian Finn, the narrator observes that "in the racket of explosive shouts and rolling laughter, (he) remained motionless, limp and dull, like a deaf man without a backbone" (p.9). The adjective like establishes this far-fetched comparison between the Finn and the deaf man without ^a backbone. But far-fetched as the comparison might seem to be - one can hardly imagine a man without a backbone - the image created testifies to Conrad's ability to revitalise what would otherwise be taken for a commonplace, if not a banal, description of the man. To say that in the midst of all hilarity the Finn looked like a deaf man has nothing original about it; but to say that he was like a man without a backbone breathes new life into the overexhausted comparison.

So far the analogies conjured up by the narrator with regard to Singleton, Belfast and the Russian Finn have been of a sympathetic nature. They may be indolent, deaf, tattooed like cannibals, but there is always that muffled note of the rock-like quality implicit in the "figures cut out of sheet tin" which would stand them in good stead during the storm episode. When it comes to Donkin, the narrator seems at a loss as to the best way he can convey the sheer meanness and revolting villainy of the man. One of the recurrent images is that of Donkin as a bird of prey. Donkin's shoulders "were peaked and drooped like the broken wings of a bird" (p. 10), where the analogy is effected through adverbial like. Still, when he offers to describe him in concrete terms: "He stood with arms akimbo, a little fellow with white eyelashes" (p. 9), he follows this with, "he looked as if he had known all the degradations, and all the furies. He looked as if he had been cuffed, kicked, rolled in the mud; he looked as if he had been scratched, spat upon, pelted with unmentionable filth" (p.9).

The subordinator as if is used in this case to introduce suppositions which aim at creating an image of the man's shabby and nauseous appearance. The subordinator implies that although this cannot be taken for a literal description of the man, the statement is practically right. The stress is laid on those aspects of the man, which can be apprehended by the sense of sight.

Like modifiers, the various items of the lexis of uncertainty are unevenly distributed throughout Conrad's works. They usually abound in descriptive passages. The foregoing illustrations are scattered instances of the novelist's exploitation of this stylistic device for purposes of comparison. In the examples that follow these items figure on such a large scale that they tend to acquire the dimensions of a stylistic mannerism, similar to that already attested with respect to the different types of modification.

On the eve of the ship's setting sail for England, the narrator's description of the Bombay harbour reminds us of what Richard Curle once said about Conrad being "one of the great masters of atmosphere - that thing so hard to define and so easy to perceive. For atmosphere is not simply a background, it is an essence vitally affecting the spirit of a work" (1). Thus on the town side,

high

... Rows of other lights stood away in straight lines as if drawn up on parade between towering buildings; but on the other side of the harbour sombre hills arched their black spines, on which, here and there, the point of a star resembled a spark fallen from the sky. Far off, Byculla way, the electric lamps at the dock gates shone on the end of lofty standards with a glow blinding and frigid like captive ghosts of some evil moons. Scattered all over the dark polish of the roadstead, the ships at anchor floated in perfect stillness under the feeble gleam of

(1) - Curle, 1914 : 89

their riding-lights, looming up, opaque and bulky, like strange and monumental structures abandoned by men to an everlasting repose. (p. 15)

In the first and third sentences the subordinator as if and adverbial like establish two analogies susceptible to sensuous perception. In the second sentence, like effects an analogy between the electric lamps and one of those recondite phenomena which are the proper domain of spiritual intuition: "the captive ghosts of some evil moon". It is the sheer beauty of such passages that betrays the authorial tone behind the narrator, for it is Conrad's imagination that creates this quiet atmosphere of the Bombay harbour which contrasts with the hustle and bustle on board the "Narcissus" (1). Everything around the ship stands still as if to pay homage to that microcosm of the world of men embarking on their voyage home. This alternation between images of sensuous perception (the troops on parade and the monumental structures) and those of spiritual intuition (the captive ghosts) is something that the Marlow of Lord Jim and Chance is fond of, as will be shown later. The three analogies are based on three different spheres of experience: the military, the spectral and the artistic. This lively tableau of images bodies forth the impression received by the narrator from his place of observation on board the "Narcissus".

This, however, is not the only occasion on which Conrad's insatiable mania for commentary and occult meditations shows through the narrative. In the following quotation Conrad moves from the general to the particular in what looks like a contrapuntal descriptive technique:

A multitude of stars coming out into the clear night peopled the emptiness of the sky. They glittered, as if alive above the sea; they

(1) For an enlightening comment on Conrad's narrative inconsistencies in the Nigger, see Guerard, 1958 : 92 - 115.

surrounded the running ship on all sides; more intense than the eyes of a staring crowd, and as inscrutable as the souls of men.

The passage had begun, and the ship, a fragment detached from the earth, went on lonely and swift like a small planet.

...
The days raced after one another, brilliant and quick like the flashes of a lighthouse,... (pp. 29 - 30)

In the second and fourth sentences attention is focused on the general atmosphere surrounding the ship, while in the third the emphasis is put on the ship itself as a microcosm of an earth peopled solely by seamen. The subordinator as if and the complement more...than call up analogies that are based on the narrator's capacity for spiritual intuition. The two adverbials like evoke images of a more concrete nature susceptible only to the sense of sight. This constant shift from the general to the particular, from the moralising abstract to the highly visualised particular, from the broad vision to the close view is a clever application of the tenets of impressionism as practised by both Conrad and Ford. We also note that, apart from their image-making function, the two subordinate clauses containing the complement more...than and the correlative adverbial as...as are heavily laden with modifiers - intense, staring, inscrutable - that ^ehighten the suspense and mystery surrounding the ship's voyage.

With the breeze setting in, the crew are on the alert, while the ship,

...swung to a heavier puff; and suddenly the slack of the chain cable between the windlass and the hawsepipe clinked, slipping forward an inch, and rose gently off the deck with a startling suggestion as of unsuspected life that had been lurking stealthily in the iron. In the hawse-pipe the grinding links sent through the ship a sound like a low groan of a man sighing under a burden. The strain came on the windlass, the chain taunted like a string, vibrated... (p. 26)

In this quotation the stress is laid on the auditory sense. Adverbial as of the first sentence restricts the reference of the preposition of with a view to putting into relief the analogy between the sudden activity of the ship and the unsuspected life that seemed to be lurking inside her. The following two analogies are effected through adjectival and adverbial like respectively. The personification implicit in the analogy between the ship and its sound on the one hand, and the unsuspected life and human groans on the other, is abandoned in the third sentence for the sake of drawing a comparison between the sound of the chain and that of a musical string. Here, also, we note that sense of mystery emanating from the comparisons. The suggestion of unsuspected life, the low groans of the man sighing under a burden, seems to indicate that the ship is foredoomed, that the crew are courting disaster by sailing in a ship whose links grind and chains vibrate. The mystification enhances that feeling of suspense which contrasts with the ship ultimately making port in safety.

Once out at sea, the ship's captain is seen mainly within the context of mortuary images:

At night, many times he (Captain Allistoun) rose out of the darkness of the companion, such as a phantom above a grave, and stood watchful and mute under the stars, his night-shirt fluttering like a flag... When he spoke... his restless grey eyes still and cold, like the loom of ice. (p. 30)

Here a new element of comparison is introduced where the narrator detects a similarity between the Captain and the phantom guarding a grave. This analogy is effected through the combination of the adjective such and the adverbial as, a combination which was apparently brought about for reasons of stylistic variety. The grave which the Captain watches over is meant to be the "Narcissus". The resultant sense of suspense and mystification is further heightened when the Captain's eyes are described as being cold and

lifeless like ice. (1) Everything, every word seems to suggest approaching death or inevitable disaster. Two of the images have their source in the narrator's maritime experience, while that of the spectre-like Captain seems to be derived from the adventure tales of writers like Bulwer Lytton in the "elegant verbiage" of whose pages sailors like Old Singleton found the "excitement, appearance, forgetfulness and mystery" (p. 6) they longed for.

With the ship confidently carving its way through the wide seas, the narrator turns his attention to the main objective of his narrative: his proposed study of the "collective psychology" of a group of men fighting against those tremendous odds represented on the one hand by a relentless nature, and on the other by the spell cast on the crew by the ailing nigger James Wait. This spell is gradually brought home to the reader through comparisons that are mainly apprehended by the auditory sense. Wait's cough is related through adverbial like to explosives in "it resounded like two explosions in a vault" (p. 18), and to mighty wind in "(it) tossed him like a hurricane" (p. 24). The same insistence on the auditory sense occurs when Wait's presence is heralded by "something like a weak rattle" which came through the forecastle door. The fact that the crew, the narrator included, were not aware of Wait's consumptive nature is underlined by the analogy between the weak rattle and that indefinite something which was none other than Wait's fatal cough. In this last case like is an adjective whose elliptical nature can be well perceived if we replace it with the correlative subordinator as...as: "Something as startling as a weak rattle". We also note the narrator's mystifying stress on the indefiniteness and sheer mystery of everything about the nigger.

(1) It is worth mentioning that whereas the metaphorical origin of these images is implicit in the similarity relationship between the subject and predicate of each comparison, the metonymic strain is highlighted by the contiguity in space between the shirt and the flag (both on the same ship) on the one hand and the Captain's eyes and the loom of ice (ship and sea) on the other.

A few lines later James Wait and the crew's reaction to his appearance are spotlighted through various analogies:

Then James Wait's head protruding, became visible, as if suspended between the two hands that grasped a door-post on each side of the face.

...
 ... the setting sun dipped sharply, as though fleeing before our nigger; a black mist emanated from him, a subtle and dismal influence; a something cold and gloomy that floated out and settled on all the faces like a mourning veil. (34)

In this sequence of analogies the last two run concurrently. The three images are easily apprehended by the visual sense. They are both suggestive and symbolic. The first effected through the subordinator as if bodies forth the symbolic quality the nigger has acquired in the eyes of the crew. With his two hands clutching the doorposts and his head dangling in between, Wait reminds us of the crucified image of Jesus Christ. It is as though the nigger were not only a symbol of the crew's fear of mortality, or of the blackness in their hearts, but also of their need to be absolved from sin. That such a conjecture is not mere theorising is later borne out by the fact that the crew thought of rising in mutiny against their officers in support of Jimmy's demand for special treatment. The second analogy effected through the subordinator as though paints a very lovely image of the sun hurrying on its westward course as if eager to outdistance its black chaser, Wait. Needless to say that the image foreshadows Jimmy's impending end. The last of the three analogies, effected through adverbial like, has the merit of further enhancing the close relationship between the preceding images. Not only does Jimmy's appearance drive away the sun, but it also casts a sad veil on the face of the crew. It could be argued that the use of modifiers such as dismal, cold and gloomy with reference to Jimmy's impact on the crew precludes the possibility of associating him with the image of Christ

crucified. Still, one has to remember that the crew's attitude towards the nigger is far from consistent. Like Coleridge's seamen of the "Ancient Mariner" they vacillate between sympathy for, and sheer hatred of their albatross. Besides, the effect of the modifiers is of little significance compared with the narrator's use of the possessive pronoun our in "our nigger", for here the nigger is not depersonalised, but rather identified with something mythical and symbolic in the crew's consciousnesses.

James Wait's irritating way of talking about his failing health is described in terms of its disconcerting effect on the morale of the crew. Wait talked of death:

as if no one else in the world had ever been intimate with such a companion....
He would talk of that coming death as though it had been already there, as if it had been walking the deck outside, as if it would presently come in to sleep in the only empty bunk, as if it had sat by his side at every meal. (p. 36)

The suppositions introduced by the subordinators as if and as though constitute a fine example of the developed image in Conrad. In both sentences death, which is the most recondite phenomenon of spiritual intuition, is personified. It is first seen as Jimmy's companion. Then follows the suggestion that it could walk decks, sleep in empty bunks or sit by the nigger's side at meals. This solidification of man's spiritual intuition of the idea of death is typical of Conrad's sophisticated narrators, especially Marlow and M. Gerge of the Arrow of Gold. The sinister impact of Jimmy's words is underscored in the way the narrator wavers between the overt personification in "companion" and the derogatory insistence on the use of the impersonal pronoun it.

When the ship runs into storm off the Cape, the narrator describes the crew's reactions by means of the subordinators as and as though:

→
 They watched the weather and the ship as men on shore watch the momentous chances of fortune. Captain Allistoun never left the deck, as though he had been part of the ship's fittings.

...
 He (the steward) kept his gaze riveted upon her as a loving man watches the unselfish toil of a delicate woman upon the slender thread of whose existence is hung the whole meaning and joy of the world. We admired her qualities aloud... as though they had been our own. (p. 50)

Here we get a sequence of analogies, all related to the main theme, the relationship between ship and crew. Still, as against the commonplace, even tautological, nature of the first - after all there is nothing striking in comparing men watching the weather with shore people watching the chances of fortune - the second image comparing the steward to the lover is original, despite the fact that the originality is the result not so much of the analogy as of the types of modification that set it in relief. Apart from this, we note that the subordinators are concerned with the rock-like quality of the Captain and crew of the "Narcissus". The spectral image of the Captain watching over the grave-like ship of the earlier comparisons is replaced by suppositions that highlight the sterling qualities of both Captain and crew, who admire the ship's solidity seeing in it a reflection of their newly felt sense of solidarity in the face of threatening danger. The emphasis is laid on the visual aspect of things.

On the other hand, the ship's attempt to weather the storm is brought out through adverbial like in "(the ship) tossed about, shaken furiously, like a toy in the hand of a lunatic" (p. 53), and through adjectival like in the "wind came brutal like the blow of a fist", and the "hail streamed on her ... round and gleaming in the murky turmoil like a shower of pearls" (p. 53). Both the visual and the tactile senses are brought into play. The first and third analogies are apprehended by the sense of sight, while

that of touch is the means of apprehending the second. One also notes the suggestive quality of the analogies. The participial modifier shaken furiously glorifies the ship's fight against the relentless elements of wind and water; the noun lunatic stands for both the sea and the storm. The second analogy is disappointing, in part at least, because of the unfitting collocation of the modifier brutal with the "blow of a fist", while "hail" could hardly be seen under the adverse circumstances as resembling "a shower of pearls". It is only in moments of thrill or euphoria that such can be the case.

The ship's battle with the elements commands the narrator's admiration, so much so that he devotes pages on end to the lengthy description of the struggle between the ship and its inveterate adversaries, the two elements of water and air. The ship drifts "like the last vestige of a shattered creation" and in the raging storm the crew's suits "swung out and in ... like reckless ghosts of decapitated seamen dancing in a tempest". Besides, there was that loud tremor "as of innumerable drums" and the ship "soared up swiftly as if to leave the earth for ever", while at other times it remained still and vibrating, "with a stillness more appalling than the wildest motion" (p. 54). On the syntactic level, the analogies are realised through adverbial like in the first example, adjectival like in the second, the adverbial combination as of in the third, the subordinator as if with the suppressed subjunctive in the third, and the comp-element more... than in the fourth. One notes also the subtle interplay of sensuous perception and spiritual intuition which results in the easily visualised images of the drums and ghosts as against the more abstract images of the shattered creation and the appalling stillness. There is also the fusion of the two spheres of

sensation: the auditory in the last two analogies as opposed to the visual of the first two. Modifiers such as shattered, innumerable and appalling are meant to magnify the nature of the danger facing the ship, and thus heighten admiration for both ship and crew in standing up to the storm. The image of the reckless ghosts is a throw-back to that of Captain Allistoun watching over the phantom ship. Here, however, the ghosts, who have regained their sense of solidarity, become reckless, i.e. indifferent to, and even contemptuous of, the encompassing danger.

During this encounter between ship and sea the narrator tells us that in its rush the foaming sea "looked as mischievous and discomposing as a madman with an axe". It towered close to the ship "high like a wall of green glass topped with snow", while all the time the ship "rose to it as though she had soared on wings, and for a moment rested poised upon the foaming crest as if she had been a great sea-bird" (p. 57). The image of the sea as a madman is one further variation on the earlier image of it as a lunatic playing with a toy. Realised through the correlative subordinator as...as, it is original, but less lyrical in tone than the three images that follow. Like functioning as an adjective establishes a live analogy between the waves and the glass walls; as though and as if introduce two suppositions about the ship equating it with some great sea bird. We have two concurrent images: that of the sea as a madman and a wall of glass, and that of the ship as having wings and perching on the top of waves like a sea bird. The images have their source as much in the animal kingdom as in adventure tales. The visual sense is the main sphere of sensation.

The sky comes in for its share of Conrad's comparative technique. At one time the narrator sees it taking on "the delicate

tints of pink and yellow like the inside of a rare shell", while the clouds appeared "like a forgotten fragment of the night set in a border of dazzling gold" (p. 84). In both cases like functions as an adjective. The narrator's wide range of experience shows up in the way he effects this sensuous perception of the relationship between the sky and the shell as in his spiritual intuition of the analogy between the clouds and the forgotten bits of night. At such moments the narrator poses as the poet hymning the solidarity of the crew, the audacity of the ship and the magic of the east.

Other analogies realised through the lexis of uncertainty on the same page include that between Singleton and the many benefactors realised by adverbial like. There is also that between the cook's proverbial sayings and those of conquerors or sages realised by the adverbial as, together with subject-operator inversion: "as are the sayings...". The subordinator as though also figures here expressing the crew's sheer fatigue: "as though they had done for ever with their work". The narrator rounds off his comparisons with two examples of like being used as adverbial in, "Singleton's coat glistened like hoar frost", while the Captain's words to the idling crew made them "start like a sudden flick of a whip". The ironic tone underlying the analogy between Singleton and the sages is as striking as is the combination of the auditory and tactile senses in the last image.

Other synaesthetic analogies include the narrator's account of the argument between Mr. Baker and Captain Allistoun during which the Captain "fixed his chief mate with a cold gaze, piercing like a dart"^(p.90), where the adjective like establishes a relationship bringing together two disparate spheres of sensation: sight (the gaze), and touch (the piercing dart). The breeze also stirred

the hair of the crew "like an indulgent caress" (p. 32), where the tactile sense is the means of apprehending two sensations belonging to two different spheres of experience.

Sometimes the narrator's attempt to underline the relationship between two items necessitates that he brings into play two correlative spheres of experience. Belfast's devotion to Jimmy is one such occasion on which three correlative spheres are brought together. Belfast,

spent every moment of his spare time in Jimmy's cabin. He tended him, talked to him; was as gentle as a woman, as tenderly gay as an old philanthropist, as sentimentally careful of his nigger as a model slave-owner. But outside he was irritable, explosive as gunpowder"...(p. 140)

The correlative subordinator as ...as identifies gentility with women, tender gaiety with philanthropists, and sentimental care with slave owners. On the other hand, Belfast's innate irritability is equated with gunpowder. This last analogy harks back to Belfast's habit of shrieking like dervishes. There is also the ironic note underlying the analogy between Belfast and slave owners. It betokens, that is, a fall from the sublime of the first two analogies to the sordid of the fourth. Belfast's possessive care of Jimmy has its bright as well as its seamy side. Of the four analogies, the first three are susceptible to the sense of sight, while the last is apprehended by the sense of hearing.

With Jimmy casting his evil spell on the crew, the narrator sees the "Narcissus" as a phantom ship to which the moonlight clung "like a frosted mist", while the white sails stood in "dazzling cones as of stainless snow". He then proceeds from particularisation to generalisation seeing the ship,

like a vision of ideal beauty, illusive like a tender dream of serene peace. And nothing in her was real, nothing was distinct and solid but the heavy shadows that filled her decks with their unceasing and noiseless stir: the shadows darker than the night and more restless than the thoughts of men. (p. 145)

Here again there is this fusion of sensuous perception and spiritual intuition. As opposed to the concrete nature of the two analogies realised through adverbial like and the combination as of, those realised through adjectival like and the comp-element more ... than of the longer quotation are of an unmistakably abstract nature. Against the background of "the cold sheen of the dead moon", the ship recalls to mind the way Coleridge's mariners viewed their ship in moments of psychological despondency.

Jimmy's approaching end has had its impact on the atmosphere surrounding the ship. The moon is dead; its light which is susceptible to the visual sense is solidified into "frosted mist" which can be apprehended by the tactile sense. The light which is supposed to guide the ship on its way is thus rendered a static, useless thing reeking of death and decay. The restless shadows of the sailors enhance the impression of the phantom ship, epitomizing in its illusiveness the burning desire of the restless shadows on board it for that serene peace which turns out to be nothing but a "tender dream".

Nor does Donkin, the arch villain of the novel, escape the ominous spell of the dying nigger. Donkin is the first and only seaman to see Jimmy's eyes "blaze up and go out like two lamps overturned together by a sweeping blow" (p. 155), where adverbial like effects an analogy combining the visual and tactile senses. Jimmy's death fills his heart with wonder at the unchanging condition of the world around him "as though he had expected to find the men dead", where the subordinator as though introduces a supposition reflecting Donkin's secret desire to be rid of all the crew, who made no secret of their scorn and resentment of his malingering presence. This is immediately followed by the same subordinator and the adverbial like that body forth the analogy

between Donkin and the home-bound wanderer: "as though, like a wanderer returning after many years, he had expected to see bewildering changes" (p. 155). This is in turn followed by a syn-aesthetic supposition combining the visual and tactile senses in "the moon drooped sadly as if withered by the cold touch of a pale dawn", while the sea is described as being "like the image of life", countering Jimmy's death which shook the foundations of the ship's society "like the death of an old belief", which last brings into play one of those images of the recondite phenomena of the world susceptible only to spiritual intuition. This constant variation between subordinators, adjectivals and adverbials creates stylistic variety and adds to the mystery surrounding the idea of death in man's mind. It also asserts the narrator's belief in the continuity of life. Jimmy dies but life goes on, and the immense sea becomes "like the image of life". More important is that this theme of death sets off in the narrator's mind a variegated sequence of analogies testifying to his wide range of experience in the world of sensuous perception, as it also pinpoints his capacity for spiritual intuition.

The sight of the English Channel unleashes the narrator's penchant for the creation of atmosphere. On four closely related occasions like is used in its adverbial function. The Channel "glittered like a blue mantle shot with gold"; steamboats sailed "hugging the coast, like migrating and amphibious monsters"; the lighthouse shone steadily "like an enormous riding light", while the dark land lay "like a mighty ship bestarred with vigilant lights" (p. 162). The emphasis is on the visual aspect of the impressions conveyed. We also notice that, despite the fact that the syntactic function of like is the same on all four occasions, two spheres of experience define one another in terms peculiar to

each. The Channel is a mantle, the lighthouse is a riding light and the land is a ship with myriad lights. In other words, the narrator's shore and sea experiences project the one on to the other.

The rest of the crew share in the narrator's tendency to establish analogies between the various items of discourse. Theirs, however, is by far a less sophisticated technique. We have already seen how Belfast likens his opponent to "a mad bull" (p. 272 supra). Donkin uses the comp-element worse... than to draw a comparison between his fellow sailor and firemen in: "Blamme if you don't look a blamed sight worse than a broken-down fireman" (p. 11). He also uses like as a conjunctive in "'cos I stood up for my rights like a good'un" (p. 12) which is a mark of his illiteracy.

Wait, on the other hand, uses like as an adverbial in "And you come jabbering near the door like a blooming lot of old women". (p. 35) His other banal analogies include that established by adverbial like in "He complained that he would have to die there, like a dog", which is the narrator's reported version of the man's speech. Jimmy's obsession with death shows up in the analogy relating the hole in which Jimmy was caught up to the dark grave (p. 106). The prophetic tone of the image is in keeping with Jimmy's irritating way of talking about death. The cook's Biblical readings are reflected in images of spiritual intuition such as that effected by the adjective like in, "Judgement capsized all in a minute... More like a sudden visitation than anything else" (p. 144).

A count of the various items of the lexis of uncertainty in The Nigger has shown that in this short novel (173 pages), Conrad uses like in its syntactic function of adjective or adverbial 172

times, as if 78, as though 67 (both as subordinators introducing suppositions expressed by overt or suppressed subjunctive), as 21 times, the correlative as... as 26 times, as of 6 times, and the comp-element more...than 8 times. In addition, he uses the appositive such as twice, while combinations like as on and as after are each used only once.

On the semantic level, the sources of Conrad's analogies have proved to be quite heterogeneous. They include comparisons based on the animal kingdom, churches, the arts (music, sculpture), adventure tales and some aspects of spiritual intuition. The main theme of attraction is human frailty in the face of inevitable odds be these human (James Wait) or elemental (sea, wind and earth). The pattern of the comparisons includes: the developed analogy, concurrent analogies, sequence of analogies, recurrent analogies and correlative analogies. The type of these analogies is one of these: personification, synaesthetic analogies, original analogies, revitalised analogies, and analogies commonplace or banal. The three main spheres of sensation are the visual, the auditory and the tactile, of which the first is the dominant sphere. Occasional combinations of two or more spheres are not hard to come by, but they are not strikingly frequent.

In the light of the above classification, we can now analyse some five examples from the novel:

1. Suddenly many heavy blows struck with a handpike on the deck above boomed like discharges of small cannon through the forecastle (p. 14).
2. He jumped up as if he had been cut with a whip (p. 19).
3. We spoke in low tones within that fo'c'sle as though it had been a church (p. 37).

4. ... no one could tell what was the meaning of that black man sitting apart in a meditative attitude ^{and} as motionless as a carving (p. 45).
5. ... Under white wings she (the ship) skimmed low over the blue sea like a great tired bird speeding to its nest (p.161).
6. ... They appeared to be creatures of another kind... like reckless and joyous castaways, like mad castaways making merry in the storm and upon an insecure ledge of a treacherous rock (p. 172).

item used	syntactic function	semantic classification				
		source	theme	pattern	type	sphere of sensation
like	adverbial	sea	man	recurrent	original	auditory
as if	subordinator	animal	versus nature	"	synaesthetic	" & tactile
as though	"	the arts		"	original	visual
as..as	correlative	"		correlative	"	"
like	adjectival	adventure tales		recurrent	personification	"
like	"	"		developed	common-place	"

The chart reflects the precision or arbitrariness of syntactic classifications, as against the relative inadequacy inherent in all attempts at a clear-cut, watertight description of the semantic peculiarities of the items in question.

I have already suggested that this stylistic device began to figure on a large and almost unprecedented scale in the novels starting with The Nigger. The following table gives a statistical

account of the numbers of occasions on which each of these items occurs in the novels before and after The Nigger. Their stylistic significance will be discussed in some detail later on in this chapter.

Novel	No. of pages	Lexis of uncertainty									total	% ratio
		like	as if	as though	as..as	as	such as	as of	as on	more than		
A.F	208	57	60	---	3	6	--	8	--	3	137	0.65
O.I.	368	199	136	16	19	9	1	6	--	2	388	1.05
N.N	172	172	78	67	26	21	2	6	2	8	382	2.22
L.J.	416	281	160	103	71	20	--	7	--	3	645	1.56
N.	566	256	197	42	45	38	--	8	--	3	589	1.04
S.A.	311	112	102	22	15	13	--	4	--	2	270	0.86
U.W.E.	381	145	123	44	9	10	--	2	--	1	334	0.87
C.	447	161	165	61	19	16	--	1	--	3	426	0.95
V.	412	163	169	9	28	26	--	5	--	-	400	0.99
A.G.	336	163	94	35	34	17	--	3	--	2	348	1.03
R.	286	130	101	43	12	16	--	4	--	-	306	1.03

As it stands, the chart underlines the change that came over Conrad's stylistic strategy in the novels following The Nigger. Indeed, the first novel displays the lowest ratio of frequency of these items, despite the fact that it is heavily laden with modifiers. The lexis of uncertainty is at its highest in The Nigger, Lord Jim, and Nostromo. If it be contended that An Outcast, the novel just preceding The Nigger is as much spattered with these items as are Under Western Eyes or The Arrow of Gold, the fact remains that An Outcast is a conglomeration of stylistic sins abounding in modifiers side by side with the various items of the lexis of uncertainty, whereas the novels that followed The Nigger reflect a marked

playing down of the role played by modifiers, as opposed to the novelist's sustained indulgence in the other items. More important is that the Malay setting of An Outcast is much more favourable to this practice than are the London, Geneva, or Marseilles settings of the Secret Agent, Under Western Eyes or The Arrow respectively. From beginning to end Conrad was a novelist intent on recording his own impressions, or those of his fictitious characters, and his decision to shift the stress from modifiers to the lexis of uncertainty should not be slightly passed over. The sustained tone of the practice makes it of great stylistic significance.

Before examining its importance, let us see first in what way this practice of Conrad's differs from similar endeavours by some of his near contemporaries. I have made a count of the relative frequency of these items in four novels published in Conrad's lifetime. These are Ford Madox Ford's The Good Soldier, Henry James's The Ambassadors (first volume), Arnold Bennett's Hilda Lessways and E.M. Forster's Howard's End. (1)

The result is shown in the following table:

Novel	No. of pages	Lexis of uncertainty										total	% ratio
		like	as if	as though	as.. as	as as	such as	as of	as more on	than			
<u>Ambassadors</u>	256	18	113	--	11	3	--	4	2	5	156	0.59	
<u>Howard's End</u>	362	30	44	1	1	12	--	2	--	1	91	0.25	
<u>Hilda Lessway</u>	408	72	35	25	8	7	--	1	--	--	148	0.36	
<u>Good Soldier</u>	220	75	66	--	15	4	--	--	--	1	161	0.73	

(1) Ford, 1962; James, 1903; Bennett, 1913; Forster, 1947.

Judging by the number of pages of each of the four novels, the above figures clearly underscore the sharp discrepancy between Conrad and his four contemporaries. In none of the four novels does the respective writer use the lexis of uncertainty as lavishly as Conrad does in any of his novels (perhaps with the exception of Almayer's Folly). In eight of Conrad's novels the number of items is as much the same as that of the pages of each work. In two of these (The Nigger and Lord Jim) the number of items is almost double that of the pages. Of the four contemporaries, Ford seems to be the one nearest to Conrad. But then it was Ford who wrote that both Conrad and he,

... accepted without much protest the stigma: "Impressionists" that was thrown at us. In those days Impressionists were still considered to be bad people: Atheists, Reds, wearing red ties with which to frighten householders. But we accepted the name because Life appearing to us much as the building of Mr. Slack's greenhouse comes back to you, we saw that life did not narrate, but made impressions on your brains. (1)

Both novelists were impressionists who, as Ford puts it in The Good Soldier, were like "very good novelists for the matter of that, if it's the business of a novelist to make you see things clearly" (p. 102). Both novelists try to body forth the analogies, covert or overt, between their characters' actions or sensations and certain aspects of their respective experiences. Still, Conrad's analogies are much more varied and complex than those of Ford.

It is true that Ford can put into relief two or three such analogies as when, on page 36 of The Good Soldier, he uses like as an adjective in "... he swung that pony round with all its four legs spread out, like a cat dropping off a roof", or "it was like a chap in the middle of the eruption of a volcano" (where he refers to Edward Ashburnham's pseudo-heroics). But this can in no way

(1) Ford, 1924 : 182

compare with Conrad's practice of piling analogy upon analogy giving us those marvellous tableaux of images which are as suggestive of the novelist's deep meaning as they are descriptive of the surface aspect of his impressions. With Ford the piling up of such analogies is the exception; with Conrad it is the rule.

This does not mean that Ford cannot be as sophisticated or mystifying as Conrad because he can on occasions. The narrator in The Good Soldier uses the subordinator as if on three such occasions where he tells us that Leonora gave him a remarkable look "as if for a moment a lighthouse had looked at me (p. 39). On the same page he also tells us that during the dialogue between himself, Leonora, Florence and Edward, Leonora "shivered a little, as if a goose had walked over her grave". The analogies thus hinted at appear to be as far-fetched and original as the best that one may come across in Conrad. These are nevertheless scattered instances that do not compare with Conrad's ability to develop or stretch the analogy to the utmost, or for that matter, with his adeptness at developing two or more concurrent or correlative comparisons on the same page of a novel.

Of the three remaining novels, James's The Ambassadors is the one that bears a stylistic affinity of some sort to both Conrad's and Ford's practice. Here James is mainly concerned with the recording of the American Strether's impressions of the old continent. Strether comes to Europe on the express orders of Mrs. Newsome who wants him to rescue her son, Chad, from the temptations of the Parisian society. The recurrence of the word impression in Strether's case explains in a way James's free use of the subordinator as if in the novel:

Such had at any rate markedly been the case for the precipitation of a special series of impressions. They had proved, successfully, these impressions - all of Musette and Francine; but

Musette and Francine vulgarised by the larger evolution of the type. (pp. 81 - 2)

A bit earlier James tells us that Strether "passed an hour in which the cup of his impressions seemed truly to overflow". (p. 70)

James is very sparing in his use of like for purposes of analogy. When he does this, the analogy produced is of a very simple nature. When rebuked by Strether on account of his timidity, Waymarsh, the narrator tells us, "took it - silent a little - like a large snubbed child" (p. 28). Contrasted with this adjectival function of like is its function as adverbial in "others.... struck him now as sitting, clustered and expectant, like a somewhat defiant family-group, on the doorstep of their residence" (p. 23). The sheer simplicity of the analogies is quite striking in view of the fact that Strether's education and social upbringing make him superior to Conrad's most sophisticated characters. Still, it is the wide range of experience of characters like Marlow and M. George that finally tips the balance in Conrad's favour. Indeed, the nearest example to be found in the novel to Conrad's complex analogies is when we are told that Strether "had ceased even to measure his meagreness, a meagreness that sprawled, in this retrospect, vague and comprehensive, stretching back like some unmapped hinterland from a rough coast settlement (p. 77).

On the other hand, his free use of the subordinator as if shows that he could be as expressive and suggestive as Conrad at his best. In the theatre, the narrator tells us, that Strether felt "as if the play penetrated him with the naked elbow of his neighbour" (p. 46). The subordinator introduces a supposition that gives us a synaesthetic image combining the visual (play) with the tactile sense (penetrated). Still, the general tenor of his analogies is one of sheer simplicity and unaffected ease. Each of them (Conrad and James) was a stylist in his own right;

and each had his own reasons for indulging in, or abstaining from, too much use of the various items of the lexis of uncertainty.

Arnold Bennett's Hilda Lessways and E.M. Forster's Howard's End are remarkable for the controlled use of these items in both novels. The figures on page 292 prove that the lexis of uncertainty is at its lowest in these two relatively big novels. The analogies created in the process have nothing extraordinary or striking about them. In Hilda Lessways Bennett uses like in its adverbial function, where he tells us that Hilda bore the cup and saucer "like a hand-maid"; but when he tries to develop the analogy he adds nothing new except a couple of modifiers "like a delicate and superior hand-maid" (p. 100). Describing her overcoat he tells us that it was heavy, still "she, who would have been lost in it like a cat in a rug, enjoyed it" (p. 100). Forster, on the other hand, tells us that the Miss Schlegels of his novel "shone out in the world like stars" (p. 29), which is a banal analogy. He also ^{that} says/the fog pressed against the windows "like an excluded ghost" (p. 69), where like is also used as an adverbial. But, like Bennett, he falls short of developing his analogies to create those tableaux characteristic of the Conradian practice. Scattered flashes of genius are not hard to come by now and again in both novels, still social problems seem to be too much foregrounded in the novelist's consciousness to leave much room for stylistic experimentation.

This brief discussion of Conrad's peculiar use of the various items in relation to some of his near contemporaries' practice has shown that the difference between them is as much one of kind as of degree. That there is a difference in degree is a statistical fact that cannot be doubted. The resultant analogies show them to be different in kind as well, especially in as much as regards the sources, patterns and forms of the analogies concerned.

When Conrad fails to effect the subject-verb inversion, as he does in the early period of his career, he makes a grammatical mistake that constitutes a deviation from the prescribed rules. Such mistakes, however, are of slight stylistic significance. For one thing, Conrad soon corrects himself and the thing is put right in the novels following the experimental stage of his career as a novelist. For another, all that can be said in explanation of this phenomenon is that at the start of his career, Conrad had a precarious hold on some aspects of English grammar, or that this had something to do with Polish or French influences on his adopted language. Besides, as R.L. Mégroz has convincingly demonstrated (1), great English novelists like Dickens and Hardy now and again made similar mistakes. But when Conrad indulges in a stylistic device, such as that facing us in the present chapter, and when he consciously maintains this indulgence contrary to contemporary norms, such a fact is bound to give rise to the question: why did he do it?

In an enlightening essay on "Metaphor", J.M. Murry advances the theory that simile (the literary term for what has so far been termed the lexis of uncertainty) is much more congenial to the spirit of prose rather than of verse. This is why, according to Murry, poets prefer metaphor to simile which as often as not requires that the reader pauses in his attempt to unveil the possible connections between the two parts of the simile, whereas in metaphor such involvement of the reader is minimal (2). Although evidence to the contrary can be easily provided, Murry is right to say that simile is much more thought-consuming than metaphor. It makes us think. Hence it is no accident that Conrad, who was

(1) Mégroz, 1931 : 156 - 64

(2) Murry, 1972 : 27 - 41.

after involving his readers in the creative process, should resort to this stylistic device.

Conrad himself says something to this effect in his letter of 24th April 1922 in which he tells Richard Curle:

Explicitness, my dear fellow, is fatal to the glamour of all artistic work, robbing it of all suggestiveness, destroying all allusion. (1)

It is this suggestiveness that Conrad tries to achieve through what appears to be an excessive use of the lexis of uncertainty. Far from contenting himself with recording the surface aspects of his impressions, Conrad was after exploring their deep structure or underlying meaning. The theory is further elucidated in his letter to Barrett Clark: "A work of art", Conrad wrote, "is very seldom limited to one exclusive meaning and not necessarily tending to a definite conclusion" (2). A work of art, that is, can be differently interpreted by the different critical readers. As an impressionist Conrad knew that the reader's involvement could be secured by many a stylistic feature. Delayed punctuation marks, or peculiarly punctuated sentences would advert the critical reader to the rhythmic quality of the prose; the multiple perspectives of direct and reported speech help him compare judgements contrasting them with his own; the lexis of evocation, i.e. adjectives and other modifiers, conjures up to his mind conflicting visions of atmosphere and individual portraits; and through allusion and suggestiveness the lexis of uncertainty further whets the reader's critical faculties.

Such a view is corroborated by what literary critics like Hewitt and Wright say about the rhetoric of some Conradian characters, especially Marlow. Hewitt remarks that "far from clarifying the moral issues, Marlow's reflections only succeed in making them

(1) Curle, 1928 : 142

(2) L.L., Vol. II, p. 205 (Letter dated 4th May 1918)

more confused" (1). A little later Hewitt observes that a great deal of Marlow's rhetoric "is imprecise and some is little more than a vague and rather pretentious playing with abstractions"

(2). Hewitt's statements are of special import, because, of all Conrad's characters, Marlow is the one most inclined to use the lexis of uncertainty in his speech excessively. Like most of Conrad's narrator's Marlow, as Hewitt puts it, is fond of casting "a haze of romance and mystery over certain aspects of his theme" (3).

The suggestiveness and allusion implicit in the use of the lexis of uncertainty should not blind us to its importance as an image-making device. As has been attested in my analysis of The Nigger, the lexis of uncertainty features prominently as the second main constituent (next only to modifiers) of the structure of the image in Conrad. Although the two functions overlap, in some cases Conrad gives precedence to one function over the other. In the first two novels, for instance, Conrad's preoccupation with image building is in striking contrast to his obsession with the symbolic or mystifying implications of the lexis of uncertainty in such novels as The Nigger, Lord Jim or Nostromo. It is this preponderance of one function over the other that makes Wright say, with respect to the voyages by the "Narcissus" or the "Nan Shan", that "there is no need to read any specific form of symbolism into the voyage. It is sufficiently magnificent as pure spectacle" (4) Wright is apparently enthralled by what Richard Curle calls Conrad's power of creating atmosphere; but this has not dissuaded other critics from looking into the suggestiveness and mystery behind the "magnificent spectacle".

(1) Hewitt, 1975 : 34
 (2) Ibid., p. 38
 (3) Ibid., p. 101
 (4) Wright, 1966 : 64 - 5

The interplay of the two functions can be well illustrated by this concise and seemingly simple analogy from Nostromo. Before embarking on his fateful adventure on the Golfo Placido, Nostromo tells old Giorgio that should he (Nostromo) not come back, Giorgio must see to it that Paqueta gets all his belongings which "will look well enough on the next lover she gets, and the man need not be afraid I shall linger on earth after I am dead, like those Gringos that haunt the Azuera" (p. 258). The adverbial like sets in relief one of the most suggestive recurrent analogies in the novel. Its image-exhibiting function shows up in the way it calls up in mind that spectral image which is susceptible not so much to sensuous perception as to our innate power of spiritual intuition (there is no logical consensus of opinion as to what ghosts really are). Still, the image occurs. Its suggestive function is multi-sided. It enhances the association between Nostromo and the fabled phantoms of the local legend. It indicates that Nostromo had a prophetic presentiment of the dangers besetting his mission. It is as though the man could see through the intricate designs of fate. His premonitions are later highlighted by the omniscient narrator's expository comments on the phantom-like quality of the man following the nocturnal mission on the Placido. The ironic overtones become clear when we realise that the man's prognostications came true almost to the letter. Nostromo dies, and not only does his ghost haunt the Great Isabel in quest of the hidden treasure in his lifetime, but it also continues to haunt it after his death as is clearly reflected by Linda Viola's cry of agony declaring that she would never forget him, a cry which, Conrad tells us, "was another of Nostromo's triumphs, the greatest, the most enviable and the most sinister of all" (p. 566).

Speaking in general terms, Conrad's analogies revolve round two main themes: isolation and reintegration. His novels can be

divided into three groups, early, middle and late. In the early period (comprising Almayer's Folly and An Outcast) the function of the lexis of uncertainty is mainly that of evocation, i.e. image-making, with the aim of heightening the protagonists' total estrangement from the body of mankind. Theirs is both a moral and physical isolation. - In the second period (The Nigger, Lord Jim, Nostramo, The Secret Agent, Under Western Eyes, Chance and Victory) the lexis of uncertainty is there mainly for purposes of suggestiveness, mystification and irony. In the third period (The Secret Sharer, The Shadow Line, The Arrow of Gold and The Rover) the lexis of uncertainty partakes, with varying degrees, of both functions, but lacks the subtlety characteristic of the two preceding stages.

We have seen how Willems's narrated monologue reflects the man's overweening sense of self-importance. We have also seen how modifiers body forth this self-destructive trait of the man in the most ironic manner. Indeed, the three adjectives used in the opening sentence of the novel: "When he stepped off the straight and narrow path of his peculiar honesty (p. 3), are so impregnated with ironic overtones that they seem to set the tone for the subsequent portrayal of the man. His moral and physical isolation is further brought out through the lexis of uncertainty.

Speaking of Willems's wishful thinking about his rosy future, the narrator tells us that at one moment "the billiard balls stood still as if listening also," (p. 6). The reference is to Willems's narrated monologue; but the image produced by the subordinator as if is strikingly original. Billiard balls are personified. The image appeals to our sense of sight, and a reader can visualise the balls growing ears to listen to the man's secret thoughts of his future greatness. The supposition is not without its ironic

implications, for it contrasts sharply with his wife's unexpected reaction to the news of his dismissal from Hudig and Co. in chapter three, where the same subordinator introduces the anticlimactic supposition about the woman's words stunning Willems "as if somebody had fired a gun close to his ears" (p. 27). In the first instance, the subordinator underscores the fact that the man's secret aspirations establish his moral and physical alienation from the people around him. He believes himself to be too superior to the rest of mankind to let them share his thoughts. Billiard balls may listen to them, but not human beings. The second supposition enforces his isolation by underlining his wife's secret resentment and disgust at the proud man's conceit. In both cases the visual and auditory senses are brought together: the balls and the guns (visual) listen and fire (auditory). The second image underpins the ironic effect of the first and serves as an anticlimax to it in more than one way.

The same observation applies to the contrast between the developed analogy at the end of chapter one and the two as if suppositions towards the close of chapter three. At first, the narrator reports that Willems saw himself "quite safe; solid as the hills; deep - deep as an abyss; discreet as the grave" (p. 11). This gives way in chapter three to Willems feeling "as if he was the outcast of all mankind", going on doggedly "with his head down as if pushing his way through some thick brambles" (p. 30). The images evoked appeal to the senses of sight, hearing and touch: solid hill, discreet grave and wall of thick brambles. Here also the developed analogy of the first example precludes any possibility of Willems ever achieving bliss of any kind. For although he sees himself firm as a hill, the remaining parts of the analogy reek of death and frustration. The abyss and grave

images foreshadow the far from glorious end of the confidential clerk of Hudig. This premonition of forthcoming disaster is further highlighted in the two as if suppositions which categorically point up the outcast's total isolation. This almost contrapuntal use of the adverbial as and the subordinator as if parallels the way the narrator exploits Willems's reported and direct speech to achieve the same artistic ends.

After the dismissal from Hudig's service everything about Willems tends to accentuate his estrangement. In Sambir the virgin forests, "bordered the path, coming close to it as if to provoke impudently any passer-by to the solution of the gloomy problem of its depth" (p. 65). In his canoe Willems felt the spreading nipa palms nodding their broad leaves over his head "as if in contemptuous pity of the wandering outcast" (p. 67). Personification of the forest enhances the man's isolation. The darkness and gloom of the forests reflect the gloom in the outcast's heart. The forest may feel pity for the lonely man, but it is a qualified compassion of a degrading kind as is implied by the modifier contemptuous of the second example.

Even in his moments of deceitful bliss with Aissa, Willems's sense of loss is subtly hinted at. When the narrator tells us that Willems saw "the very spirit of that land of mysterious forest standing before him like an apparition behind a transparent veil" (p. 70), we are bound to feel that although there is a subtle indication of the outward gloom of the forest becoming less intense as a result of Aissa's mitigating presence, there is still that suggestion of lingering inner blackness which the noun apparition sets in relief. Far from dispelling the man's inward perception of solitude and frustration, the adverbial like accentuates it by drawing this sharp line of distinction between the temporary

"transparent veil" and the sinister-looking "apparition" behind it. The image created is a blend of spiritual intuition (the spirit of the forest) and sensuous perception (the apparition and the veil which appeal to the visual sense).

Even synaesthetic analogies which abound in the novel tend to intensify the protagonist's moral and physical disintegration. Joanna's reaction to her husband's revelations about his fall from Hudig's favour takes the form of a shriek which "was like a needle through his (Willems's) heart" (p. 27), where the adjective like is the means of equating the auditory effect of the cry with the tactile impact of the needle. Again, when Aissa looks at Willems, her glance was hard, keen and narrow like the gleam of sharp steel" (p. 71), where the adjective like brings together both the visual and the tactile senses. In both instances Willems's alienation is foregrounded.

Willems may experience moments of temporary relief from the surrounding blackness as when the narrator uses adjectival like to pinpoint Aissa's benign effect on her lover: "(her) smile was like the first ray of light on a stormy day-break" (p. 71), still, the general impression is one of sheer spiritual fatigue and physical alienation. Thus, when Willems proposes to Aissa that they leave Sambir to its own devices, she refuses and steps back and it was "as if she had drawn slowly the darkness round her" (p. 154). The supposition introduced by the subordinator as if underscores the fact that, far from being an agent of the merciful providence sent for the release of the white man from the inward and outward gloom encompassing him, Aissa is bound in the long run to intensify his desolation and render it more soul-searing. It is no chance that the narrator tells us a few lines later that the big tree of the forest towered over them "spreading his branches in a gesture of lofty protection, as if to hide them in the sombre

shelter of innumerable leaves, as if moved by the disdainful compassion of the strong, by the scornful pity of an aged giant, to screen this struggle of two human hearts from the cold scrutiny of glittering stars" (p. 154). The emphasis is on those aspects of nature which appeal to the sense of sight. Nature might sympathise with the outcast; but it is the contemptful sympathy of the strong and sombre for the remarkably weak and foredoomed man. There is nothing in these descriptions to suggest that Willems would ever achieve any sort of regeneration. On the contrary, both in An Outcast and Almayer's Folly the stress is invariably laid on those aspects which throw into relief the spiritual as well as physical alienation of the respective protagonists from the rest of mankind.

Before Marlow takes over the narration of Jim's story in chapter V of Lord Jim, the omniscient narrator's summing up of Jim's life before and after the Patna affair serves as a mere introduction to the grave issues that would be the main preoccupation of Marlow's investigations in the subsequent chapters. The narrator takes up Jim's story immediately after his disgrace. He tells us that while working as a ship-chandler's clerk Jim "was spotlessly neat, apparelled in immaculate white from shoes to hat" (p. 3). As in Willems's case, the choice of modifiers is deliberately ironic, for we soon learn that Jim's spotless neatness and immaculate whiteness hide behind their spurious gloss that soft spot, that fatal weakness, which would prompt Marlow's bewildering ratiocinations. The narrator further forestalls the revelation about Jim's failure to live up to his fantasized heroics by remarking that "a water clerk need not pass an examination in anything under the sun" (p. 3). Such a casual remark heightens the ironic implications of the modifiers in the third opening sentence

of the novel, and sets the tone for the movement backward in time to the "Patna" affair and Jim's infamous rôle in it.

The same ironic treatment is followed up in chapter III where adjectival like conjures up that live analogy between Jim's feelings of "unbounded safety" on board the "Patna" and a suckling baby's sense of security on his mother's breast: "Jim on the bridge was penetrated by the great certitude of unbounded safety and peace that could be read on the silent aspect of nature like the certitude of fostering love upon the placid tenderness of a mother's face" (p. 17). This dream of perfect and unapproachable security soon collapses when the narrator towards the end of the same chapter introduces the as if clause "and suddenly the calm sea, the sky without cloud appeared formidably insecure in their immobility, as if poised on the brow of yawning destruction" (p. 26). Here, also, there is this fusion of the visual sense (the sea and sky) and that image of "yawning destruction" which appeals to our capacity for spiritual intuition. In this way, the start and the end of the chapter become structurally connected, and the finish serves as an ironic comment on the beginning. The two sentences body forth the conflict between Jim's romantic aspirations and the hard, uncompromising dictates of fortune. They, that is, foreshadow the main preoccupation of the captain-narrator who will pick up the threads of Jim's story a little later.

Although the omniscient narrator can provide us with live analogies as in that synaesthetic image of the question which cut short Jim's speech "like a pang of pain" (p. 31), where adverbial like brings together the auditory and tactile senses, or in the developed analogy relating the pilgrims to water "(they) flowed forward... filled the inner recesses of the ship - like water flowing into crevices and crannies, like water filling a cistern, like water rising silently even with the rim" (p. 14), where the

two senses of sight and hearing are combined; it is to Marlow and Jim that we should turn for the best of sophisticated (Marlow's) and simple (Jim's) analogies in Conrad. In Jim's case, the analogies are a means of portraying the man's prolific imagination, with Marlow they are the means of bringing out the captain-narrator's remarkable capacity for creating those images which appeal to our faculties of sensuous perception and spiritual intuition.

Speaking of the "Patna" hitting the floating derelict, Jim tells the court of inquiry that the ship "went over whatever it was as easy as a snake crawling over a stick" (p. 28), where the correlative subordinator as... as puts into relief an analogy that has its source in Jim's experience of the Malay jungle. The pattern is the recurrent analogy; the image of the snake keeps cropping up on various occasions in the novel. It is also a throw-back to those snake analogies in An Outcast (pp. 25, 257, 260). Later on Jim tells Marlow that the ship "began to buzz fore and aft like a disturbed beehive", where the analogy combines the two senses of sight and hearing, and like the preceding one, it has its source in the Malay jungle experience. (1) Of his experience in the life-boat after deserting the "Patna", Jim tells Marlow that he and his fellow deserters were "like men walled up quick in a roomy grave" (p. 120). The analogy effected by adjectival like is one of those recurrent and quite symbolic images in the novel. Marlow will later develop the analogy by associating the moon with the spirit coming out of a grave. (p. 245) The recurrence of those images of ghosts, graves, and captives foreshadows the tragic end of Jim and helps connect him with that mystifying element which makes Marlow constantly declare: "I cannot say I had ever seen him distinctly" (p. 221).

(1) Other jungle images are those of the ants and squirrels (p. 263), birds (184, 316).

The type of Jim's analogies is simple indeed. It ranges from the vague and banal, as when he uses adjectival like in "The thing stirred and jumped off like something alive", through the commonplace, as when he uses the correlative subordinator as... as in "a flake of rust as big as the palm of my hand" (p.84), to the strikingly original, as when he uses adverbial like in "The sea hissed 'like twenty thousand kettles'. That is his simile not mine", says Marlow. The tactile, visual and auditory senses are the means of apprehending the three analogies respectively.

Whereas the lexis of uncertainty focuses attention in the first two novels on the respective protagonists' estrangement from the body of mankind, in novels such as Lord Jim, Nostromo, The Secret Agent and Under Western Eyes it adverts us to the tragic nature of characters like Jim, Nostromo, Winnie Verloc and Razumov, and in so doing it underlines the fact that each of these people is, to quote the Marlovian phrase, "one of us". One difference, however, is that it is much more pervasive in Lord Jim and Nostromo than it is in the other two novels where its tone is markedly ironic. It also underscores the fact that narrators like Marlow, Decoud, Captain Mitchell and the old teacher of languages are fallible human beings for whom the lexis of uncertainty is the appropriate means of reflecting their humanity, of showing, that is, that they resort to this stylistic device because, like the fallible human beings that they are, they can never pass judgments in black and white on the characters concerned.

Not that Marlow or the other narrators do not use the lexis of uncertainty for purely imagistic purposes, for this is something that cannot be helped. Indeed, of all these men, Marlow seems to be the one most endowed with that capacity of establishing the most versatile analogies in Conrad. Of Jim's words about his fellow deserters, Marlow tells us that Jim's hate "distilled into

commonplace
the/words like a drop of powerful poison into a glass of water"

(p. 123) where the adverbial like brings together the three senses of hearing (words), sight (glass of water), and taste (poison). Again, he describes his impressions of Jewel's love for Jim by saying that her vigilant affection seemed to "envelop him like a peculiar fragrance" (p. 283), where adverbial like brings together the abstract notion of love and the olfactory sense. He develops the analogy by adding the auditory sense in her affection seemed to "dwell in the sunshine like a tremulous, subdued and impassioned note" (p. 283).

Marlow's tendency to solidify abstract notions shows up also in the way he describes the Malay girl's tenderness as hovering over Jim "like a flutter of wings" (p. 283), while in telling us that her look was silent and subdued "as if put to flight by the recollection of some abiding danger" (p. 282) he personifies the abstract notion of sight and combines it with the kinetic sense. The same argument holds good for Marlow's solidification of the abstract notion of nearness in Chance, where Flora is said to have "felt Anthony's nearness ^{intimately,} like a touch" (p. 220), while his words were "like a caress" (p. 265) which last brings together the auditory and tactile senses. In these last two cases adjectival like is the means of blending the three senses of sight, sound and touch. The same analogies recur in Nostromo where Giselle's voice is "like a caress" (p. 535). Giselle is also said to have "bemoaned her fate, spreading unconsciously, like a flower its perfume in the coolness of the evening, the indefinable seduction of her person" (p. 535), an analogy effected by the conjunctive like combining the visual and olfactory senses.

Marlow is eclectic in his choice of analogies with which he describes his impressions of the actions of those characters with whom he comes into contact. He observes that Stein looked at him

with interest "as though I had been a rare insect" (p. 219). The analogy introduced by the subordinator as though is very appropriate. Stein is a confirmed naturalist whose interest in butterflies is well-known. On the other hand, Marlow states that Doramin's facial expression "remained unalterable like a huge mask" (p. 274), where the analogy is based on Doramin's sphere of experience. (1)

The marked density of the lexis of uncertainty in Marlow's narrative gives rise to the question: What is the meaning of this constant piling up of analogies connecting Jim with images of the grave, abyss, darkness, shades and ghosts? What purpose, other than that of spectacle painting, does this insistence on mystery and inscrutable abstractions serve? The answer to this and similar queries becomes quite clear when we examine some five such analogies characteristic of Marlow's method of character presentation.

Somewhat earlier in his story of Jim, Marlow tells his audience that he listened to Jim's version of what happened "as if to a tale of black magic at work upon a corpse" (p. 109). The subordinator as if seems to be advisedly used by Marlow to set the tone for that atmosphere of bewildering mystification with which he intends to envelop Jim's story. The nature of the supposition advanced is out of proportion to the story being related. Jim's failure to live up to "the fidelity of the craft" is too obvious to be compared with that far-fetched suggestion of incantations being performed on corpses. Still, Marlow is not concerned with the superficial and crystal-clear "how" of the case, for his main preoccupation is with the fundamental "why". How Jim came to abandon his ship in distress is commonplace knowledge, it is the reason behind the action that challenges the narrator's reason and imagination.

(1) Here, also, the metaphorical origin of the images is based on the similarity relationship between Marlow and the insect as on that between Doramin's face and a mask. The metonymic strain is implicit in the contiguity relationship between the two parts of the analogy (in both cases the Malay Archipelago is the place where both parties belong).

Later in Chapter XVI he uses the subordinator as though in a negative sense, where he tells us,

The time was coming when I should see him loved, trusted, admired, with a legend of strength and prowess forming round his name as though he had been the stuff of a hero. (p. 175)

The attempt at mystification is as obvious here as elsewhere in Marlow's speech. For whereas the principal clause with its various modifiers is an outright commendation of Jim's success in Patusan, the subordinate clause seeks to negate the preceding praise of the man's prowess. It is clear that Marlow does not concur in the views of the Patusan people about Jim. He even modifies Jim's heroism by adding to it the derogatory noun stuff. Unlike his Patusan admirers, Marlow, who had been let into the secret of Jim's soft spot, seems to intimate that such a man cannot measure up to the heroic requirements which Marlow has in mind. In this, however, Marlow seems to have been somewhat mistaken, for Jim's heroic nature is reflected in that "proud and unflinching glance" (p. 416) with which he greets death at the hands of old Doramin at the end of the novel. Our surprise at Marlow's ambivalent attitude vanishes when we remember his self-incriminating words: "He was not - if I may say so - clear to me. He (Jim) was not clear" (p. 177).

The adverbial like is used by Marlow for the same purpose of mystification, where he observes to his audience: "I was going home, and he (Jim) had come to me from there, with his miserable trouble and his shadowy claim, like a man panting under a burden in a mist" (p. 221). The image, it will be recalled, is an elaboration on that of the grinding links of the "Narcissus" which were "like a low groan of a man sighing under a burden" (p.276 supra). In Marlow's case the obfuscation arises as much from the

vague modifier shadowy as from the subsequent analogy. Marlow never tells us the exact nature of that "shadowy claim" Jim had over him. The analogy is nevertheless quite suggestive. Apparently Jim's burden is the sense of guilt he harbours in his heart after his disgrace. Still, a man carrying a burden on his back need not necessarily be "in a mist" (compare this with the lack of the modifier "in a mist" in the "Narcissus" analogy) unless his viewer is himself incapable, for some reason, of seeing him clearly. And this is what Marlow meant, for the following sentence reads: "I (Marlow) cannot say I had ever seen him distinctly - not even to this day" (p. 221).

In answer to Marlow's question whether Jim did not want to go out, Jim said only "yes" and "interrupted in a strange access of gloom that seemed to envelop him from head to foot like the shadow of a passing cloud" (p. 232). Here again we notice the same insistence on vague modifiers strange access of gloom, which is further confused by the adverbial like introducing the analogy of the "passing cloud". Both the auditory and visual senses are brought into play; Jim does not interrupt by raising or modulating the pitch of his voice, but rather by undergoing a visual change of complexion. Does Marlow intimate that the gloom that came over Jim was temporary? The constant recurrence of the analogy makes such a possibility seem remote (pp. 337, 415 - 7). It all seems to be part and parcel of Marlow's attempts to obscure rather than explain away Jim's problem. Faced with Marlow's inconclusive analogies, the reader cannot help agreeing with Chester's revealing diagnosis of Marlow as being "like the rest of them. Too much in the clouds" (p. 168). That the uneducated sea-faring vagabond, Chester, should be the man to pass this enlightening judgement on Marlow, that he should use on this one occasion the

same rhetoric which seems to be the sole prerogative of the captain-narrator, is the most scathing ironic comment in the whole novel on one whose stylistic peculiarities seem to put him in a class by himself among Conrad's characters. It shows him to be as blighted with soft spots as is Jim. It also shows how appropriate in Marlow's case the lexis of uncertainty is, since it is this that marks his individuality as the impressionist who is constantly juggling with words only to leave us, as Wright puts it, "speculating at the end" (1).

Marlow's remarkable penchant for analogies is as clear in Chance as it is in Lord Jim. His ability to revitalise over-exhausted or even banal comparisons can be well illustrated from his description of Mr de Barral, who, according to Marlow, "walked as if he were carrying a glass full of water on his head" (p. 386). Marlow could have simply said that ^{the} man walked cautiously or stealthily; but this would not be as effective as that visual image introduced by the supposition implied in the as if clause. The image is the more striking on account of the commonplace nature of the sphere of experience from which it is derived.

On another occasion, he tells us that Captain Anthony walked past his motionless second officer "leaving the words behind him like a trail of sparks succeeded by a perfect conversational darkness" (p. 392). The synaesthetic analogy realised by the adjective like combines two spheres of sensation, the auditory (words) and the visual (trail of sparks). He also solidifies Anthony's generosity which "rose in front of him like a wall which his respect for himself forbade him to scale" (p. 395), while "time" is said to have fretted away his ability for action "like drops of water wearing down a stone" (p. 396). In both cases abstract

(1) Wright, 1966 : 143.

notions are seen in terms susceptible to the senses of sight and touch.

Marlow's fondness for mystification shows up in his insistence on analogies that relate both Flora and Anthony to spectres (pp. 26, 30, 59, 52, 284, 285); animal, sea and abstract analogies are also found in plenty here. One representative example of Marlow's inconclusive ratiocinations will suffice. Speaking of Flora de Barral, Marlow tells his auditors:

These are great mysteries, of course. Magic signs.
 'I don't know in what the sign consisted in this case. It might have been her (Flora's) pallor (it was not pasty nor yet papery) that white face with eyes like blue gleams of fire and lips like red coals. (p. 217)

Reading such passages, the reader is left with the impression that the mysteries hinted at are largely of Marlow's own making. It is not only the vague modifiers that create the mystery (Flora's pallor was not pasty nor yet papery, we are not told what it was exactly like); but rather the fact that the two concurrent analogies that follow throw this mystery into sharp relief. A pale face, or worse still, a white face with blue fiery eyes and extremely red lips is not a fascinating sight to look at. It is more spectral than human. The reader cannot help feeling at a loss whether to regard Flora as a really beautiful woman of this world or as a supernatural creature of some other unknown planet. The two thermal images with their appeal to the visual sense confuse rather than body forth the impression conveyed.

Nor does Marlow fare any better where he tells us that "a young girl, you know, is something like a temple. You pass by and wonder what mysterious rites are going on in there, what prayers, what visions" (p. 311). Flora de Barral is still the girl in question. The passage quoted is one of tens of similar passages during which Marlow talks at length about women. But does Marlow

really help us understand Flora through these never ceasing speculations? A careful examination of the above quotation will reveal him to be as mystifying as ever. He does not say that Flora is like a temple, which association would be quite suggestive of the mystery and magic implied in the second part of the analogy, Marlow would rather increase the mystery by further qualifying the girl as "something" like a temple. What that "something" is, we are never told. If the noun temple is indicative of the mystery surrounding the young girl, the other noun something wraps this mystery up in an enigma.

The mystification centres mainly round Flora de Barral of whom Marlow using the subordinator as if in two suggestive clauses says: "It was as if the forehead of Flora de Barral were marked", wondering in the meantime whether she was born to be a victim, "as if she were too fine for this world". (p. 309) The fact remains that the ironic tone of the suppositions reflects Marlow's dissatisfaction with the girl's negative response to the vicissitudes of her life. He may sympathise with her, but he does not totally condone her inertia. The final effect of Marlow's lengthy and discursive discussions of Flora's case is one of frustration, and the reader sees Flora passing the narrator like a "woman under a cloud" (p. 281), just as Jim does in the earlier novel.

Like Marlow, the old English teacher of languages in Under Western Eyes is fond of enveloping Razumov in mystery. His description of Razumov as being "tall, well-proportioned young man, quite unusually dark for a Russian from the Central Provinces" (p. 5) is mainly effected through modifiers with concrete reference, that help the reader have a clear visual record of the old teacher's impressions. Still, the old teacher of languages has already declared on the second page of the novel that he has "no comprehension of the Russian character" (p. 4). This is why, after

giving us this concrete description of the Russian's physical appearance, he resorts to the subordinator as if to add that element of mystery without which his professed inability to understand the Russian character would be called into doubt. Immediately after the foregoing description come the revealing sentences:

His good looks would have been unquestionable if it had not been for a peculiar lack of fineness in the features. It was as if a face modelled vigorously in wax (with some approach even to a classical correctness of type) had been held close to a fire till all sharpness of line had been lost in the softening of the material. (p. 5)

The supposition thus introduced is suggestive in more than one respect. It is suggestive of the old teacher's uncertainty as to the nature of the impressions he has of Razumov. It is also indicative of a certain flaw in Razumov's moral make-up similar to that hardly perceptible flaw in his physique, which only a man capable of comprehending the Russian character can pinpoint. Moreover, it identifies Razumov's blurred complexion with the vastness of Russia with its extensive plains and never melting snow, which was and still is some sort of a mystery to occidentals, just as Razumov himself continues to be somewhat enigmatic to the teacher of languages. It is no accident that the old teacher is surprised to hear of Sophia Antonovna's visit to the deaf and crippled Razumov towards the end of the novel. Because he is unable to fully understand the man, the old teacher cannot see why Sophia Antonovna should feel sorry for the fallen Russian.

The mystery that is Russia is constantly suggested in the recurrent analogy relating Razumov to the Russian plains:

His existence was a great cold blank, something like the enormous plain of the whole of Russia levelled with snow and fading gradually on all sides into shadows and mists. (p. 303)

Modifiers like cold, nouns like blank, plain, snow, shadow, and mist bring out the complex nature of the two parts of the Razumov-

Russia analogy. With every word used the reader feels that a new mystifying element is being added to the already complicated description. Razumov's existence is vaguely described as a "cold blank". What this "cold blank" is, the narrator does not tell us. When he elaborates on this vague description, he adds the noun something which enhances rather than explains away the indistinct nature of the original description. He then proceeds to pile in new descriptions of shadows and mists to the second half of the analogy through which he is seemingly trying to clarify the issue. This only results in increasing the puzzle and leaves the reader speculating as to what Razumov really is.

Like every other stylistic feature in The Secret Agent, the lexis of uncertainty is subordinated to the main objective of holding up "the worthlessness of certain individuals and the baseness of ^{some} others" (1). The novel has been dealt with in some detail in the chapter on modifiers. A few examples will suffice to bring out the role played by the lexis of uncertainty in the overall objective of the novel.

The pages from 40 - 46 are replete with images of Michaelis, the ticket-of-leave-apostle, whose voice "wheezed as if deadened and oppressed by the layer of fat on his chest", and whose elbow was more "like a bend in a dummy's limb". The emphasis is on the visual aspects of the man. The analogies realised by the two items as if and like help complete the caricature picture of the man, which has been largely effected through modifiers.

The same observation applies to the caricature pictures of Sir Ethelred whose wide mouth was "like a cavern" (p. 138), and the Assistant Commissioner who looked "like the vision of a cool reflective Don Quixote" (p. 147). Such caricature images enhance the author's irony at the pillars of peace and stability.

(1) L.L., Vol.II, p.322 (Letter dated 1st. Sep. 1923, to A.J.Barker)

On the other hand, Karl Yundt's gift of stirring the populace is set in relief by one of the best synaesthetic analogies in the novel. The narrator tells us that "the shadow of the man's evil gift clung to him yet like the smell of a deadly drug in an old vial of poison"^(p.48). This live analogy brings together four different senses: the visual (shadow), the auditory (gift of talking), the olfactory (smell), and the gustatory (deadly drug). Again, when Yundt talked "he mumbled, catching the tip of his tongue between his lips at every second word as though^{he were}chewing it angrily" (p. 47). The gustatory sense (chewing) is combined with the auditory (words). The analogies are meant to spotlight the physical and moral defects of the characters concerned with a view to heightening the overall ironic effect.

Although the lexis of uncertainty continues to feature prominently in the novels of the later period (especially The Arrow of Gold and The Rover), we notice that here it loses much of the subtlety characteristic of its use in the novels of the middle period which begins with The Nigger and ends with Victory. In the middle period the lexis of uncertainty is one of the novelist's means, on the stylistic level, of making the reader conscious of the mystery surrounding the principal characters. It also encourages him to speculate on the nature of the soft spot in each of the characters concerned. Far from satisfactorily explaining the crucial issue, ruminations and different perspectives abounding in the lexis of uncertainty/^{used} by characters like Marlow, Powell, Decoud, Mitchel and other narrators can only result in increasing the mystery and give rise in the last resort to that body of conflicting critical views about the main protagonists. In the late period Conrad is no longer concerned with such thorny problems. Rita, the heroine of The Arrow of Gold, is too vividly and unambiguously portrayed to admit of any mind-racking argumentation about her character.

The tension typical of the middle period novels eases off here, and characters like M. George and Rita do not undergo the estrangement, or suffer from that "infernal alloy" of more complex protagonists such as Jim, Nostromo, Winnie Verloc or Razumov. It might be argued that old Peyrol of The Rover meets with the same tragic death as most of the earlier protagonists. The fact remains, however, that while death or suicide is forced on Jim, Nostromo, Winnie and Axel Heyst, old Peyrol chooses to die of his own free will. Old Peyrol's death is a well-calculated move on the part of a man whose self abnegation sums up the Spensarian Maxim:

"Sleep after toyle, port after stormie seas,
Ease after warre, death after life, does greatly please".

The analogies created by M. George, the young and infatuated lover of Rita de Lasoata in The Arrow, smack of pomposity. They more often than not centre round the physical and moral attractions of the tantalizing Rita. For George, Rita is "the woman of all times" the woman who is "as old as the world," (p. 101). He sees Rita's neck as being "round like the shaft of a column" (p. 92), while her person is described as being "rosy like some impassive statue in a desert in the flush of the dawn". (p. 101) The two analogies effected by adjectival like in the last two quotations give us a clear indication of the lover-narrator's lack of ^{that} finesse which characterises the Marlovian comparisons. In his attempt at idealising the woman of his choice, the narrator unwittingly mixes his analogies. A woman's neck can be round, but when this roundness is compared with the shaft of a column the analogy becomes too insipid and crass. Again, Dona Rita is said to be rosy not like a flower, but like an inanimate statue. There is no suggestion of the young lover attempting any kind of mystification here, for he is too much in love with the woman to surround her with an

atmosphere of mystery. If anything, this mixing of analogies reflects the young lover's immaturity. They also reflect the weariness that came over the ageing novelist who seems to have lost much of his earlier perceptiveness.

Sometimes M. George is quite capable of producing original analogies as when he tells us that "the last of the light gleamed in her long enigmatic eyes as if they were precious enamel in that shadowy head which in its immobility suggested a creation of a distant past: immortal art and transient life" (p. 93). The supposition introduced by the subordinator as if about the woman's eyes gleaming like enamel is vivid and live; still, this piling in of modifiers such as shadowy, immortal, transient is out of proportion to the point of attraction. When Marlow indulges in those stylistic involutions of his, we feel that the tragic and sublime theme admits of such digressions and discursive ruminations; but with Rita de Lasoata, any attempt to create mystery where no such mystery exists is bound to make the reader condemn such descriptions as stylistic grandiloquence or pomposity.

When Rita speaks to him, M. George remarks that "she went on with tenderness in a playful note, as if tenderness had been her inheritance of all times and playfulness the very fibre of her being" (101). The hypothesis introduced here serves as an anti-climax to the analogy in the preceding quotation. The Spanish woman who has been praised earlier as a "creation of a distant past" is being praised here for her coquetry. This recurrent and ill-advised fall from the noble and sublime to the ridiculous and sordid is indicative not only of the young narrator's precarious hold on the stylistic devices at his disposal but also of the ageing novelist's declining imaginative powers.

In spite of M. George's pomposity, there are moments when his

sweeping love for Rita inspires him with some fine analogies. Rita's charm is thus seen in terms of the two senses of touch and sight where he says: "... this charm, warming like a flame, was also all-revealing like a great light" (p. 124). On the other hand, his hatred of her sister Therese makes him liquidify her words "which came out of her like an unctuous trickle of some acrid oil", combining in this way the two senses of sound and taste. These, however, are mere patches, flashes of genius, which though reminiscent of the earlier Conrad, are of very little symbolic or structural significance. Dona Rita is no Lord Jim or Nostromo, and her rise from the humble position of shepherdess to that of mistress for Henry Allegre, M. George and other social parvenus can hardly justify this excessive use of the lexis of uncertainty, which does not so much create a halo of mystery round the unmysterious figure of Dona Rita as pinpoint the young narrator's stylistic pomposity and imperceptive infatuation.

Conrad's professed aim in writing his novels was to make the reader "hear, feel and see". In view of the density of the lexis of uncertainty in his works, one would not be shooting wide of the mark to say that Conrad also wanted the reader to think seriously about the deep meaning of his analogies. It is through careful reading of his works that the reader will be able to guess at the suggestive, symbolic or ironic connotations of this stylistic device, which a cursory perusal of the novels might take for a merely descriptive convenience. Like their maker, Conrad's narrators are impressionists for whom the lexis of uncertainty is the appropriate means of conveying to the reader the fact that they are not god-like creatures who can describe in black and white every aspect of their experience. That some are more subtle in their use of the device than others (compare for instance the

subtlety of Marlow and the earlier narrators with ^{the lack of finesse of} M. George and the narrator of The Rover) is a clear indication, on the stylistic level, of what literary critics like Moser and Hewitt have called Conrad's achievement and decline, (1) while the marked density of the lexis of uncertainty in his works lends credence to what Professor Cox says about the as if construction being a means of giving Conrad "the freedom to shape experience in terms of human language, and yet still to imply doubt about its final validity".

(2)

(1) Moser, 1957; Hewitt, 1975
(2) Cox, 1974 : 50

Chapter VIII

CO-ORDINATORS AND OTHER CONNECTIVES

As an example of what he termed Conrad's "multitudinous tandems", H.G. Wells cited the opening sentence of chapter three in the fifth part of An Outcast of the Islands, which reads:

On LINGARD's departure solitude and silence closed round Willems; the cruel solitude of one abandoned by men; the reproachful silence which surrounds an outcast ejected by his kind, the silence unbroken by the slightest whisper of hope; an immense and impenetrable silence that swallows up without echo the murmur of regret and the cry of revolt. (p. 327)

Wells objected, among other things, to "this trampling army corps of dependent clauses, this silence correcting silence, (which) leaves no impression of silence at all." (1) Another critic blamed Conrad for being "diffuse"; a quality which the said critic strongly lamented "for Mr. Conrad is evidently equipped with a very thorough knowledge of the scenes which he describes and at times, when he resists his besetting sin of wordiness, he can be extremely effective" (2). The same accusations were levelled against him, this time with respect to The Nigger, by W.L. Courtney who expressed the view that Conrad "builds up his scenes piece by piece, never by one large and comprehensive sentence, but through a mass of commas, semi-colons, and full stops, especially when it is his business to depict character or narrate incidents." (3)

Such derogatory views of Conrad's style were not shared by more perceptive critics like Moser who, late in the nineteen fifties, postulated the theory that the "most characteristic

(1) Wells, 1896 : 509
 (2) Anonymous, 1973 : 69
 (3) Courtney, 1973 : 87

feature" of Conrad's style "is the overlong sentence, tending at its worst toward the mere mannerism which Conrad called "Conradese", but at its best suggesting that there is more meaning and more feeling to be expressed than language can quite contain." (1)

However, in the present chapter we are not concerned with the constituents of the overlong sentence in Conrad, some of which have already been dealt with in the previous chapters, but rather with the way Conrad links together his phrases and clauses within sentences, as well as his method of connecting these last to each other. Although co-ordination in its asyndetic or explicit forms is the main concern of the following analysis, other factors of connection such as repetition, ellipsis and structural parallelism are also investigated. Hence the title chosen for this chapter.

My plan is to begin by analysing the linguistic peculiarities of connectives on phrase, clause and sentence level in the first part of The Rescue, the novel Conrad started writing immediately after An Outcast but could not finish until 1919; then to move to manifestations of this stylistic feature in his other novels and in some works by four of his contemporary novelists. In the second part of the chapter, I discuss the artistic ends achieved through this practice. No statistical account of connectives in any of the novels will be given, for I believe that it is not so much the number of connectives as the way Conrad uses them in his works that makes them of great stylistic significance.

"The Man and the Brig", the part of The Rescue under investigation (57 pages), is made up of an introductory piece of discursive prose and some six chapters of varying length. The connectives used fall into three distinctive groups: asyndetic coordinators like the comma, semicolon and dash; explicit co-ordi-

(1) Moser, 1957 : 173

nators such as and, then, but and for; other factors of connection comprising syntactic factors like structural parallelism, substitution and ellipsis, as well as semantic factors like repetition. This grouping, however, is somewhat arbitrary, since connection of phrases, clauses or sentences is occasionally effected through the interaction of various connectives.

The remarkable thing about asyndetic co-ordinators in Conrad is the way he uses them to co-ordinate clauses or phrases in a hierarchical relationship. This usually happens in cases of apposition. The third sentence of The Rescue reads:

They have kept to this day their love of liberty, their fanatical devotion to their chiefs, their blind fidelity in friendship and hate - all their lawful and unlawful instincts. (p. 3)

It could be argued that what we have here is a case of three asyndetically co-ordinated clauses with ellipsis of the co-referential subject and verb phrase. Still, while this would apply to the first phrases, it would not apply to the last one, simply because "their love of liberty, their fanatical devotion to their chiefs and their fidelity" are aspects of what he sums up as "all their lawful and unlawful instincts". The more logical interpretation is to regard the last phrase as the postponed or delayed first appositive (1) fulfilling the same syntactic function i.e. object of the main clause, as each of the fronted particulars. In this case the sentence would read:

They have kept to this day all their lawful and unlawful instincts: their love of liberty, etc.

Conrad appears to have opted for the reverse order to achieve that heightening of effect indicative of the speaker's increasing

(1) According to the Quirk Grammar, the first appositive is the more general item in relation to the less general second appositive. Thus, in "John, the lawyer, is my friend", John is the more general element since he can be a lawyer, a communist, a gambler besides being my friend. Cf. Quirk et al., pp. 625 - 6

emotional involvement with his subject. This theory is borne out by the nature of the adjectives used. "Their love of liberty" is not modified as against the two adjectives fanatical and blind of the following phrases, the second being much more active or concrete than the passive or abstract fanatical. The fact that the delayed first appositive is not of the same order as the particulars is further highlighted by the use of the dash, as against the comma used in conjoining the less general items. The repetition of the determiner their also enhances the relationship between the various phrases. The important thing to note is that the asyndetically co-ordinated triple phrase, or clause for that matter, is a striking feature of Conrad's style, upon which he capitalises on different occasions.

The triple phrase is the norm in almost all cases of expanded apposition. In the first of the two following examples it occupies a final position; in the second it is sandwiched between the object of the main clause - which is at the same time the subject of the second conjoin - and the rest of the predication.

To the south and east the double islands watched silently the double ship that seemed fixed amongst them forever, a hopeless captive of the calm, a helpless prisoner of the shallow sea. (p. 5)

Almost in our own day we have seen one of them - a true adventurer in his devotion to his impulse, a man of high mind and of pure heart, lay the foundation of a flourishing state on the ideas of pity and justice. (pp. 3 - 4)

In both cases, the expanded second appositive is made up of two phrases asyndetically conjoined to the first. The former develops the image of the stranded ship, the latter adds further characteristics to that "one of them". The dashes in the last example give special prominence to the first conjoin of the second appositive which looks like an ironic comment on the adventurer whose claim to greatness is his questionable "devotion to his impulse".

We also note the progressive nature of the syllables contained in each of the three phrases of the first quote. As against eight syllables in the first, we get 11 in the second and 14 in the third. Besides, connection of such phrases through apposition helps Conrad do without relative pronouns such as which and who, for which he seems to have had no special predilection.

In some rare cases the second appositive is expanded by two asyndetically co-ordinated relative clauses. The stress is thus shifted from the phrase to the clause, and we end up with an instance of the triple clause sentence as in:

But there were others - obscure adventurers who had not his advantage of birth, position, and intelligence; who had only his sympathy with the people of forests and sea he understood and loved so well. (p. 4)

The first appositive, others, is conjoined by the dash to the second appositive, obscure adventurers, which is further modified by the two consecutive relative clauses. Although the first relative clause contains conjoined nouns like birth, position and intelligence, the boundaries between the clauses are marked by the semicolon. The result is the triple clause sentence which is also a marked feature of Conrad's style.

A signal example of Conrad's tendency to shun relative pronouns is this quotation:

Their country of land and water - for the sea was as much their country as the earth of their islands - has fallen a prey to the western races - the reward of superior strength if not of superior virtue. (p. 3)

Here, again, we get three clauses; the main one which is interrupted by a comment clause, and the last which constitutes a sentential relative clause with deleted relative pronoun and verb. With some other writers, the sentence would end with something like this: ", which is the reward of," etc. Asyndetic

co-ordination plus ellipsis are the main connective factors of this triple clause sentence. Repetition of lexical items such as country and near synonyms such as land and earth; water and sea further highlight the close relationship between the clauses.

The triple phrase also obtains in cases of what might be termed the split second appositive as in:

The night following from the eastward the retreat of the setting sun advanced slowly, swallowing the land and the sea; the land broken, tormented and abrupt; the sea smooth and inviting with its easy polish of continuous surface to wanderings facile and endless. (p. 5)

The first appositive, the land and the sea, is split into two separate second appositives making it easy for the novelist to end up with a triple phrase sentence, of which the second phrase is about half the length of the other two. In its concise and highly adjectived form the central phrase imitates the roughness of the topographical feature it describes, while the sprawling form of the third is in accord with the flowing nature of the sea. Asyndetic co-ordinators (the semicolon) and repetition of either part of the conjoined first appositive are the means of connecting the sentence. One further notes Conrad's tendency to avoid relative pronouns by falling back on his idiosyncratic practice of postposing most of the modifiers.

The same observation applies to instances of composite appositive, where the second appositive leads up to a noun phrase that is placed in appositional relationship with a new second appositive:

→
The sun was no more than a degree or so above the horizon, and from the heated surface of the waters a slight low mist began to rise; a mist thin, invincible to the human eye; yet strong enough to change the sun into a mere glowing red disc, a disc vertical and hot, rolling down to the edge of the horizontal and cold-looking disc of the shining sea. (p. 14)

Although the sentence is quaternary^{2r} in form (i.e. made up of four clauses), it is the last three clauses beginning with "and from the heated surface..." that are more closely bound together, a fact which is further emphasized by the absence of explicit coordinators. Here, as elsewhere in all cases of apposition, the connection between the various clauses is effected through asyndetic co-ordination and repetition of similar lexical items.

An internal ternary rhythm is quite perceptible in the quaternary sentence:

To him she was always precious - like old love;
always desirable - like a strange woman; always
tender - like a mother; always faithful - like
the favourite daughter of a man's heart. (p. 10-

As opposed to connection through apposition which is mainly a matter of reformulation and expansion requiring the repetition in the second appositive of lexical items contained in the first, asyndetic co-ordination in the above sentence is heavily dependent on ellipsis of the fronted adjectival complement to him, as well as the subject and predicate of the main clause whose internal rhythm is the result as much of repetition of the same lexical items as of obvious structural parallelism^s between the various clauses. We also notice how the rhythm varies with the expansion or contraction of the adjectival phrases: like a strange woman; like a mother; like the favourite daughter of a man's heart.

The triple clause or phrase is still the norm in cases of asyndetically co-ordinated adverbials with ellipsis of some part or other of the main clause. When the narrator tells us that Tom Lingard "felt his ship live in every motion, in every roll, in every sway" (p. 10) the subject and whole predicate of the main clause are ellipted in the last two. Occasionally, he opts for the double phrase as in, "In the waist of the brig, in the narrow spars that were lashed on each side of the hatchway (p. 13), where

the novelist's tendency to shun explicit co-ordinators is striking.

However, not all cases of asyndetic co-ordinators imply ellipsis. Still on the subject of Lingard's attachment to his ship, the narrator remarks:

"His will was its will, his thought was its impulse, his breath was the breath of its existence." (p. 11)

Here, again, the rhythm of the triple clause sentence is implicit in the structural parallelism of the three clauses of which the third is double the length of the first (10 syllables as against 5) with the second slightly longer than the first (6 syllables). We also note the variety created through the repetition of the noun will in the first clause, a repetition which is abandoned in the second, but once again resorted to in the third. In most of these cases of asyndetic co-ordination, the reader would expect the last clause or phrase to be introduced by an explicit co-ordinator such as and; but such expectations are always frustrated. In the above sentence, it is only the full-stop that marks the end of the sentence on the orthographic level. Still, no grammatical finality ensues, and the reader is left with the impression that the novelist's enumeration of the young seaman's love for his ship is too big for words to contain.

Nowhere is the reader's desire for an explicit co-ordinator that would put an end to the narrator's wandering thoughts more frustrated than in those cases where listing is in question.

When he tells us,

She - the craft - had all the qualities of a living thing: speed, obedience, trustworthiness, endurance, beauty, capacity to do and to suffer - all but life. (p. 11)

we meet with what might be called a case of discontinued first appositive, since the sentence actually reads as follows:

She - the craft - had all the qualities of a living thing but life: speed.. etc.

The listing of the qualities in question seems to go on for ever until the rhetorical utterance "all but life" is unexpectedly mentioned in a bid to clinch the issue.

Besides, there is that obvious contradiction between the general first appositive and the particulars constituting the second, for how can something that is living but lifeless be endowed with such attributes as "obedience, trustworthiness and capacity to suffer" which are the prerogatives of sensible beings? The rhetorical effect of such sentences is too obvious to need further comment.

That sense of incompleteness persists even where the presence of a co-ordinator in the final clause makes it seem as though the whole issue is resolved.

The calm was absolute, a dead, flat calm, the stillness of a dead sea and of a dead atmosphere. (p. 5)

The co-ordinator and in the last phrase conjoins the two post-modifying prepositional phrases, but it has nothing to do with the conjoining of the three main elements of the sentence. The remarkable thing about this last quotation is the way Conrad picks out the modifier dead of the second phrase and uses it to develop the image in the third, rendering the description more concrete and explicit. Still, there is that lack of complete finality inherent in this peculiar use of asyndetic co-ordinators.

The preponderance of asyndetic co-ordinators in Conrad should not blind us to the major role played by explicit connectors like and and but. Indeed, and seems to have been his favourite connecting factor. He uses it for a variety of purposes. In a great number of cases, it introduces a clause that is meant to be a recapitulation or rewording of the main one.

The vices and the virtues of four nations have been displayed in the conquest of that region that even to this day has not been robbed of all ^{the} mystery and romance of its past - and the race of men who had fought against the Portugese, the Spaniards, the Dutch and the English, has not been changed by the unavoidable defeat. (p. 3)

The first thing to note about the and clause is that its subject is not co-referential with that of the main clause. In making a point similar to that of the main clause, it implicitly underlines the narrator's growing emotional involvement. The two clauses are further connected through appositives like four nations: the Portugese, the Spaniards, the Dutch and the English, as well as near synonyms such as conquest and defeat. Apparently the two clauses could be connected through the long dash or semi-colon; but the use of and gives that sense of completeness that certain types of asyndetic co-ordination lack. This lends weight to the argument that Conrad sometimes indulges in asyndetic co-ordination in the triple phrase or clause sentence for purposes of rhythm.

The double clause sentence also obtains where and has a causative function.

There was no wind, and a small brig that had lain all the afternoon a few miles to the northward and westward of Carimata had hardly altered its position half a mile during all these hours. (p. 5)

Again, the two subjects are not co-referential. And is equivalent in meaning to "that is why", or its subordinator variant because. This causative relationship between the two clauses could hardly be the same if we replace or dispense with and in favour of the semicolon. The connection between cause and effect is made much more conspicuous by the explicit co-ordinator.

And has a concessive function in the following sentence:

They were lost in the common crowd of seamen traders of the Archipelago, and if they emerged from their obscurity it was only to be condemned as law-breakers. (p. 4)

The men in question are those "obscure" adventurers whose sympathy for the Malay race the narrator had already commended. The coupling of the two clauses sets off the narrator's ironic observations about the advantages of "birth, position and intelligence" mentioned in the preceding sentence. And thus acquires a concessive force.

And has a resultative effect in:

He (the unnamed adventurer) recognized chivalrously the claims of the conquered; he was a disinterested adventurer, and the reward of his noble instincts is in the veneration with which a strange and faithful race cherish his memory. (p. 4)

The last clause spotlights the result of the man's chivalry and magnanimity towards the defeated race. Here, however, we note the triple clause form of the sentence. The three clauses are arranged in order of rising importance. The man respected the rights of the conquered because he was at heart "a disinterested adventurer", and the result is that his memory is revered.

More important still, is the and of transition. This is an and that links together a sequence (usually three in number) of clauses or phrases placed in order of rising or decreasing significance. The narrator, for instance, remarks that Tom Lingard was proud of his luck. This is followed by a sentence that reads:

"He was proud of his brig, of the speed of his craft, which was reckoned the swiftest country vessel in those seas, and proud of what she represented. (p. 10)

The sentence begins with a general and vague statement of Tom Lingard's love for his brig. The second clause becomes more specific as regards the main attribute that endears the ship to the man: its speed. The third clause stresses the symbolic significance of the ship, a significance which the narrator believes to be of paramount importance. The repetition of the full form of the modifier proud of in the last clause is indicative of the rising order of the conjoined clauses.

The argument becomes more convincing when the narrator expatiates in the sentence that follows on the symbolic significance of the brig.

→
 She represented a run of luck on the Victorian goldfields; his sagacious moderation; long days of planning, of loving care in building; the great joy of his youth, the incomparable freedom of the seas; a perfect because a wandering home; his independence, his love - and his anxiety. (p. 10-

Here we get some seven clauses asyndetically co-ordinated through the semicolon. In the last six, ellipsis of the subject and lexical verb she represented is inevitable. The last noun phrase is introduced by the co-ordinator and as against earlier instances of listing. The clauses are arranged in order of their respective importance to Lingard. This rising order is highlighted by the nature of the modifiers used. The subjective and abstract modifier sagacious of the second conjoin is replaced in the third by the more concrete long, and this last is soon replaced by the amplifying great until we end up with maximizers such as incomparable and perfect. The and introducing the last conjoin marks the acme of the progressive order, for the noun phrase it connects with the rest of the sentence is in a concessive relationship to the other conjoins. Hence the presence of the dash before and to signal a dramatic shift in tone and emphasis.

Occasionally, the rising order of the clauses is suggested by a series of adverbials, the last of which is preceded by and.

Nothing moved on earth, on the waters, and above them in the unbroken lustre of the sky. (p. 5)

This and has the further advantage of marking the end of a tableau whose constituent parts have been lavishly described in preceding sentences.

In some other cases, the rising progression is indicated by the verbs in a sequence of conjoined clauses as in:

It (the sea) reached the brig, passed under, stretching out on each side; and on each side the water became noisy, breaking into numerous and tiny wavelets, a mimicry of an immense agitation. (p. 25)

The water reaches, passes, stretches round the brig and this final contact with the craft gives it its boisterous nature which is imitated by the chain of modifiers that follow the last clause. The and puts a logical and expected end to the tableau depicting the relationship between sea and ship. We also note the interplay of the various factors of connection. The sentence is a compound of two clauses each of which is broken down into three chunks by means of the comma.

The clauses need not necessarily be placed in rising order, for in the following quotation the reverse happens:

Suddenly, a long, shrill whistle soared, reverberated loudly amongst the flat surface of motionless sails, and gradually grew faint as if the sound had escaped and gone away, running upon the water. (p. 26)

This and of transition puts the final touch to the curve made by the whistle; a curve which the verbs of the three conjoined clauses (soar, reverberate, grew faint), together with the decreasing order of the adverbials (suddenly, loudly, gradually) render quite clear. This process of gradualism is further highlighted by the length of the clauses; the first being half the length of the second, and the last being almost double that of the second.

And is also used to signal a transition from one emotional plane to another.

→
For hours he would stand elbow on rail, his head in his hand and listen - and listen in dreamy stillness to the cajoling and promising whisper of the sea... (p. 10)

It softened the outlines of his rugged nature;
and these moments kept close the bond between
 him and his brig. (p. 11)

Lingard's emotional tension is brought out in the first example through repetition of the second conjoin of the first clause, while in the second quote the and marks a throw-back to the information imparted by the preceding sentence, and shifts attention from the pronoun it, with its anaphoric reference to "the tinge of glowing and serene half-light", to the man's emotional attachment to his brig signalled by another throw-back to "the absurd and wasted moments" of the earlier utterance.

The same and is used to mark transition from one tense sequence to another. In most cases the transition is from the preterite to the participle. The movement effected results in a sudden shift from the relatively rapid flow of the preterite to the more relaxed tone of the participle:

Right aft by the wheel the Malay quartermaster stood with his bare, brown feet firmly planted on the wheel-grating, and holding the spokes at right angle in a solid grasp, as though the ship had been running before a gale. (p. 6)

This transition from the preterite to the participle leaves the sentence hanging in mid air, so to speak, until the thread is picked up in the sentence that follows, "He stood there perfectly motionless", which brings the tense sequence to its logical end.

In the following example, the transition from the preterite to the participle introduced by and offers a moment of respite or repose from the hurried rhythm of the former to the slackened tone of the second, before another shift to the preterite is made:

→
 AS SOON as his mind came back from his home leave, he detached himself from the rail, and walking forward, stood by the break of the poop, looking along the port side of the main deck. (p. 13)

This constant recurrence of and on similar occasions gives it the dimension of a mannerism to be expected whenever more and more details are crammed into the sentence.

him

Carter, his hands in his pockets, and leaning back, examined from head to foot with a cool stare. The mate of the brig raised the glass to his lips, and glaring above the rim at the stranger, drained the contents... (p. 35)

It is obvious that the use of and enables the novelist to do without the time relater after, repetition of the co-referential subject as well as the auxiliary had. The main function, however, is that of varying the tempo of the prose by placing a new element astride the other verbs of the sentence.

Emphatic and is used where Conrad wishes to give special prominence to one particular part of the sentence. He uses it, that is, when he wants to draw the reader's attention to a specific detail in the description:

The night effaced even words, and its mystery had captured everything and every sound - had left nothing free but the unexpected that seemed to hover about one, ready to stretch out its stealthy hand in a touch sudden, familiar, and appalling. (p. 42)

Judging by Conrad's tendency elsewhere in the novel, or in other works discussed in the chapter on modifiers (1), the placing of and before appalling isolates it from the preceding modifiers by giving it special significance. Appalling is thus isolated because it constitutes a sharp contrast to the modifier familiar which precedes it. From the standpoint of literary criticism, Conrad uses here the device of oxymoron: the juxtaposition of two items of opposite meaning. The three modifiers seek to achieve a climatic impact. Still, the contrast between the first two and the third is striking.

This use of and as a means of isolating a certain lexical or grammatical item for purposes of producing a dramatic effect shows up in some cases of conjoined lexical verbs:

(1) I mean his tendency to use asyndetically co-ordinated modifiers in doubles, triplets or foursomes.

The overpowering deluge seemed to last for an age; became unbearable -- and, all at once, stopped. (p. 45)

Due to the highly unexpected nature of the last verb stopped emphatic and is preceded by the long dash and is further followed by an adverbial phrase that helps prepare us for the sudden change from the rapid movement of the first two verb phrases: seemed to last for an age; became unbearable, to the irrevocable end brought about by the last verb.

On rare occasions, both conjunctive and, i.e. that has no other function than that of co-ordination, and emphatic and occur in the same sentence:

→
He was a man - as there were many - of no particular value to anybody but himself, and of no account but as the chief mate of the brig, and the only white man on board of her besides the captain. (p. 12)

The first and conjoins the two prepositional phrases of the first two conjoins. The close relationship between them is shown by the fact that in the second conjoin both the subject and whole predicate of the first are ellipted. The second and relates the noun phrase that follows it not to the preceding of-phrase but to the subject complement of the main clause. The last noun phrase thus isolated from the other conjoins being in some way an expanded appositive to the subject complement of the first main clause.

Despite a tradition of prescriptive teaching against the practice, Conrad's style is notorious for the way he uses and to introduce sentences that are connected in this way to others preceding them. Here, however, and assumes a quasi-adverbial function similar to conjuncts like finally or eventually, etc. This is the same and of transition already attested on clause and phrase level.

As a connective factor of transition and invariably occurs

at the beginning of a sentence marking the finale of a tableau of three sentences:

→
 Out of the level blue of a shallow sea Carimata raises a lofty barrenness of grey and yellow tints, the drab eminence of its arid heights. Separated by a narrow strip of water, Suroeton, to the west, shows a curved and rigid outline resembling the backbone of a stooping giant. And to the westward a troop of insignificant islets stand effaced, indistinct, with vague features that seem to melt into the gathering shadows. (p. 5)

In half an hour after sunset the darkness had taken complete possession of earth and heavens. The islands had melted into the night. And on the smooth water of the Straits, the little brig lying so still, seemed to sleep profoundly, wrapped up in a scented mantle of starlight and silence. (pp. 16 - 7)

Lingard made a gesture to command silence. He seemed to listen yet, as if the wash of the ripple could have had an echo which he expected to hear. And a man's voice that was heard forward had something of the impersonal ring of voices thrown back from hard and lofty cliffs upon the empty distances of the sea. (pp. 25 - 6)

Although the third sentence in the first quotation does not mark the end of the paragraph in which it occurs, it definitely puts the final touch to the topographical feature described in the first two. For the sentence that immediately follows shifts attention from the sea and islands to weather conditions. As against this, the last sentences in the other quotes signal the end of the paragraph in as much the same way as they mark the end of the tableau. The use of and on such occasions gives the impression of the continuity of movement. It indicates that the description in earlier sentences is far from complete, and that something more has to be added.

When the transition is sudden or unexpected the triple sentence tableau does not obtain. Instead, we find that and is combined with a time adverbial heralding the new turn of events:

—
And now, bareheaded and burly, he walked the deck of his kingdom with a regular stride. He stepped out from the hip, swinging his arms with the free motion of a man starting out for a fifteen-mile walk into open country; yet at every twelfth stride he had to turn about sharply and pace back the distance to the taffrail. (pp.11 - 2)

—
 He tapped the table with his knuckles... Carter stood leaning against the sideboard. He was amazed by the unexpected turn of the conversation... The silence in the cabin lasted only a few seconds... And all at once he heard in it, for the first time, the cabin clock tick distinctly, in pulsating beats, as though a little heart of metal behind the dial had been started into sudden palpitation. (p. 38)

In the first quotation, and now underlines the sudden movement from the preceding paragraph reporting Lingard's secret thoughts regarding his brig to a paragraph that is mainly concerned with his actions subsequent to his short reverie. In the second, and all at once introduces a sentence that serves as ^{an} anti-climax to the four preceding ones. The element of surprise is highlighted by the fact that what Shaw finally hears is nothing but the sound of the clock which is magnified out of all proportion by a series of pompous modifiers.

And also occurs in the speech of Lingard's mate, Shaw. There it connects sentences with a view to producing a comic effect:

Unless with Chinamen, or niggers, or such people as must be kept in order and won't listen to reason; having not sense enough to know what's good for them when it's explained to them by their betters - missionaries and such like au-tho-ri-ties. But to fight ten years. And for a woman! (p. 22)

Those pagan times will never come back, thank God. Ten years of murder and unrighteousness! And for a woman! (p. 23)

The comic effect thus produced tallies with Conrad's individualisation of Shaw through his speech discussed in the fourth chapter.

The same comic effect is realised in the dialogue between Carter and Shaw, where the latter begins every answer to the former's queries with the characteristic and:

→
"Eh? What's that? I sighted you just after sunset."

"And you knew where to look, too," said Shaw, staring hard.

"I looked to the westward where there was still some light, as any sensible man would do," retorted the other a little impatiently. "What are you trying to get at?"

"And you have a ready tongue to blow about yourself - haven't you?" (p. 35)

On rare occasions, introductory and is given a concessive force by coupling it with the conjunct yet as in:

That strange rescuer himself was bringing the news of danger. Danger from the natives of course. And yet he was in communication with those natives. (p. 50)

At other times and is used for emphatic purposes, in which case it is often accompanied by inversion of the word order:

bad
You standing just on that spot of the whole coast was my luck. And that I could not help.
You coming upon me like this is my good luck.
And that I hold. (p. 38)

In each case that is a pro-form for the whole sentence preceding the one in which it occurs. In each case, also, that which is the object of the and sentence is fronted to give it special prominence. Such cases of rhetorical inversion abound in the speech of Lingard and some other characters (Aissa of An Outcast for instance).

As opposed to the and's in Shaw's speech, those used by Lingard introduce sentences that highlight the man's overweening sense of self-importance:

→
"I am a white man inside and out; I won't let inoffensive people - and a woman, too - come to harm if I can help it. And if I can't help, nobody can." (p. 39)

Here the second sentence is a mere recapitulation of the first. It sums up the man's determination to stick to his word. His self-confidence is quite obvious.

The second explicit connector is the time adverbial then which occurs on clause and sentence level. In the first case, it has a conjunctival function similar to that of and. In this

it is definitely different from its purely adverbial function on sentence level. Thus, whereas Conrad combines it with and in:

The currents don't begin till it's dark, when a man can't see against what confounded thing he is being drifted, and then the breeze will come.
(p.9)

where the connection between clauses is effected mainly by and, in the following examples the and is dispensed with and the connection is brought about through the peculiar use of then as a conjunctive factor.

The master of the brig stepped out of the companion upon the deck of his vessel, glanced aloft at the yards laid dead square; then, from the door step, took a long, lingering look round the horizon. (p. 9)

The white man looked at the impassive Malay with disgust, then glanced around the horizon - then again at the helmsman and ordered curtly: (p. 7)

Lingard peered steadily into the night, then shook his head. (p.27)

In all three cases then assumes the conjunctive function of the combination and then. Stylistic variety is one of the reasons behind this tactic. Variation of the tempo of the prose is another reason for this practice which is nevertheless typical of Conrad.

On sentence level then has a function similar to that of the and of transition. On such occasions then is a time adverbial meaning "immediately afterwards". It underlines, that is, the time relationship between the verbs of the preceding sentences and those of the sentence it introduces. Here, also, it adds the final touch to some of the descriptive tableaux in the novel.

→
The sun was no more than a degree or so above the horizon, and from the heated surface of the waters a slight mist began to rise....

Then the edges touched and the circular expanse of water took on suddenly a tint, sombre, like a frown; deep, like the brooding meditation of evil. (p.14)

There was no sound along the brig's deck....
Lingard struck a match to light his cheroot...
Then two shadowy forms and two red sparks moved backward and forward on the poop. (p. 18)

For less than a second he could see on the shimmer of the night sky the shape of a boat, the heads of men, the blades of oars pointing upward while being got out hurriedly. Then all this sank out of sight, reappeared once more far off and hardly discernible, before vanishing for good. (p. 49)

Whereas the use of and in the above sentences might give the erroneous impression of the action. simultaneously taking place with that of the then sentence, the use of then as a connective brings out the hierarchical relationship in time between the verbs. In the second sentence, for example, then highlights the causative relationship between the lighting of the cheroot and the movement of the shadowy forms, while in the third it puts into relief that fraction of a minute that passed between the seeing and the disappearance of the scene. On such occasions, the use of then becomes a stylistic necessity.

The third explicit co-ordinator used by Conrad is but which features prominently in the other novels. Here it has a concessive function in:

The others heard, but went on somnolently feeding with spidery movements of their lean arms. (p. 13)

I don't think the nephew cared particularly to have her krissed; but the old fellow made a great fuss and sent one of his own chief men to see the thing done - and the girl had enemies - her own relations approved! (p. 21)

The remarkable thing about the second quotation is that but introduces a clause whose subject is not co-referential with that of the first conjoin. The use of but becomes indicative of the random way in which everyday speech is conducted in that it heralds what looks like an afterthought on the part of the speaker. This is further emphasized by the and clause towards the end of the sentence where a new subject (the girl) is introduced in what is definitely meant as an aside on Lingard's part. The sentence thus begins with the first person pronoun I of the speaker as subject; it then moves to a new subject, "the old man", and ends

up with a third subject in a manner typical of everyday language with its hesitations and continuous meanderings. The important thing is that the characters seem to be following in the footsteps of the author.

Occasionally, but assumes a function similar to that of and as an agent of syntactic isolation. This occurs when special prominence is accorded one of two or more conjoins as when the narrator remarks:

A larger, but a paler and oval patch of light from the compass lamps lay on the brasses of the wheel and on the breast of the Malay standing by the helm. (p. 18)

He stood by his commander, his hands behind his back; a figure indistinct but straight as an arrow. (p. 27)

In the first quotation the modifier paler is isolated from the two modifiers larger and oval; and in the second the whole adjectival phrase straight as an arrow is similarly spotlighted in a move that records the impressions in the order they were received by the speaker's memory. It is as though the narrator was examining his own mind putting down on paper his observations in order of the initial impact they had on him. The first thing he noticed about the light was its large size; but he soon perceived that though larger it was paler, and this last attribute seems to have been the thing that most affected him. In the second case, he saw the figure of the man as a shadowy form, but he soon realised that despite its blurred features, it was as straight as an arrow. The impressions were thus recorded in the order received, and the movement of the modifiers from the abstract to the concrete (indistinct - straight) testifies to the narrator's care for the realistic rendering of events and actions.

Like and, but occurs on sentence level, a practice which runs counter to the prescriptive rules of traditional grammars. In the following example it has a concessive function:

—→
 The adventurers who began that struggle have left no descendants. The ideas of the world changed too quickly for that. But even far into the present century they have had successors. (p. 3)

But simply indicates that the sentence it introduces is surprising, in view of the fact that the first sentence of the quotation makes it clear that the adventurers in question have left no descendants. But helps to draw that subtle distinction between descendants and the successors of the last sentence.

Introductory but is also used to herald the transition from dialogue to description.

But the master of the brig sitting with both his elbows on the table, his face in his hands, had fallen unexpectedly into a meditation so concentrated and so profound that he seemed neither to hear, see, nor breathe. (p. 41)

In such cases, but has no other function than that of relating the preceding dialogue to the description of the man's actions. No concessive force obtains because this is realised by the adverbial phrase so concentrated and so profound that.., etc.

More frequently but occurs on sentence level in the speech of the characters to highlight a sudden shift of thought:

'My father was master's mate on board one of the three-deckers....
But this affair about a woman was long before that time.' (p. 22)

The transition in the latter case underlines a sudden turn of thought from the battle of Navarino to the main subject of the conversation: 'Helen of Troy.' In other words, no concessive relationship is established between the two sentences connected by but. But simply serves the purpose of returning to a subject that has been interrupted by digressions.

But can also introduce a sentence, the first element of which is accorded special pitch prominence.

"I cannot pretend to see through the peculiarities of them out-of-the-way parts. But I can keep a lookout in an ordinary way, and I have noticed that craft of any kind seemed scarce, for the last few days:...." (p. 24)

The speaker is Shaw whose speech idiosyncrasies Conrad ridicules. The bombastic tone of the first person pronoun I in such cases is given further force by the connective preceding it. But thus becomes an agent of syntactic isolation singling out a particular part of the sentence for special effect.

The conjunction for figures on a very limited scale in the novel. It mainly performs a causative function that is normally fulfilled by and.

"A boat sneaks up from nowhere and turns out to be a long-expected friend! For you are one of them friends the skipper was going to meet somewhere here." (p. 43)

The speaker is Shaw. However, the literary and formal tone of the conjunction for is in sharp contrast with the colloquial nature of the accusative form of the pronoun them. Again, this seems to be part and parcel of Conrad's method of satirizing Shaw's speech habits.

The third group of connectors comprises syntactic factors like substitution and structural parallelism as well as semantic factors such as repetition of certain lexical items.

While pro-forms (which are aspects of substitution) usually abound in dialogue where they are often accompanied by ellipsis of one or more parts of the sentence, the one pro-form that enjoys a place of prominence in the novel is the demonstrative that.

The ideas of the world changed too quickly for that. (p. 3)

Your gunboat won't find a single ship's rib or a single corpse left for a landmark. That she won't. (pp. 38 - 9)

Why, that chap up there wanted to pick a quarrel with me for coming aboard, and now you threaten to shoot me rather than let me go. Not that I care about that. (p. 39)

In all three sentences that has an anaphoric reference to the statements expressed in the earlier sentences. The second sentence contains a pro-form that is foregrounded, together with ellipsis of the lexical verb find. This process of rhetorical inversion is characteristic of the speaker, Tom Lingard, the vainglorious skipper of the "Flash".

Although instances of structural parallelism on sentence and clause level are not hard to come by, it is to works like The Nigger and "Youth" that we should turn for this. Here, however, rare cases like the following occur:

To him she was always precious.... (p. 10)

To him she was unique and dear, this brig of three hundred and fourteen tons register - a kingdom! (p. 11)

He - the man - was the inspirer of that thing
She - the craft - had all the qualities of a living thing... (p. 11)

Only two sat on the spars. One, a man with a childlike, light yellow face, smiling with fatuous imbecility under the wisps of some straight coarse hair dyed a mahogany tint, was the tindal of the crew - a kind of boatswain's or serang's mate. The other, sitting beside him on the booms, was a man nearly black, not much bigger than a large ape, and wearing on his wrinkled face that look of comical truculence which is often characteristic of men from the south-western coast of Sumatra. (p. 13)

The identical structure of the first two sentences shows up in the inversion of the adjectival complement to him. Other factors such as the lexical equivalence between a kingdom and this brig of three hundred tons register further highlight the relationship between the sentences. The same similar structure obtains in the next two sentences. "He - the man; She - the craft". The third quotation is linked together through apposition between two, one and the other, as well as the structural parallelism existing between the two sentences constituting the second appositives to the subject of the first: two. It could also be said that

structural parallelism is the norm where the triple phrase or clause sentences occur in succession.

Repetition of lexical items in consecutive sentences is one last device of connection in Conrad:

The eyes gave the face its remarkable expression.
The eye-brows, darker than the hair, pencilled a straight line below the wide and unwrinkled brow much whiter than the sunburnt face. The eyes, as if glowing with the light of a hidden fire...
 (pp. 9 - 10)

The rhetorical effect of this and similar descriptions is typical of the early Conrad.

We can now list Conrad's connectives as follows:

1. Markers of asyndetic co-ordination. These Conrad uses in a very peculiar manner in the triple clause or triple phrase sentence. The connection between the three elements is further reinforced through lexical equivalence, especially in cases of apposition in its expanded or split forms.
2. The explicit co-ordinator and which fulfils a variety of functions. As a connective of transition, it adds the final touch to a descriptive tableau, introduces the last clause of a triple clause sentence, of which the elements are arranged in order of increasing or diminishing importance, indicates a change from the preterite to the participle, or from the fictional past of the author to that of the character concerned. It is used as a concessive or causative connector. It is also used as an agent of syntactic isolation or rejection when it isolates a particular part of the sentence for dramatic or emphatic purposes. When it occurs on sentence level, it is equivalent in meaning to an adverbial of addition or summation such as finally or ultimately.
3. But is used for concession or transition, in which last case it is similar in function to and.

4. Then is idiosyncratically used on clause level as a co-ordinator in place of and. On sentence level, it is a time adverbial regulating the time sequence of verbs, allowing in the interim a momentary relaxation in the tempo of the prose.

5. Pro-forms of which that is the most conspicuous in the part of the novel under investigation.

6. Structural parallelism and ellipsis.

7. Repetition of lexical items.

The foregoing analysis has shown that connection is often brought about through the interplay of more than one connective factor.

Conrad's connective practice as displayed in The Rescue is much more typical of the earlier than of the later novels. Indeed, the first part of The Rescue analysed in the previous pages is different in this respect from the later two parts, which were written almost two decades later. Still, this does not mean that this peculiarity of Conrad's style disappears with time. It is at its height in Almayer's Folly, An Outcast, the earlier parts of The Rescue, The Nigger and the short stories in between. It dwindles in Lord Jim, Nostromo, The Secret Agent. It is at its lowest in Under Western Eyes and Chance. It soon gains momentum in Victory, The Shadow Line, The Arrow of Gold and The Rover, Conrad's last complete novel. The decline of this feature in some of the novels might be due to Conrad's desire to maintain a distinction between author and character narrators supposed to cover up for him. Excessive use of this conjunctival practice in Lord Jim, for instance, tends in the final analysis to blur the distinction between Marlow and Conrad as will be pointed out in due time.

The changes that came over Conrad's use of connectives can be illustrated by the following characteristic quotations from

novels belonging to the different stages of the novelist's stylistic development.

She had taken up her burden already, with the intention of pursuing her path. His sudden movement arrested her at the first step, and again she stood, straight, slim, expectant, with a readiness to dart away suggested in the light immobility of her pose. High above, the branches of the trees met in a transparent shimmer of waving green mist, through which the rain of yellow rays descended upon her head, streamed in glints down her black tresses, shone with the changing glow of liquid metal on her face, and lost itself in vanishing sparks in the sombre depths of her eyes that, wide open now, with enlarged pupils, looked steadily at the man in her path. And Willems stared at her, charmed with a charm that carries with it a sense of irreparable loss, tingling with that feeling which begins like a caress and ends in a blow, in that sudden hurt of a new emotion making its way into a human heart, with the brusque stirring of sleeping sensations awakening suddenly to the rusk of new hopes, new fears, new desires - and to the flight of one's old self. (Outcast, p. 69)

→
When he had taken it down the day before he had folded it in four, absent-mindedly, before dropping it on the table. And now he saw it lying uppermost, spread out, smoothed out even and covering all the confused pile of pages, the record of his intellectual life for the last three years. It had not been flung there. It had been placed there - smoothed out, too! He guessed in that an intention of profound meaning - or perhaps some inexplicable mockery. (U.W.E. p. 77)

→
One closes behind one the little gate of mere boyishness - and enters an enchanted garden. Its very shades glow with promise. Every turn of the path has its seduction. And it isn't because it is an undiscovered country.

•••→
One goes on recognizing the landmarks of the predecessors, excited, amused, taking the hard luck and the good luck together - the kicks and the halfpence, as the saying is - the picturesque common lot that holds so many possibilities for the deserving or perhaps for the lucky. Yes. One goes on. And the time, too, goes on - till one perceives ahead a shadow-line warning one that the region of early youth, too, must be left behind. (Shadow Line, p. 3)

After entering at break of day the inner roadstead of the Port of Toulon, exchanging several loud hails with one of the guardboats of the Fleet, which directed him where he was to take up his berth, Master-Gunner Peyrol let go the anchor of the seaworn and battered ship in his charge, between the arsenal and the town, in full view of the principal

quay. The course of his life, which in the opinion of any ordinary person might have been regarded as full of marvellous incidents (only he himself had never marvelled at them), had rendered him undemonstrative to such a degree that he did not even let out a sigh of relief at the rumble of the cable. And yet it ended a most anxious six months of knocking about at sea with valuable merchandise in a damaged hull, ... (Rover, p. 1.)

In the passage from An Outcast the first and puts the final touch to one of the numerous tableaux the novel teems with, while the second brings to a dramatic end a series of prepositional phrases. It is the and of transition in both cases. In the passage from Under Western Eyes the and of transition is used as a means of shifting attention from the fictional past of the narrator to that of Razumov. In the third quotation the two and's are there for purposes of concession and transition respectively, while the presence of the adverbial yet in the fourth makes the function of and one of both concession and transition at the same time. The thing to note here is that in three of the four quotes and occurs at the beginning of the third sentence in the paragraph. Apart from that, we note that the passage from "The Shadow Line" is linked together mainly through repetition of lexical items and structural parallelism between the conjoined clauses, which recalls to mind Conrad's predilection for the asyndetically co-ordinated series of phrases and clauses running in troika. Just as Conrad's favourite connector and remained with him till the end of his active life as a writer, the other connecting devices, which feature strikingly in the early works, kept cropping up in the most realistic of his works as will be presently shown.

Conrad's singularity in this respect can be shown by juxtaposing his practice in The Rescue with other works by some of his contemporaries. Here is a passage from Henry James's Portrait of a Lady (1883):

The shadows on the perfect lawn were straight and angular; they were the shadows of an old man sitting in a deep wicker-chair near the low table on which the tea had been served, and of two younger men strolling to and fro, in desultory talk, in front of him. The old man had his cup in his hand; it was an unusually large cup, of a different pattern from the rest of the set, and painted in brilliant colours. He disposed of its contents with much circumspection, holding it for a long time close to his chin, with his face turned to the house. (p. 2)

In his essay on James, Conrad calls him "the historian of finer consciences" (1), while Ford Madox Ford regards James's "sense of form" to be "so nice as to be unrivalled" (2). Still, the passage quoted from one of his best novels is typical of James's connective practice in that it shows that the man shunned most of Conrad's mannerisms. It is true that we occasionally come across sentences beginning with and then (p. 6), and more frequently with but, still, it is the way Conrad uses his and's, but's and asyndetic co-ordinators (especially in the triple clause or phrase sentence) that gives his style its distinctive quality.

Ford, on the other hand, was more liberal in his use of the explicit connectors already attested in The Rescue. On page 24 of Some Do Not we read: (3)

And yet... He had had passages when a sort of blind unreason had attracted him almost to speechlessness towards girls of the most giggling, behind-the-counter order, big-bosomed, scarlet-cheeked.

...

And Macmaster, who would have sentimentalised the plump girl to the tune of Highland Mary, would for a day damn Tietjens up and down for a coarse brute.

...

And Macmaster suddenly realised that he wasn't wallowing, as he had imagined that he would, in the sensuous current of his prose.

Here, however, we notice that and is used at the beginning of every other paragraph, a practice which is contrary to that

(1) N.L.L., p. 17

(2) Ford, 1964^b: 169

(3) Ford, 1963

followed by Conrad. Besides, the only function of and in such cases is that of antithesis or contrastive juxtaposition, since the second paragraph is nothing but an anti-climax to the one preceding it. Ford's prolific use of and and but on pages 65 - 66 makes the function of and one of mere addition similar to Biblical and, while reserving the concessive function to but or yet. The paragraphs on the two pages begin with, and, but, and, yet, but, and respectively. The contrapuntal variation between and and but, or its equivalent yet is quite remarkable. It is obvious that the finest stylist in England, as Ford calls himself in his book on Conrad, used his connectives for purposes different in many ways from those of his friend.

Another novelist who overindulged in the use of connectives was Arnold Bennett. The following is a characteristic passage from Hilda Lessways. (1)

The Church choir had its annual dance to which she was invited; but the perverse creature cared not for dancing. Her mother did not seek society, did not appear to require it. Nor did Hilda acutely feel the lack of it. She could not define her need. All she knew was that youth, moment by moment, was dropping down inexorably behind her. And, still a child in heart and soul, she saw herself ageing, and then aged, and then withered. Her twenty-first birthday was well above the horizon. Soon, soon, she would be 'over twenty-one!' And she was not yet born! That was it! She was not yet born! If the passionate strength of desire could have done the miracle, time would have stood still in the heavens while Hilda sought the way of life.

And withal she was not wholly unhappy. (pp. 7 - 8)

The first and indicates a dramatic turn in the woman's secret thoughts. The urgency of Hilda's thoughts is further emphasised by the two following and's conjoining the two clauses "and then aged and then withered". The shortness of the clauses parallels the woman's agitation. In And she was not yet born, we meet with the and of transition signalling a return to the preterite after

(1) Bennett, 1913

two sentences of future past. That last and seeks to relate the passage it introduces to the preceding one, the two being a mere reporting of the young woman's anxious thoughts regarding her isolation. Although Bennett seems to use his connectives for purposes similar to Conrad's, the fact remains that this is only restricted to cases of reported speech. In other words, we do not find in Bennett that insistence on the triple phrase of clause or even sentence characteristic of Conrad. Besides, Conrad's and's and but's are more significant as factors of transition in descriptive passages, the thing that does not obtain in Bennett's case.

The same remark holds good for Galsworthy's practice. In Over The River. The following passage is typical:(1)

All new, and rather exciting, tantalising, unsatisfying. No rest! Certainly none in the white house with the wide verandah she had occupied at Kandy. At first she had enjoyed, then she had wondered if she enjoyed, then she had known she was not enjoying, lastly she had hated it. And now it was all over and she was back! She flipped the ash off her cigarette and stretched herself, and the fantail rose with a flutter. (pp.15-6)

After the stylistic variation on and of the third sentence, i.e. lastly, and now is used to effect the transition from the past perfect to the fictional present of the character concerned, a practice similar to Conrad's on like occasions. Still, the and's that follow have no other function than that of conjunction, and the monotony that ensues is a rare occurrence in Conrad for whom such connectives (whether explicit or asyndetic) are the means of bringing about what has recently been called the musicalisation of the novel.

This brief comparison proves that Conrad's singularity is due not so much to the higher frequency of particular connectives in his works as to the way he manipulates them for purposes quite

(1) Galsworthy, 1933.

different from those of his contemporary novelists and close friends. Asyndetic co-ordinators on the triple phrase or clause level, and or but for purposes of transition, syntactic isolation or emphasis, structural parallelism, ellipsis and repetition are the connectives that put Conrad in a class by himself.

The question that arises now is this: What are the artistic objectives Conrad seeks to achieve through this conjunctival practice of his? I believe that he overindulges in this practice to produce certain rhythmical effects, to give his style a colloquial touch of some sort, but mainly to satisfy his incorrigible penchant for descriptions.

Defining his impressionistic philosophy in the Preface to The Nigger, Conrad advances the theory that all art "must strenuously aspire to the plasticity of sculpture, to the colour of painting, and to the magic suggestiveness of music - which is the art of arts" (p. ix). This simply means that Conrad was aware that any series of impressions must be organized into something like order, since it is this ordered movement that gives pleasure to the reader and helps him in the long run "hear and feel". For an artist such as Conrad haphazard recording of one's impressions would not do.

The argument becomes more convincing in the light of what Ford tells us about their joint preoccupation with rhythm. Ford thus remarks that when he once told Conrad that whole "passages of "Heart of Darkness" were not very far off blank verse Conrad tried for a short time to turn a paragraph into decasyllabic lines" (1). He also mentions how he and Conrad used to argue

(1) Ford, 1924 : 199

over the number of syllables in certain verses of Racine (1). Ford's testimony is of great importance for us, because it proves that Conrad was alive to the prosodic peculiarities of language. This is what Ford actually means when he tells us that although Conrad's ears "were singularly faulty" he was "a great writer of elaborated prose" whose "polyphonic closings to paragraphs" Ford greatly admired. It is natural then to assume that Conrad's feeling for rhythm should be reflected (consciously or unconsciously) in his own works.

On the other hand, Richard Curle believes that Conrad's "music is not the mere enlargement of older English strains. It is a new music altogether - the romantic, mysterious, and thrilling music of another race. There is a Latin, harp-like rhythm about Conrad's prose which is intensely individual" (2). A third critic, John Shand, would attribute some of Conrad's stylistic mannerisms to the fact that Conrad "is too much in love with the sound of words and the rhythms of his sentences" (3). A little later Shand makes it clear that he dislikes Conrad's style when it is "merely a striving for opulent word-painting and beautifully cadenced sentences" (4).

In the following few pages I shall try to show how Conrad's connectives help him produce, among other things, certain rhythmical effects. This does not mean that considerations of rhythm dictated this peculiar use of connectives on the novelist's part, since I have already made it clear in the linguistic analysis of The Rescue that Conrad's conjunctival practice is first and foremost a device aimed at arranging, correcting or adding new details

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- (1) Ibid., pp. 201 - 2
 (2) Curle, 1914 : 180-1.
 (3) Shand, 1960 : 15
 (4) Ibid.

to the impressions the writer wants to convey to the reader. That such a process should occasionally result in the prose acquiring certain rhythmical qualities is a side issue that should not blind us to the far more important objectives of his impressionism. (1)

This is how asyndetic co-ordination produces carefully balanced phrase:

While the sun shone with that dazzling light in which her love was born and grew till it possessed her whole being, she was kept firm in her unwavering resolve by the mysterious whisper^{ings} of desire which filled her heart with impatient longing for the darkness that would mean the end of danger and strife, the beginning of happiness, the fulfilling of love, the completeness of life. (A.F. 147)

The underlined four phrases can be divided into their constituent parts as follows:

Head noun phrase	Postmodifying prepositional phrase (of + modifying noun phrase)
the énd	ōf dāngēr ānd strífe,
the bēgínnīng	ōf hāppīnēss,
the fūlfíllīng	ōf lóve,
the cōmplētēnēss	ōf lífe.

The numerical order of syllables in the four phrases is: 7, 8, 6, 6 respectively. A close look at the head noun phrases will reveal that they are arranged in a rising numerical order of

(1) I take rhythm to be a *sim qua non* feature of verse, whereas in prose it has to be fished out, so to speak, in passages where the balanced movement of certain phrases or clauses, or the syntactic isolation of certain parts of the sentence tend to induce a lilting effect suggestive of rhythm. Being a non native speaker of English, and prose rhythm having by almost general consensus of opinion something subjective about it, I restrict my discussion here to the role played by connectives in the overall rhythmical pattern of Conrad's works, which is, needless to say, the outcome as much of connectives as of other factors not dealt with here.

syllables: 2, 4, 4, 4. As opposed to this, we find that the postmodifying of-phrases are placed in a decreasing syllabic order 5, 4, 2, 2. We also note that the strongly stressed syllable in the second phrase advances from the third position in the head noun phrase: the bēginning, to the second in the of-phrase: of happinēss, and then recedes once more to the third position in the following head noun phrase: the fūlling. Variety is further maintained through this juxtaposition of the well-balanced last two phrases (each containing six syllables) with the relatively longer preceding phrases. It is worth mentioning that the absence of an explicit co-ordinator (typical of Conrad in these cases of enumeration) results in this striking balanced order of the last two phrases. Besides, cadence seems to be in full muster here (1). There is the native cadence of the type 6-4-1 in end of danger and strife, of the type 4-1 in -filling of love and ..letenēss of life. A *cursus tardus* obtains in ..ginnig of happinēss ('--'--).

Connectives are also responsible for the rhythmical quality of this passage from An Outcast:

Those were the delights of his life, and he was unable to conceive that the moral significance of any act of his could interfere with the very nature of things, could dim the light of the sun, could destroy the perfume of the flowers, the submission of his wife, the smile of his child, the awe-struck respect of Leonard da Souza and of all the Da Souza family. (p. 3)

The role played by connectives in the rhythmic pattern of the passage

(1) This is the name for certain rhythmical sequences which occur frequently throughout numerous prose, and especially at emphatic places, and are used, either consciously or unconsciously, because they appear to be more effective than others. In highly rhythmical prose they occur with such frequency that they often overlap. All cadences begin on a strongly stressed syllable and contain both strong and weak syllables. Like meter they cut across words. Cf. *Tempest*, 1930 : 131 ; see also pp. 73-103

becomes clear when we break the underscored clauses and phrases down into their constituent parts:

<u>Predicate (verb)</u>	<u>Head noun phrase</u>	<u>of-phrase</u>
cōuld īntērfēre wīth	thē véry nátūre	ōf thīngs,
cōuld díim	thē líght	ōf thē sūn,
cōuld dēstrōy	thē pērfūme	ōf thē flōwēr,
- - -	thē sūbmīssīōn	ōf hīs wīfe,
- - -	thē smīle	ōf hīs chíld,
- - -	thē áwe-strūck rēspēct	ōf Leónārd dē Sóuzā and of all thē Dā Sóuzā fāmīly.

Ellipsis and asyndetic co-ordination are the main factors of connection. Their impact on the rhythm of the passage is obvious.

First, there is this progressive elliptical process which eliminates the co-referential subject of the two clauses: could dim, could destroy; and then proceeds to eliminate both subject and verb from the remaining three clauses. The result is that we get three identical clauses followed by three conjoined phrases. In this balanced order between the phrases and clauses running in troika, variety is created through a variety of techniques. Thus, despite the repetition of the auxiliary could in the first three clauses the lexical verb in each is different. There is the phrasal verb īntērfēre wīth containing four syllables. This is replaced in the second by the monosyllabic díim which is in turn replaced in the third by the disyllabic dēstrōy. On the other hand, both the first and last head noun phrases are modified by the attributives very and awe-struck respectively, as against the lack of such pre-modification in the intermediate head noun phrases. These last, however, range from the monosyllabic líght through the disyllabic

per̄fūme to the trisyllabic sub̄miss̄ion. This also applies to the of-phrases where variety is assured as much through the alternate decrease and increase in the number of syllables as through this alternation between determiners like the and possessive pronouns such as his. Such variations in the seemingly parallel structures of the various constituents in each group testify to the novelist's desire to arrange his impressions in a way as much informative as it is pleasing to the reader's innate propensity to "see, hear and feel". The highly cadenced nature of the prose shows up in phrases like per̄fūme of the flōwer which is a case of *cursus planus*, while Da Souza family is a case of *cursus tardus*. Other instances of cadence include nature of things, light of the sun, and ..mission of his wife (1).

This preoccupation with cadence is also reflected in this case of the syntactically isolated modifier arrested in:

An immense cloud had come up running over the heavens, as if looking for the craft, and now hung over it, arrested. (R. p. 42)

Without this syntactic isolation of the modifier (effected through the comma) the last part of the sentence would read: and now hung arrested over it. The way Conrad puts it gives us a case of *cursus planus* in over it, arrested ('---'-).

In the following quotations from "Youth", which is perhaps the most poetic of Conrad's works, connectives are conducive to the pleasing effect of the balanced phrases and clauses:

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- (1) As already pointed out on p. 358 supra, cadences occur in emphatic places. *Tempest* divides these into three classical models:
- a) *Cursus planus* '---'- (counting from the end the strong syllables are no. 5-2)
 - Extension: '---'- (6-2)
 - b) *Cursus tardus* '---'-- (6-3)
 - Extension: '---'-- (7-3)
 - c) *Velox* '---'-'- (7-4-2)
 - Extension: '---'-'- (8-4-2)

In addition, there are native cadences (beginning and ending on strongly stressed syllables) Cf. *Tempest*, 1930 : 82 - 102

It blew day after day: It blew with spite,
without interval, without mercy, without
rest." (p. 10)

Apart from asyndetic co-ordination, the sentence is linked together through the parallel structures of the two clauses and the three prepositional phrases that follow them. Repetition of without and the lexical verb blew constitute the semantic factor of connection. But look at the careful way the last three phrases are placed. The downward gradation of the phrases transpires in the eliminating process of syllables. In without interval, the modifying noun interval is made up of three syllables, while in without rest we end up with a monosyllable that puts an emphatic end to the whole sentence.

The same process is followed in:

Day after day and night after night there was
nothing round the ship but the howl of wind,
the tumult of the sea, the noise of water
pouring over her deck. (p. 10)

Aside from the parallel structure of the adverbial phrases:

Day after day, night after night; there is the balanced movement of the last three conjoined phrases where variety is nevertheless maintained through this alternation between monosyllables and disyllables in the noun phrases howl, tumult, noise, as well as the rising order of syllables in the modifying noun phrases of the of-phrases: wind, sea (two monosyllables) and water (which is disyllabic). The fact that the sentence abounds in strongly stressed syllables (most of which are monosyllabic words) serves the purpose of portraying the tension inherent in the depicted storm scene.

The tension surrounding the Judea's attempt to weather the storm is also maintained in the conjoined lexical verbs in the coming example:

In two days, it blew a gale.
 The Judea hove to, wallowed on the Atlantic
 like an old candle-box.
 It blew day after day, etc. (p. 10)

Asyndetic co-ordination in the central sentence emphasizes the critical condition of the ship. For whereas an explicit coordinator like and between the two conjoins would give the faulty impression of the tension coming to an end, its absence leaves the whole critical question of the ship's fate hanging in the balance, a fact which the novelist's return to further description of the storm in the third sentence puts into relief. Moreover, the two conjoins (each containing one strong and one light syllable in succession '-,'-) are on a level par of rhythmical pattern imitating the ship's desperate movements.

The process of syllabic gradation is also attested where the explicit co-ordinator is used in preference to markers of asyndetic co-ordination in:

It eased before morning, and next day the sky
cleared, and as the sea went down, the leak
 took up. (p. 14)

The first thing to note is that the parallel structures of the first three clauses is mainly brought about through the use of and (each of the three containing six syllables, the thing that would not obtain in the absence of and). Variety is effected in the first place, through the foregrounding of the adverbial phrase in the second clause, as well as through the fronting of the subordinate clause in the third. Notice also the variations in the stress pattern of the sentence: -' -' '-, -'' -'', -' -' '', -' ''. The element of surprise and tension is kept to the fore through an abundance of monosyllables, three of which occur in immediate succession at the end, thus riveting the reader's attention on the information imparted.

The use of the and of transition in the following example from

Lord Jim aims at relaxing the tempo of the prose by shifting attention from the rushed and emphatic monosyllabic and disyllabic words to the more temperate tone of larger chunks comprising three, four or five syllables:

After two years of training he went to sea,
and entering the regions so well known to his
imagination, found them strangely barren of adventure.

(L.J.p.10)
The movement of the rhythm is further characterised by the rising nature of the first part (i.e. mainly consisting of a light and strong syllable in succession -'), as opposed to the waved rhythm of the participial clause introduced by and (i.e. a strong syllable occurring between two or more light ones), while the last part is falling (the strong syllable is followed by a weak one '-). Besides, one notes how the use of the lightly stressed syllable in and prevents the clash of the strongly stressed syllables in the two closely related words sea, entering.

The same applies to the use of and in this sentence from The Arrow of Gold:

...his hands resting on the hilt of a cavalry
sabre - and all around him a landscape of
savage mountains. (p. 8)

Without the and the two phrases: cavalry sabre, all around him (the first ending on a strong syllable just as the second begins with a strong one) would produce a jerky effect on the reader, while the and, in eliminating such clumsy effect, makes it possible for the novelist to get a cadence of the type '--' in cavalry sabre, and a cursus velox in landscape of savage mountains ('--'-'-').

Variety of syllabic units and cadence also obtains in this sentence from The Secret Agent, where and is the means of conjoining the last two parts of the sentence:

The door of the shop was the only means of entrance to the house in which Mr. Verloc carried on his business of a seller of shady wares, exercised his vocation of a protector of society, and cultivated his domestic virtues. (p. 5)

The last two clauses in question can be subdivided into constituents like:

<u>lexical verb</u>	<u>noun phrase</u>	<u>of-phrase</u>	(double genitive)
exercised	his vocation	of a protector	of society,
and cultivated	his domestic virtues.		

It is to be noted that the syllabic units in the two clauses run in this order: 3 4 5 4, 5 4 2. It is obvious that the use of and makes it possible for this marked alternation between units of four and those of five syllables to continue. Besides, there is this correspondence between the cursus planus in --tēctor of sociēty and the cursus velox --vated his dōmestic virtūes ('---'--), and ('---'-'--') respectively.

When all is said and done, the fact remains that it is in the balancing of parallel phrases and clauses that Conrad's use of connectives is quite striking. The following examples from An Outcast throw this fact into sharp relief. Here is an instance of postposed adjectival phrases identical in everything except for the subtle variation in the number of syllables in each unit:

It seemed to him to be something loud and stirring like a shout, silent and penetrating like an inspiration. (p.69)

In the following quotation, however, a progressive case of ellipsis eliminating a new part of the sentence with each new movement combines with asyndetic co-ordination in bringing about the balanced phrases and clauses at the end of the sentence:

And he lay there, dreamily contented, in the tepid and perfumed shelter, thinking of Aissa's eyes; recalling the sound of her voice, the quiver of her lips - her frowns and her smile.

(p.75)

The participle is dropped after the second movement, and with the onslaught of the fourth both the participle and the of-construction are abandoned for the sake of the conjoined noun phrases: her frowns and her smile. The gradation is both pleasing and conducive to heightening the emphatic ending of the sentence.

Far from being the exception in Conrad's style (especially in the early phase of his development) such passages with their unmistakable lilting effects are the rule in situations of emotional tension or unconscious authorial involvement with his subject. I might as well conclude this brief discussion of the rhythmic potentialities of Conrad's connectives by referring the reader to the passage on page 254 where various connectives on sentence and clause level are called into play with the inevitable rhythmic results entailed. Take the opening four sentences:

Tell the brook not to run to the river;
Tell the river not to run to the sea.
Speak loud. Sneak angrily. Maybe they
 will obey you.

There is first the structural parallelism between the two opening sentences (each containing ten syllables). There is also the balanced movement in the third and fourth utterances. Besides, there is the repetition of lexical items such as tell, river, speak. Notice also how the novelist opts for the adjectival form of the adverbial loud to prevent inevitable rhyming between loudly and angrily. The passage ends with two sprawling sentences:

He that cares not for the very mountain that
 gave him life
 he that tears the earth from which he springs.
 Tears it, eats it, destroys it -
 to hurry faster to the river -
 to the river in which he is lost for ever....

Apart from the rhyming of (river - ever), there is the parallel structure of He that cares not... he that tears the earth... etc., as well as the balanced movement of the conjoined clauses: tears

it, eats it... etc. Repetition of lexical items is found in plenty. Notice also how the novelist squeezes the clause he that tears into a new highly balanced sequence of parallel structures: tears it, eats it, destroys it.., etc. Moreover, there is the deliberate ellipsis of the subject of the first clause tears it in order not to impair the balance between it and the following parallel structures. The lilted effect in this and similar cases is undoubtedly the result of the interplay of connective factors like structural parallelism, ellipsis, repetition and asyndetic co-ordination.

Conrad's excessive use of connectives can be also interpreted as his own way of giving to his style the colloquial touch it badly needed. In a letter to Alfred Knopf dated 20th July, 1913, he claimed to "stand much nearer the public mind than Stevenson, who was super-literary, a conscious virtuoso of style", while his own style he saw to be "clumsy here and there, but is perfectly straight-forward and tending towards the colloquial," (1). The statement is not totally untrue. For Conrad himself could be as super-literary as the most notorious of virtuosos; the passage from An Outcast bears witness to this. On the other hand, his peculiar theory of the colloquial is in full swing in the Marlow novels, "The Shadow Line" and The Arrow of Gold. The point at issue now is the degree of colloquialism imparted to style through excessive use of connectives.

In Chance when Marlow is interrupted by one of his audience, who accused him of exaggeration "if only by way of putting things. It is too startling.", Marlow, the narrator tells us, defended himself in the following manner:

(1) L.L., Vol. II, p. 147

'My way of putting things! My dear fellow, I have merely stripped the rags of business verbiage and financial jargon off my statements. And you are startled! I am giving you the naked truth. It's true too that nothing lays itself open to the charge of exaggeration more than the language of naked truth. What comes with a shock is admitted with difficulty. But what will you say to the end of his career! It began with the Orb Deposit Bank. under the name of that institution de Barral, with the frantic obstinacy of an unimaginative man, had been financing an Indian prince who was prosecuting a claim for an enormous number of scores of lakes - a miserable remnant of his ancestors treasures - that sort of thing. And it was all authentic enough. (p.80)

Here we have two explicit connectors: and which is used twice and but. In both cases and is used as an agent for concession. Judging by the sentences that precede it on both occasions, the use of the concessive conjunct still would be more appropriate. Still, however, has an unmistakable literary touch about it, whereas and which performs the same function is more typical of the language of daily life. It is not unusual that a speaker should use it on similar occasions in place of the more literary still. The same thing applies to but which has no concessive function in the above passage. Indeed, it can be easily replaced by and or dispensed with altogether. Again, this is typical of everyday speech, especially among the less educated classes, where and's and but's are used to connect conversational speech. In descriptive passages such items are deliberately used to add the final touch to a tableau, or effect transition from one tense sequence to another; but in the speech of characters like Marlow no such stylistic effects obtain.

The speech of the narrator in "The Shadow Line" is replete with such connectors.

He had, it seems, been meditating upon them ever since.
I began to pity him profoundly. And in a tone which I tried to make as little sarcastic as possible I said that I was glad he had found

something to occupy his morning hours. (p. 20)

'Good lord! for the Harbour Office. This must be looked into'.

Strictly speaking, he was right. But I've never had much taste for investigation, for showing people up and all that, no doubt, ethically meritorious kind of work. And my view of the episode was purely ethical. (p. 27)

All at once, as if a page of a book had been turned over disclosing a word which made plain all that had gone before, I perceived that this matter had also another than an ethical aspect.

And still I did not move. Captain Giles lost his patience a little. With an angry puff at his pipe he turned his back on my hesitation.

But it was not hesitation on my part....(p. 28)

In the first two quotations and is used in place of adverbials like finally and still respectively. In the third instance and is a superfluous item because of the presence of still. But is not this constant alternation between and's, but's and other connectors characteristic of the easy-going, closely connected nature of everyday language?

However, to say that all Conrad's connectives occupying similar positions are colloquial in nature, would be an unjustifiable sweeping generalisation. Take for instance, his use of the conjunction for in the following quotations from "The Shadow Line":

She was an eastern ship, inasmuch as then she belonged to that port. She traded among dark islands on a blue reef-scared sea, with the Red Ensign over the taffrail and at her mast-head a house-flag, also red, but with a green border and with a white crescent in it. For an Arab owned her, and a Syed at that." (p. 4)

His alms-giving, I have heard, was most extensive, covering almost the whole Archipelago. For isn't it said that "The charitable man is the friend of Allah?" (p. 5)

All day long, at sea or in harbour, he could be seen walking hastily up and down the after-deck, wearing an intense, spiritually rapt expression, which was caused by a perpetual consciousness of unpleasant physical sensations in his internal economy. For he was a confirmed dyspeptic." (p. 6)

Obviously the function of for in such instances is to effect a syntactic connection between the for sentence and the one preceding it. But is not the connection already established on the semantic level . . . one of cause and effect without this monotonous use of for? Indeed, the superfluity of for in the first quote becomes more striking in view of the sentence that immediately follows it: "Hence the green border on the flag." (p. 4). If it be argued that the use of for in the last two quotations heightens the ironic impact of the sentences they introduce, the fact remains that the ironic purpose would be as well served in the absence of the conjunction. Besides, for has an unmistakable literary or formal touch about it. Still, this mixing of the colloquial and the literary is one of those thorny stylistic problems that Conrad could not successfully resolve.

Apart from serving the purposes of rhythm and colloquialism discussed above, Conrad's connectives are the means of linking together the various elements of his descriptive passages. In an informative essay on Conrad, John Shand once said:

For Conrad, always a serious artist, is most serious in his descriptions, and seems so anxious to make his readers see all the details of a setting that he often obscures the picture instead of revealing it. He is always inclined to squeeze the last possible word into a sentence, the last possible sentence into a paragraph, and when he sometimes desires to be brief, he goes to the other extreme, and writes short, staccato sentences.(1)

Among the other things that Shand objected to was Conrad's "extreme use of simile" which has already been discussed in the previous chapter. What interests us most is the underlined part of Shand's statement inasmuch as it has direct bearing on connectives.

In his mania for descriptions Conrad could squeeze not only the last word but also the first word into the most sprawling of

(1) Shand, 1960 : 14

sentences. The real danger of such a method, when carried too far, is that it undermines in the long run the novelist's desire for impersonality which is one of the main prerequisites of his impressionistic philosophy. Lord Jim begins with four chapters of omniscient narration by some unidentified author who is none other but Conrad himself. This omniscient narrator seems to be given over to some characteristic outbursts of rhetorical prose. Describing the arrival of the pilgrims on the Patna, he writes:

They came covered with dust, with sweat, with grime, with rags -- (p.14)

This is the impressionistic method in full swing. The first thing he sees of the men is, perhaps, the faces covered with dust, but on close scrutiny sweat shows through the dust, and then he sees the dirt or soot covering the rags. Emotion is gathering momentum with every new detail. Asyndetic co-ordination helps preserve the level pitch prominence of the utterance. On similar occasions, Conrad would leave the emotion-packed utterance hanging in mid air between other sentences. But this does not happen here; other utterances closely related to the main clause follow the long dash:

-- the strong men at the head of family parties, the lean old men passing forward without hope of return; young boys with fearless eyes glancing curiously, shy little girls with tumbled long hair; the timid women muffled up and clasping to their breasts, wrapped in loose ends of soiled head-cloths their sleeping babies, the unconscious pilgrims of an exacting belief. (p. 15)

The main clause, it will be remembered, ends with some four prepositional phrases fulfilling the function of subject-complement, with the usual ellipsis of subject and predicate on such occasions.

The above-quoted second part of the sentence, however, is made up of phrases semantically connected by lexical equivalence to the very first part of the sentence, the subject they. Syntactically, they are appositives serving as the particulars of the general first appositive; although he has described the passengers in their totality

as coming covered with dust, soot, etc., he has not made it clear who those "they" were. Thus he proceeds to pile in appositive after appositive until he is quite sure that everything is crystal clear. Asyndetic co-ordination is the only connective device at his disposal, since no explicit connector would fit in with such cases of apposition. Notice also the careful balance of the phrases: the strong men, the old men; young boys, shy little girls; the timid women, their sleeping babies. Needless to say that the balanced antithetical phrases are held together by means of the comma.

If we now leave the omniscient narrator aside, and look at Marlow's speech we come across sentences like the following:

We return to face our superiors, our kindred, our friends-- those whom we obey, and those whom we love; but even they who have neither, the most free, lonely, irresponsible, and bereft of ties-- even those for whom home holds no dear face, no familiar voice-- even they have to meet the spirit that dwells within the land, under its sky, in its air, in its valleys, and on its rises, in its fields, in its waters and its trees-- a mute friend, judge and inspirer.(p. 221-2)

Marlow's sentence is similar in many ways to that of the omniscient narrator. The main clause ends with three asyndetically co-ordinated noun phrases functioning as object: our superiors, our kindred, our friends, this is soon followed by the long dash exactly as in the previous example. Then follows two appositive clauses: those whom we obey, and those whom we love; the first being in appositional relationship to our superiors, the second to both our kindred, our friends. An explicit co-ordinator and conjoins the two rhythmically balanced clauses. These in turn are followed by a new clause in concessive relationship with the first. Here, again, the appositional relationship obtains, this time between the whole clause: they who have neither and the string of superlatives: the most free... and bereft of ties. The emotion

continues to rise until it culminates in a series of prepositional phrases in foursomes: under its sky, in its air, in its valleys and on its rises; or in triplets: in its fields, in its waters and its trees. And like the omniscient narrator's sentence it ends with a case of apposition between the spirit and a mute friend, judge and admirer. The alternation between markers of asyndetic co-ordination and explicit co-ordinators creates that sort of balance and continuity of movement already attested in the case of the narrator's sentence, with the inevitable result that the perceptive reader would conclude that both narrator and character are one and the same person, and the distinction between the two, that Conrad seemed to be keen on maintaining, would be utterly blurred.

To call such over-long sentences a mere stylistic mannerism serving no artistic purpose but that of cramming some "purple patches" into the texture of the prose would be an unfair judgement. On the one hand, it could be contended that the omniscient narrator's insistence on recording the slightest details regarding the pilgrims of the "Patna" serves the double purpose of magnifying their sheer tenacity of faith, as well as of ridiculing those seemingly destitute people who, despite their abject conditions, are so keen on paying homage to the prophet in Mecca. On the other hand, Marlow's harangues, which are sometimes described as the mere reflection of the man's loquacious nature, could be justified as Conrad's way of showing us that truth is not always easy to get at; that the essence or reality of things is as difficult to grasp as is the ultimate purpose of Marlow and his likes.

Even in shorter and less complicated sentences, Conrad's conjunctival practice is of marked importance. Take these two relatively short sentences from Nostromo:

She (Giselle) promised to be brave in order to be loved always -- far away in a white place upon a hill above a blue sea." (p. 541)

Linda, . . . found her with a lighted candle at her back, facing the black night full of sighing gusts of wind and the sound of distant showers -- a true night of the gulf, too dense for the eye of God and the Wiles of the devil." (p. 543)

In the first, there is a deliberate syntactic isolation of the underscored adverbial phrase. Giselle, Linda's flirting sister, promises to love Nostromo. But it is not unqualified love that she is after. She wants to be loved always -- far away in a white ^a place, etc. It is interesting to note that in its position after the verb the adverbial always modifies not so much the verb phrase to be loved as the syntactically isolated adverbial phrase that follows the dash. In this way the last part of the sentence puts into relief the ephemeral and qualified nature of Giselle's love for the Capataz. In the second sentence, the underlined appositive conjoined to the main clause by the dash adds further attributes to the night facing Giselle. The description of the night is already full of premonitions of impending disaster highlighted by phrases like sighing gusts of wind, the sound of distant showers. Then comes the appositive phrase further confirming the mysterious nature of that night which was not after all too dense for the wiles of Nostromo, since he decided to see Giselle on that self-same night. The man's guilt is thus magnified through this seemingly superfluous addition to the sentence.

The same argument holds good for the sentence from An Outcast, quoted on the first page of this chapter. There, also, we find a series of appositive clauses which, in Wells's view, leave no impression of silence at all. Still, a close scrutiny of the sentence will reveal that, if left on its own, the main clause would give the faulty impression of the solitude and silence being

of the making of atmospheric or natural forces, whereas the appositive clauses make it quite clear that they are psychologically inspired. It is not the silence and solitude characteristic of the Malay jungle, but rather that which can be experienced only by a desperate and ostracised man such as Willems. The fact that such sprawling sentences are held together through a variety of connective devices - in the sentence from An Outcast connection is effected through asyndetic co-ordinators, lexical equivalence, and apposition - testifies to the importance of this stylistic feature in Conrad's works.

Chapter IX

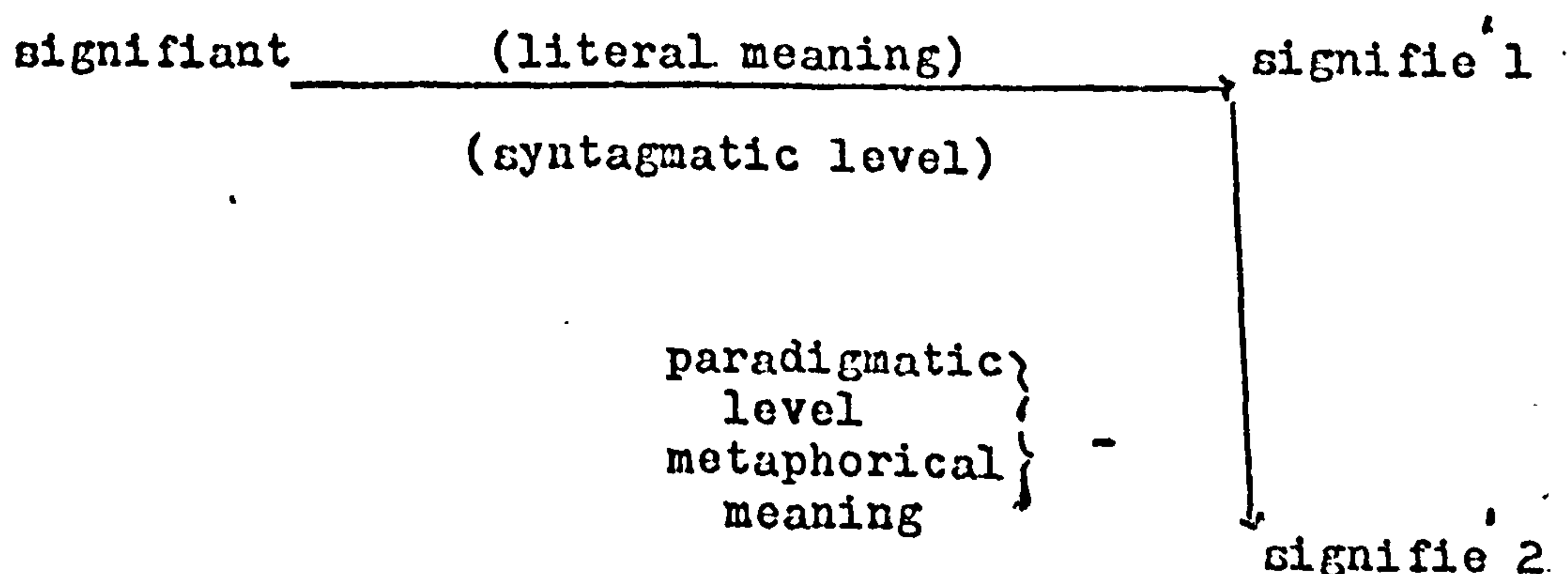
THE VERB PHRASE

Ever since he started writing in 1895, Conrad's method of manipulating the verb phrase in his various works has been the subject of conflicting views. On the one hand, there are those who, like H.G. Wells, tend to depreciate Conrad's achievement on account of the novelist's "apparent" deficient grasp of the semantic connotations of certain verbs. On the other, there are critics or stylisticians such as Miss Cluysenaar who choose to overestimate Conrad's achievement seeing in it a reflection of the man's remarkable awareness of the linguistic potentialities of the verb phrase in the overall structure of the novel. Both views represent two extremes in an ever-increasing corpus of Conrad criticism. Both views also betray the subjective nature of the critical stances behind them, since by putting emphasis on individual examples from Conrad's works (one sentence in Wells's case and one paragraph in Miss Cluysenaar's) they render their judgements more thought-provoking than convincing. (1)

In his review of An Outcast, Wells objected, among other things, to Conrad's use of the verb phrase closed round in, "On Lingard's departure solitude and silence closed round Willems", claiming that "silence and solitude do not close round any one; they sit down afar off and watch". Language, as Jean Cohen tells us, is made up of two substances, i.e. two realities each of which is both self-sufficient and independent of the other. (2)

(1) Wells, 1896 : 509 - 10 ; Cluysenaar , 1976 : 77-81
 (2) Cohen, 1966 : 28

These are called by Saussure "signifiant et signifié", while Hjemslev calls them "expression et contenu" (1). The "signifiant" is the articulated sound of the word, the "signifié" is the concept or object to which the word refers. In the above example from Conrad's novel we get this deviation from the norm resulting from the incompatibility between the words used and the idea referred to in the world of reality. After all, we cannot conceive of either silence or solitude closing round anyone in the literal sense of the word. This deviation of "signifiant" and "signifié" occurs on the syntagmatic level of discourse and constitutes a violation of the code of individual language or parole. To reduce this deviation the "right reader" usually resorts to metaphor, by means of which he replaces the literal meaning of the words with other less deviant alternatives. In such a case closed round would be replaced in the reader's mind by verbs like "overwhelmed", "overpowered" or "weighed heavily upon". This changing of meaning occurs on the paradigmatic level of language. In other words, as against one "signifiant" we get two "signifiés". The first of these last is deviational on account of its literal reference; the second (i.e. the metaphorical alternative) reduces the deviation on the syntagmatic level of individual parole by an instantaneous resort to the paradigmatic level of language in general. This can be represented by the following schema:



(1) Ibid., pp. 27 - 9

However, Wells makes it sound as though Conrad was at fault in his use of the verb phrase closed round on both the syntagmatic and paradigmatic levels of language, for no matter what other metaphorical meanings the verb phrase may have, "stand afar off and watch" can never be one of them. Far from being a synonym of the verb phrase closed round, the two conjoined verb phrases which Wells opts for constitute what might be regarded as an antonym of the Conrad verb phrase. Still, Wells's argument is far from being conclusive. No English dictionary would tell us that the Wells verb phrase is more appropriate in the context than the Conrad one. The whole thing seems in the final analysis to be a question of individual preference, and it will remain so, I believe, until a fully fledged dictionary of metaphors is compiled. Failing this, one might as well examine Conrad's phrase on its own merits in its particular context. This will show that the silence and solitude referred to by Conrad exist only in Willems's breast (1). As such, it is much more expressive to say that they "closed round" the outcast rather than that they "stood afar off and watched" him.

As opposed to this "inadvertent deviation" from the norm cited by Wells, Miss Cluysenaar quotes a paragraph from The Secret Agent as ^{an} evidence of Conrad's masterly manipulation of tense in his works. The passage is that describing Inspector Heat's departure from the Vorlocs' house after Stevie's death and Winnie's reactions to the overheard conversation between her husband and the inspector. According to Miss Cluysenaar, Conrad deliberately deviates "from the sequence of tenses that would be expected in the context" (2). The idea is that instead of using the past perfect in his description

(1) Through a series of independent clauses Conrad makes it clear that the solitude and silence are of Willems's own creation.

(2) Cluysenaar, 1976 : 78 - 81

of the inspector's departure, Conrad opts for the simple past, thus highlighting his "cinematographic" technique which "communicates a backward overlap in time, not merely immobility or recurrence, which mimes very adequately a certain psychological impression often present in states of shock". Although such a possibility cannot be overruled, the fact remains that the twentieth century has seen a growing tendency on the part of writers to use the simple past in lieu of the past perfect, especially where such replacement would not result in unnecessary semantic ambiguity or syntactic complexity. Nowadays the two sentences: "After he went away, I decided to pay his family a visit", and "After he had gone away, I decided to pay his family a visit", are linguistically acceptable. Besides, it could be argued that here Conrad is merely picking up the thread of his narrative, after a moment of characteristic digression, with no purpose in mind other than that of adding new details to a description which he thought to be still wanting in precision. More important still, the whole thing might be due not so much to Conrad's remarkable artistry as to a possible lack of awareness on his part of the intricacies of English grammar, which is by no means surprising since English was not his first language.

In addition to these two clues provided by a critic on the one hand and a stylistician on the other, there is the intuitive factor implicit in the plan of stylistic analysis propounded in the first chapter of this thesis. There, it will be recalled, I have maintained that my approach is partly based on Spitzer's "click theory" adopted, inter alia, by Professor Ullmann in the sixties and quite recently developed by Dr. Roger Fowler in his "hunch theory" for the stylistic investigation of literary texts (1).

(1) pp. 35-8 supra.

Now, during my discussion of the various types of modification in "The Lagoon", I have had occasion to observe that Conrad depends heavily on intransitive verbs throughout the whole short story. I find this to be somewhat striking in the light of the following statement by E. Fenollosa:

"I have seldom seen our rhetoricians dwell on the fact that the great strength of our language lies in its splendid array of transitive verbs, drawn both from Anglo-Saxon and from Latin sources. These give us the most individual characterisation of force. Their power lies in their recognition of nature as a vast storehouse of forces. We do not say in English that things seem, or appear, or eventuate or even that they are; but that they do." (1)

The question that arises here is: Does Conrad really prefer intransitive to transitive verbs? And if so, would this not lend credence to the charge levelled at him by some critics of being not so much a portrayer of actions as a novelist of descriptions? (2)

I shall begin by examining the linguistic peculiarities of the verb phrase in Conrad's "Karain" (53 pages) with particular reference to the categories of verbs, the activities they represent, and the various tense forms used. This will lead to a discussion of the extent to which "Karain" is typical of the full-length novels. Conrad's verbal practice will then be contrasted with that of four of his contemporaries. The second section of the chapter will be concerned with the literary implications of his practice.

"Karain" belongs to the "Lagoon" period. Conrad makes this quite clear in the Author's Note to the volume containing "Karain",

(1) Quoted by Rose, 1970 : 223

(2) Graver, 1969 : 35, quotes Conrad as saying: "It is evident that my fate is to be descriptive and descriptive only."

On the other hand, Macy, 1906 : 697 - 702, believed that in Conrad "each description creates a new scene, and when descriptions of different and separated places appear on the same page, the illusion of events happening before the eye is destroyed."

"The Lagoon" and three other short stories:

In that story "Karain" I had not gone back to the Archipelago, I had only turned for another look at it. I admit that I was absorbed by the distant view, so absorbed that I didn't notice then that the motif of the story is almost identical with the motif of the Lagoon. (1)

From the stylistic standpoint the story, though far longer than "The Lagoon", abounds in many of the stylistic features already attested in my analysis of the latter story in the sixth chapter. "Karain" is subtitled "A Memory", and the impressionistic technique is at full play here as it is in almost all ^{the} other works of Conrad.

Like most of Conrad's works, "Karain" begins with an unidentified sailor-narrator reminiscing at large about his past experiences in the east. The opening two paragraphs can be quoted as a representative sample of Conrad's descriptive method which dominates the first three chapters. (2)

→
 We knew him in those unprotected days when we were content to hold in our hands our lives and our property. None of us, I believe, has any property now, and I hear that many, negligently, have lost their lives; but I am sure that the few who survive are not yet so dim-eyed as to miss in the befogged respectability of their newspapers the intelligence of various native risings in the Eastern Archipelago. Sunshine gleams between the lines of those short paragraphs - sunshine and the glitter of the sea. A strange name wakes up memories; the printed words scent the smoky atmosphere of to-day faintly, with the subtle and penetrating perfume as of land breezes breathing through the starlight of bygone nights; a signal fire gleams like a jewel on the high brow of a sombre cliff; great trees, the advanced sentries of immense forests, stand watchful and still over sleeping stretches of open water; a line of white surf thunders on an empty beach, the shallow water foams on the reefs; and green islets scattered through the calm of noonday lie upon the level of a polished sea, like a handful of emeralds on a buckler of steel.

(1) T.U., p. vii

(2) As elsewhere in this thesis the linguistic analysis is based on the Quirk Grammar. Cf. Quirk et al., 1974, Chapters 2, 3 & 7

There are faces too - faces dark, truculent, and smiling; the frank audacious faces of men barefooted, well armed and noiseless. They thronged the narrow length of our schooner's decks with their ornamented and barbarous crowd, with the variegated colours of checkered sarongs, red turbans, white jackets, embroideries; with the gleam of scabbards, gold rings, charms, armlets, lance blades, and jewelled handles of their weapons. They had an independent bearing, resolute eyes, a restrained manner; and we seem yet to hear their soft voices speaking of battles, travels, and escapes; boasting with composure, joking quietly; sometimes in well-bred murmurs extolling their own valour, our generosity; or celebrating with loyal enthusiasm the virtues of their ruler. We remember the faces, the eyes, the voices, we see again the gleam of silk and metal; the murmuring stir of that crowd, brilliant, festive, and martial; and we seem to feel the touch of friendly brown hands that, after one short grasp, return to rest on a chased hilt. They were Karain's people - a devoted following. Their movements hung on his lips; they read their thoughts in his eyes; he murmured to them nonchalantly of life and death, and they accepted his words humbly, like gifts of fate. They were all free men, and when speaking to him said, "Your slave". On his passage voices died out as though he had walked guarded by silence; awed whispers followed him. They called him their war-chief. He was the ruler of three villages on a narrow plain; the master of an insignificant foothold on the earth - of a conquered foothold that, shaped like a young moon, lay ignored between the hills and the sea. (pp. 3 - 4)

In the first paragraph, we get twenty verb phrases, nineteen of which are simple phrases (each consisting of a single lexical verb) and one complex phrase made up of an auxiliary plus lexical verb, have lost. The twenty verb phrases can be divided according to category as follows:

Transitive verbs: knew, to hold, believe, has, hear, have lost, to miss, wakes up, scent (nine verbs).

Intransitives are: be (used three times), gleam (twice), breathing, survive, stand, thunder, foam, lie (eleven verbs in all). Of

these, two are especially marked for their susceptibility to being followed by modifiers in an intensive relationship with the subject: be and stand. The concept of intensive relationship can be further

extended to the relation between subject and adverbial in the clauses containing the intransitives thunder, foam and lie. In other words, such intensive intransitives seem to be more congenial to the novelist's innate penchant for description. They, that is, enable him to pile on as many modifiers and adverbial phrases as could be mustered. Not that transitives would not allow him that much freedom of expression, it is just that such verbs throw into sharp relief the state of the subject rather than the action performed by it.

We can now classify the verbs according to the types of activity they represent. The nine transitives include three verbs of inert perception and cognition: knew, hear, believe; two transitional event verbs: miss, lose; one relational verb: have and three activity verbs: hold, wake up and scent. In other words, six of the nine verbs are concerned with state rather than action of any sort. Even the three activity verbs express action in the abstract; the first, to hold, occurs in a prepositional phrase functioning as complement to the adjective content, while wake up and scent are used in a metaphorical sense in relation to their respective subjects.

On the other hand, the eleven intransitives include one relational verb, be, and eight activity verbs. Each of these last is invariably followed by a modifier or an adverbial phrase. Moreover, most of them are used in a metaphorical sense especially gleam, stand, thunder and foam. All this means that the majority of the verbs in the passage highlight the relationship between the subject, the state described and the circumstances surrounding them. They are, that is, stative rather than active verbs.

The second paragraph contains 29 verb phrases. Of these 16 are intransitives: be (used four times), speak (used twice), boast, joke, return to rest, hung, murmur, die out, walk, lay. These can be further classified as 6 relational verbs (including the two complex verb phrases seem to hear, seem to feel), 9 activity verbs, and one transitional event verb (die out). The transitives include 2 inert perception verbs, remember, see; one relational verb, have; one verb of bodily sensation, feel; 7 activity verbs, throng, extol, celebrate, read, accept, follow, call. This means that we have 16 activity verbs in the passage. Still, the dominant tone is one of description rather than action. In the first place, relational verbs like be and have are by their very nature concerned with the appearance or state of the subject. The fact that Karain's people had keen eyes or independent bearing has nothing to do with the plot of the story. In the second place, the verb lay in a conquered foothold that lay ignored focuses attention on the intensive relationship between the subject and one of its attributes. As for the activity verbs, we notice that the verb throng, for instance, does not so much spotlight the action performed by the subject they as the colourful nature of the instrumental subject made up of the three prepositional phrases: with their ornamented and barbarous crowd, with the variegated colours..., with the gleam of scabbards. Besides, there is the negative effect of the relational verb seem on five verbs in the passage. Seem neutralizes the activity of verbs like speak, joke, boast, hear and feel. We simply realise that the activity is imaginary. Other activity verbs such as hung on, died out, followed represent no action at all. On the syntagmatic level, they are devotional verbs on account of their metaphorical nature.

Such verbs are imagistic elements whose sole function is to satisfy the novelist's seemingly incorrigible mania for description. To say that the movement of Karain's people "hung on his lips", or that on his appearance voices "died out" is a roundabout way of saying that Karain had much prestige and respect amongst his kinsmen. Conrad's method is thus one of replacing a simple stative verb with a series of verbal elements that give the illusion of an action where no such action really occurs.

Although the descriptive technique in these passages sets the tone for Conrad's verbal practice in the rest of the story, analytical comparison between the various parts has the advantage of sharpening the reader's awareness. The first three chapters of the story are narrated by a sailor who knew Karain in bygone days. In the fourth chapter Karain himself begins to tell his own story, which extends over the three remaining chapters with occasional descriptive digressions by the sailor-narrator. We might as well examine the first paragraph from Karain's speech to see whether the change in perspective entails a dramatic shift in their respective use of the verbal elements.

The opening paragraph of chapter IV reads:

"It was after the great trouble that broke the alliance of the four states of Wajo. We fought amongst ourselves, and the Dutch watched from afar till we were weary. Then the smoke of their fire-ships was seen at the mouth of our rivers, and their great men came in boats full of soldiers to talk to us of protection and peace. We answered with caution and wisdom, for our villages were burnt, our stockades weak, the people weary, and the weapons blunt. They came and went; there had been much talk, but after they went away everything seemed to be as before, only their ships remained in sight from our coast, and very soon their traders came amongst us under a promise of safety. My brother was a Ruler, and one of those who had given the promise. I was young then, and had fought in the war, and Pata Matara had fought by my side. We had shared hunger, danger, fatigue,

and victory. His eyes saw my danger quickly, and twice my arm had preserved his life. It was his destiny. He was my friend. And he was great amongst us - one of those who were near my brother, the Ruler. He spoke in council, his courage was great, he was the chief of many villages round the great lake that is in the middle of our country as the heart is in the middle of a man's body. When his sword was carried into a campong in advance of his coming, the maidens whispered wonderingly under the fruit-trees, the rich men consulted together in the shade, and a feast was made ready with rejoicing and songs. He had the favour of the Ruler and the affection of the poor. He loved war, deer hunts, and the charms of women. He was the possessor of jewels, of lucky weapons, and of men's devotion. He was a fierce man; and I had no other friend. (pp. 28 - 9)

The passage contains 44 verb phrases. Of these 33 are intransitive. They include the relational verb be (used 17 times), seem (used once) and 15 activity verbs (underlined in the passage above). The eleven transitives include the relational verb have (used twice), one verb of inert perception see (used twice), and seven activity verbs: broke, had given, shared, had preserved, was carried, was made and loved. The abundance of activity verbs seems to drive to the background of the passage the other verbs concerned with the state of the subject and the circumstances surrounding it. Still, one should not forget that we have here 20 relational verbs out of 44. Such verbs are stative by nature; they all concentrate on the physical or moral aspects of Karain, his people or the Dutch imperialists. Besides, Karain's tendency to use the passive form for purposes of thematisation in phrases like was seen, was carried, was made, shifts attention from the act of seeing or carrying to the state resulting from the action. More important still, is Karain's repetitive use of certain verbs such as fought which he uses three times, together with came, went and see. These indicate the limited linguistic repertoire of the speaker, and highlight Conrad's

preference for prolixity in expression. Indeed, despite the relative density of activity verbs in the passage, what little action they spotlight is submerged in a heap of details about Karain's friend's power, kindness and prestige among his people. Nor can this be called a peculiarity of Karain's alone among Conrad's characters. One of the main charges levelled against Marlow in Lord Jim is that it would take a normal person three evenings to narrate Jim's story as told by Marlow, whereas if the story was divested of its insistence on descriptions, most of which is thought to be irrelevant, the whole action would effectively be reported in less than three hours.

However, it would be misleading to pass a fair judgement on Conrad's verbal practice on the basis of one or two paragraphs. I have therefore made the following classification of the verb phrase in "Karain" on the basis of the first one hundred verbs in the speech of the sailor-narrator and Karain.

A - Classification according to category

Speaker	total number of verbs	intransitives	transitives
Narrator	100	58%	42%
Karain	100	69%	31%

B. - Classification according to the kind of activity

Speaker	relational verbs		activity verbs		other verbs	
	tran.	intran.	tran.	intran.	tran.	intran.
Narrator	4	26	33	29	5	3
Karain	2	30	26	35	3	4

Table A clearly shows intransitives to be the dominant verbal element in the speech of both the narrator and Karain. Table B, on the other hand, underlines the fact that relational verbs, i.e. which are unequivocally stative, add up to 30% in the narrator's speech as against 32% in Karain's. It also shows that activity verbs in the narrator's speech are almost equal the number of their equivalents in Karain's : 62% for the narrator as against 61% for Karain. Still, if we take into account the number of activity verbs used in a metaphorical sense by either Karain or the narrator, the contrast between the two will be thrown into sharper focus.

C - Classification of deviational (metaphorical) verbs (1)

Speaker	total number of activity verbs	verbs used in a metaphorical sense		
		tran.	intran.	total
Narrator	62	11	14	25
Karain	61	4	2	6

This reduces the number of activity verbs in our corpus to 37% for the narrator as against 55% for Karain. We can now safely say that stative verbs constitute the bulk of the verbal elements in the "purple passages" (63%), and that far from being an insignificant minority in dialogue they stand at 45% of the total verbal elements in the latter case, which simply means that stative verbs are in the final analysis the dominant feature of the verb phrase in Conrad.

Another important feature of Conrad's verbal practice is his peculiar use of the auxiliary would to refer to what the Quirk

(1) The reason for the exclusion of these verbs from the class of activity verbs is that they refer to action in the abstract. Thus when Karain describes his friend's sister as a woman who silences the reason and ravishes hearts, the verbs do not refer so much to physical action as to one of the woman's attributes: extreme beauty.

Grammar call "characteristic activity". Compared to his use of the auxiliary to express a hypothetical meaning in, "What would happen should one of the moribund Spanish gun-boats be suddenly galvanized into a flicker of active life did not trouble us" (p. 7), Conrad's lavish use of would for purposes of typification is striking. In An Historical Syntax of the English Language, Visser distinguishes between consuetudinal would in examples like, "sometimes she would laugh", and typifying would in, "Well, Mrs. Mills would say, appearing suddenly with a red face after a day's washing". According to Visser, would in the last example "refers to a behaviour that may be understood as typifying character or natural propensity of the person denoted by the action". (1)

Visser's distinction between the two types of would is, as he himself admits later, "rather vague, so that classification is occasionally bound to be arbitrary" (2). Still, the constant recurrence of the latter type of would in Conrad's works has captured the attention of one critic, Stegmaier, who holds the view that Conrad "was indeed the first to have made any marked use of the 'would scene'", by which last term he means the special use of would to depict not "a unique moment but a series of similar occurrences dramatically presented" (3).

In "Karain" we have 16 examples of this peculiar use of would. The following are representative samples:

Meantime we noticed that, even during the most important interviews, Karain would often give a start, and interrupting his discourse, would sweep his arm back with a sudden movement, to feel whether the old fellow was there. The old fellow, impenetrable and weary, was always there. (p. 12)

As men's names came up in conversation he would say, "We swam against one another when we were

(1) & (2) Visser, 1963 : 1709 - 12
 (3) Stegmaier, 1972 : 517 - 23

boys;" or, "We had hunted the deer together - he could use the noose and the spear as well as I." Now and then his big dreamy eyes would roll restlessly; he frowned or smiled, or he would become pensive, and, staring in silence, would nod slightly for a time at some regretted vision of the past. (p. 14)

The remarkable thing about the two quotations is the sheer superfluity of the auxiliary would. In the first passage, for instance, the presence of the adverbial often is quite sufficient to highlight the notion of characteristic behaviour, if this is what Conrad is mainly after. The same observation applies to the use of the adverbial phrase now and then in the last sentence of the second example which renders the use of would quite superfluous. In both cases the concept of habitual action would be best served through the use of the simple past after each of the two adverbials: "He often gave a start and swept his arm back...; Now and then his big dreamy eyes rolled restlessly, etc." Indeed, far from simplifying the grammatical structure of the sentences, the use of would results in a grammatical complexity of a baffling nature. A close look at the underlined sentence will make my meaning clear. In the first place, why does Conrad use would before the verb roll and drop it before the two verbs frowned and smiled? Does he mean to juxtapose a momentary action (the frowning or smiling) with a series of habitual actions (the rolling of the eyes)? Even so, the structure is grammatically incorrect, since the time adverbial at the start of the sentence extends its time frequency aspect to all the co-ordinated clauses.

The important thing to note is that negative effect of the auxiliary would on the lexical verb that follows it. Would, that is, seems to be more indicative of state rather than action. To say that Karain would roll his eyes pinpoints not so much the action expressed by the verb as one of the man's attributes: his

irritability. Besides, the superfluity of would in some cases highlights two important facts about Conrad himself. First, his precarious hold as a foreigner on some aspects of the grammar of his adopted language. Second, an innate tendency to use roundabout or lengthy means of expression, which is also characteristic of foreigners writing in English.

This last point can be well illustrated by quoting one or two examples where Conrad uses a noun (1) derived from a verb to express an idea or concept that would be better, or rather more concisely, denoted by the lexical verb. Speaking of Karain, the narrator tells us that "He had a deslike of an open space behind him. It was more than a dislike - it resembled fear." (p. 11) In my opinion, "he disliked open space" would be more expressive and stylistically more economical. Again, when he tells us that Karain "would give a start", one wonders what could be wrong with "he would start" on its own. Besides, look at the clumsy phrasing of the following sentence: "He was ornate and disturbing, for one could not imagine what depth of horrible void such an elaborate front could be worthy to hide" (p. 6). For one thing, worthy should be followed here by the preposition of plus the -ing form of the verb hide. For another, the idea would be best expressed if we do without the predicate be worthy to and content ourselves with the simple phrase: could hide.

Of the other grammatical inconsistencies in Conrad's verbal practice, we may mention the narrator's tendency to dispense with the periphrastic negative in favour of the older simple form where he tells us that "Karain moved not" (p. 40). This sudden and unwarranted shift to the older form is striking in view of its being the sole example of its kind in the whole story. When Conrad uses

(1) Other grammars would call the noun in such cases "substantives"; The Quirk Grammar, however, dispense with such terms as substantives or gerunds.

the older form in "The Lagoon" or in An Outcast, he does this, perhaps, with the aim of underlining lack of education or colloquialism in the speech of the speaker. In "The Lagoon" Arsat tells the narrator, "She hears not me... She sees not me" (p. 191). And in An Outcast, Aissa is reported as saying that Willems "was there - alone in the gloom of the dwelling. He was there! He spoke not" (p. 233). Far from underlining colloquialism of any sort, however, the use of the simple negative form adds a further literary touch to the novelist's style, and testifies to his uncertain grasp of some aspects of English grammar.

. . .

Conrad's manipulation of tense in his short story is characterised by his readiness to interrupt the dominant time sequence of the simple past with the simple present. The opening two paragraphs of the story (already quoted on pp. 380 - 1) bear witness to this fact. In most of these cases the transition from the simple past to the present or vice versa is often effected where it is least expected. Take the opening sentence of the second paragraph, "There are faces too -..." It is a simple statement with present time reference which is immediately followed by a sentence in the simple past, "They thronged the narrow length of our schooner's deck..." Here, as in the third sentence, we are suddenly confronted by an onslaught of the simple past which soon gives way to a new sentence in the simple present, "we remember the faces..." This constant shuffle between simple past and present is typical of a novelist whose past and present impressions project the one onto the other. One important difference between the simple present in

the first and fourth sentences of the second paragraph is the deviational nature of the present in, "There are faces too -", for here the subject of the sentence is the same subject of the second sentence, "They thronged". Unless Conrad meant to say that the selfsame men were living at the time of telling the story, the use of the past form were in place of the present are would be more appropriate.

In most cases, however, the simple present is used as a kind of outlet for the novelist's desire for sermonizing or highlighting one of the facts of our existence. Speaking of Karain's emotions prior to the latter's narration of his own story, Conrad observes:

We expected him to speak. The necessity within him tore at his lips. There are those who say that a native will not speak to a white man. Error. No man will speak to his master; but to a wanderer and a friend, to him who does not come to teach or to rule, to him who asks for nothing and accepts all things, words are spoken by the camp fires in the shared solitude of the sea, in riverside villages, in resting-places surrounded by forests - words are spoken that take no account of race or colour. One heart speaks - another one listens; and the earth, the sea, the sky, the passing wind and the stirring leaf, hear also the futile tale of the burden of life. (p. 26)

This is surely Conrad's mania for description at its worst. One cannot help wondering what earth, sky and wind have got to do with Karain's inability or hesitation to tell his tragic story. Are there any grounds for this flagrant deviation from the dominant tense sequence (the simple past) other than Conrad's desire to poeticise his impressions or cram a host of unnecessary details into the already overstretched texture of the narrative? Apparently none.

The simple present is more interesting as a means of reporting the speech of one of the characters. In such cases, the customary transposition of the verbs into simple past does not obtain on account of the utterance being a universal time statement. When

Hollis empties the contents of his bag, the narrator observes:

There were, amongst a lot of various small objects, a bunch of flowers, a narrow white glove with many buttons, a slim packet of letters carefully tied up. Amulets of white men! Charms and talismans! Charms that keep them straight, that drive them crooked, that have the power to make a young man sigh, an old man smile. Potent things that procure dreams of joy, thoughts of regret; that soften hard hearts, and can temper a soft one to the hardness of steel. (p. 48)

The use of the simple present (underlined above) constitutes a sudden deviation from the dominant norm. It is a form of free indirect style which is heralded here by the exclamation marks, punctuating Karain's instantaneous reactions to the sight of the white man's amulets and charms. There follows two sentences uttered by either Karain or Hollis. In reporting them, the narrator retains the simple present all the way through on account of their timeless reference. As such, it is a form of narrated dialogue which does not conform to the rules regarding the transposition of verbs discussed in the chapter on reported speech.

The simple past (or the preterite as it is commonly called by stylisticians) is Conrad's supreme tense form. Paraphrasing Kate Hamburger's theory about the epic preterite in fiction, Bronzwaer tells us, "in fictions the fictitious world of the novel constitutes the fictitious present of the characters in the novel, the preterite being the vehicle by means of which this present is conveyed. In first person novels the fictitious world of the novel constitutes the non-fictitious past of the narrator; here the preterite conveys past and not present events" (1). He then goes on to say that "the function of the preterite in any novel is not to assign the events narrated to any time-sphere at all, but 'to fictionalise'

(1) Bronzwaer, 1970 : 42 - 3

them, to present them as forming an epic fiction instead of a chain of events taking place in a temporal order" (2). Be this as it may, the fact remains that the book which has for a declared purpose the investigation of tense in the novel soon turns out to be nothing but a plausible, though not very convincing, examination of the preterite in "free indirect style" with special reference to Iris Murdoch's The Italian Girl. The conclusions reached are impressionistic in nature, and can only bear out the author's preconceived thesis about a particular novel, but would hardly apply to all novels.

Conrad uses the simple past (the preterite) for a variety of reasons; both as a narrative mode and as the main tense form in many cases of reported speech discussed in the fifth chapter. Suffice it here to say that, as in most novelists, the preterite in Conrad is linguistically marked by its ability to be modified by deictic adverbs of time. In "Karain", we come across examples like

We sailed south; we overtook many praus; we examined the creek and the bay...
The wide sea was all round us now. (p. 31)

The adverb now has for its point of reference Karain's present moment of narration. This fact gives it a past-time reference which accords with the function of the preterite in first-person narratives. In the following example, however, now has a present time reference. Speaking of Karain, the narrator observes,

Meantime he filled the stage with barbarous dignity. Some ten years ago he had led his people - a scratch lot of wandering Bugis - to the conquest of the bay, and now in his august care they had forgotten all the past and had lost all concern for the future. (p. 8)

The preterite in this case constituting the fictional present of the characters concerned, the adverbial now retains its present

(1) Ibid., p. 45

time reference. The same applies to his use of the adverbial phrase "long time ago (pp. 8, 31) in place of "a long time before", which is, after all, a common practice among novelists. Still, to say this is to say very little about the function of the preterite in the man's works, for it is his pioneering attempt at using this tense form for the reporting of his characters' speech as well as his use of it as the main verbal element in his descriptive passages that mark him for the stylist and innovator that he is.

The past perfect (or the pluperfect as stylisticians term it) is lavishly used by Conrad to refer to the past past or anterior past of the characters. In "Karain" this use of the past perfect is faulty in more than one respect. In the first place, he uses the expanded tense form in one case where the past perfect should be used:

On one occasion, after we had been talking to
him late in his campong, he jumped up. (p. 18) (1)

The speaker is the narrator, and the man in question is Karain. We cannot be dead sure whether Conrad meant to use the past progressive in a sentence like, "while we were talking to him, he jumped up", or that he meant to refer to the past past of the character on this given occasion. It is more likely that he meant the latter possibility. As such, the sentence should read: "after we had talked to him late in his campong, he jumped up". Obviously Conrad is mixing up either the past progressive with the past perfect progressive, or that last with the past perfect. This is not to be wondered at in a foreign writer who boasted, on one occasion, that he had never opened a book of grammar (2). Still, we should not hasten to capitalise on this striking deviation from the norm

(1) Neither French nor Polish has got anything to do with these grammatical mistakes on Conrad's part. See p. 409 infra.

(2) See p. 62 supra.

by attributing to Conrad a total lack of 'grammatical sense', for this is the only example of its kind in the whole story. Besides, I have not come across any similar mistakes in the full-length novels.

What interests us most is the sustained verbal practice and this we find in examples like the following:

Afterwards, when we had learned that he was the son of a woman who had many years ago ruled a small Bugis state, we came to suspect that the memory of his mother (of whom he spoke with enthusiasm) mingled somehow in his mind with the image he tried to form for himself of the far-off Queen... (p. 13)

Here Conrad is writing English the way foreigners usually do. As a non-native speaker of English myself, the first rule that I was taught about the past perfect was that it is used "after after and before before": After he had gone away, the train arrived; He had gone away before the train arrived." It is only through constant reading in and about English that we foreigners realise that writers do not always follow these prescriptive rules. In Conrad's example, we may assume that Conrad differentiates here between two kinds of anterior past: remote past emphasised by the adverbial phrase in "who had many years ago ruled" and a recent anterior past in the first phrase of the sentence. In other words, he distinguishes between the simple past and past perfect (or anterior past) of the "we" narrator, and the simple past and past perfect (or remote anterior past) of the man and woman in question. Even so, such use of the past perfect with its insistence on hyper-correctness smacks of a foreign flavour. Other writers would simply use the simple past in, "when we learned that he was the son of a woman" instead of the past perfect. Moreover, such use of the past perfect is more of a stative than active nature.

Other such examples of the past perfect taking the place of the simple past occur on pages 19 and 20. After a long period of time, the narrator sees Karain who, the narrator observes, "was haggard, as though he had not slept for weeks, he had become lean as though he had not eaten for days". Apparently, Conrad means to say that on that particular occasion the man looked both haggard and lean. Why should he then use the simple past in the first clause and the past perfect in the second? The implication is that on previous occasions the man was neither haggard nor lean as is made clear by the two subordinate clauses, as though..., after each of the two main clauses. In both cases the use of the simple past was would be quite correct; and even if become must be used, then the simple past became would be sufficient. It is not hard to imagine the way Conrad's mind worked on that occasion. Faced with two actions in the past (the becoming and the seeing) the first preceding the second, Conrad, as would a foreigner following the prescriptive rules, uses the past perfect in the first and the simple past in the second. Either way the stative nature of the verb is unequivocal. The fact remains that overscrupulous use of the past perfect creates a sense of artificiality and gives the style that literary quality with which many a critic has found fault.

The expanded tense form is also attested in those cases where the past progressive is used in lieu of the past simple as in:

Under the thatch roof supported by smooth columns, of which each one had cost the life of a straight-stemmed young palm, the scent of flowering hedges drifted in warm waves. The sun was sinking. In the open courtyard suppliants walked through the gate etc. (pp. 15 - 6)

To all seeming, there is nothing wrong with tense in this sentence. Still, there is no indication that the sinking of the sun outlasted

the drifting of the scent of flowering trees. On the contrary, the more logical inference is that the first and third actions expressed by the two verbs, drifted and walked, outlived the sinking of the sun as is made clear by the context. However, it is characteristic of Conrad, especially in descriptive passages, to shift to the past progressive to achieve what the Quirk Grammar call "vividness of description" (p. 93). The method is one of state rather than action. The sinking sun serves as a background, a natural scenery, to the human or other natural actions taking place in the forefront of the picture.

In the following two examples the past progressive is preferred to the simple past for almost the same reasons:

He was bending his head under the deck beam;
his fair beard spread out magnificently over
his chest, he looked colossal, ineffectual,
and mild. (p. 46)

The gun went up to my shoulder. I was kneeling
and I was firm. (p. 37)

Here the expanded form puts the emphasis on the state of kneeling rather than the act itself. For the past progressive to express action on such occasions, the action must be accompanied with what Professor Palmer terms, "the necessary implication that the actions were being repeated throughout the time" (1). As such condition could only obtain in the previous examples in cases of what Mr. Phillipps calls "slow motion photography" (2), the only possible explanation left is that the past progressive is part and parcel of Conrad's descriptive technique of the state of the subject and the circumstances surrounding it.

While the past progressive in the preceding examples is acceptable from the linguistic standpoint (at least in terms of its

(1) Palmer, 1974 : 55 - 8

(2) Phillipps, 1970 : 108 - 59 (pp.111-2, in particular)

function), in the following example the past progressive is definitely deviational:

Then, just as we were thinking of repose, the watchmen of the schooner would hail a splash of paddles away in the starlight gloom of the bay; a voice would respond in cautious tones... Karain appeared noiselessly in the doorway of the little cabin. (p. 11)

Here there is that clash between the past progressive in "just as we were thinking", and the would phrases that follow it. The first refers to an incomplete action that should be followed by verbs in the simple past: "Just as we were thinking of repose the watchman hailed". As it stands, the sentence has to be reworded in something like, "whenever we thought of repose, the watchman would hail a splash of paddles", in which case the auxiliary would becomes quite superfluous on account of the adverbial of frequency at the beginning of the sentence. In the Conrad example the use of the adverbial just as limits the durative aspect of the verb to one particular occasion, which sharply contrasts with the implication in the would phrase of the action taking place on various occasions.

The foregoing analysis shows that Conrad's verbal practice is characterised by the following salient features:

1. A marked dependence on intransitive verbs. Some of these, especially relational verbs like the copula, seem, appear, resemble, and process verbs like become and grow accept modifiers after them, and this alone could have been the main reason behind Conrad's preference for them.
2. A special fondness for verbs of state (be these transitive or intransitive). However, it must be made clear that the percentage of stative verbs is higher in the purple patches than it is in dialogues or other parts concerned with the plot of the story where

active verbs are brought to the fore.

3. Conrad's style is notorious for his excessive use of the auxiliary would for purposes of typification. In most cases, however, the technique is tautological on account of the presence of time frequency adverbials that give the same indication of habitual activity.
4. A tendency towards unnecessary prolixity resulting, among other things, from the use of nouns derived from verbs instead of direct use of the verbs themselves.
5. Occasionally Conrad opts for the old non-periphrastic negative form in a strikingly inconsistent way.
6. With tense Conrad makes a practice of interrupting the simple past with the simple present.
7. The simple past is Conrad's favourite tense form. He extensively uses it both as a narrative mode and as a means of reporting the speech of his characters.
8. Conrad's precarious hold on English grammar shows up in the way he sometimes uses the past perfect or the past progressive in lieu of the simple past. In other cases, such use results in the verbs acquiring a stative function which highlights the novelist's notorious predilection for descriptions.

It now remains to see how far "Karain" is typical of the full length novels, and in what way Conrad's verbal practice distinguishes him from some of his contemporary novelists.

In attempting to answer the first question, the degree of similarity between "Karain" and the full-length novels, we have to differentiate between two aspects of Conrad's verbal practice: the constant or invariable and the casual or variable. Conrad's

tendency to use the verb for purposes of description or image-making is a prominent feature of his style. It is true that, as such, it figures on a larger scale in the novels of the Malay Archipelago than in others like Nostramo, The Secret Agent, Under Western Eyes, Chance or The Rover, where active verbs are much more foregrounded; still, even here, Conrad is always ready to resort to stative verbs to highlight the moral or physical attributes of the characters concerned. Another constant feature of his style is his peculiar use of the auxiliary would which features prominently in the short stories, and novels like Lord Jim, Nostramo, The Secret Agent, Under Western Eyes, Victory and The Rescue (1919). On the other hand, Conrad's grammatical mistakes with regard to tense figure on a very small scale in the novels and short stories of the early period, but they tend to disappear from Lord Jim onwards. A signal example of the casual nature of these mistakes is Conrad's failure in some sentences from Almayer's Folly (his first novel) to effect the subject-operator inversion when using the adverbial no sooner in initial position, a mistake which disappears in Lord Jim and subsequent novels (1).

We can now examine three passages which put into relief Conrad's fondness for stative verbs. The first comes from Almayer's Folly, the second from Lord Jim, the third from Victory (early, middle and late Conrad respectively.)

Here are the two opening paragraphs from chapter ii in Almayer's Folly:

→

In the middle of a shadowless square of moonlight, shining on a smooth and level expanse of young rice-shoots, a little shelter-hut perched on high

(1) In Almayer's Folly, Conrad writes: "No sooner she had disappeared however, than a vague shape flitted out..." (p. 156)
 In Lord Jim, we read: "No sooner were these words out of my mouth than I perceived..." (p. 237).
 The mistake is never repeated after the first novel.

-wood

posts, the pile of a brushy near by and the glowing embers of a fire with a man stretched before it, seemed very small and as if lost in the pale green iridescence reflected from the ground. On three sides of the clearing, appearing very far away in the deceptive light, the big trees of the forest, lashed together with manifold bonds by a mass of tangled creepers, looked down at the growing young life at their feet with the sombre resignation of giants that had lost faith in their strength. And in the midst of them the merciless creepers clung to the big trunks in cable-like coils, leaped from tree to tree, hung in thorny festoons from the lower boughs, and, sending slender tendrils on high to seek out the smallest branches, carried death to their victims in an exalting riot of silent destruction.

On the fourth side, following the curve of the bank^{of} that branch of the Pantai that formed the only access to the clearing, ran a black line of young trees, bushes, and thick second growth, unbroken save for a small gap chopped out in one place. At that gap began the narrow footpath leading from the water's edge to the grass-built shelter used by the night watchers when the ripening crop had to be protected from the wild pigs. The pathway ended at the foot of ^{the} piles on which the hut was built, in a circular space covered with ashes and bits of burnt wood. In the middle of that space, by the dim fire, lay Dain. (p. 165)

The following passage from Lord Jim is typical of Marlow's speech:

→
 'An abrupt heavy rumble made me lift my head. The noise seemed to roll away, and suddenly a searching and violent glare fell on the blind face of ^{the} night. The sustained and dazzling flickers seemed to last for an unconscionable time. The growl of the thunder increased suddenly while I looked at him, distinct and black, planted solidly upon the shores of a sea of light. At the moment of greatest brilliance the darkness leapt back with a culminating crash, and he vanished before my dazzled eyes as utterly as though he had been blown to atoms. A blustering sigh passed; furious hands seemed to tear at the shrubs, shake the tops of the trees below, slam doors, break window-panes, all along the front of the building. He stepped in, closing the door behind him, and found me bending over the table: my sudden anxiety as to what he would say was very great, and akin to fright....' (pp. 177-8)

The opening chapter of Victory (1914) is interesting both for the relative density of stative verbs and the way Conrad interrupts the simple past of the narrative with passages in the simple present.

→
 The Tropical Belt Coal company went into liqui-
 dation. The world of finance is a mysterious
 world in which, incredible as the fact may appear,
 evaporation precedes liquidation. First the
 capital evaporates, and then the company goes
into liquidation. These are very unnatural phy-
 sics, but they account for the persistent inertia
 of Heyst, at which we 'out there' used to laugh
 among ourselves ^{but} not inimically. An inert body
 can do no harm to any one, provokes no hostility,
 is scarcely worth derision. It may, indeed, be
 in the way sometimes; but this could not be said of
Axel Heyst. He was out of everybody's way, as if
he were perched on the highest peak of the Hima-
layas, and in a sense as conspicuous. Everyone in
 that part of the world knew of him, dwelling on
his little island. An island is but the top of
 a mountain. Axel Heyst, perched on it immovably,
was surrounded, instead of the imponderable
 stormy and transparent ocean of air merging into
 infinity, by a tepid, shallow sea; a passionless
 offshoot of the great waters which embrace the
 continents of this globe.... His nearest neighbour -
 I am speaking now of things showing some sort of
 animation - was an indolent volcano which smoked
 faintly all day with its head just above the
 northern horizon, and at night levelled at him,
 from amongst the clear stars, a dull red glow,
 expanding and collapsing spasmodically like the
 end of a gigantic cigar puffed at intermittently
 in the dark. (pp. 3 - 4)

The first passage is remarkable for the striking density of intran-
 sitive verbs (10 as against 4 transitives). The main clause in
 each sentence is virtually submerged by a host of adverbial and
 post modifying-ing or-ed participial phrases. Some of these are
 the direct result of verbs like seem and appear. Others are due
 to the presence of verbs like ran, began and lay. It is interes-
 ting to note that of the four transitives two are stative in nature
 on account of their occurring in postmodifying relative clauses
 such as, that had lost and that formed the only access, which spot-
 light one further aspect of the descriptive tableau. Although the
 passage abounds in active verbs like, leap, clung, hung, they in-
 dicate action only in the abstract. Creepers never leap or carry
 death in the manner described except in the metaphorical sense of
 the word, i.e. they are mere image verbs primarily used for the

evocation of the appropriate atmosphere.

The second passage is typical of Marlow's method of creating an atmosphere to match the psychological tensions in his narrative. Of the 17 verb-phrases in his speech, 10 are intransitives. Prominent among these is the relational intransitive seem, which in the penultimate sentence neutralises the activity of a series of transitives: tear, shake, slam, break. Despite such seemingly forceful verbs, the relational seem adverts us to the fact that none of these actions took place in actual fact, that it was all part and parcel of the narrator's technique of putting into sharper focus the critical psychological situation.

The most interesting thing about the passage from Victory is the novelist's flirtation with tense. The deliberate movement backward and forward in time, the calculated overlapping of the simple past (underlined) and the simple present produce the most striking effects in terms of irony, vividness of description, rhythm and stylistic variety. The phrase: goes into liquidation is indicative of Conrad's preference for active lengthy combinations to passive and concise phrases like was liquidated. We further notice Conrad's way of extracting verbs from certain nouns, evaporation precedes liquidation, the capital evaporates; while retaining other nouns like liquidation in the overfamiliar phrase, goes into liquidation, to serve as a rhythmical pattern that keeps on recurring throughout the opening chapter.

Nor is Conrad's passion for stative verbs restricted to the novels of the Malay Archipelago as can be clearly shown by quoting one passage from one of the most realistic of his novels: Under Western Eyes.

Razumov received an almost physical impression of endless space and of countless millions.

He responded to it with the readiness of a Russian who is born to an inheritance of space and numbers. Under the sumptuous immensity of the sky, the snow covered the endless forests, the frozen rivers, the plains of an immense country, obliterating the landmarks, the accidents of the ground, levelling everything under its uniform whiteness, like a monstrous blank page awaiting the record of an inconceivable history. It covered the passive land with its lives of countless people like Ziemianitch and its handful of agitators like this Haldin - murdering foolishly.

It was a sort of sacred inertia. Razumov felt a respect for it. A voice seemed to cry within him, "Don't touch it". It was a guarantee of duration, of safety, while the travail of maturing destiny went on - a work not of revolutions with their passionate levity of action and their shifting impulses - but of peace. What it needed was not the conflicting aspiration of a people but a will strong and one: it wanted not the babble of many voices, but a man - strong and one!

Razumov stood on the point of conversion. He was fascinated by its approach, by its overpowering logic. For a train of thought is never false. The falsehood lies deep in the necessities of existence, in secret fears and half-formed ambitions, in the secret confidence combined with a secret mistrust of ourselves, in the love of hope and the dread of uncertain days.

In Russia, the land of spectral ideas and disembodied aspirations, many brave minds have turned away at last from the vain and endless conflict to the one great historical fact of the land. (pp.33-4)

All the verbs in the passage are concerned with the description of two interrelated states belonging to two different subjects: the snow-covered land and Razumov's helplessness in the face of encompassing despair. The first paragraph brings out the inexorable nature of the Russian atmosphere; the second, Razumov's embarrassment brought out by verbs like seem and be. In the third, the old teacher of languages suddenly drops the simple past of the narrative and resorts to the simple present, to pass his own arbitrary judgement on the inner workings of Razumov's mind and on the nature of Russia with its "spectral ideas and disembodied aspirations". The verbal elements thus become ^a means of stating general observations that have little bearing on the action in the novel.

In comparing Conrad to contemporary novelists like Ford, Henry James, Galsworthy and Bennett, we are faced with the difficulty that in none of these do we find this sharp distinction between the "purple patches" and dialogue or speech in general. So much so indeed that I have had to content myself with the following count of the first one hundred verbs in Ford's The Good Soldier, Henry James's "The Madonna of the Future", Galsworthy's "The Juryman", and Bennett's "The Yacht". (1)

A - Classification according to category

author	total number of verbs	transitives	intransitives
Ford	100	43%	57%
James	100	54%	46%
Galsworthy	100	61%	39%
Bennett	100	48%	52%

B - Classification according to the kind of activity

author	relational verbs		activity verbs		other verbs	
	tran.	intran.	tran.	intran.	tran.	intran.
Ford	2	39	33	16	7	--
James	4	27	41	14	9	5
Galsworthy	5	18	52	19	4	2
Bennett	4	34	33	9	11	9

Table A shows Ford to be the one nearest to Conrad in his use of intransitives 57% as against 58%, 69% for Conrad's narrator and Karain respectively. Table B shows Galsworthy as the one using a higher number of activity verbs 71% as against 49% for Ford, 55%

(1) Ford, 1962; James, 1962; Galsworthy, 1918; Bennett, 1924

for James, 42% for Bennett and 62% for Conrad. For a while it seems that Conrad's activity verbs are numerically on a par with the rest of his contemporaries. However, the contrast between them becomes more striking when we count the number of deviational activity verbs in each of the five novelists.

C - Classification of metaphorical activity verbs

author	total number of activity verbs	verbs metaphorically used		
		tran.	intran.	total
Conrad	62	11	14	25
Ford	49	2	2	4
James	55	3	6	9
Galsworthy	71	2	1	3
Bennett	42	---	---	---

This proves that Conrad was unique among his contemporaries in his use of the verb phrase for imagistic purposes, a fact which Galsworthy himself put into relief when he wrote of Conrad: "No writer of English has exceeded him in sheer power of word painting". (1) Reading a novel by Conrad, one always gets the impression that the novelist is in constant need of more elbow room. Everything he puts down on paper spreads itself to lengths far exceeding the sketchiness of his contemporaries. For Conrad, images are to words what light is to sound. It is but natural that the verb phrase which is so central to the structure of the sentence should bear the brunt of this image-making task. For Conrad, as Ramon Fernandez puts it, "man is only a feeble gleam in the tempest, but that gleam resists and that gleam is everything" (2). The fact remains that

(1) Galsworthy, 1927 : 160
 (2) Fernandez, 1960 : 12

the beauty and helplessness of the gleam, the power and indifference of the tempest can be only brought out through a special use of the verbal elements constituting the backbone of the style in any given work. The charts thus prove that Conrad is different from his contemporaries on both levels: the syntactic and the semantic. He uses intransitive verbs much more than any of the rest does. More interesting is the fact that he uses verbs in a metaphorical sense in a way that sets him apart from any of his four contemporaries.

We come now to the literary implications of Conrad's verbal practice. In the Language of Fiction, ^{quoting Coleridge,} Lodge tells us that "the definition of good prose is-proper words in their proper places; of good verse - the most proper words in their proper places" (1). He is further of the opinion that "language is the point of departure and the terminus of the criticism of poetry, but only the point of departure of novel-criticism" (2). That is why we have to inquire at this stage of our study into the reasons behind Conrad's peculiar use of some of the verbal elements in his work.

One of the theories advanced with regard to the grammatical mistakes in Conrad was that of Arthur Symons, who, in comparing Conrad and Cunningham Graham, said:

Conrad is a creative artist, while Graham is a chronicler of personal adventure ; but there is something in both of that splendid subtle recklessness in writing English, which is a singularly exhilarating quality, when used as both use it, in the record of life lived rapidly, unthinkingly, in the presence of danger. (3)

It is obvious that Symons attributes Conrad's grammatical inconsistencies to his innate carelessness in writing, which Symons

(1) Lodge, 1966 : 10

(2) Ibid., p. 32.

(3) Symons : 1925 : 31

nevertheless finds to be quite in keeping with Conrad's being a confirmed impressionist. In other words, Symons does not see such things as the reflection of the novelist's foreignness or lack of a firm hold on the grammar of his adopted language. On the contrary, he seems to intimate that Conrad was fully aware of the complexities of English, but that he wilfully chose to deviate from the norm out of sheer carelessness.

Although none of the three alternatives can be ruled out in any objective consideration of Conrad's style, the fact remains that such a phenomenon does not yield much from the literary standpoint. That Conrad should inadvertently make two or three such mistakes in any of the novels of the early period is a casual stylistic feature that has no bearing at all on the artistic or aesthetic ends the novelist seeks to achieve through a more conscious manipulation of the verbal elements at his disposal (1).

On the other hand, Conrad's conscious or premeditated use of the verb phrase in his works, especially on the semantic level, has been partly explained by Galsworthy's description of his friend as the matchless word-painter (p. 407 supra). Besides, Conrad himself throws much light on his practice in his lengthy letter to Mrs. E.L. Sanderson, Sep. 1910. Commenting on Mrs. Anderson's South African Sketches, Conrad wrote:

(1) Neither French nor Polish grammars have the past perfect progressive. In French, a clause like "He had been waiting for me" is expressed by the plus-que parfait in something like "Il m'avait attendu". On the other hand, Polish has three tense forms: present, future and past. It is a highly inflexional language wherein the various tense forms are realised through affixes added to the verb. A verb like czytae, to read, is conjugated as czytam, I read (present); czytalem (I read: past masculine singular); preczytam, I shall read, etc.

Nor does either . . . grammar have the auxiliary would used in English for purposes of typification.

It can thus be argued that the most likely explanation for Conrad's grammatical inconsistencies in the early period of his career is that he had a weak hold on certain aspects of English grammar, a defect which experience and constant reading was to put right.

The general effect, however, is too harsh, I have asked myself, why? I think that the fault lies in the want of atmosphere. We see these people in the flesh and, as it were, in vacue. It needs a little more detail.

A little later he tells her:

The alterations on the page are merely illustrative of my saying that your prose wants a little "bracing up". For instance A is a simple re-arrangement, the picture of the lilies starring, etc., etc., being completed before the effect of surprise is mentioned. In B and D, I have erased a few words which detract from the actuality of the impression. This is a purely descriptive passage, in which any suggestion of action is detrimental."

In letters suggestiveness itself, -- a great quality must be obtained by precise expression. I feel with you that there is "something truly pagan in the mystery, etc., etc., etc." -- but the sentence in itself means nothing. To awaken a responsive feeling something exact must be said. (1)

The letter seems to be an artistic credo that spells out the novelist's stylistic strategy with its insistence on "atmosphere", "The actuality of the impression" and the "suggestiveness" of precise expression'. More important is Conrad's declaration that action is detrimental in "purely descriptive passages", which explains beyond any doubt the reason behind his dependence on stative verbs.

Let us now turn to Conrad's unequalled "sheer power of word painting", and examine the place of the verb phrase in that technique of his. If we take a novel like An Outcast, we find that the human drama enacted in the novel does not justify the extreme length of the work (368 pages). Willems, a Dutch tramp, arrives in the Malay Archipelago with the express purpose of making his fortune. Lingard, a self-styled benefactor, picks him up and puts him in the service of old Hudig. That last takes a fancy to the

(1) L.L., Vol. II, pp. 117 - 8

young Dutchman, makes him his confidential clerk, and finally convinces him to marry his half-caste daughter, Joanna. Willems, a confirmed gambler, embezzles some of Hudig's money. On discovering the theft, Hudig dismisses Willems; his wife revolts against him, and the outcast chooses to go to Sambir to work as Almayer's assistant. There he meets Aissa, a native enchantress, who coaxes him into betraying Tom Lingard's secret about the entrance to the Pantai river to the Arabs. Almayer tells Lingard of Willems's deceit, and the old sea captain decides to take his revenge on the ungrateful Dutchman by leaving him to rot in the solitude and silence of the Sambir jungle. The end comes when Aissa discovers Willems's marriage to Joanna and shoots him dead in the scuffle that ensues. This is briefly what the novel is about. Still, to every one page of dialogue or action related to the human drama, there are two or more pages of what Conrad calls "atmosphere". Indeed, the novel seems to consist in an endless series of descriptive tableaux.

It could be argued that Conrad mainly achieves his descriptive ends by means of the various types of modification. Still, these do not exist in vacuum, i.e. most of them are dependent on the presence in the sentence or clause of a verb phrase of some sort. Besides, in most cases the verb phrases themselves are conducive to image painting as are the other stylistic devices. Missing the boisterous company of his fellow gamblers, Willems, who is now alone with his thoughts in Sambir, decides to go on a picnic on the Pantai. This is described by the omniscient narrator in the following manner:

As he paddled up to the point where the Rajah's stockade came down to the river, the nipas were left behind rattling their leaves over the brown water, and the big trees would appear on the bank, tall, strong, indifferent in the immense solidity of their life, which endures for ages, to that short

and fleeting life in the heart of a man who crept painfully amongst their shadows in search of a refuge from the unceasing reproach of his thoughts. Amongst their smooth trunks a clear brook meandered for a time in twining lacets before it made up its mind to take a leap into the hurrying river, over the edge of the steep bank. There was also a pathway there and it seemed frequented. Willems landed, and following the capricious promise of the track soon found himself in a comparatively clear space, where the confused tracery of sunlight fell through the branches and the foliage overhead, and lay on the stream that shone in an easy curve like a bright sword-blade dropped amongst the long and feathery grass. Further on, the path continued, narrowed again in the thick undergrowth. At the end of the first turning Willems saw a flash of white and colour, a gleam of gold like a sun-ray lost in shadow, and a vision of blackness darker than the deepest shade of the forest. He stopped, surprised, and fancied he had heard light footsteps - growing lighter - ceasing. He looked around. The grass on the bank of the stream trembled and a tremulous path of its shivering, silver-grey tops ran from the water to the beginning of the thicket. (pp. 67 - 8)

Whether transitive or intransitive, all the verb phrases in the passage are of a stative nature. To match the outcast's inward sense of loss, trees appear to be not only tall and strong but also indifferent to the fate of the hapless Dutchman. Brooks make up their minds and take leaps. Willems follows the capricious tracks; and grass trembles. Reason rejects this calculated deviational use of the verbs owing to the logical clash between the signifier (the words used) and the signified (the ideas they refer to in the world of reality). Only imaginative readers can grasp the sheer beauty and exotic nature of such descriptions. And it is to the imaginative reader, rather than those who are after hard facts, that Conrad's image-verbs appeal.

The interplay of concreteness and sensuousness already attested in our study of Conrad's modifiers is also a marked feature of the verbal elements in An Outcast. Here are two representative quotes:

He (Willems) threw himself down in the grass by the side of the brook and listened for the sound of her footsteps. The brilliant light of day fell through the irregular opening in the high branches of the trees and streamed down, softened, amongst the shadows of big trunks. Here and there a narrow sunbeam touched the rugged bark of a tree with a golden splash, sparkled on the leaping water of the brook, or rested on a leaf that stood out, shimmering and distinct, on the monotonous background of sombre green tints. The clear gap of blue above his head was crossed by the quick flight of white rice-birds whose wings flashed in the sunlight, while through it the heat poured down from the sky, clung about the streaming earth, rolled among the trees, and wrapped up Willems in the soft and odorous folds of air, heavy with the faint scent of blossoms and with the acrid smell of decaying life. (p. 74)

Here the novelist is apparently preoccupied with Willems's newly born love for Aissa. With those of Conrad's contemporaries that we have examined some of their works, such an incident would be realistically depicted as Conrad actually does in the opening sentence of the passage. Conrad's romantic inclinations, however, make him devote the rest of the passage for a description of the sensuously evoked atmosphere surrounding the man's euphoria. Although verbs like fell through, streamed down are activity verbs whose imagistic functions cannot be doubted, it is verbs like sparkled, poured down, and clung about that capture the attention of a reader already familiar with the less colourful styles of Conrad's contemporaries. Notice how the various sense mediums are brought into play. In the third sentence the visual and tactile senses are blended mainly through the use of the verb touch and the adverbial phrase with a golden splash in relation to the subject sunbeam and the direct object the rugged bark of a tree. This is immediately followed by a verb, sparkled, which appeals not only to the visual but to the auditory sense as well. The clause that follows contains a verb, stood out, that highlights the intensive relationship between the subject leaf and the two modifiers, shimmering and distinct. The last sentence contains a series of

verbs, poured out, clung about, rolled among and wrapped that have the effect of solidifying or rendering concrete a thermal phenomenon, the heat, endowing it with the power to stimulate the protagonist's sexual desires, through this bringing together of the tactile sense implicit in the metaphoric use of the verbs, and the olfactory sense introduced by the adverbial phrase complementing the last verb in the series. Two paragraphs later we read:

Day after day, when they met and she stood a little way off, listening to his words, holding him with her look, the undefined terror of the new conquest became faint and blurred like the memory of a dream, and the certitude grew distinct, and convincing, and visible to the eyes like some material thing in full sunlight. It was a deep joy, a great pride, a tangible sweetness that seemed to leave the taste of honey on her lips. He lay stretched at her feet without moving, for he knew from experience how a slight movement of his could frighten her away in those first days of their intercourse. He lay very quiet, with all the ardour of his desire ringing in his voice and shining in his eyes, whilst his body was still, like death itself. And he looked at her, standing above him, her head lost in the shadow of broad and graceful leaves that touched her cheek; while the slender spikes of pale green orchids streamed down from amongst the boughs and mingled with the black hair that framed her face, as if all those plants claimed her for their own - the animated and brilliant flower of all that exuberant life which, born in gloom, struggles for ever towards the sunshine. (pp. 75 - 6)

The full impact of Aissa's final triumph over her white lover is brought out as much by the various types of modification as by the verb phrases. Most prominent among these are the transitives hold, touched and the intransitives became, grew, lay and struggle. In the first sentence hold endows the abstract noun phrase her look with the concrete and almost animate power of curbing in physical terms the white man's movements rendering him the slave of the woman's look. There follows a description of Aissa's initial fear and ultimate victory realised by the two process verbs, become and grow, which by their very nature admit of being followed by

modifiers; and this is what we actually get: each verb is followed by a string of predicative adjectives. The copula in the second sentence aims at defining, by its authoritative tone, the nature of the woman's feelings of triumph. Here, however, the complex verb phrase, seemed to leave, adds a touch of obfuscation, owing to the negative impact of the relational verb seem on the lexical verb that follows it. The verbs thus become agents as much of evocation as of evasion (we are not told what the nature of that sweetness was). Apart from the fact that lay in the third sentence is ostensibly preferred on account of its ability to accept modifiers, its repetition in the fourth sentence gives the prose a rhythmic quality and a rhetorical touch reminiscent of the novelist's use of certain prepositional or appositive phrases for the same effects. The last sentence abounds in verbs whose imagistic qualities lead up to that lovely portrait of the Malay girl standing in the midst of natural forces that "claimed her for their own". The interplay of look and touch (both used in a literal sense) and streamed down, which is metaphorically used, culminates in that description of Aissa as "the animated and brilliant flower", an appositive phrase (other grammars would call flower here a substantive) remarkable for its sheer beauty and sensuous appeal.

The use of the different types of verb for purposes of evocation and evasion is a striking feature of The Nigger, famed for its symbolic nature.

—→
 About half-past seven the pitchy obscurity round us turned a ghastly grey, and we knew that the sun had risen. This unnatural and threatening daylight, in which we could see one another's wild eyes and drawn faces, was only an added tax on our endurance. The horizon seemed to have come on all sides within arm's length of the ship. Into that narrowed circle furious seas leaped in, struck, and leaped out.

(pp. 55 - 6)

The images in the passage are realised by the intransitives, turned, leaped, struck and leapt out. The first accepts modifiers immediately after it, the remaining three dramatise the image of the angry sea in the most evocative way. As opposed to this evocative function of these verbs, there is that evasive quality of the verb phrase, seemed to have come, which adds an element of obscurity or mystery to the description in a bid to magnify the ship's struggle against the forces of nature to hyperbolic proportions. (1)

The same verbal power of evocation and evasion is a marked feature of Lord Jim. A representative passage is the opening paragraph of chapter III.

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A marvellous stillness pervaded the world, and the stars, together with the serenity of their rays, seemed to shed upon the earth the assurance of everlasting security. The young moon, re-curved, and shining low in the west, was like a slender shaving thrown up from a bar of gold, and the Arabian sea, smooth and cool to the eye like a sheet of ice, extended its perfect level to the perfect circle of a dark horizon. (p. 17.)

Although verbs like pervade aim at giving us a vivid image of the quietness that surrounded the "Patna", the verb phrase seemed to shed soon calls into question the spurious nature of the first statement, for a few pages later we learn that the fine weather lasted but a short time, and that the whole description as well as Jim's initial feelings of "unbounded safety and peace" were meant to be the ironic prologue to the catastrophic end.

Even in Nostromo the narrator's description of the topographical features of the fictitious republic of Costaguana is coloured by the novelist's romanticism which shows up in the evocative power of the verbs used.

(1) Conrad was very much infuriated to know that critics deplored the "lack of incident" in The Nigger. Cf. L.C. p. 61

→
 At night the body of clouds advancing higher up the sky smothers the whole quiet gulf below with an impenetrable darkness, in which the sound of the falling showers can be heard beginning and ceasing abruptly - now here, now there. Indeed, these cloudy nights are proverbial with the seamen along the whole west coast of a great continent. Sky, land and sea disappear together out of the world when the Placido - as the saying is - goes to sleep under its black poncho. The few stars left below the seaward frown of the vault shine feebly as into the mouth of a black cavern. In its vastness your ship floats unseen under your feet, her sails flutter invisible above your head. (pp. 6 - 7)

Both the clouds and the Placido are personified by virtue of the very semantic nature of the two verbs smother and go to sleep. The images here, as in the other underlined clauses, are the direct result of the verbal element.

It could be contended that in novels like Lord Jim and Nostromo Conrad is too much preoccupied with action to pay much attention to descriptions. In the latter novel, for example we have for a setting a whole south American republic with unmistakable epic dimensions, due mainly to the presence of the fabulously rich San Tomé mine, which attracts the attention of a host of European and American adventurers. Still, the novel which is supposedly concerned with the life story of Nostromo, who, as Ted Boyle puts it, "unites the various private histories of the novel" (1), is void of any indication of action on the picturesque hero's part for almost the whole first part of it. Instead, Conrad's "camera eye" keeps roving here and there describing the history of Costaguana, past and present, in what seems to be a deliberate attempt by Conrad to justify his claim that

there was not a single brick, stone or grain of sand of its (Costaguana's) soil I had not placed in position with my hand... (2)

(1) Boyle, 1965 : 175

(2) P.R., p. 100

Even the complex time-shift device in the novel, which is more concerned with Conrad's manipulation of tense in the novel than with his use of the verbs for imagistic purposes, is an integral part of the descriptions that serve as an illuminating background to the action in the book, but are not in themselves part of the human tragedy being enacted. When all is said and done, the fact remains that all these descriptive details are out of all proportion to the tragic story of Nostromo, the alleged hero of the book.

Of the seven meanings of irony defined by Sedgwick (1), there is what he terms "irony of grammar" which simply means that form of speech by which a man "sayth one thing and gyveth to understand the contrary". Thus the use of a certain verb in a particular context can have its ironic connotations as can be clearly illustrated by the following examples from The Secret Agent wherein the ironic treatment of a serious subject is the novelist's main ambition:

The door of the shop was the only means of entrance to the house in which Mr. Verloc carried on his business, of a seller of shady wares, exercised his vocation of a protector of society, and cultivated his domestic virtues. (p. 5)

Prominent among the verb phrases used in the passage is the verb cultivated whose literary nature betrays the ironic intentions behind it. For it is two lines later that we know what this cultivation of domestic virtues consisted in: "He found at home the ease of his body and the peace of his conscience, together with Mrs. Verloc's wifely attentions and Mrs. Verloc's mother's deferential regard" (pp. 5 - 6). However, the reader knows in due course that what Mr. Verloc cultivated was something totally different from what he was bound to reap: his murder at the hands of the wife whose "wifely attentions" he prided himself upon.

(1) Sedgwick, 1948 : 5

On the other hand, the verbal elements used in the description of the physique of Comrade Ossipon are marked for their implicit ironic reference:

A bush of crinky¹ yellow hair topped his red freckled face, with a flattened nose and prominent mouth cast in the rough mould of the negro type. His almond-shaped eyes leered languidly over the high cheek-bones. (p. 44)

Although the man's portrait is mainly painted through a conglomeration of modifiers, the verb leer in the underlined sentence is of special significance. It underpins the man's habit of making eyes at women; it paves the way for his stealthy advances to Mr. Verloc's wife, Winnie. It is this leering quality about his eyes that seems to endear him to some women . . . whose income he lives off. It also explains why Mrs. Verloc in her extremities should turn to him for salvation after killing her husband.

The repetition of the passive form of the verb phrase in the following example from Under Western Eyes is conducive to irony and suspense.

Mr. Razumov was supposed to be the son of an Archpriest and to be protected by a distinguished nobleman - perhaps of his own distant province. But his outward appearance accorded badly with such humble origin. Such a descent was not credible. It was, indeed, suggested that Mr. Razumov was the son of an Archpriest's pretty daughter - which, of course would put a different complexion on the matter. (p. 6.)

The irony implicit in this verbal repetition becomes quite clear when the narrator tells us that this last theory "rendered intelligible the protection of the distinguished nobleman" (p. 6). In other words, the unidentified subject or subjects of the rumour would have it that Razumov was the son of the Archpriest's pretty daughter by the unnamed nobleman.

The evocative power of the verbs is by no means abated in the later novels. The Arrow of Gold (1919) bears witness to this fact:

The feeble gas flame in the hall was still there, on duty, as though it had never been turned off since I last crossed the hall at half-past eleven in the evening to go to the harbour. The small flame had watched me letting myself out; and now, exactly of the same size, the poor little tongue of light (there was something wrong with that burner) watched me letting myself in as indeed it had done many times before. (p. 230)

The speaker is M. George, the young Conrad of the Marseilles days. The verbal elements are remarkable for the way they endow inanimate objects like the gas flame with qualities peculiar to human beings. In the first sentence the copula effects a highly original image of the flame standing on duty as if it were a sentinel of flesh and blood. The process of personification is continued in the second sentence where the verb watch (a lexical one this time) throws the image into sharper focus.

Although Conrad's peculiar use of the auxiliary would for purposes of typification smacks of superfluity and redundancy owing to the presence of certain frequency adverbials in the sentence, his constant manipulation of the auxiliary in the novels up to The Rescue (1919), as well as his emphasis on precision and careful choice of words in his letter to Mrs. Anderson (p. 410 supra) enhances the impression that Conrad might have aimed at achieving certain stylistic effects through this characteristic use of the auxiliary. With this in mind, E. Stegmaier goes so far as to say that the function of this technique in Nostromo is to "bring about a considerable change in the reader's attitude",

From taking up an imaginative stance in one particular moment, he is made to withdraw to a vantage point from which he can survey an unspecified number of similar events. Or, to be more precise, the reader's stance is both inside and outside the scene: inside because the 'would scene' remains scenic in form, outside because this form strictly speaking, no longer stands for an actual and unique fictional present. (1)

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 What Stegmaier fails to clarify, however, is the ultimate effect on the reader of his withdrawal to "a vantage point from which he can survey an unspecified number of similar events". If we take the example he cites from Nostromo,

She was not then invoking the saint himself, but calling upon Nostromo, whose patron he was. And Giorgio motionless on the chair by her side, would be provoked by these reproachful and distracted appeals. 'Peace, woman... he murmured in the dark; and she would retort panting - 'Eh I have no patience. Duty what of the woman who...'
 (1)

we will find that the reader's "imaginative stance" is that related to his attitude to the first sentence which represents an action taking place at one particular moment in the story. With the second sentence, there occurs the onslaught of the would-phrase which rivets the critical reader's attention, who suddenly perceives that he is no longer concerned with one action, but with a series of actions presented or shown in the most economical manner through this peculiar use of the would-phrase. The thing that has eluded Stegmaier's attention is the fact that the would-phrase occurs only twice in the passage; it does not occur, for instance, in the reporting clause, he murmured in the dark, which is highly significant. For it puts into relief the difference in temperament between old Giorgio and his wife Signora Teresa. It shows him up for the wise and experienced, though also romantic or idealistic, sage that he really is, while spotlighting the Signora's nagging and emotional character. When Conrad tells us that Giorgio would be provoked by these reproachful remarks, he does not follow this up with, "Peace woman... he would murmur, but drops the auxiliary would and opts for the simple verb phrase using *the simple past or preterite*. This simply means that although

(1) *Ibid.*

Giorgio was apt to be provoked by the woman's complaints about Nostromo's negligence, he was not in the habit of paying much heed to her petty emotional outbursts. He was not, that is, always willing to argue with her over this. On that one occasion he counselled her to be quiet, but the reporting clause that follows (containing the auxiliary would) makes it quite clear that whether Giorgio answered her or not, she would follow up each of her complaints with the exclamation "Eh! I have no patience". (1)

Stegmaier also shoots wide of the mark when he attributes the frequent recurrence of the would phrase in Nostromo (as against its scarcity in Lord Jim) to the fact that the 'would scene' is "the most appropriate means of suggesting the vastness of this country (Costaguana) and more importantly, an almost endless number of events and details behind the few glimpses which actually appear on the page" (p. 518). Stegmaier does not tell us why the would-phrase figures more prominently in a short story like "Karain" than in Lord Jim or even Nostromo. Besides, in what way can the use of the would-phrase in the above quoted passage from Nostromo be indicative of the country's largeness or eventful history? On the whole Stegmaier's essay is more attention-catching than convincing. However, it is only to give credit where credit is due to say that this short essay highlights the importance of a significant linguistic feature of Conrad's verbal practice.

Towards the end of chapter four in Lord Jim we come across a representative example of the would-phrase in this novel.

And later on, many times, in distant parts of the world, Marlow showed himself willing to remember Jim, to remember him at length, in detail and audibly. Perhaps it would be after dinner, on a veranda

(1) Such interpretations, however, do not obscure the fact that the would-phrase is of a more stative than active nature, since it tends to sum up a series of characteristic activities in a phrase of just two words.

draped in motionless foliage and crowned with flowers, in the deep dusk speckled by fiery cigar-ends. The elongated bulk of each cane-chair harboured a silent listener. Now and then a small red glow would move abruptly, and expanding light up the fingers of a languid hand, part of a face in profound repose, or flash a crimson gleam into a pair of pensive eyes overshadowed by a fragment of an unruffled forehead; and with the very first word uttered Marlow's body, extended at rest in the seat, would become very still, as though his spirit had winged its way back into the lapse of time and were speaking through his lips from the past. (p.33.)

The notion of repetitiveness implicit in the use of the would phrase is maintained all the way through. There is no verb phrase in the simple past or otherwise to undermine this theory. Indeed, the first sentence of the passage heralds this notion through the use of the adverbial phrase many times in connection with the verb showed. Such passages, however, elicit from Stegmaier the following remark, "references along similar lines to Marlow's and his listeners' presence behind the events revealed in the foreground of the book, remind the reader that he is not following those events directly" (p. 518). But does the reader really need such would-phrases to know that he is reading a novel or a story at second remove, or that he is reliving a second-hand experience of the events depicted? Would it not be more logical to say that the would phrase here hints at the loquacious nature of Marlow the preposterous raconteur? I believe that such verbal elements are bound to make the reader feel that Marlow is as obsessed with the story of Jim as is Coleridge's ancient mariner with the events that led to the shooting of the albatross. Both Marlow and the ancient mariner seek psychological relief through telling their respective stories to their guests. It also shows that Marlow is quite right when he tells us that he has never quite understood Jim. This explains his continuous resort to verbal elements like the verb seem or appear which betray the man's bewilderment and lack of

certainty.

This theory advanced in the previous chapter about Conrad poking fun at Marlow's incurable obsession is borne out by the similarity of the verbal elements used on such occasions with those used in relation to Captain Mitchell. In chapter ten of the third part of Nostromo, the narrator remarks:

It would be into the Harbour Office that he (Mitchell) would lead some privileged passenger he had bought off in his own boat, and invite him to take a seat for a moment while he signed a few papers. And Captain Mitchell, seating himself at his desk, would keep on talking hospitably--- (p. 474)

Obviously the would-phrases in this context set off Mitchell's pompous nature. He is a man fond of talking for no apparent purpose. It is just that he cannot keep quiet. And just as his use of modifiers in connection with his protégé, Nostromo, shows him up for the unperceptive fool that he really is, the would phrases here enhance this impression and make us sympathise with those who had to bear with the monotony and sheer stagnation of the whole thing.

The ironic function of the would-phrase is more striking in Victory where it is used in connection with the hapless Morrison, the sea-captain whom Axel Heyst rescues from the malicious designs of the Portuguese authorities. This is how Conrad satirizes Morrison's misplaced generosity:

He (Morrison) would often sail through awfully dangerous channels up to some miserable settlement, only to find a very hungry population clamorous for rice, and without so much 'produce' between them as would have filled Morrison's suitcase. Amid general rejoicings he would land the rice all the same, explain to the people that it was an advance, that they were in debt to him now; would preach to them energy and industry, and make an elaborate note in a pocket-diary which he always carried; and this would be the end of the transaction. I don't know if Morrison thought so, but the villagers had no

doubt about it. Whenever a coast village sighted the brig it would begin to beat all its gongs and hoist all its streamers, and all its girls would put flowers in their hair and the crowd would line the river bank, and Morrison would beam and glitter at all this excitement through his single eyeglass with intense gratification. He was tall and lantern-jawed, and clean-shaven, and looked like a barrister who had thrown his wig to the dogs. (pp. 10-11)

It is noteworthy that Conrad uses here time adverbials like always and whenever with those simple past verbs so that the whole tenor of the narrative would accord with the characteristic activity referred to by the would-phrases. This corroborates my theory about the absence of such adverbials in the case of the passage from Nostromo about Giorgio and Signora Teresa. The would-phrases here leave no shadow of^a doubt about Conrad's ironical treatment of Morrison's philanthropic nature. It shows him to be a man, who like Nostromo, was content to be paid in fine words. It is for such manifestations of native adulation that he "would often sail through dangerous channels". And this is why, although he gets nothing for the rice he provides the natives on credit, he "would beam and glitter" at the sight of the natives excitement at his coming.

The irony is further brought out by the lexical verbs that follow the auxiliary. Apart from the highly ironic connotations of beam and glitter in the last quotation, Conrad tells us that when his white colleagues remonstrated with him as to his foolish conduct and self-destructive generosity, Morrison "would put on a knowing air", and promise to "squeeze the natives at the first time of calling". After which declaration, "he would stick the pencil back and snap the elastic on with inflexible finality; but he never began the squeezing." (p. 11). It is hard to imagine a more economical way of poking fun at the man than this

syntactic device consisting of the auxiliary would plus ^alexical verb.

Tense in Conrad's novels is marked by the recurrent interruption of the flow of the dominant preterite with passages, long or short, in the simple present. What is significant about this is that he seems to do it, perhaps, more than any one of his contemporaries. Other novelists before Conrad indulged in the same technique. The author of Vanity Fair, for instance, is quite notorious for the way he interrupts the preterite with discursive authorial passages that betray the hand of the showman manipulating his puppets or characters. Typical of such practice is the end of the novel "Vanitas Vanitatum! which of us is happy in this world!" . The same happens when Thackeray gives way to his arch humour after the death of Jos Sedley and young Osborne:

However much you may be mourned, your widow will like to have weeds neatly made; the cook will send or come up to ask about dinner, the survivor will soon bear to look at your picture over the mantelpiece. (p. 685)

Conrad's practice is different in that he does not speak directly to the reader; he simply incorporates his discursive passages into the texture of the narrative with ease and without undermining the reader's willing suspension of disbelief.

There are two themes in Conrad at the mention of which he never hesitates to change the course of the narrative from the preterite to the simple present: the east and the sea. For a man who spent more than two decades of his life as a seaman wandering on the waters of the far east, this is something not to be wondered at. The function of the present simple in such cases is to juxtapose the eternal with the temporal. In "Youth" Marlow often interrupts the preterite to introduce one such passage about the east in the simple present:

again

A wave of movement passed through the crowd from end to end, passed along the heads, swayed the bodies, ran along the jetty like a ripple on the water, like a breath of wind on a field - and all was still. I see it now - the wide sweep of the bay, the glittering sands, the wealth of green infinite and varied....

... the East looked at them without a sound.

"I have known its fascination since; I have seen the mysterious shores, the still water, the lands of brown nations where a stealthy Nemesis lies in wait... (p. 41)

On the other hand, the sea is the motive force behind Conrad's dropping of the preterite in An Outcast of the Islands. Chapter one ends with the sentence: He saw him quite safe; solid as the hills; deep - deep as an abyss; discreet as the grave." Chapter two begins with a sentence in the simple present: The sea, perhaps because of its saltiness, roughens the outside but keeps sweet the kernel of its servants' soul." Such interruptions occur on a larger scale in the Nigger. Chapter three ends with the preterite dominating the scene, while chapter four begins with a whole paragraph about the sea and its uncanny power: "On men reprieved by its disdainful mercy the immortal sea confers in its justice the full privilege of desired unrest.... etc." Here, as elsewhere on similar occasions, the evanescent nature of human actions, is highlighted through this contrast between them and the durability of natural forces.

Sometimes the shift from the preterite to the simple present bodies forth one of the painful or sad facts of human existence. In "The Return" Alvin Harvey discovers that his wife has eloped with another man. At this the narrator tells us,

He stood alone, naked and afraid, like the first man on the first day of evil. There are in life events, contacts, glimpses, that seem brutally to bring all the past to a close. There is a shock and a crash, as of a gate flung to behind one by the perfidious hand of fate. Go and seek another paradise, fool or sage. There is a moment of dumb dismay, and the wandering must begin again...

He came to himself with a slight start and became aware of an oppressive, crushing desolation. It was only a feeling... (p. 134)

Here, however, Conrad makes the same mistake on account of which previous novelists like Thackeray were severely criticised: addressing himself directly to the reader in, "Go and seek another paradise, fool or sage". The scarcity of such slips makes them of slight significance.

In most of the Marlow stories the onslaught of the simple present spotlights a universal time statement that has a symbolic function in the overall structural pattern of the book. One such example is the following quotation from Lord Jim:

→
 'The shadow (Stein's) prowling amongst the graves of butterflies laughed boisterously.

"Yes! Very funny this terrible 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 the 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 exertion of your hands and feet in the water make the deep, deep sea keep you up... (p. 214)

The speaker is Stein whose characteristic habit of inverting the normal word order has been commented upon in the chapter on direct speech. The important thing to note is that Stein's assessment of the role of man in God's universe as articulated in the above passage has given rise to a seemingly endless chain of critical opinions on the relevance of Stein's words to Jim's tragedy. Most of the critics see in Stein's words a succinct explanation of Jim's fate: his inability to submit himself to the dream of his life. Many, that is, see Jim's failure and ultimate self-inflicted death in Patusan to be the direct result of that lack of exertion which stood in the way of making the "deep, deep sea keep him up".

The proterite, Conrad's favourite tense form, is used by the

novelist for a variety of purposes. It is the means of contrasting the continuity of life and the transitory nature of human actions. In Victory the second paragraph of chapter 9 reads:

After the cold gust of wind there was an absolute stillness of the air. The thunder-charged mass hung unbroken beyond the low, ink-black headland, darkening the twilight. By contrast, the sky at the zenith displayed pellucid clearness, the sheen of a delicate glass bubble which the merest movement of air might shatter. A little to the left, between the black masses of the headland and of the forest, the volcano, a feather of smoke by day and a cigar-glow at night, took its first fiery expanding breath of the evening. Above it a reddish star came out like an expelled spark from the fiery bosom of the earth, enchanted into permanency by the mysterious spell of frozen spaces.

In front of Heyst the forest, already full of the deepest shades, stood like a wall. But he lingered, watching its edge especially where it ended at the line of bushes, masking the land end of the jetty. (p.356)

The passage occurs at a critical stage in Heyst's life: the moment he realises that his hermit-like existence on Samburan has availed him nothing, and that his withdrawal from the world of evil human beings has been rendered valueless by the arrival on Samburan of the three emissaries of evil, plain Mr. Jones, Ricardo and Pedro. The preterite brings out in vivid detail the splendour and sheer indifference of nature to the fate of the white man. Heyst's movements described by verbs such as, lingered, turned, entered, stared used in the next paragraphs contrast sharply with the active verbs hung, displayed, darken, shatter, came out which underline the continuity of life irrespective of what happens to petty mortals. In short, the preterite is the tense form that bodies forth Conrad's stupendous power of evoking and bringing to life the forces of nature in the most striking way. It is the tense form without which the novelist's sensuous tableaux and lifelike descriptive passages would not be the same.

The preterite is also the dominant tense form in passages contrasting two temporal human activities: the physical and the psychological. In the following excerpt from Under Western Eyes the preterite occurs both in narrative sentences as well as in the character's narrated monologue:

—→
 Ziemianitch's passionate surrender to sorrow and consolation had baffled him. That was the people. A true Russian man! Razumov was glad he had beaten that brute - the "bright soul" of the other. Here they were: the people and the enthusiast. Between the two he was done for.... It was a sort of terrible childishness. But children had their masters.

...→
 He walked slower and slower. And indeed, considering the guest he had in his rooms, it was no wonder he lingered on the way. (pp. 31-2)

Although other tense forms are brought into play, it is the juxtaposition of the preterite in Razumov's narrated monologue in utterances like, Here they were, between the two he was done for and in descriptive sentences like, he walked slower, that brings out the importance of the preterite as a means of fusing the man's physical activities with his psychological trepidations.

In Conrad's hands the preterite could be a means of foregrounding or backgrounding certain aspects in the descriptive tableau.

In An Outcast one such tableau reads:

On the left the tree seemed to step out to meet them, appearing vaguely, high, motionless and patient; with a rustling plaint of innumerable leaves through which every drop of water tore its separate way with cruel haste. And then, to the right, the house surged up in the mist, very black, and clamorous with the quick patter of rain on its high-pitched roof above the steady splash of the water running off the eaves. Down the plankway leading to the door flowed a thin and pellucid stream, and when Willems began his ascent it broke over his foot as if he were going up a steep ravine in the bed of a rapid and shallow torrent. (pp. 284-5)

Although the preterite is the only tense form in the passage, we

notice that the use of the relational verb seem in the complex verb phrase of the first sentence relegates the tree to the background of the picture, as opposed to the use of the robust verb phrase surged up in relation to the description of the house. In a sense, the use of seem in the first sentence neutralises the active force of the intransitive step out, a fact rendered quite explicit by the postmodifying phrase, appearing vaguely, whereas the house is described as surging very black and clamorous, etc. On the other hand, the subject is backgrounded in the third sentence, flowed a thin and pellucid stream, assigning it a third place in the tableau after the house and the tree. All this is indicative of the hand of a master who knew quite well what he was out to achieve.

Chapter IX

CONCLUSION

I make no claim, in the foregoing chapters, to have discovered the ideal approach to the stylistic investigation of prose-fiction. What I have attempted to do is to describe Conrad's style along the lines laid down in the stylistic approach propounded in the opening chapter of this study. In the majority of cases, stylistic features for discussion were chosen on the basis of the "click" theory or the "hunch" concept of Spitzer and Dr. Roger Fowler respectively. In all cases, the stylistic feature examined was treated as a sign, functioning not in isolation, but in harmony with the other signs within the structural framework of Conrad's works. Apart from its obvious indebtedness to Spitzer and his school of "genetic stylistics", the method followed in this thesis owes as much to Bally as it does to structuralists like Jakobson. For while the process of delimiting, defining and identifying the stylistic features is borrowed from the school of "descriptive stylistics" founded by Charles Bally, that of investigating the stylistic feature in terms of its functional relationship with the other signs of the work of art is based on the tenets of the school of "structural stylistics" founded by the Prague Linguistic Circle. As such, my approach is eclectic and subjective, but mainly pragmatic.

It is eclectic not only because it focuses attention on seven features of Conrad's style, but also because, in discussing his stylistic strategy in relation to other contemporary novelists, reference is made to only one short story or novel by each of the

last-mentioned practitioners. This stems from my deep-seated conviction that even a life-long study would not be sufficient to describe every possible aspect of Conrad's style and compare it with its counterpart in the entire works of his contemporaries.

The approach is subjective in so far as the interpretations of the semantic connotations of the stylistic feature in question reflect my own views as a critical reader familiar with Conrad's work in its entirety. Unlike Bally who is much more concerned with the message as a reflection of the speaker's mode of thinking or social milieu, I have been mainly interested in the impact of the message on the receiver who is none other but myself.

Most important of all is the pragmatic nature of the approach, for instead of theorising at length about the linguistic feature in question and illustrating my argument with representative examples carefully gleaned from one or the other of Conrad's voluminous novels, I have for the most part begun each chapter with a detailed description of the feature in a limited corpus (50 pages on the average) and then proceeded to a brief examination of its manifestations in the other novels. This has had the advantage of pinpointing the unquestionable density of the feature examined, highlighting in the interim the novelist's premeditated and conscious use of it for certain aesthetic ends. Such a procedure was dictated by my firm belief that stylistics cannot be the mere listing of linguistic features, some of which at least might be of little or no significance in the overall artistic design of the novelist's work. To our purposes, both the "how" and the "why" underlying Conrad's peculiar use of language have been of equal importance. In the process, however, a certain degree of repetitiveness has been unavoidable. Whether this is to be regarded as a virtue or a flaw in the approach, remains for the reader to judge.

While the descriptive analysis of Conrad's style has been the prime concern and major contention of this thesis, other relevant questions have been lightly touched on. These are mainly the two controversial points regarding Conrad's linguistic background and the nature of the various influences on his prose. The fact that Conrad was a multi-lingual who spoke and wrote well in Polish, French and English has given rise to wild speculations as to which of the three formulative forces had the greatest impact on his style. In the attempt to answer this question, three different theories have been put forward over the past fifty years.

On the one hand, there are those who maintain that Conrad was much more influenced by French than by any other formulative element. The advocates of this theory capitalise on the fact that his prose is sprinkled here and there with French lexical items or grammatical mistakes that betray a literal translation from the French language. They hold the view that Conrad's indebtedness to his first foreign language is conscious where lexical French items are used, and unconscious where grammatical mistakes indicative of a French way of thinking occur.

On the other hand, there are those who would attribute Conrad's linguistic deviations to Polish influence in the belief that unconscious interference of one's native tongue in one's adopted language is something that cannot be helped. Here, also, the supporters of this theory do not find it hard to dig up enough evidence to bear out their contention. (1)

The trouble with these two approaches is that they tend in the final analysis to cancel each other out. A signal example of such inevitable confusion is the way Conrad uses the verb regret

(1) The question is discussed in detail in Chapter II supra.

discussed on page 61 of this study. Coleman sees in this a definite Polish influence, while a Frenchman would regard it as an unambiguous indebtedness to French. The problem is more striking on the literary level. So far the two theses done on the subject are representatives of the two extremes already attested with regard to foreign linguistic influences on Conrad's prose. For, while Houvouet, in his doctoral thesis, maintains that French is the dominant linguistic and literary formulative force of Conrad's "cosmopolitan background", (1) Andrzej Busza, the Pole, is of the opinion that Conrad's linguistic and literary background "remained a vital force throughout his life, and, in fact, exerted a considerable influence over his writing". (2) Unfortunately, Busza's main concern is with the literary aspect of Conrad's Polish background, the thing that leaves the question of the linguistic influence of Polish on his prose far from settled. Nor will that question be author^{it}atively resolved until the day comes when a Polish scholar with a good knowledge of both French and English undertakes the enormous task of underlining the degree of the novelist's indebtedness to each of the three elements making up his linguistic background.

The third group of critics, with whom the writer of this thesis associates himself, does not deny the influence of either Polish or French on Conrad's linguistic background; but neither do they over-emphasize their relative importance as the adherents of the other two theories tend to do. The view of this third group can be summed up in F.R. Leavis's well-known declaration about Conrad's being "significantly 'in' the tradition (English tradition) - in and of it." (3) It is this neglect of the influence of this

(1) Houvouet, 1971 : 22
 (2) Busza, 1964 : 11
 (3) Leavis, 1962 : 17

tradition on Conrad's prose that makes critics like Stewart indulge in those sweeping generalisations about the influence of French on the novelist's style. Stewart, for instance, attributes Conrad's excessive use of the verb arrest to the influence of its French equivalent arrêter, forgetting in the interim that true-born English novelists like Hardy had used the same verb in one or other of the senses given it by Conrad. (1) In The Woodlanders Hardy uses the verb more than ten times. The same applies to Ford's use of the adjective, sensible to, in much the same way as Conrad uses it in some of his works. (2) Still, no one, as far as I know, has ever accused either Hardy or Ford of directly borrowing from the French. Such charges are usually reserved for Conrad, whose foreignness renders him an appropriate target for such speculations.

Besides, Conrad's critics overlook the influence of the Bible on his English. Thus, to say that Conrad borrowed from the French the verb, restrain from, (3) would be misleading, for the verb is extensively used in the Bible in much the same sense as Conrad uses it. This Biblical strain in Conrad's prose was pointed out by J.A. Macy as far back as 1906. At that time Macy held the view that the King James Version of the Bible was the earliest source of Conrad's English. Macy also believed that,

Approaching our language as an adult foreigner, he (Conrad) goes deep to the derivative meanings of words, their powerful first intentions, which familiarity has disguised from us native-born to English. (4)

The same view was shared by Huneker who believed that "there is no mistaking the influence of the English Bible on ^{Conrad's} prose style."

(1) See p. 66. supra. See, also, Hardy, 1975: 275 & 346 (chs. 34 & 43).
 (2) See p. 73 supra.
 (3) See p. 69 supra.
 (4) Macy, 1906 : 701

He is saturated with its puissant elemental rhythms, and his prose has its surge and undertow". (1)

This, however, has not stopped eminent critics like Mr. Charles Jones from suggesting that Conrad is influenced in his use of some forms of reported speech, (le style indirect libre in particular) by Flaubert, despite the fact that Conrad himself strongly denied such allegations. (2) Such a suggestion overlooks the influence of English literature on Conrad, for before he started to write in English Conrad had read, among other things, the works of novelists like Jane Austen, Dickens, and Scott, whose works abound in the varieties of speech presentation that are more often than not attributed to Flaubert's influence in Conrad's case. Take, for instance, that passage from Dickens's Dombey and Son (3):

Presently he told her that the motion of the boat upon the stream was lulling him to rest. How green the banks were now, how bright the flowers growing on them, and how tall the rushes! Now the boat was out at sea, but gliding smoothly on. And now there was a shore before him. Who stood on the bank -- (p. 267)

Apart from the opening sentence, the rest of the passage takes the form of "le style indirect libre" of the type already identified as reported dialogue. It bears all the linguistic markers of this method of speech presentation discussed in the fifth chapter. On the other hand, Norman Page clearly shows "free indirect speech" to be a salient feature of Jane Austen's prose. (4) Are we then to assume that both Jane Austen and Dickens learned their art from Flaubert just as Conrad is said to have done? As such a hypothesis is absurd, the most reasonable

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- (1) Huneker, 1922 : 5
 (2) See p. 64 supra.
 (3) Dickens, 1911 : Vol. I
 (4) Page, 1972 : 130 - 40

conclusion is that Conrad was influenced by the stylistic techniques of the authors from whom he borrowed his medium of expression, English.

Much has been said about Conrad's unique power of word-painting. (1) What should be stressed is that other English novelists possessed this power with varying degrees of intensity long before Conrad came on the scene. Take the opening paragraph of chapter XXXI of Dombey and Son: (2)

Dawn, with its passionless blank face steals shivering to the church beneath which lies the dust of little Paul and his mother, and looks in at the windows. It is cold and dark. Night crouches yet, upon the pavement, and broods sombre and heavy, in nooks and corners of the building. The steeple-clock, perched up above the houses, emerging from beneath another of the countless ripples in the tide of time that regularly roll and break on the eternal shore, is greyly visible, like a stone beacon, recording how the sea flows on; but within doors, dawn, at first, can only peep at night, and see that it is there. (p. 2)

The majority of the verb phrases in the passage are used in their metaphorical sense, a practice highly reminiscent of the introductory passages in "Karain", "The Lagoon" and many other works by Conrad. Besides, it is commonplace knowledge that Conrad's description of London in The Secret Agent is similar in many ways to Dickens's description of the same city in Bleak House, while the sentimental strain in the speech of some of Conrad's characters (especially Lena's in Victory) betrays a marked Dickensian influence. On the other hand, Shakespeare's influence on Conrad cannot be minimized. Razumov's soliloquy with Haldin's ghost recalls Macbeth's soliloquy with that of Banquo.

Other possible influences from Richardson, Scott, Thackeray, Marryat and Stevenson, to name but a few of those whose works

(1) See p. 407 supra.

(2) Dickens, 1911 : Vol. II

Conrad is reported to have read, should not be overlooked if we are to grasp the full extent of Conrad's indebtedness to the English tradition. Such an ambitious endeavour, however, lies outside the scope of this thesis, and can only be carried out in a separate study which would have such an investigation as its sole purpose.

On the other hand, Conrad's indebtedness to travel literature has been put beyond the slightest shadow of a doubt by Professor Sherry in his classic books on Conrad's sources. In his books, Professor Sherry is mainly concerned with the prototypes of Conrad's characters in actual life, as well as with the sources of his plots. Like Richard Curle, Professor Sherry seems to believe that, "from the merest skeleton Conrad could construct an ^{elaborate} edifice". (1) Indeed, he manages to justify Crankshaw's claim that before Conrad's imagination "could begin to function it required a springboard of actual fact." (2)

Although Professor Sherry manages to prove that part of the speech of characters like Nostromo, Inspector Heat or Tom Lingard is rendered almost verbatim from the English sources Conrad consulted, thus highlighting one of the reasons behind the narrow range of direct speech in Conrad's works, he virtually tells us nothing about the origin of Conrad's stylistic strategy. My point will become clear when we contrast one of the passages quoted by Professor Sherry from Eastwick's Venezuela (regarded as the origin of the plot of Nostromo) with its counterpart in Conrad's novel.

The Sunday following, the scene was repeated, but on this occasion it was the acting president who gave the breakfast. At last the meal reached its termination, and the president,

(1) Curle, 1958 : 12
 (2) Crankshaw, 1963 : 98

filling his glass, looked round the table, and then at me, and said, 'Brindo al Senor qui nos ha llevado treinta mil libras.' - 'I drink to the gentleman who has brought us thirty thousand pounds.' (1)

And here is its counterpart from Nostramo:

'General Montero is going to speak', he (Sir John) whispered, and almost immediately added, in comic alarm, 'Heavens! he's going to propose my own health, I believe.'

General Montero had risen with a jingle of steel scabbard and a ripple of glitter on his gold-embroidered breast; a heavy sword-hilt appeared at his side above the edge of the table. In this gorgeous uniform, with his bull neck, his hooked nose flattened on the tip upon a blue-black, dyed moustache, he looked like a disguised and sinister vaquero. The drone of his voice had a strangely rasping, soulless ring. He floundered, lowering, through a few vague sentences; then suddenly raising his big head and his voice together, burst out harshly:

'The honour of the country is in the hands of the army. I assure you I shall be faithful to it.' He hesitated till his roaming eyes met Sir John's face, upon which he fixed a lurid sleepy glance; and the figure of the lately negotiated loan came into his mind. He lifted his glass. 'I drink to the health of the man who brings us a million and a half pounds.' (2)

The purpose of the two passages is the same: the toasting of an important visitor by a South American dignitary. They both end on the same word, pounds. Still, the two authors are worlds apart in their respective stylistic strategy. The second descriptive paragraph in the Conrad passage is completely absent from the Eastwick version. Despite the fact that the words uttered by the acting president in Eastwick's version are rendered almost verbatim by Conrad, the latter's notorious technique of manipulating the various types of modification is something quite his own, something that contrasts sharply with the bare and quasi-scientific narrative method followed by Eastwick. Hence it could

(1) Sherry, 1971 : 173

(2) Ibid., p. 174

be said that while Eastwick and other writers of the English tradition provided Conrad with the "skeleton" for most of his works, the fleshing out of the bones was of Conrad's own making.

All the way through, Conrad's style has been investigated against the linguistic background of his age. Comparisons with novelists like Henry James, Galsworthy, Bennett, Ford and Forster have shown the difference between them and Conrad to be a question of degree rather than kind. Thus, in his use of the various punctuation marks Conrad seems to be closer to James and Wells than to any of the other novelists. James's fondness for over-long sentences makes him use commas and semi-colons in much the same way as Conrad, while Wells's use of dashes and suspension points enhances the impression that, far from Conrad's being an innovator in the art of punctuation, he was merely overindulging in a practice that was part and parcel of the stylistic conventions of the age.

Conrad's use of the various varieties of reported speech is paralleled by a similar indulgence on the part of the other novelists in the same practice. Indeed, James, Bennett and Galsworthy use the various forms of reported speech in a way that matches, and sometimes exceeds, Conrad's use of it. This can be clearly shown from an investigation of James's The Ambassadors. Bennett's Hilda Lessways or Galsworthy's The Man of Property. The importance of such an investigation is that it discredits the assumption that Conrad was influenced in his use of reported speech by Flaubert's example, for unless we assume that all other novelists were equally influenced by Flaubert (which is hardly tenable under the circumstances) we have to admit that Conrad, in Leavis's own words, "drew from English literature what he needed, and learnt in that peculiar way of genius which is so different from imitation.

And for us, who have him as well as the others, there he is, unquestionably a constitutive part of the tradition, belonging in the full sense." (1)

Even Conrad's notorious manipulation of modifiers has proved to be a practice that some of his contemporaries occasionally indulged in. Galsworthy's "The Juryman" contains a great number of postposed modifiers. Still, Galsworthy has not come under attack for his excessive use of modifiers as has his naturalised English friend. Besides, Conrad's lavish use of the various types of modification is similar in many respects to James's. It is true that the latter does not favour postposition of adjectives, the fact remains, however, that his overlong sentences with their multitudes of relative clauses and other types of modifiers recalls Conrad's method of cramming as many details into the texture of his narrative as could be mustered.

On the other hand, Conrad's use of some of his connectives (especially his use of the and of transition which has been attributed to Flaubert's influence) is paralleled by James's, Ford's, Galsworthy's and Bennett's resort to the same technique. Although Flaubert's influence cannot be excluded in this particular respect, one has to remember that Conrad and his contemporaries had before them the undoubted authority of the Bible with its profuse use of and's, but's and other connectives.

Conrad and his contemporaries part ways, however, in so far as Conrad's adherence to the philosophy of impressionism necessitated an overdependence on his part on those stylistic conventions which his contemporary novelists moderately indulged in. It is true that James and Ford professed almost the same tenets, still, it is Conrad's stupendous power of evoking atmospheres and his continual preoccupation with the interplay of the various sense

(1) Leavis, 1962 : 18

mediums in the recording of his own, or his characters' impressions that set him apart from the rest of his contemporaries. His sheer power of word-painting contrasts sharply with Ford's sketchiness. It also distinguishes him from James's overpowering preoccupation with plumbing the depths of his characters' psychological or philosophical backgrounds. As for Bennett and Galsworthy, they seem to have been too much preoccupied with social problems to care too much for the evocation of atmospheres or exuberant descriptions, things that seem to have been indispensable for Conrad's themes and exotic settings. It is worth noting that, of all Conrad's novels, only two have England for their setting, The Secret Agent and Chance; while for the most part it is either in the Malay Archipelago or in far away places like Russia, Spain, France or somewhere on the high seas between East and West, that the action of most of Conrad's novels takes place.

Although the difference in degree between Conrad and his contemporaries highlights the common tradition to which they all belong, Conrad's uniqueness stems from the way he turns the acquired stylistic conventions into mannerisms which bear the distinctive stamp of his genius. Galsworthy might use postposed adjectives in some of his works, and Bennett's style might be interspersed with introductory and's and but's; the difference between them and Conrad is that with the latter the conscious effort behind the use of one or other of the stylistic features betrays a constant preoccupation with some artistic end which Conrad the stylist seeks to achieve.

We now come to the prime concern of this study: the descriptive investigation of some major features of Conrad's style.

Seven such features have been examined: punctuation, direct speech,

reported speech, adjectives and other modifiers, the lexis of uncertainty, connectives and the verb phrase. In the following pages, I shall sum up the conclusions reached with regard to each of the seven features.

Punctuation in Conrad has a double function: grammatical and rhetorical. Conrad's use of the full-stop and comma, for instance, is aimed at making it easy for the reader to understand the meaning of the novelist. When Conrad wrote that he wanted the reader to "hear, feel and see" his purpose in writing his novels, this elicited from one of his earliest critics the remark that before the reader could "hear, feel and see" he must first of all understand the novelist's meaning." (1) It was with this in mind that Conrad began in the second phase of his stylistic development to simplify his style. A rough count of the punctuation marks in the early and late novels has shown Conrad's sentences to be shorter and less complex in the late than they are in the early period.

On the other hand, Conrad's dashes and suspension points have proved to be a salient hallmark of the early style. These are mainly used for rhetorical purposes. They heighten the dramatic intensity of certain situations, especially where an emotional crisis is in question. Conrad also uses them by way of apology to the reader for the disconnected nature of some of his grammatical structures. More important is Conrad's use of these marks as an aid towards a more realistic rendering of some of his characters' speech. In all cases, Conrad's constant pre-occupation with punctuation puts into relief his keen desire to transcribe the nuances of everyday speech through this careful manipulation of these graphic symbols.

(1) Macy , 1906 : 699

Despite the constant accusations levelled against what G.B. Shaw, among others, called Conrad's literary style, the study of direct speech in Conrad has revealed that Conrad did, after all, try to represent in his works some of the varieties of English. The qualified success he met with here is largely due to his own precarious familiarity with regional and class dialects. Besides, most of his characters are foreigners to whom standard educated English is the natural means of expression. With English characters, regional and class dialects are reserved for minor figures like Chester in Lord Jim or Ricardo in Victory. Major characters like Jim and Marlow fluctuate between the most educated and the most colloquial of speech. Speaking in general terms, however, his major protagonists (perhaps with the exception of Marlow and Jim) seem to have a very limited repertoire of everyday language at their disposal. In most cases, as in the dialogues between Mrs. Travers and Tom Lingard in The Rescue, the characters' direct speech is strikingly too literary. More important still, most of his characters tend to react to situations of high emotional tension in much the same way. As such, most of them do not measure up to the demands of linguistic realism, while some may be tolerated on the grounds that their speech tallies with the novelist's fundamental intentions. The study has shown, however, that Conrad's critics are partially, if not totally, justified in their attacks on his direct speech.

Although Conrad could not catch the note of the uneducated, he succeeded in rendering the variety of interference on a large scale in his works. Although the main emphasis is laid on French, some other languages like German, Spanish, Malay and Arabic are represented on a very small scale in his novels. These, together with his limited range of regional and class dialects give his novels that touch of local colour essential for the reader's

sustained willing suspension of disbelief. In the majority of cases, these varieties of English and other languages help individuate and typify the characters concerned, in much the same way as they make of them the butt of the novelist's irony or even caricature.

The main reason behind Conrad's experimentation with the various forms of reported speech was his desire for impersonality. (1) It was that factor that prompted the creation, on the literary level, of narrators like Marlow, Dr. Kennedy and the old teacher of languages. It was also that same desire that made him use some seven forms of reported speech on the stylistic level. The two most prominent among these seven forms are narrated monologue and reported dialogue. The two forms thus distinguished are usually treated by stylisticians under the term "style indirect libre". They share the same linguistic features; still the former is concerned with the reporting of inner thoughts, while the latter is the free rendering of dialogue or conversation. It has been shown that Conrad's mastery of the technique enabled him to turn some forms of interior monologue into interior narrated dialogue between the character and his own self, i.e. some form of interior cross-examination.

Conrad uses the seven forms of reported speech for purposes of irony, authorial detachment, character-portrayal, brevity and stylistic variety. Conrad's irony at the Almayers, the Willemses and the Vorlocs of his novels derives much of its effectiveness from the fact that it is not the omniscient narrator that pokes fun at his characters, but rather the characters themselves whose reported utterances give them away.

(1) See p.197 supra.

On the other hand, the characters' reported speech is in some cases a more effective means of portraying them than their direct speech. It is mainly through reported speech that Almayer's imaginative nature, Willems's sense of self-importance and Nostromo's secret resentment at the way the Blancos treated him, are mainly depicted. By letting his characters speak for themselves, Conrad maintains his declared ambition of impartiality and detachment, while providing the reader with the objective rendering of multiple perspectives with which he can compare his own or other characters' views of the situation, all of which is in keeping with Conrad's impressionistic philosophy which is in the main one of detachment or aesthetic distance.

The two main forms of reported speech (narrated monologue and reported dialogue) are as densely used in the novels of the early period as in others like Under Western Eyes. And although they are sparsely used in the novels of the late period, they never disappear.

The linguistic analysis of Conrad's modifiers has shown them to be mainly made up of adjectives, the post-modifying prepositional phrase, the post-modifying participial clause, the heavily adjectived appositive phrase, the post-modifying relative clause, the supplementive adjectival clause. Of all these types of modification, the adjective has proved to be the most important from the stylistic standpoint for three main reasons. It is the type with the highest rate of frequency: It is the major constituent in almost all the other types of modification. Thirdly, it is the most controversial among Conrad's modifiers. Indeed, while critics condone all other types of modification, they have always found fault with the novelist's notorious yoking of adjectives.

Although Conrad uses adjectives in a variety of positions it

was his tendency to overindulge in the use of postposed adjectives that attracted the attention of his critics. The analysis has shown, however, that this manipulation of adjectives is not done haphazardly. In most cases the postposition of adjectives has proved to be the best means of distinguishing between the inherent characteristics of the described object (which is usually effected by attributive adjectives) and the temporary, non-inherent qualities which the postpositives throw into sharp relief. On the syntactic level, Conrad's adjectives have proved to be mainly attributive, predicative, postpositive and supplementive or circumstantial. On the semantic level, they all share in the three general characteristics of kind, nature and sphere of sensation. Conrad's tendency to use adjectives in the place of adverbials, through his characteristic method of using intransitive verbs as intensive verbs susceptible to being followed by modifiers, has also been noted.

An investigation of the stylistic significance of Conrad's notorious use of modifiers has shown it to be in harmony with his impressionism which aims at showing, rather than telling the reader what or how things happened. In most cases, the stringing of adjectives is effected in such a way as to underline the order in which impressions were received and recorded.

Although Conrad's modifiers have been proved to be of great help in achieving the novelist's ironic or symbolic purposes, it is as ^a means of evocation that they are mainly used. Conrad's descriptive tableaux of natural scenery and his remarkable portraits of the variegated host of characters in his works depend to a large extent on the way he uses his modifiers. The interplay of sensuous and spiritual perceptions, the fusion of concretions and abstractions are partly realised through this clever manipulation of modifiers.

The study has also shown that, although Conrad's characteristic adjectival insistence tends to be less obtrusive in the novels following Lord Jim, it never pales into sheer insignificance. On the contrary, the practice remains with him for the rest of his active career as a novelist, though with varying degrees of intensity.

Conrad's comparisons have been dealt with under the heading, "Lexis of Uncertainty". This is because I believe the main function of such comparisons in Conrad's case is the obfuscation rather than the clarification of the crucial issues under investigation in the various novels. Among Conrad's characters, Marlow is the one most given over to the use of such comparisons or analogies. Still, the images of graves, abyss, darkness, shades and ghosts conjured up by his analogies are part and parcel of a premeditated technique of increasing the mystery surrounding the characters or episodes described.

The main items of the lexis of uncertainty that Conrad uses are like in its syntactic function of adjective or adverbial, the two subordinators as if and as though, the adverbial as and the correlative as...as. On the semantic level, the analogies realised through the various items of the lexis of uncertainty have been classified according to source, theme, pattern, form and sphere of sensation.

The study has shown that in the early period, this feature of Conrad's style was not so much a means of evasion or uncertainty, but rather one of evocation. It was with the time Conrad began to be much more concerned with the investigation of the recondite phenomena of the world around him that his analogies came to be viewed as [^]means of uncertainty and mystification, i.e. in novels like The Nigger, Lord Jim, Nostromo, Under Western Eyes and Victory.

An investigation of Conrad's method of connecting his notorious sprawling sentences has yielded interesting results. It has been proved that Conrad uses asyndetic co-ordinators for purposes of connecting the triple clause or triple phrase sentence. Most of the clauses and phrases thus linked have proved to be cases of expanded or split apposition. More striking is Conrad's use of the explicit co-ordinator and as a means of adding the final touch to a descriptive tableau, of linking the final clause in a sentence to other clauses or phrases arranged in order of decreasing or rising importance, of indicating a change from the preterite to the participle, of highlighting the transition from the fictional past of the author to the fictional past or present of one of the characters and finally, of isolating one syntactic item for purposes of emphasis. The other connectives include concessive but, pro-forms, structural parallelism, ellipsis and repetition.

Here, again, an investigation of the stylistic significance of Conrad's connective practice has shown it to be part and parcel of his desire to make the reader feel, see and especially hear him. For Conrad, as many a critic has rightly noticed, was "too much in love with the sound of words and the rhythm of his sentences." (1) Conrad's method of producing carefully balanced phrases, his constant preoccupation with cadence, has been shown to be largely dependent on the conscious use of connectives.

Connectives have also been shown to play a part in giving Conrad's style that colloquial touch towards which he was always striving. (2) Indeed, it has transpired that Marlow's style would hardly be credible without his constant recurrence to the introductory and's and but's that bespatter his style. Connectives have

(1) See p.355 supra.

(2) See p.366 supra.

also been proved to play an important role in the linking together of the various constituents of Conrad's sentences, especially in the descriptive passages.

The investigation of Conrad's verbal practice has shown his marked preference for intransitive verbs over their transitive counterparts. It has also shown his fondness for verbs of state rather than of action. A striking feature of his practice is his use of would for purposes of typification; while, on the level of tense, Conrad's habit of interrupting the simple past with passages in the simple present, his use of the simple past or preterite for purposes of narration and the reporting of his characters' speech, have proved to be one of the invariables of his style throughout his active career as a novelist.

From the stylistic standpoint, Conrad's verbal practice has also proved to be in accord with the tenets of his impressionistic philosophy. His constant preoccupation with "atmosphere", the "actuality of the impression", and the "suggestiveness of precise expression" has proved to be the motive force behind this aspect of his stylistic strategy. The verbs thus become agents both of evocation and evasion. More important still is that this investigation of Conrad's verbal practice has shown him to be a novelist of descriptions rather than actions. Such a conclusion is further corroborated by the results of our statistical inquiry into Conrad's modifiers in relation to his contemporaries, which has shown him to be the most pictorial novelist of the group. (1) Far from detracting from the man's acknowledged worth, this conclusion seems to be in accord with his declared ambition of making the reader "hear, feel and see".

(1) See p. 243 supra.

The study makes no claim to comprehensiveness in as much as regards Conrad's imagery, which has been indirectly dealt with in Chapters VI, VII and IX. The point to be stressed in this respect is that, although his imagery is mainly metaphorical in nature, the metonymic strain in it shows up as much in the way Conrad transposes sensations from one sphere to another adjoining it, as in the fact that most of his characters relate their past experiences to those derived from their immediate neighbourhood. It is hoped that such an assumption, if taken into consideration in any subsequent detailed treatment of the subject, might yield interesting results.

CHRONOLOGY OF CONRAD'S WORKS

First date is of initial systematic composition;
second is of first appearance in final book form. (1)

- 1889 - 95 Almayer's Folly
- 1894 - 96 An Outcast of the Islands
- 1896 - 97 The Nigger of the "Narcissus"
- 1896 - 1920 The Rescue
- 1896 - 98 Tales of Unrest ("The Idiots", 1896; "An Outpost of Progress", 1896; "The Lagoon", 1896; "Karain", 1897; "The Return", 1897)
- 1898 - 1900 Lord Jim
- 1898 - 1902 Youth ("Youth", 1898; "Heart of Darkness", 1898?; "The End of the Tether", 1902)
- 1900 - 02-03 Typhoon (Typhoon, 1900; "Falk", 1901; "Amy Foster", 1901; "Tomorrow", 1902)
- 1901 The Inheritors (with Ford)
- 1903 Romance (with Ford)
- 1903 - 04 Nostramo
- 1904 - 06 The Mirror of the Sea
- 1905 - 08 A Set of Six ("The Brute", 1905; "Gaspar Ruiz", 1905; "An Anarchist", 1905; "The Informer", 1905; "The Duel", 1907; "Il Conde", 1907 - dates approximate)
- 1905 (or 6)-7 The Secret Agent
- 1907 - 11 Under Western Eyes
- 1908 - 12 A Personal Record
- 1909 - 12 Twixt Land and Sea ("The Secret Sharer", 1909; "A Smile of Fortune", 1910; "Freya of the Seven Isles", 1910)
- 1906 - 13 Chance
- 1910 - 15 Within the Tides ("The Partner", 1910; "Because of the Dollars", 1912; "The Inn of the Two Witches", 1912; "The Planter of Malta", 1913 - dates probable)
- 1911(or 12)-15 Victory
- 1914 - 17 The Shadow Line
- 1917 - 19 The Arrow of Gold
- 21 Notes on Life and Letters (Reprints)
- 1921 - 23 The Rover
- 24 The Nature of a Crime (with Ford)
- 1920 - 25 Suspense (unfinished)
- 1911 - 25 Tales of Hearsay ("Prince Roman", 1911; "The Warrior's Soul", 1916; "The Tale", 1916; "The Black Mate", 1922 - approximate dates. Cf. 1886)
- 1926 Last Essays (Reprints)

(1) Cf. Wright, 1966 : 213 - 4.

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