Hearts of Darkness: Melville and Conrad in the Space of World Culture

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**Melville and/or Conrad: Philosophers of the Sea**

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MELVILLE / CONRAD: LITERARY / HISTORICAL / RHETORICAL PERSPECTIVES
Lindsey Cordery – “My Largest Canvass”: South American Views

Abstract: Melville and Conrad depicted a Latin American south in “Benito Cereno” and Nostromo, respectively, from their Northern Hemisphere centres and specific textual worlds. In “Benito Cereno” Melville interrogates South America from an Inquiries Court in Lima when judgement is passed on mutineers, and in Nostromo Conrad creates a fictional Republic of Costaguana set in a South American territory, both constituting inviting scenarios for 21st century explorations of tensions and modulations, and/or conversations, between southern and northern worlds.

How are these tensions, modulations, conversations, expressed within the narratives? How are exploration, depiction, carried out? What is their significance, how representative are they? Are they relevant in narrative, cultural and literary terms?

Various Latin American readers have engaged with these works critically as well as creatively, enriching reception studies, interrogating or expanding 19th, 20th and 21st century Northern views of South America, to establish fertile textual crossings.

In order to explore some of the above I take as my starting point the destabilization Conrad carries out in connection with the binary pair “fact/fiction” in Nostromo through successive, sometimes contradictory, partial, fragmentary stories and histories which operate in contrast with the all-encompassing, monologic, hegemonic model of the “Official History” (this title carrying particular resonances in post-dictatorship Latinamerican countries). The destabilizing effect achieved by Conrad is underscored when, from his “Author`s Note”, appended to the novel several years later, he appears to deliberately erase boundaries between what is factual and true and what is fictitious. “Joseph Conrad” as a historical character in one of García Marquez`s novels and in a story by Borges would further complexify the issue.

I then move on to describe a specific locus, an encounter, a cross roads at which “Benito Cereno” and Nostromo constituted the meeting point for academics from both Americas who met at Montevideo, Uruguay to discuss topics related to both writers and their specific South American works. The conference “Benito Cereno” and Nostromo: Imageries and Americas, took place on 4-6 July 2005 at the National Visual Arts Museum.

The images of South America constructed by Europeans first and latterly U.S. Americans are based on the biased gaze first manifested by Christopher Columbus, which in turn was informed by Biblical and other sources, and I take this as the start for my second point, which would be to introduce the Southern conference in the North.

Both Melville and Conrad register in their narratives the complexity of their respective historic moments, and several of the papers presented at the conference re-read these from newly informed perspectives, linking them to contemporary Latinamerican situations. While “Benito Cereno” and Nostromo were undoubtedly the key texts, other similarly located texts such as “Gaspar Ruiz” and The Enchanted Isles but also “The Town-Ho’s Story” were also considered. I shall present a
summary of the key points which were addressed in an attempt to continue a rich and fertile south/north dialogue around these two great writers.

**Bio:** Lindsey Cordery Assistant Professor, Modern Literatures Department, Area: English Literatures Facultad de Humanidades Universidad de la Republica Montevideo, Uruguay. Since 2003 I have been involved in the organization of the Montevideana Conferences which seek to bring together local and international academics to discuss, from a Latin American perspective, the works of Northern writers who in a variety of ways have interacted with Latin American readers. In 2003 the discussion was based around Dickens; 2004, William Henry Hudson; 2005 Conrad and Melville; 2006 Joyce and Proust, and 2007 will be Faulkner. Following the conferences, a volume of selected presentations is published. My main field of interest is postcolonial studies, positioning my readings from a third world, Latin American perspective.

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**Steve Andrews – Mastery and the Hermeneutics of Suspicion: Spanish Prisoners, Nigerian Scams, and Melville’s *Benito Cereno***

**Abstract:** What is exposed in the chiasmic relationship between fictions of ownership and the ownership of fiction? When applied to Melville’s *Benito Cereno*, the exposure is tantamount to the revelation of a series of scams or confidence games involving several different kinds of ownership, all revolving around the issue of plagiarism. In addition to the modern and more common meaning of literary theft, “plagiarism” once also meant the kidnapping of persons and slaves, all of which converge when we hold Melville to account for kidnapping Delano’s narrative. Every scam needs its mark, however, or, as Paul Ricouer puts it in establishing Marx, Freud and Nietzsche as his “masters of suspicion,” “guile will be met by double guile” (emphasis in original) as the “man of suspicion carries out in reverse the work of falsification of the man of guile.” Within the context that Melville sets up in *Benito Cereno*, masters of suspicion—Babo, Delano, Melville—emerge as men of guile. With that in mind, I explore the ways in which Melville sets up the con—in this case, the “Spanish prisoner”—by positing a confiding narrator who imposes and withholds key elements of the narrative so as to “bait” the reader into certain assumptions about commodification, impersonation, and copyright that mask as much as they unmask. I then conclude with a discussion of the Nigerian 419 scams (named for the section of the Nigerian Criminal Code “against impersonating officials for financial gain” [Glickman]) that constitute what I take to be a return of the repressed (if not of Babo), a virtual reenactment of the ongoing trauma of transatlantic exploitation.

**Bio:** Steve Andrews, Associate Professor, Grinnell College, teaches mostly 18th and 19th century American Literature, and has work forthcoming on W.E.B. Du Bois and William James; wilderness and civil rights; and baseball, Romance, and Reconstruction.
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Nathan Adams – Separated by Common Experience

Abstract: As sailors, Herman Melville and Joseph Conrad experienced very different circumstances. Melville’s time aboard a packet ship, a naval vessel, and a whaling ship provided him with cultural, ethnic, and racial diversity. Conrad’s less diverse time aboard British and European merchant vessels limited his ability to see different types of maritime culture but enabled him to see a greater depth of maritime trade. These two very different maritime careers were part of the foundations of two very different maritime authors. Although both Melville and Conrad can be tied together as white authors that sailed aboard square-riggers and then utilized their work to explore human nature, the truth is much deeper. For Melville, the diversity of a whaling ship enabled him to contemplate the social structure that could enable a monomaniacal captain or a South Seas beachcomber. Conrad’s depth of experience as an ordinary sailor and officer aboard European merchant vessels allowed him a deeper understanding of leadership in both calm and storm. For Melville and Conrad, the disparities of their time at sea would likely be far more prominent than their commonality. However, time makes these distinctions appear to be only subtle. While their countries of origin and original language might be apparent, the very dissimilar maritime experiences can become lost as our memory of the era of tall ships blurs. This paper will explore how the very different maritime worlds of Melville and Conrad shaped their writing subjects and styles. It will compare the sailing careers of both writers and look at how these experiences came through in their writing.

Bio: Nathan Adams is a student in the Maritime Studies program at The University of Connecticut concentrating in literature and history. He works at Mystic Seaport, the Museum of America and the Sea, and has experience sailing aboard many vessels including square-riggers. He has spoken and been involved in maritime literature and history conferences in the United States and around the world.

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Douglas Robillard – Melville, George Crabbe, and the Natural Death of Loved

Abstract: From the books owned by Melville, we have been able to learn much about his sources, the development of his ideas, and, to some extent, his life. Since books, sold by his wife, still turn up regularly, we continue to add to our stock of knowledge.
In 2004, a two-volume set of *George Crabbe’s Tales of the Hall* (1819) marked and signed by Melville, came to light. The Crabbe volumes were acquired by the Houghton Library at Harvard University toward the end of 2005. A study of Melville's markings and marginalia in the books, which he apparently bought in 1871, tell us something about his work in poetry and, in a more subtle way, about his life and feelings at a later date.

There are more than 40 marked passages in the two volumes of *Crabbe*. Since Melville was working, in the early 1870's, on *Clarel*, we might expect that he did take some hints from his reading. The predominant verse form that Crabbe used here and elsewhere is that of rhymed iambic pentameter couplets with a number of rhymed triplets. In *Clarel*, Melville depended upon rhymed octosyllabic couplets; but the movement of Crabbe's verse, the handling of narrative, and the poetic diction of the older poet offered useful guides to his own poetic practice.

However, an important biographical hint is exhibited by the Crabbe volumes. Melville apparently did not finish reading *Crabbe’s Tales*. Markings carry on through the first volume but only through a few more than one hundred of the 350 or more pages of the second volume. In addition, markings in the second volume indicate that Melville reread this marked portion of *Crabbe* in 1880. On the title page, he subtracted 1819, the year of his birth, from 1880, indicating his age at the time of this second reading, and added a striking annotation that says something of his own life during that late and difficult year. We are thus in a position to say something about both professional and biographical matters learned from his reading of another poet’s verse.

**Bio:** Douglas Robillard received his B.S. and A.M. from Columbia and his Ph.D. from Wayne State University, and is Professor Emeritus at the University of New Haven in Connecticut. He is the author of Melville and the Visual Arts (1997), and has edited *The Poems of Herman Melville, Jack London & Anna Strunsky, The Kempton Wace Letters*, and *The American Supernatural Tale*.

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**Marek Paryż**  
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**Marek Paryż – Recasting *Moby Dick*: The Case of Sam Peckinpah’s Western Movie *Major Dundee***

**Abstract:** The papers offers an intertextual analysis of Sam Peckinpah’s Western movie *Major Dundee* in the light of Herman Melville’s *Moby Dick*. The primary focus is the configuration of characters in the film which is reminiscent of the one to be found in Melville’s classic work; the most important parallels involve major Dundee and captain Ahab, on the one hand, and the young narrators, on the other (in the film, the events are presented from the point of view of a young cavalry soldier). Another significant correspondence concerns the treatment of the fundamental opposition of wilderness versus civilization. Dundee and Ahab are very problematic representatives of the latter, both motivated by obsessions and easily falling into excess. Finally, in both the novel and the film, the focus on the two protagonists helps to highlight the question of the shaping of power relations.
Bio: Marek Paryż is an assistant professor of American literature in the Institute of English Studies, University of Warsaw. He is the author of Social and Cultural Aspects of Madness in American Literature 1798-1860 (Warsaw 2001) and co-editor (with Agata Preis-Smith) of The Poetics of America: Explorations in the Literature and Culture of the United States (Warsaw 2004). He has published academic articles on nineteenth-century American literature, American film, and postcolonial writing. He is currently working on a book project entitled "Figures of Dependence, Figures of Expansion: Representations of Postcolonial and Imperial Experience in the Discourse of American Transcendentalism".

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Jan Keessen – Barbaric ‘Virtu’ and Ornaments of Lust: The Etymological Skull & Cross Bones of Irony

Abstract: Words tell stories but there are also stories in words. Hence if we take a look into some of the etymology that arises from the “Bower in the Arsacides” chapter in Moby-Dick and compare it to the passage in “The Heart of Darkness” that depicts another kind of jungle retreat, we can gain insights into specifically how these two authors approach cultural artifacts, artifacts that make their geographical space so arresting. For Melville, it’s what he calls virtu, “a love of or taste for fine art objects.” For Conrad, it’s what he calls ornaments, “something decorative.” What becomes compelling by way of comparing the two is that both of these etymologies ultimately arise from individual sources that can be defined as “something of worth.” Moreover, if we understand the etymology at work in these words and other telling words in both scenes, we can understand something about how irony works when we least expect it and how words with their historical underpinnings contribute to the enigma, the real magic, that makes these works part of what we call great literature.

Bio: I graduated from the University of Chicago with an M.A. and a Ph.D. in English. Since then I’ve been at Augustana College teaching courses mostly on American literature and writing with faculty and friends I’ve grown to love. Along with that, since 1999, I’ve also been involved in our college’s arm of National Public Radio in a program called “About Books,” aired biweekly on WVIK/NPR (90.3FM). My end of it is writing and narrating informal essays on the history of words for a gig called “A Word with Jan Keessen.” And then I rewrite those scripts for a local newspaper column. I’ve been using this research in class and more recently for papers at conferences.
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Alex Calder – The Mutineer and the Gun-runner: Wrecking and Reputation in Omoo and The Mirror of the Sea

Abstract: The deliberate wrecking of a ship, confesses Conrad, “lies upon my soul with the dread and horror of a homicide, with the unforgettable remorse of having crushed a living, faithful heart at a single blow” (171). In an ostensibly autobiographical passage in The Mirror of the Sea, he describes the last days of the Tremolino, a lateen-rigged balancelle engaged in running guns into Catalonia. The venture has been betrayed by a crew-member. Rather than face capture by the pursuing coastguard, Conrad takes the tiller and runs the ship onto rocks; the vessel sinks without a trace and the crew row ashore. The actual incident is considerably embellished in this telling and resonates with themes—betrayal, shame, honour, extremism—that engage the novelist throughout his career. Much the same might be said of the story of the Julia in Melville’s second novel, Omoo. The mutinous crew wants an end to an unlucky cruise but when one of their number, the Maori harpooner Bembo Byrne, attempts to run the whaler on to a Tahitian reef he is almost lynched by shipmates who suddenly discover an unexpected loyalty to their ship. The Tremolino episode brings out an odd feature of the Julia’s near miss: in light conditions grounding a ship on a coral reef would be an easy route ashore. Indeed, the excoriated Bembo seems to have been about to accomplish what the mutineers wanted all along: an end to their unsuccessful cruise and a pleasant sojourn at Papeete.

The attempted stranding in Omoo is entirely fictional, but parallels from the Tremolino story help us understand why Melville invented this episode in the first place, and why the actions and character of the Maori harpooner are presented so negatively. The parallels are various. In both stories, I am interested in the way the author constructs, and seems to identify with, a charismatic but somewhat disreputable elder figure: Dominic Cervoni in The Mirror of the Sea and Dr Long Ghost in Omoo. Both stories also give us characters notable for mindless malevolence: Cesar and Bembo. I argue that the presentation of the latter characters involves a form of scapegoating which is partly homosocial and partly a means by which Melville and Conrad secure their reputations against threats from their own pasts: their involvement in the romantic but shady activities of mutiny and gun-running.

Bio: I am a member of the Department of English at the University of Auckland, New Zealand. My research focuses on literature and the processes of cultural contact and settlement, particularly with regard to writings from New Zealand, the Pacific, and
the United States. I have written on Melville’s Pacific writings for *Representations* and for the new Blackwell *Companion to Melville* edited by Wyn Kelly.

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**Scott Norsworthy – Identity Cruxes: Melville and Conrad as Plagiarists**

Abstract: Melville and Conrad plundered the writings of others so well that the Academy forgives them for habitually doing what is commonly presented—in college writing assignments on Melville and Conrad, for instance—as a moral and legal crime. As Marilyn Randall affirms in *Pragmatic Plagiarism* (Toronto, 2001), the term *literary plagiarism* has been widely understood as “a kind of pleasing oxymoron expressing the transformative power of aesthetic genius” (6). Nevertheless, neither Melville nor Conrad foreknew that the critics would eventually pardon the great literary pirates. Seeking acceptance as truth-tellers while stealing from others, both writers were bound to disguise their thefts. This paper focuses on issues of plagiarism, identity, and authorship in Melville’s serialized novel *Israel Potter* (1854–5) and one of Conrad’s early short fictions, “An Outpost of Progress” (1896). In each narrative, the sign of the cross, isolated from a traditional Christian context, emerges as a displaced marker of stolen identity, and an image of self-annihilation in the words and texts of other writers.

Identities of author and subject intersect in Melville’s long-planned rip-off of a pamphlet autobiography entitled the *Life and Remarkable Adventures of Israel R. Potter* (Providence, 1824). In the preface to his remake, Melville compares his act of unauthorized ghostwriting to the restoration “of a dilapidated old tombstone.” In the main narrative, a cross formed by battle scars on Israel Potter’s chest embodies the essential crux of his ambiguous identity. Confused and figurally crucified identities similarly dominate Conrad’s “An Outpost of Progress.” Parallel to Melville’s tombstone image is the grave of the first station manager, a frustrated artist. The cross over his tomb (leaning, like the slanted cross in Melville’s *Clarel*) may be read as a figure of the author as plagiarist. The prototypes of Conrad’s bumbling traders Kayerts and Carlier are, as Wallace Watson and Yves Hervouet have shown, the eponymous heroes of Flaubert’s *Bouvard et Pécuchet* (1881). Conrad’s lead characters become interchangeable with Flaubert’s and with each other. Each hangs, metaphorically and literally, on the cross of an absent originator.

The mechanics of plagiarism expose distinctively different agendas and authorial identities. Whereas Melville romances history, Conrad historicizes romance. Their personal myths tended toward different ends: Melville disclaiming originality and deferring authorship to fictive personae; Conrad, in late Author’s Notes, asserting doubtful paternity claims over characters borrowed of French originals. In another light, however, their artistic agendas do not look so different. Each would be believed. Eternally vexed by the problem of veracity, Melville and Conrad are still looking for friendly acceptance by one ideal reader.

**Bio:** In 1998, I earned a Ph.D from the University of Louisiana-Lafayette. Then I moved to Minnesota and met the redoubtable Ena Easter. In 2002, Ena and I co-
founded Eastworth, Inc. as a licensed provider of home and community-based services for people with developmental disabilities. My academic interests include Old and Middle English literature as well as Melville and nineteenth-century studies. As an independent scholar, I aspire to conduct original research in the spirit of the Wild Tchoupitoulas.

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**John T. Matteson – “Unfathomable Cravings” and “Enchanted Heysts”: The Ironic Rescuer in *Pierre* and *Victory***

**Abstract:** Melville’s *Pierre* and Conrad’s *Victory* are facially similar in that each tells of a man who, as a result of familial influences, becomes removed from the cares and events that preoccupy the ordinary mind, but who explosively renounces his neutrality and re-enters the world in order to rescue an irresistibly attractive young woman. In these works Melville and Conrad both throw off their habitual interest in essentially masculine microcosms to deal with damsels in distress.  

*Pierre* and *Victory* are also comparable in that each was a self-conscious attempt by an innately philosophical writer to produce a popular novel. Nevertheless, neither author is finally content to fashion a conventional rescue plot. In each instance, the reprieved woman dies anyway, and the putative hero dies by his own hand. I shall argue that the troubled outcomes of both novels arise from deeper sources than a mere resistance to plot clichés. My paper will explore the reasons why both Melville and Conrad found popular melodrama an uncomfortable genre in which to work. I will also discuss why Conrad was eventually able to turn his project into a commercial success, whereas Melville’s effort resulted in the greatest disaster of his literary career.

In my treatment of these questions, a wide variety of issues will intersect. I will illustrate how the extraordinary ironic tensions in both works derive from analogous roots. Both *Pierre* and *Victory* abound with allusions to *Hamlet*, and, as in Shakespeare’s play, the central characters can achieve heroism only by metaphorically wrestling with the ghosts of their fathers. Both Pierre Glendinning and Axel Heyst discover that they can vindicate morality only through symbolic parricide. The impossibility of this paradox forces each to confront the problem of attempting to behave heroically in an absurd universe that renders human effort contingent and to some extent futile.

In addition, both *Pierre* and *Victory* may be read through the analytical lens provided by Nietzsche’s *The Birth of Tragedy*. Both Pierre and Axel are seduced into heroism by a fatally attractive woman, and each seduction takes place through music: Isabel sings a song of mystery to her guitar, and Lena belongs to an all-girl orchestra. In both cases, the hero is a detached, Apollonian figure, simultaneously brought to a higher state of awareness and condemned to death by the charms of Dionysus. In
each work, the author suggests the fatal consequences of involving oneself in the world, while at the same time asserting that a well-lived life demands involvement, even at the price of immolation.


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**John D. Schwetman – Ships Passing: Encounters with Strangers in Melville’s “Benito Cereno” and Conrad’s “The Secret Sharer”**

**Abstract:** The background of the typical maritime narrative provides a classic trope of clarity and precision: a vast, blank ocean surface separates the ships floating across it. Crew members of various ships must identify unambiguously with a particular vessel and with a particular rank within their crews. As Herman Melville argues in *Billy Budd, Sailor*, the maritime setting offers a striking counterpoint to the muddled social networks of land-based, urban communities. Consequently, life at sea serves as a workable theoretical model upon which to test the cohesiveness of communities and various patterns of community affiliation.

Herman Melville’s “Benito Cereno” and Joseph Conrad’s “The Secret Sharer” both test their communities through encounters between unfamiliar ships. In “Benito Cereno,” the encounter between ships passing reveals the fragility of the main character Amasa Delano’s own constitutive narratives. After crossing from his sealer to the distressed slave ship *San Dominick*, Delano unwittingly falls into a larger conflict between the community of slaves and the community of slave-holders. Throughout the first part of the story, the ideology of white racial superiority so completely captivates Delano that he cannot perceive the clues that the slaves have successfully taken over the *San Dominick*. Delano contends with strangeness by forcing it into the resilient structures of his preconceptions and nearly loses his life in the process. Conrad’s much briefer and more cerebral story “The Secret Sharer” tells the story of a young captain who must grapple with self-doubts following his sudden emergence as the leader of his crew. On his first voyage as captain, he sees a second ship whose presence forces him to confront the strangeness of own command. Whereas Melville writes about alienation from the Other, Conrad writes about alienation from the Self. The protagonist’s double, who has fled this other ship, serves as an effigy of the captain’s anxieties. No one other than the captain knows of his existence before he sneaks away from the vessel. By harboring this fugitive, the captain obtains authority over the ship at the expense of his authority as a witness to the events in this story.
In both of these narratives, encounters between strange ships passing introduce ambiguity to what initially appears to be a pure model of community. Upon closer examination, allegiances on Melville’s *San Dominick* and within the heart of Conrad’s young sea captain deviate significantly from this ideal. Melville and Conrad both presciently recognize that modernity blurs traditional community distinctions and plunges everyone into a world of encounters with strangers. In their tales, ocean-going vessels literally usher in this new domain of incongruity while figuratively modeling its resulting complications.

**Bio:** I am an Assistant Professor of English at the University of Minnesota Duluth. My article “Romanticism and the Cortical Stack: Cyberpunk Subjectivity in the Takeshi Kovacs Novels of Richard K. Morgan” will appear in the Fall 2006 issue of *Pacific Coast Philology*. I am currently revising a manuscript for a book on twentieth-century American road novels.

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**Dennis Berthold – Narcissus/Narcissus: Men, Myths, and Ships in Melville and Conrad**

**Abstract:**

"Ships [...] ships are all right. It is the men in them."  
*Singleton, "The Nigger of the Narcissus"

"And still deeper the meaning of that story of Narcissus [...] and this is the key to it all" (6: 5). So Ishmael introduces his tale of Moby Dick and the mad captain who pursues him, seeking the "ungraspable phantom of life" in his own image: "the firm tower, that is Ahab; the volcano, that is Ahab; the courageous, the undaunted, and victorious fowl, that, too is Ahab; all are Ahab" he says, gazing egotistically at the doubloon he himself has nailed to the mast (6: 431). Is the great myth of death by self-absorption also a key to Conrad's "The Nigger of the 'Narcissus," a tale not of seeking white whales but of seeking nautical records, self-aggrandizement, camaraderie in a selfish world, and physical and spiritual salvation itself? Gerard Sweeney pointed out long ago that Ahab is Melville's chief narcissistic character (although Pierre might run a close second), and that the myth is as central to *Moby-Dick* as is the myth of Prometheus (*Melville's Use of Classical Mythology*, 1975). As might be expected of a mid-nineteenth-century American autodidact, individualism is the dangerous reflection that endangers the true selfhood in league with others that Ishmael discovers in chapters like "A Squeeze of the Hand" and "The Monkey-Rope." In contrast, for European Conrad, a ship captain himself, narcissism is located mostly in the crew, as black James Wait mirrors their egotism, selfishness, fear, and degradation. Yet the ship too is *Narcissus*, as is the story, and both mirror Captain Allistoun's ambition, pride, and disdain for the very crew to which he owes his livelihood, not to say his life. Conrad understands the self-reflexive power of this
Ovidian myth that escapes Melville, who exempts the crew and ship from the egotism that smothers everyone in Conrad's story and almost leads them to a doom as fatal as the Pequod's. Yet they are saved, and narcissistic Ahab's crew is not. My paper will examine how each author exploits this well-known allusion in multiple ways to reveal differing attitudes toward their craft of fiction and the seagoing crafts and crews that bear their tales.

Bio: I am a Professor of English at Texas A&M University and teach nineteenth-century American literature and literature of the sea. I have won two Distinguished Achievement Awards in Teaching and several NEH fellowships. My scholarship emphasizes the cultural politics of iconography, landscape, and the visual arts, and includes books on Hawthorne, Whitman, and a new edition of Joshua Slocum's Sailing Alone Around the World. My work on Melville has appeared in American Literary History, American Literature, and Nineteenth-Century Literature, as well as in Christopher Sten's Savage Eye: Melville and the Visual Arts (1991). My monograph, American Risorgimento: Herman Melville and the Cultural Politics of Italy, is currently under submission.

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Lyon Evans — “The Destructive Element”: Schopenhauerian Pessimism in Conrad and Late Melville

Abstract: In rereading Conrad's major works after many years—and reading extensively in his biography for the first time—I was struck by notable similarities between the conference's two featured authors. Both Conrad and Melville were outsiders, gripped by a sense of dispossession, from childhood on: Conrad because of being a Pole (when there was no independent Poland) exiled to Russia, with his parents, who died when he was still a boy; Melville because of the early bankruptcy and premature death of his wealthy father, leaving him, still a boy, an exile from the life of privilege to which he had become accustomed. Both became dependent on the charity and goodwill (problematic in Melville's case) of relatives; both escaped to the sea as teenagers; both were carried by ship to distant lands, experienced first-hand the impact of European colonialism on indigenous peoples, were deeply critical of what they saw. Both were wide and deep readers (of the places and peoples they encountered; of the major intellectual currents of their times); both were suspicious of or hostile to political radicalism. Both occasionally expressed generous sympathy for the subjugated “people of color”; yet both (Conrad more than Melville—but Melville too, e.g., in his depiction of Fedallah in Moby Dick) were typical Westerners of their times in exoticizing or demonizing the inscrutable Other. Both of these men also were markedly misogynistic in their writings, and they explore, however covertly, the forbidden territory of homoeroticism, so much so that one is compelled to speculate as to whether the two men may have been latently (or perhaps self-consciously) gay.

Despite these notable similarities, I am also struck by the profound differences between the two men, or, rather, between the two artists, especially when comparing
Melville’s greatest work, Moby Dick, with the comparable masterpieces of Conrad (e.g., Lord Jim, Nostromo). Born in 1819, Melville came of age during the high tide of romanticism in antebellum America, and his early writings—from Typee through Moby Dick—express an exuberance and bravado markedly absent from the dour, pessimistic Conrad, nearly two generations younger (he was born in 1857), who came of age in the era of realism and naturalism, of Darwin and Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, who, in his Zarathustra proclaimed the death of God.

To be sure, even in the early Melville, there are assertions of metaphysical uncertainty and skepticism (e.g., in Ahab’s admission, “Sometimes I think there’s naught beyond” in “The Quarter-Deck”); and in the six years after the devastating failure of Moby Dick, the darkness hinted at by Ahab invades and overwhelms such corrosive works as Pierre, Benito Cereno and The Confidence Man. But the pessimism (perhaps verging on nihilism) elaborated in these texts are atypical of their time and, while prophetic of later intellectual developments, they seem to me to be rooted in Melville’s personal situation, his existential anguish, rather than in his response to the ante-bellum zeitgeist.

But Melville’s career as an author did not end with The Confidence Man (1857). Although forced to take a job as a lowly customs inspector and all but abandoning his professional writing career, Melville kept reading, writing, and responding to the central intellectual and cultural currents of his day. By the time of Clarel (1876) — a central text of the post-Darwinian crisis of faith— John Marr (1888), Timoleon (1891), and the late, posthumously published Weeds and Wildings and Billy Budd, Melville is inhabiting the same intellectual and spiritual terrain as Conrad; in the late works, the two men are virtually contemporaries. (Conrad’s first novel, Almayer’s Folly, was begun in 1889 and completed only four years after Melville’s death.)

The affinities between Conrad and late Melville are markedly personal. In his old age, Melville, long-forgotten by the New York literary community that once lionized “the author of Typee, Omoo etc.,” has become a Conradian isolate; such solitary, lonely fictional characters as John Marr, Bridegroom Dick, Daniel Orm, Timoleon, Urania, and the Rip of “Rip Van Winkle’s Lilac,” autobiographically resonant, could have been conceived by Conrad himself (Marlow might have crossed paths with them in his travels to the Congo or the Malay archipelago). (Contrary to widespread belief—and as I will demonstrate in a forthcoming article on Weeds and Wildings in Leviathan—Melville in his old age was not reconciled with or devoted to his long-suffering wife, but was estranged from and covertly contemptuous of her.)

It is, however, the intellectual affinities between the two men in Melville’s old age, which coincided with Conrad’s maturity, that are most noteworthy. That Conrad was influenced by Schopenhauer’s pessimism has been long established by Conrad scholars. The most explicit elaboration of this influence appears in Victory (1915): Heyst’s father, a philosopher and prolific author, might have been Schopenhauer himself in espousing the view that the will is inherently destructive, that “all action is bound to be harmful,” and that the only valid response to the inevitable “evil in the world” is stoical withdrawal and Buddhist detachment. (Schopenhauer was avowedly influenced by Buddhism and Hinduism.) It is true than in Lord Jim (1900), the sage-like Stein, tacitly acknowledging this bleak Schopenhauerian metaphysic, repudiates it in urging Jim (via the mediation of Marlow): “to the destructive element immerse yourself... In the destructive element immerse.” (By immersion in the “destructive element,” Stein means engagement in the “fallen” world via commitment and idealism.) But Jim, like most (perhaps all) other romantic strivers in Conrad, is destroyed by his immersion in the destructive element. In Victory, Heyst may have been emotionally and spiritually crippled by his embrace of his father’s Schopenhauerian stoicism and pessimism, but it is his immersion in the destructive
element of love and concern for others (through his involvement with Lena) that destroys him.

Melville, too, in his old age, was reading Schopenhauer (his well-marked copies of Schopenhauer’s works in English translation have been preserved); and the impact of Schopenhauer’s pessimistic metaphysics on his late works and world-view—in the Buddhist-tinged fragment, “Rammon,” in *Weeds and Wildings*, *Timoleon*, *Billy Budd* and other works—is notable. While Melville in his youthful writings (from *Typee* through *Moby Dick*) may have immersed himself in Stein’s “destructive element”—and lived to tell about it—(Tommo, Redburn, White-Jacket and, most famously, Ishmael, are metaphysical as well as literal survivors), in the years of his old age, Melville, like Heyst’s father, has become a wintry follower of Schopenhauer. Melville’s pessimistic, stoical renunciation and withdrawal—from other human beings, from the strivings of the will, from the consolations of religion in the face of mortality and finitude—and his escape into a solitary, hermetic world of devotion to Art itself—link the late Melville (and his late works) to the aesthetic, intellectual and spiritual world (and aesthetic practices) of Conrad, Schopenhauer, and *fin-de-siècle* pessimism.

My proposed paper will elaborate and support this thesis.

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**Abstract:** Although Herman Melville and Joseph Conrad are generally regarded as sea writers, both wrote numerous works concerned primarily with events on land. Critical approaches to both writers, however, display a tendency to prioritize one set of environments. A result of such approaches is to overlook the manner in which Melville and Conrad explore the relationship between land and sea. This paper argues that one way to analyze how both writers examine that relationship is by locating their works within the space of the modern world-system. Immanuel Wallerstein defines the modern world-system as the capitalist world-economy that he views as the only historical system on the globe—a role it has occupied since the sixteenth century. Thus, the modern world-system provides a global frame within which to position Melville and Conrad. Works such as Melville’s *Mardi* (1849) and Conrad’s *Nostromo* (1904) provide a unique approach to the world-system by employing a distinct process of spatial exploration as a means of examining geographic areas of the world that are at least partially imaginary. In the end, both Melville and Conrad are not merely sea writers, but rather world-system writers.
Melville’s global perspective emerges in *Mardi* as the characters explore the island group of the novel’s title, a process that functions as a means of charting the world-system itself. For Melville, the trip around the various islands—each of which is utterly unique—provides a microcosm of exploring the world. During one moment of departure, the narrator indicates the novel’s global implications by proclaiming that he and his companions are leaving with “the universe again before us; our quest, as wide.” Throughout their voyage, the characters compare the islands as a way of examining the various boundaries that construct the system a civilization’s inhabitants are compelled to live inside. By doing so, Melville is in fact exploring the constructed nature of nineteenth-century America, while simultaneously searching for a regional space in which he can exist free from industrialism’s consumptive tendencies. But the “space” he finally constructs for himself is an indeterminate one—it is always shifting, always in flux.

Similarly, *Nostromo* charts a realm of the world-system through its examination of the history of the fictional South American country of Costaguana. Here Conrad surveys the various changes, both economic and geographic, that occur in Costaguana over a span of historical time. The primary locales Conrad’s novel constructs, including the town of Sulaco and the Gould silver mine, define Costaguana’s role as a distinct space in the world-system. For instance, the silver mine’s high productivity not only attracts the attention of a San Francisco financial corporation, but also prompts the establishment of a telegraph line to transmit news concerning the mine at a faster speed. That telegraph line indicates how Conrad’s focus extends beyond the mere local regions of Costaguana, Sulaco, and the Gould silver mine to the larger space of the modern world-system itself—it is a line connecting Costaguana with the rest of the world. Ultimately, Conrad positions himself, like Melville, as no mere writer of the sea who occasionally journeys to the land, but instead as a world-system writer concerned with spaces charting the earth’s global boundaries.

**Bio:** James W. Long is a student in the Ph.D. program of the English department at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. His scholarly interests include nineteenth-century American literature, Colonial American history, Atlantic studies, and historical criticism.

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**Wendy Stallard Flory – Looking for Mr. Kurtz or Serving under Captain Ahab: Conrad’s Realist Seriousness and Melville’s Romance Extravagance**

**Abstract:** This paper compares narrative modes and types of characterization in Conrad and Melville and the quite different impulses and priorities that, despite these
authors’ similarities in temperament and circumstances, determine their choice and treatment of their subjects. In the process, it suggests what made Conrad say that *Moby-Dick* contained “not a single sincere line.” It develops its thesis mainly with reference to *Heart of Darkness* and *Moby-Dick* but also considers *Lord Jim*, *The Secret Sharer* and *Billy Budd, Sailor*.

Although the extreme circumstances and remote locations of Conrad’s works give them some of the characteristics of romance, he is strongly committed to realistic presentation of place and of character. For Conrad, to be sincere means holding to a standard of moral seriousness in his treatment of his subjects and being responsible to his readers by being direct with them—making clear his attitude toward his characters and his position on their choices and actions. Melville must have seemed to Conrad to be shirking these responsibilities. Especially from *Mardi* on, he is often writing more for himself than for his reader. Rather than adopting and presenting firm positions, Melville is more likely to focus on “ambiguities.”

“Looking for Mr. Kurtz” applies to Conrad himself and how he inquires into the phenomenon of colonialism and its corrupting effect on an individual’s moral sense. He emphasizes the horror of Kurtz’s depraved actions yet, as with Brown’s final attack in *Lord Jim*, Conrad sees such acts not as a complete aberration from “normal” human behavior, but as only an extreme extension of it. “Serving under Captain Ahab” refers to how Melville has lived under the constraints of the overmastering moods of depression and how his works reflect this. He dramatizes this experience symbolically by creating characters who personify dimensions of these moods. These include Pierre and Bartleby and, most comprehensively, Ahab in his monomaniac pursuit of the whale. Although, like Kurtz’s and Jim’s, Ahab’s actions can be discussed from the point of view of morality, duty, and the responsibilities of leadership, this addresses only part of their significance. Ahab’s psychological-symbolic role generates many of the most intense dramatic effects in *Moby-Dick*. Given Conrad’s priorities, it is not surprising that this romance, with its extravagant symbolizing and sudden alternations of realist and symbolic modes, should strike him as a “rather strained rhapsody.”

**Bio:** I am Professor of English at Purdue University. I have two books on Ezra Pound from Yale U P; an essay on *Pierre* in *Melville and Women*; one on Queequeg, Starbuck, Stubb, and Flask in *Ungraspable Phantom: Essays on Moby-Dick* ; and one forthcoming on *Typee* and W. S. Merwin’s *The Folding Cliffs* in *Whole Oceans Away: Melville and the Pacific*. My current book manuscript, “Inside Stories: A New American Romance Criticism” (under consideration at a press) has chapters on *Pierre* and *Billy Budd, Sailor*.

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Sostene Massimo Zangari – Between actual experience and literary marketplace: the first books of Herman Melville and Joseph Conrad

**Abstract:** Herman Melville and Joseph Conrad apparently do not have much in common. They were born almost fifty years apart (the former in 1809, the latter in 1857). They belong to different literary milieus, as Melville was a protagonist of the so-called American Renaissance, while Conrad began writing in the late Victorian period.

In spite of these and many other differences, their literary careers share one fundamental point: the conditions and limitations surrounding their debut. Both writers decided to capitalize on their actual experience of sea voyages to find inspiration and narrative matter for their respective first books. Melville spent four years cruising around the world on whale boats; while Conrad’s commitment to sea was much longer, almost twenty years, sixteen of which he spent in the British Merchant Navy.

In their first attempt at writing, they knew that their adventures at sea could be turned into interesting – and profitable – works. Concerning the United States in the 1840s, the fact that the colonization of the territory between the Mississippi river and the Pacific coast was not yet completed made accounts and description of travels very popular; the interest was not limited to books describing the still unknown North American continent, but spread to any kind of exploration, in Africa as well as in the South Seas.

England, on the other hand, in the last decades of the Nineteenth century, saw a great diversification of the literary marketplace, in which romances played a big role. One of the most successful genres was the exotic adventure: Stevenson, Kipling and Ryder Haggard wrote books set in places far removed from the everyday experience of the reading public, stirring up its curiosity and fantasies. Thus, Melville and Conrad knew they had “marketable” narrative material to sell. But both of them did not content themselves to write a popular book using staple formulas and exploiting the genres’ literary conventions. In both *Typee* and *Almayer’s Folly* it is evident the attempt to find a middle ground between conventional orientalist modes of representation and the “truth” which they gained from their real experiences.

The aim of my paper is precisely about analyzing the strategies that both Melville and Conrad adopted when writing their first book, how did they negotiate between actual experience and literary conventions.

**Bio:** I am currently in a three-years PhD program at Milan State University, is working on a project about American-Jewish Literature. I graduated at the same institution with a dissertation about Melville’s first book *Typee*.

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Rodrigo Andrés – The threat of a revolution on board the Bellipotent: Darkness in Billy Budd.

Abstract: The paper will analyze darkness and its connotations in connection with the body of Billy Budd in Herman Melville's “Billy Budd, Sailor”. Melville's fascination with the “power of blackness” in Nathaniel Hawthorne's work as a rejection of the radical optimism of the Transcendentalists can also be interpreted as Melville’s willingness to explore and denounce white Americans’ guilt about depriving black Americans of their more basic “Rights of Man”. From the opening pages of “Billy Budd, Sailor” young Billy Budd is turned into “the Other” by the narrator, who compares him with a slave, a “Handsome Sailor... so intensely black that he must needs have been a native African of the unadulterated blood of Ham”. Both sailors share great physical beauty and a special sexual allure. By correlating racial tensions with homoerotic tensions, the novella points out how the repression of those tensions actually indicates their centrality in the cultural definitions of Western order. Uncomfortable in front of the erotic potential of Billy Budd on board a ship inhabited exclusively by men, both Claggart and Captain Vere associate the “excess” of sexual potential of a white body with the sexual “excess” of a body they do recognize because they have stereotypically read it as dangerously oversexed: the body of the black man. Thus, two unmentionable issues for many optimist Americans of the nineteenth century- the immorality of slavery on the one hand, and desire between men on the other - merge in a single image of horror that blends fears of homoeroticism with racial fears.

The paper will also explore the way in which both Claggart and Captain Vere choose to understand Billy Budd in the light of another stereotype, that of the Rousseauvian Noble Savage. Melville shows how the repression and final suppression of Billy are owed to the fact that - for Claggart and for Vere - loving Billy Budd as an equal is impossible “for fate and ban” in a highly hierarchical, racist, militarized, imperialist, classist and homophobic society. At the end of the novella what is hegemonically understood as civilization triumphs over natural instincts. In this way, Melville deliberately upsets his readers by forcing them to question their own definitions of what civilization and natural instincts are, and also by making them feel guilty for their passive acceptance of an unfair ending that receives the approval of so many interpreters from within the text and - what is more surprising and disturbing - from without it too.

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Daniel Paliwoda – “Hero and Villain: A Comparison between Melville’s Billy Budd and Conrad’s Lord Jim”

Abstract: Romanticism is a major artistic problem and theme in which both Melville and Conrad wrestle with and shape their individual works of art by. Melville's understanding and treatment of romanticism is ironic and surprisingly modern, which, at the same time, points to Conrad’s own brand, but also Melville is motioning to the modern world, perhaps even a post-modern one. Melville achieves muted victory, partial faith in the backdrop of a devastating skepticism. Billy Budd is the epitome of Melville’s esteemed literary values. Billy is an attempt to recapture the innocence, the idealized sense of self during those early experiences in the Pacific Islands Melville dramatized in Typee, Omoo, and Mardi; however, as Tommo/Typee can only hint at, the narrator of Billy Budd emphasizes with tragic force the vulnerability of innocence. Melville’s tragic vision has tempered his romantic one. It is painful, but he knows Billy must die. Innocence is akin to recklessness. Anticipating Conrad's artistic conflicts with a similar type, Melville is setting the (final) staging between the exuberance of activity and sobriety of mind. When consciousness comes, the glow of purity, guilelessness, and juvenescence dims, disappearing because innocence cannot last. Darkening the conflict is war; it looms over individual dilemmas, and all three men: Vere, Claggart, and Billy suffer in their own ways. The best that can be done is done, but Vere perishes. Claggart is a given as Satan is a given in Melville’s literary world; it is there: a defect according to nature.

The two artists also share a common understanding of romanticism. For Melville and Conrad, romanticism is an artistic tendency for characters to evade full responsibility for their actions, thus gravitating toward willful naïveté, an utter and contemptible failure to use normal, healthy, and sensible rationality and perception. Romanticism in Melville’s art is a deep-rooted characteristic, and to resist its enchantment over him, Melville must, in effect, kill Billy Budd to free himself from it. Billy embodies everything Melville loved in his earlier artistic work: youth, adventure,
and confidence. Jim is Conrad’s first major romantic figure. In “Heart of Darkness,” romanticism is almost eradicated, and the only detail which holds Conrad back from a complete nihilism is Marlow’s lie to the Intended; Conrad was not yet prepared to give up his gentlemanly, chivalrous conception of women. Conrad’s continued exploration and reliance upon romanticism distinguishes him from Melville’s more final, mature vision. It is not simply a matter of Melville’s endpoint as an artist and man that completes his development of romantic themes, but also an understanding of what romanticism (and its zenith) means for Melville that contrasts him with Conrad.

Not only do the simplicity of their names, the rather unsophisticated nature of their characters, and the devastating crisis that marks each of their lives group Billy and Jim together, but also the similarities between Billy Budd’s confrontation with Claggart and Conrad’s pairing of antagonists Lord Jim and Gentleman Brown are striking. Although Jim comes from the land, intent on becoming a hero, and deliberately evades harder maritime service, he, like Billy, does not succumb to despair; as with Billy, Jim goes willingly to his death. However, Billy does not intend on becoming a hero, and is not resentful of his impressments. On the other hand, they belong to the people, and accept responsibility, in their own ways, for their actions; these protagonists are apotheosized. Budd’s virtues, exemplified in his optimistic nature, youthful, invigoration, and spiritual innocence, are Billy’s sources of life, which Claggart lacks. Claggart identifies some past and lost beauty in himself that he sees in Billy that painfully reminds him of the larger, richer human being (lofty, noble, courageous, loved) that he might have been or become. Such a daily reminder must be destroyed. He is driven like Milton’s Satan to make Billy fall as Adam and Eve. He is driven like Shakespeare’s Iago to see Billy humiliated, defeated. He is driven like Conrad’s Gentleman Brown to be victorious. Like Claggart, Brown is inward, cunning, and opportunistic; Brown was a Jim-like figure, but turned against the world. Unlike Brown, Jim could have but does not become an outlaw. Jim holds on to his dream, which allows him to flourish, but struggles wretchedly to face up to his crime, cowardice, and violation of his self-image.

Billy’s truer nature is memorialized in the closing ballad, and so Melville sees hope on the horizon; that Billy lives on in the imagination, art as hero, the American Christ-like hero, stops the pull toward the abyss if the novel were to end immediately following his execution. Melville achieves muted victory, partial faith in the backdrop of a devastating skepticism. Jim’s end, however, is more ambiguous.

**Bio:** May 2006 I successfully defended my dissertation on Herman Melville at Stony Brook University (SUNY). I accepted a visiting professor position in American literature at University at Albany (SUNY) starting Fall 2006.

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Andrea White – Conrad’s The Shadow-Line: A Confession

Abstract: In On Late Style, Edward Said contrasts the kind of late works that “reflect a special maturity, a new spirit of reconciliation and serenity often expressed in terms of a miraculous transfiguration of common reality” – and here he evidences The Tempest -with the kind that exemplifies “artistic lateness not as harmony and resolution but as intransigence, difficulty, and unresolved contradiction” (7) - and here he evidences Victory, the work that immediately precedes The Shadow-Line. In this essay, I will argue that the late novella, published in 1917 exemplifies many of the characteristics Said finds inherent in the latter kind of late work: self-quotation, a “re-invasion of his past,” a “new kind of mannerism,” and a “nonharmonious nonserene tension,” especially evident in the case of The Shadow-Line as I will argue, in the unresolved ambiguous attitudes towards writing and textuality, and in the role style itself plays in the moral concerns with paternal authority, responsibility, and guilt. Reading the novella as a late work in Conrad’s oeuvre while also considering his complicated responses to the unfolding events of the time of this writing, affords the work a particular light and helps us better understand the depth and complexity of its confessional nature.

In this late work, the retrospective narrator looks back, from a late phase of his own career, on a crucial moment in his earlier becoming that has been treated in several former fictions as well, and understands its importance not only as marking his growth from youth’s “enchanted garden” to maturity, but also as a moment in the inevitable passage toward death. While this novella is a “re-invasion of his past,” the final work of fiction in a series that treats of his first command and one that has been on his mind for more than fifteen years, Conrad admits that it would have been a rather different story if written then and that the war has changed his own “mental attitude” toward it. While several readers have observed that the subtitle “A Confession” and the narrator’s expressed sense of guilt about the calamitous conditions of his first command exceed any objective correlative provided by the text, I will argue that this novella is an expression of, and as such is commensurate with, the world’s lateness and Conrad’s own. The Shadow-Line: A Confession constitutes not only his war piece but his war effort as well.

Bio: Andrea White teaches literature and critical theory at California State University, Dominguez Hills, where she is Professor of English and Co-ordinator of Graduate Studies. She is the author of Joseph Conrad and the Adventure Tradition, CUP, 1993, and co-editor of Conrad in the 21st Century, Routledge, 2005. She has also written articles for various journals and collections such as The Cambridge Companion to Conrad and Approaches to Teaching The Secret Sharer and Heart of Darkness, and presented at local and international conferences. She is currently President of the Joseph Conrad Society of America.
Anna M. Szczepan-Wojnarska – Conrad and Melville in the quest for the meaning of suffering

Abstract: This paper taking into account Conrad’s "Heart of Darkness" and Melville’s "Moby Dick", will examine attitudes of these authors towards suffering. A mystery of suffering embraces a diverse range of explanations from a purely religious to a lay existentialist approach. Nevertheless the question of the meaning of suffering remains open and shall be examined from a literary perspective.

Both considered writers deliberate on complicity of situation when a human being is confronted with suffering and evil. The protagonists of their chosen novellas experience on various levels a misfortune that shapes their characters and influences their choices perhaps in unpredictable directions. The main aim of the essay is to compare Conrad’s and Melville’s reflections upon suffering. Comparison will be based on a question: do they share a conviction that suffering - although in itself remains inexplicable - might become a way of gaining an inner knowledge and achieving a spiritual progress as well as a way to skeptic disillusionment, encouraging sufferer to tantalize the others. A border between being oppressed and becoming an oppressor appears as a place for an intervention of the third power of supernatural order, a place for a God and religion. Suffering devoid of the hope of redemption and final moral justice may lead to a devastating desire of revenge and therefore to self-condemnation because of a necessity to acknowledge a dark side of one’s soul willing others to suffer too. However one may claim that suffering is a punishment or martyrdom yet also it might evoke further torments, pains and misery.

Similarities and differences of Conrad’s and Melville’s approaches shall be identified, compared and assessed. In my view the power of these two novellas consists in their revelation of the capacity of a human soul to struggle with itself, to find within itself values by which it can and must judge its actions.

Bio: I am a lecturer at Cardinal Wyszyński University, Warsaw. I received MA in literature at Jagiellonian University, Krakow and MA in Jewish-Christian Relations at CJCR, APU, Cambridge. In 2003 I defended my PhD dissertation on theory of literature at Jagiellonian University in Krakow and my book under the title “...you will get married to a fire.” The experience of transcendence in life and works of Jerzy Liebert was published by Universitas. I have published also in several Polish periodicals on literature and theology as well as on the web of www.diapozytyw.pl. My research interests include literature, religion and culture, especially an issue of contemporary identity.

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Abstract: Joseph Conrad, as a well-known novelist, commencing to pen reminiscences about the beginnings of his nautical career and his first steps as an English writer, faced an essential dilemma. On one hand, the need to order and make meaningful the decisions and events from his past was so compelling that it urged the writer to create his memoirs; on the other, Conrad’s distrust of direct confession and unequivocal externalization, made him choose the literary form of loose memories based on apparently chaotic associations referring to people and events from the past. The result was a collection of seemingly disconnected vignettes portraying different episodes from the author’s days of yore. The aim of this paper is firstly, to establish to what extent Conrad’s volume, *A Personal Record*, is an autobiography, secondly, to consider whether it is possible to create an anti-confessional autobiography, and last but not least, to disclose the techniques that Conrad used to reduce the confessional character of his recollections.


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Margaret A. Amstutz – Endings: A Reading of Moby Dick and Lord Jim

Abstract: In viewing Melville and Conrad together in the space of world culture, I propose to examine the question of endings in *Moby Dick* and *Lord Jim*, comparing and contrasting the creative imaginations at work in these two novels.

Awaiting any seasoned seafarer is a final destination, and the distant shores presented by Melville and Conrad in these two works thus invite a paired reading that is attentive to endings. Whether the ending of camaraderie, the ending of a particular character development, the ending of life, or the ending of the narrative itself, the ways in which these two authors offer closure to the readers of their texts provide opportunities for reassessment of the works. If, as Ted Billy has argued, Conrad clearly and purposefully delivers an absence of tidy finality at the conclusion of his novel *Nostromo*, I would argue that consideration of such questions for another of Conrad’s works may be enhanced by an examination of Melville’s own endings. Melville’s narrator Ishmael observes in the core cetological chapter that his encyclopedia of whaling facts is only a framework, stating, “Finally: It was stated at
the outset, that this system would not be here, and at once, perfected [...]. But I now leave my cetological System standing thus unfinished, even as the great Cathedral of Cologne was left, with the crane still standing upon the top of the uncompleted tower."

*Moby Dick* and *Lord Jim* are often taught in undergraduate classrooms, and readers of these two works should necessarily wrestle with questions of narrative structure given the space of world culture in which these works were composed. Acknowledging the oral tradition of the Far Away and Long Ago lands visited by these seafaring authors, one finds an understanding of the expansive, continuing quality of story in their works. In her Nobel-Prize acceptance speech in 1938, Pearl Buck addressed the subject of the Chinese novel, stating that the early Chinese novels “are not perfect according to Western standards. They are not always planned from beginning to end, nor are they compact, any more than life is planned or compact.” Considering the ways in which undergraduate students may often anticipate, evaluate and privilege endings, I also propose to comment upon classroom presentation of Melville’s and Conrad’s works in light of such assessments of non-Western literature.

**Bio:** Margaret (Meg) A. Amstutz joined the Office of the President at The University of Georgia in 1997 in her role as Assistant to the President. Her current responsibilities in the area of academic affairs include serving as a liaison to the faculty, the Office of the Provost, the UGA Research Foundation, the Office of Admissions, and various committees within the University’s faculty governance structure. She holds an academic appointment as adjunct assistant professor of English at UGA. Dr. Amstutz received her bachelor’s degree in English from Centre College in Danville, Kentucky, working as an assistant to the president at Centre from 1989 to 1991. She holds two degrees in English and American literature from Washington University in St. Louis (M.A. in 1992 and Ph.D. in 2004). Her doctoral research in nineteenth-century American literature focuses on the writings of Elizabeth Stoddard and Nathaniel Hawthorne. While in St. Louis, she held successive positions as project consultant, publications director and program officer at the Missouri Humanities Council, a state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. She has served as a member of the Centre College Alumni Board of Directors and presently serves on the board of directors of the Girl Scouts of Northeast Georgia.

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**Aleksandra Nikčević-Batrićević – Teaching Melville at the University Level**
Abstract: The aim of this paper will be to point to the effective and practical ways in which the course on Herman Melville’s early novels can be taught at the university level in Montenegro. As non-native speakers are attendants of the course the paper will be divided into two sections: in the first section the main concern will be to make them aware of the biographical influences and historical perspective of Melville’s time and of the eventual influence of it on his writings. In the second section the main concern will be to introduce nine different types of contemporary criticism “by showing how various cultural theories actually work in practice”. Postulates of different literary theories will be defined: new criticism, phenomenological criticism, archetypal criticism, gender criticism, narratology, sociological criticism, psychoanalytic criticism and reader – response criticism. Both possibilities have certain obvious advantages as according to Staton double perspective sheds light on how literature interacts with theory, and how, presupposing literary culture, students react to such process especially when ‘confronted’ with complexity of Melville’s texts. Extracts from five Melville’s novels from the early period, Typee, Omoo, Mardi, Redburn and White-Jacket, will be taken into consideration and various critical modes will be clustered around them. After putting the critical postulates into action, the set of questions will follow that might encourage the attendants of the course “to see around the corners of their own assumptions”, as most of them deny having a critical stance.

Bio: Since 1996 I have been appointed at the University of Montenegro. I defended my Master’s Thesis in American Literature at the Belgrade University in 2001. I am currently writing the final pages of my dissertation on Herman Melville titled “The Concept of Characterization in Herman Melville’s Early Novels”. I have published many articles on both English and American literature and a study on Victorian Literature titled A Reader’s Guide to Victorian Literature. In cooperation with Marija Knezević, I have translated many short stories, one-act plays and novels. Last year we translated D.H. Lawrence’s The Etruscan Places.

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Ellen Ferguson – Teaching Bartleby as a Construction of Apathy

Abstract: A number of theoretical perspectives consider Bartleby’s silence. Silence can be navigated, as Dan McCall does provocatively in his work The Silence of Bartleby. Drawing on this work and my own experience in the high school classroom, I discuss from a pedagogical standpoint how teaching Bartleby to high school seniors in their third trimester just before graduation raises more questions about silence than teaching Bartleby as part of my American literature course. In this senior elective, Studies in the Anti-Novel, students consider Bartleby’s silence as a valid response, and their own apathy as a form of engagement.

My paper is a study of contexts, particularly relevant to the Szczecin conference. In Poland we will be looking at the space of world culture and the way we navigate it; in my paper we are looking at the space of a profound silence offered by
Melville, and the way in which we as teachers can navigate it most fruitfully. Perhaps
many of us have taught Bartleby along with other short masterworks of American
literature; certainly many of us in the field have avoided its discomforting echoes. I
have found the text works better in my Anti-Novel course when paired with works
like Nabokov’s Pale Fire and the film Smoke (as well as its inspiration, Paul Auster’s
“Auggie Wren’s Christmas Story”) than when offered as an extension of the local color
unit in my American literature course. When does Bartleby speak to students? When
they are least likely to listen to anything, when they have a foot out the door yet are
still sitting still: when they both embody Bartleby’s paralysis and when they are about
to shake it.

Bio: Ellen Ferguson joined the faculty of Kent Place School in Summit, New Jersey in
2003. At this independent school for girls she teaches American literature to high
school juniors and a course she designed in reading and writing the anti-novel to
seniors. She earned her doctorate at Washington University in St. Louis and her
doctoral research on twentieth century American poetry focuses on the rhetoric of
tapinosis in the writings of Frank O’Hara and Philip Levine. She holds two degrees in
English and American literature from Washington University (MA, Ph.D.) an M.Phil.
in Anglo-Irish Literature from Trinity College, Dublin, and an undergraduate degree
from Cornell University. She is a published poet who most recently read her work at
the Old Stone House in Brooklyn, New York. She is pleased to have reached a lifetime
goal of being represented in animated form, reading her poetry in a new interactive
tour of the F train you can find on the Norwegian Public Broadcasting website.

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Mary K. Bercaw-Edwards – Sailor Talk in Melville and Conrad

Abstract: Both Herman Melville and Joseph Conrad spent extensive periods of time
at sea. Aboard ship both participated in various forms of sailor talk. The term “sailor
talk” has several meanings. It refers to the actual terminology used by sailors, to the
coterie speech, or coded language, they speak amongst themselves, and to the
discourse, or generalized language, that is used by and about seamen. All sailors
share the more formalized occupational lingo, but within any voyage the crew will
develop speech particular to that specific group of people, when the already arcane
set of terms that is nautical terminology, the occupational dialect, will shade into the
more personal rubric of coterie speech.

Writers who use the language of sailors are criticized at times for obscurity or
cliquishness. Samuel Johnson declared in The Lives of the English Poets (1779) that
such use was not acceptable: “It is a general rule in poetry that all appropriated terms
of art should be sunk in general expressions because poetry is to speak an universal
language. This rule is still stronger with regard to arts not liberal or confined to few,
and therefore far removed from common knowledge; and of this kind certainly is
technical knowledge.” Quoting a passage from John Dryden’s Annus Mirabilis (1667)
with such forbidden words as *calking-iron*, *marling*, and *shrouds*, Johnson writes: “I suppose here is not one term which every reader does not wish away.” Nonetheless, the specificity of sailor language is an absolute necessity for the safety of the ship and crew. Sailors do not use nautical terminology at whim.

This paper will investigate the sailor talk used by Melville and Conrad. It will include examples drawn from their works of nautical terminology, of the coterie speech, or coded language, sailors speak amongst themselves, and of the discourse, or generalized language, that is used by and about sailors. It is based not only on years of study of both writers, but also on my own time at sea, sailing on a wide variety of sailing vessels, and on my archival work in preparation for the publication of *Herman Melville's Whaling Years*.

**Bio:** Mary K. Bercaw Edwards is an Associate Professor of English at the University of Connecticut. She served as President of The Melville Society in 2004. She is a founding member of the Melville Society Cultural Project based in New Bedford, which includes the Melville Society Archive. She is the author of *Melville's Sources* (1987) and the co-editor of *Herman Melville's Whaling Years* (2004). In addition to her teaching and scholarly duties, she works aboard the only 19th-century whaleship left in the world, the Charles W. Morgan, berthed at Mystic Seaport in Mystic, Connecticut. She has accrued 56,000 miles at sea under sail.

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**Beth Rosenberg – Darkness and the Apocalypse: Teaching “Heart of Darkness” with Apocalypse Now in the high school classroom**

**Abstract:** As a starting point for my sophomore British Literature survey class several years ago, I gave a casual questionnaire to the students asking questions that would offer them the opportunity to tell me something about themselves I might need to know as we began the year together, or perhaps to tell me something I might not otherwise learn about them. At the end of the questionnaire, I asked what lingering questions they might have heading into a new year in English class. Most left this space blank, but one student pointedly (and poignantly) asked, “Why do we have to spend a whole year reading British Literature?” I think of this question often when deciding what to have students read and why.

One text, for which a question such as this is particularly riddled, is Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*. Why teach this book? To what level of students? Is it a “racist” text? A “dated” text? An unreachable text for high school students despite its longstanding appearance in the curriculum? All are criticisms. And yet I have found no other text to have quite the profound impact that this one does on upper-level high school students, especially when taught in conjunction with an eye toward current events and a viewing/analysis of (another difficult “text”) Francis Ford Coppola’s film, *Apocalypse Now*.

I introduce all the “criticisms” of *Heart of Darkness* to the students as possibilities to be considered on the first day of our exploration and use them as a stepping off
point—a gauntlet thrown. We approach the text as one of “journey” and “exploration”—especially inner journey and exploration—with all of its difficult rhetorical techniques driving towards finding “meaning” and “understanding.” Students are encouraged to use the difficulty of the text as key to the text and in the process learn what it means to be a good “reader” (as well as a good “explorer”). This paper will discuss the ways in which Conrad’s text can be introduced before the reading begins to set a tone of inquiry that anticipates some of the complexities of the novella; the ways in which the reading of the *Heart of Darkness* can proceed so as to allow the students themselves the ability to analyze and reflect on its three stages; and the ways in which *Apocalypse Now* can be viewed so as to heighten and complement a reading of Conrad’s text.

**Bio:** Beth Rosenberg grew up in Washington D.C. and completed her undergraduate work at Princeton University. After a post-graduate year at Trinity College in Dublin, she attended graduate school at New York University, focusing on both the modern and medieval time periods. She currently lives with her husband in Brooklyn, New York and teaches high school English.

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**Sanford E. Marovitz**

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**Sanford E. Marowitz – From Desertion Comes Solace: The Stories of Agatha, Hunilla, and Amy Foster**

**Abstract:** Surprising similarities appear in the portraits of three women depicted by Melville and Conrad. Although Melville wrote but did not publish on Agatha, he included an account of Hunilla in “The Encantadas,” and Conrad’s Amy Foster is the eponymous heroine of her own story. Comparing the characters, situations, and narrative construction of the stories exposes the correspondences.

Agatha Hatch, a Nantucket woman, married a shipwrecked English sailor, and after living with her briefly, he left her with child; for seventeen years she awaited his return. While gone, he remarried, and the daughter Agatha bore was herself soon to wed when he finally returned, remorseful and repentant; upon his death, following Agatha’s, he left their daughter a sizable legacy. Hunilla is a Peruvian Indian stranded with her husband and brother in the Galapagos after being left there for a few months by a whaler to round up tortoises, but the whaler never returns. Before long she watches her husband and brother drown when their catamaran overturns in a storm, and for years she waits alone to be rescued until finally saved by another whaler. On being returned to Peru, she is given money by the crew. Conrad’s Amy Foster is an English countrywoman isolated in a tightly knit community without truly being a member of it. Two narrators characterize as well as describe her. She, too, assists a shipwrecked sailor, and although he understands no English, she marries and has a child by him. As he is dying of illness, Amy flees in fright over his incomprehensible shouts, and she is left to dwell alone in an indifferent community with only her infant as solace. A hard-working, merciful woman, she is ostracized. Yet perceived without the prejudicial denigration of the narrators, Amy has more merit than her narrow-minded neighbors, who lack her benignity and leave her to suffer without cause.

Both authors were moved by the straits of long-suffering women, isolated or otherwise alienated through no fault of their own and consequently subjected to live apart from society. Only Amy, however, is characterized by the narrators as well as somewhat by Conrad himself, who based her portrait partly on a woman he had
known. According to critics of “Amy Foster,” not Amy but her husband, Yanko, is central, yet she is no less prominent; her character is benign, and she is sympathetic when regarded without the somber coloration of both narrators. If her desertion by Yanko in death is unfortunate, her unjustifiable exclusion by the community is evil in the face of good, a subtle but crucial point that Conrad’s critics may overlook, but the author himself probably did not.

**Bio:** Sanford E. Marovitz is Professor Emeritus of English at Kent State U., where he taught from 1967-96. In 1985 he received the Distinguished Teaching Award. He has also taught at the U. of Athens (Greece) and Shimane U. (Japan). Author and co-author/editor of four books, he has published widely in professional journals and critical collections. A former secretary and president of the Melville Society, he co-directed Melville “Among the Nations” (Volos, GR, 1997); the Kent State U. P. published the proceedings of that conference (2001), which he edited.

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**Robert K. Wallace – Tall Ships (and Smaller Ones) in Melville’s Print Collection**

**Abstract:** Turner’s *The Fighting Temeraire* is one of more than four hundred prints that have survived from Herman Melville’s print collection. In Melville’s poem “The Temeraire,” a “pigmy steam-tug” tows the storied wooden warship “gigantic to the shore,” an indelible, poignant image of historical change. This illustrated presentation will survey the presence of tall ships within the collection of prints and engravings that Melville had assembled during the age of steam in the declining decades of his life in his house on East 26th Street in New York. Smaller ships and boats will be included for contrast. Prominent maritime artists in his collection include Claude Lorrain, William van de Velde the Younger, Joseph Claude Vernet, J. M. W. Turner, and Clarkston Stanfield. Various nations and genres will be represented as ships are depicted in commercial, military, and pleasurable activity.

**Bio:** A native of Everett, Washington, I am Regents Professor of Literature and Language at Northern Kentucky University, where I have taught since 1972. I am a past president of the Melville Society and was coordinator of the international conference on Douglass and Melville in New Bedford in 2005. My books include *Jane Austen and Mozart, Emily Brontë and Beethoven, Melville and Turner, Frank Stella’s Moby-Dick, and Douglass and Melville*. My essays on Melville’s print collection have appeared in *Essays in Arts and Sciences, Melville Society Extracts, Harvard Library Bulletin*, and *Leviathan*. I have curated exhibitions of prints from Melville’s collection of art for the New Bedford Whaling Museum, South Street Seaport, the Berkshire Athenaeum, and the Berkshire Historical Society at Arrowhead.
Abstract: As Moby-Dick progresses, Melville makes a strong case for the intelligence of the whale and its ability to have conscious thoughts—not simply of vengeance and destruction but of method and planning or intention. Given the limited state of knowledge about whales, and of animal intelligence more generally, in the nineteenth century, this is a surprising step for the author to have taken. Before Darwin, it was commonly believed that animals and humans constituted radically different realms, the one ruled by “instinct” and the other by conscious thoughts. This paper will examine evidences of animal intelligence provided in Melville’s narrative; explore the state of understanding about animal intelligence in his time; and attempt to determine what Melville knew or might have known about the subject, from his reading and personal observation. This paper will then attempt to explain why Melville took such pains to make a case for the whale’s intelligence. One explanation concerns the need for narrative suspense and mystery. Another concerns Melville’s faith in the underlying intelligence of the animal world. Melville was more than a sympathetic reader of the animal kingdom. In addition to anthropomorphizing the whale, and whale intelligence, he reverses that process and “animalizes” the human, by suggesting that Ishmael (and by extension the reader) is capable of learning much that is valuable about the conduct of life by observing the behavior of this most intelligent of sea creatures. For Melville, as for Emerson, all of nature is infused with intelligence and serves as a source of knowledge, something that biologists were beginning to understand at about the time he was writing Moby-Dick at mid century, and that anthropologists in our own time are also starting to recognize in the idea that mankind evolved by modeling its behavior upon that of wolves and dogs, for example, or whales. While Melville probably knew nothing about autism per se (the disorder was first discovered in the early 1940s), the writings of a contemporary expert on autism and animal intelligence, Temple Grandin (Animals in Translation [2005], will be useful in explaining what is distinctive and recognizable about the workings of animal and human intelligence.

Bio: I have a longstanding interest in Melville, having published two critical studies of Melville’s fiction (The Weaver-God, He Weaves and Sounding the Whale, both published in 1996) and edited a collection of essays on Melville’s appropriation of the visual arts (Savage Eye, 1991). I am currently co-editing (with Jill Barnum and Wyn Kelley) a collection of essays on Melville in the Pacific, based on the proceedings of the 2003 Melville Society-sponsored conference on Maui, and completing a history of American writers’ involvement in national politics. A past President and past Executive Secretary of the Melville Society, I teach in the English Department at George Washington University, in Washington, DC, and currently serve as the Director of the Writing in the Disciplines Program there.
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Hank Galmish - Voyages of Self-Discovery: Melville’s Neversink and Conrad’s Narcissus

Abstract: In Chapter Two of The Nigger of the Narcissus Joseph Conrad describes the Narcissus setting out of Bombay into the blue expanse of the Indian Ocean in this manner: “The passage had begun and the ship, a fragment detached from the earth, went on lonely and swift like a small planet.” Despite Conrad’s famous disparaging remarks about Melville’s those novels that he knew, it is clear to even a casual reader that both novelists approach the world of the ship on the sea as an appropriate metaphor for life itself. In the final chapter entitled “the End” of Melville’s White-Jacket, he writes the following: “As a Man-of-War that sails through the sea, so this earth that sails through the air. We mortals are all on board a fast-sailing, never-sinking world-frigate....” For both writers throughout their sea novels, the sea voyage often establishes the narrative framework of the plot, but on a deeper level acts as an extended conceit by which the entire world can be viewed as if through a prism, as a microcosm.

This theme of the “Voyage of Self-Discovery” permeates many of both Conrad’s and Melville’s novels, but it most clearly present in two novels both written in their mid-careers respectively—White-Jacket and The Nigger of the Narcissus. Significant similarities exist in both novels; all the world with its poignant ambiguities, dark ironies, and its heroic challenges are to be found bounded within the wooden walls of the two ships the Neversink and the Narcissus. The diverse crews, each with his unique personality and shipboard office or authority exemplifies emotional, intellectual, and ethical types that are to be found throughout human society. The voyage home produces in cameo the very situations that constitute the human dilemma. Each sailor discovers himself as he confronts those dilemmas during the voyage. As Melville reminds us as his novel ends, “...let us never forget, that, Whoever afflict us, whatever surround Life is a voyage that’s homeward-bound!”

Bio: I am a tenured professor in English at Green River Community College in Seattle, Washington. I have a Master’s in Theology from Catholic University, with specialization in Medieval Studies. I also have a Master’s in English from the University of Colorado. I have a life long interest in Melville studies and have written on Melville’s influence on the twentieth century English writer Somerset Maugham. I have presented a number of papers at various conferences on Melville and other significant modern writers. I am honored to be a part of this International Melville-Conrad Conference.

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Thomas D. Zlatic – The Voice of Darkness in Melville and Conrad

Abstract: Pretext is the heart of The Confidence-Man, in which the antics of a river-boat swindler in various guises provoke contemplation of the connection between reason and faith, author-reader relationships, the interplay between written and oral communication, the possibilities and conditions of interpretation, the fictionalizing of audiences, and the relationship of mask-wearing to communication. The question of the novel is how to interpret texts--exegesis is the focus of The Confidence-Man. But a deeper question concerns faith in the communication process itself--faith having both epistemological and ethical overtones. The title character, the “talking man,” represents a subversion of that process; he talks but does not communicate. One can interpret that fact as a failure of communication or as a failure of the Confidence-man; the problem may be language or language use, only the latter of which invokes character. What are the implications when the textual “voice” of the novel, the untrustworthy narrator, is assumed to be yet one more confidence-man bilking the reader? The various hermeneutics of suspicion provide necessary corrections for the confining interpretations derived from intentionalist fallacies and other closed-system patterns of thinking. Yet textualization’s erasure of the speaker/writer through such dicta as “the text and not the writer speaks,” seems to discourage from the start an investigation of ethos, character, or intention.

As does Conrad’s Heart of Darkness, The Confidence-Man pivots on a dynamic interplay of truth and lying for the investigation of blackness in its metaphysical, moral, political, and psychological dimensions. The contention here is that Walter J. Ong’s “oral hermeneutic” can provide a better understanding of the strategies these authors employ to attempt to give voice to blackness.

Bio: I received a Ph.D. in American literature from St. Louis University, St. Louis, MO, USA, with a dissertation on Melville. I have published on literature and on orality/literacy in Nineteenth-Century Fiction; Clio: A Journal of Literature, History and the Philosophy of History; Papers on Language and Literature; EME: Explorations in Media Ecology; and American Literature (co-winner with Thomas M. Walsh of the Foerster Award for best essay that year). A chapter on Melville’s The Confidence-Man will appear in Of Ong and Media Ecology, to be published by Hampton Press in 2006/07.

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**Abstract:** Melville’s *Benito Cereno*, one of the narratives published in *Putnam’s Monthly Magazine* in 1855, and later included in *The Piazza Tales*, is one of the most popular and controversial texts of the author (in terms of political, historical and literary perspectives). The text was based on the writings of the actual captain Amasa Delano, who rescued the Spanish captain Benito Cereno after visiting his ship, unaware that it was controlled by the blacks on board, who had previously mutinied and taken charge, but concealed their leadership while acting like slaves. More than adding symbolical meaning through the change of dates or of the ships’ names, Melville’s narrative deepens the shadows around the character Benito Cereno. The captain of the San Dominick - just as his spiritual brother Bartleby - is a doomed soul. In Cereno’s case, as the reader may imply from the final dialogue, he is doomed because he is human, he has memory, he is frail, and has been exposed to horror - the horror of slave trading, of violence and death and also the horror of reenacting the power and leadership lost forever. Don Benito is no longer the captain of the Saint Dominick or the captain of his soul. This is the horror that later will echo in Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*. Melville intensifies both the psychological and the sociological aspects of the story of the ship under slave dominion. In this text, just as in Conrad’s narrative, shadowy places, dark and grey atmospheres become the perfect scenery for the dark side of human nature and behavior. In *Benito Cereno* as in *Bartleby*, darkness is exposed through the interaction and contrast with the average successful American (Delano and the lawyer) who try to understand the doomed characters and are definitely puzzled by them. After all, only those who follow their leaders to the heart of darkness know where this country is.

**Bio:** I was born in Tomar, Portugal. I have a Degree in Pharmaceutical Sciences, an MA in Biotechnology and Renewable Natural Resources, and a Degree in Modern Languages and Literatures from the Faculty of Letters, where I am a researcher at the ULICES (University of Lisbon Centre for English Studies) and a member of the Organizing Committee of the 9th International Conference on the Short Story in English. I am presently preparing a PhD on American Literature and I have been teaching at the University since 2000. I have poems published in the *VII Antologia de Poesia Contemporânea* (1990), I am the author of the text and co-producer of the film *Henrique* (2000) and I have a short story published in the anthology *From the Edge. Portuguese Short Stories* (2006). I am also a member of the editing board and the author of several texts published in the journal *Textos e Pretextos* edited by the Centre for Comparative Studies of the University of Lisbon.
MELVILLE AND/OR CONRAD: POLITICS/HISTORY/CULTURE
Abstract: A long time ago Schleiermacher stated famously that there are only two possibilities of translating: either the author is brought to the language of the reader, or the reader is carried to the language of the author. In other words, either we bring the author home, or send the reader abroad. In more modern times, the same concepts are still hotly debated, yet the theoretical angles and terminology have changed. Now it is more common to come across Venuti’s differentiation between domestication and foreignization; whereas Even-Zohar’s work on the position of translated literature within the literary polysystem sheds some light on the interrelationships of these two approaches to translation and translating from a dominating literary system into the peripheral one and vice versa.

The present paper seeks to analyse the development of the translation series of Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* with emphasis on domesticating tendencies on the one hand, and modernising ones on the other. To this end, two translations of *Heart of Darkness* into Polish shall be compared: Aniela Zagórska’s version published in 1930 and Ireneusz Socha’s modern translation of 2004. Various levels on which domesticating and modernising tendencies can be noticed shall be considered. The treatment of specifically culture-bound items shall be compared in the two translations; but, more importantly, the analysis shall concentrate on the linguistic elements which make the language of the translation sound either “exotic” or quite “domestic”. These elements comprise the translation of idioms, stylistic devices such as metaphors and similes, which Conrad is famous for, but also particular terminology connected with certain jargons, exclamations and other relevant features of the text.

It seems that, contrary to current tendencies to foreignize translated texts, the modern version of *Heart of Darkness*, at least at the linguistic level, may be labelled as the domesticated one in comparison with the earlier translation of Conrad’s work. Generally, Zagórska tries to reproduce Conrad’s wording in Polish, thus, for instance her treatment of the metaphor borders on literal translation; whereas Socha’s aim, or *skopos*, seems to be creating the text that reads naturally. Consequently, the modern version turns Marlow into a present-day businessman, who, paradoxically, sounds very Polish as he uses typical Polish sayings, comparisons, idioms, exclamations, quite unlike the former one. The paper aims to show in what way the translators’ choices of particular translating strategies and lexical items accentuate the deforming tendencies, as Antoine Berman calls them.

Bio: I am a reader in the Institute of Neophilology at the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn where I conduct bachelor’s and master’s degree seminars in translation and teach practical translation and English literature. In 2003 I received my PhD degree at the University of Łódź, having written my thesis on the novels of Charles Dickens. My main areas of research include film adaptation of literary works
with emphasis on intersemiotic translation. I have published 3 articles on the interrelationships between *Heart of Darkness* and *Apocalypse Now*. Victorian literature is still within my research interests, the outcome of which is the publication of a monograph on Charles Dickens and some articles on various aspects of his works. My latest field of attention is literary translation within which I focus on translating culture-bound and intertextual elements. Currently I am working on Dickens's works as sources of intertextuality, levels of cultural references and their functions in G.K. Chesterton’s works and translation series as realised in various translations of J. Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*.

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**Paula Kopacz – Work in Melville: The Cultural Sweat of Slavery and Race**

**Abstract:** It has sometime been seen as the height of insensitivity and even egotism that the Lowell mill workers used the rhetoric of abolition to protest conditions in the mills. Yet in doing so, they revealed many unfortunate similarities between slavery and factory work: both slaves and mill workers were oppressed by a dominant patriarchal system; both groups worked long hours at wearisome, repetitive tasks; both groups were constrained night and day by the requirements of their work; both groups were exploited economically; both groups lacked freedom; and so on. Of course, these similarities do not negate the very significant differences between slaves and mill workers, not least of which was that work constituted a voluntary, temporary forsaking of personal freedom for the mill workers rather than the involuntary and lifetime condition for slaves. Still, given the sometimes ten, sometimes twelve hour work days of mill workers and the unhealthy physical conditions of their work, contemporary readers must concede there is some justification for use of the term “white slavery” in connection with the mill workers. Nor were antebellum mill workers themselves the only ones who recognized connections with black slaves. Harriet Beecher Stowe in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* has St. Clare agree with his brother Alfred, the slave holder, “that the American planter is ‘only doing, in another form, what the . . . capitalists are doing by the lower classes;’ that is, I take it, appropriating them, body and bone, soul and spirit, to their use and convenience. . . .He says that there can be no high civilization without enslavement of the masses, either nominal or real. There must, he says, be a lower class, given up to physical toil and confined to an animal nature” (199). St. Clare defends his father’s slave-holding to Ophelia, “Miss Vermont,” in factory terms: “Well, my father worked some five hundred negroes; he was an inflexible, driving, punctilious business man; everything was to move by system,—to be sustained with unfailing accuracy and precision” (196), as though he were the manager in a factory rather than a plantation.

Melville’s writing shows great sensitivity to conditions of labor and the plight of workers. Indeed, *Moby-Dick* itself has been both praised and vilified by critics for
its rendering of the daily and hourly work involved in running a whale ship. For every reader who glories in Melville's details regarding how whale blubber is cut up and “tried” or the order in which crew members take their meals or the revery possible when standing in the crow’s nest or the excitement of a Nantucket sleigh ride, there is a reader who finds such material irrelevant to the plot and extraneous to today’s almighty computer culture. I argue differently. Not only can Melville’s grand epic of the American whaling industry be read as an investigation into the American labor system, it also shows his views on a range of social issues. Melville was preoccupied with conditions of common labor, as his most famous works attest. From Bartleby to the “The Tartarus of Maids,” Wall Street to the factory; *Moby-Dick* to *Pierre*, whaling to writing, Melville probed the working life of average Americans in their struggle to survive in dramatic or dreary conditions. In sum, Melville positions The American Worker among Emerson’s Representative Men, and the American Worker is a cultural product.

What I will argue in my paper is that Melville uses work in his writing as the space for probing the major social, cultural, and political issues of his day. Work initiates his negotiation of issues of race and gender, politics and class, and through the metaphor of work Melville performs important cultural work. In particular, his frequent use of the rhetoric of slavery extends the significance of the peculiar institution into all areas of social protest in antebellum America, while labor at the same time provides a window into his view on race. Thus, my paper will probe Melville’s writings about work for the cultural work they perform regarding race, slavery, and abolition.

**Bio:** Paula Kopacz is Foundation Professor at Eastern Kentucky University. Her publications include texts on Anne Bradstreet, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and other early American authors, especially antebellum writers.

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**Ralph James Savarese – “Organic Hesitancy”: on Speechlessness in *Billy Budd***

**Abstract:**

Though in the hour of elemental uproar or peril he was everything that a sailor should be, yet under sudden provocation of strong heart-feeling his voice, otherwise singularly musical, as if expressive of the harmony within, was apt to develop an organic hesitancy, in fact more or less of a stutter or even worse.  

(Melville, *Billy Budd*)

Much has been made of Billy’s failure to communicate with words at the moment Vere first questions him. Hershel Parker nicely describes the young sailor as “unable to defend himself through speech.” I intend to pursue this notion in the context of Melville’s own description of Billy as a kind of innocent, strangely
untouched by culture, (in Melville’s phrase, “an upright barbarian”). I also intend to pursue this notion in the context of contemporary debates about autism spectrum disorder or, in the jargon of special education, “pervasive developmental delays unspecified.” I wish to historicize Billy’s speech defect, investigating dominant medical and cultural understandings of speechlessness at the time Melville was writing, and then to present the ambiguous achievement of current diagnostic wisdom.

There are at least two essays that suggest Bartleby may have been autistic (and a third by Rosemarie Garland-Thomson that views him as quintessentially disabled: “What makes Bartleby operate narratively as a disabled figure is not what is explicitly ‘wrong’ with him—indeed, the question drives the plot--but rather the way that Bartleby’s differences from normative expectations constitute a problem that the narrator takes as his mission to solve.”), but none that contend Billy might have been autistic as well. I’m less interested in nailing down a definitive diagnosis than in tracing the way that a kind of disability logic—specifically about speech and cognition—animates Melville’s final work, marking Billy as both tragically and productively bereft of culture’s influence. To stutter before the law and sexuality suggests a nearly Lacanian fantasy of return to the imaginary order: prior to desire, prior to language, prior to the desiring self’s differentiation in words. Much more needs to be said about Melville’s paradoxical love affair with obdurate inarticulacy.


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Wyn Kelley – "Wreck Ho, a Wreck!": Silent Women and the Demise of Tragedy in Melville's and Conrad's Short Fiction

Abstract: In the rare, early tales in which Melville and Conrad thematized a certain kind of female heroism—passive, long-suffering, and, most important, speechless—they seem also to have unwittingly played out the drama of their narrators' anxieties about masculine utterance. In two minor works—Melville's projected story of Agatha Hatch, narrated to Hawthorne in a series of letters (1852), and Conrad’s "Amy Foster" (1901, 1903)—and subsequently in more substantial fictions—Melville's The Encantadas (1856) and Conrad’s “Heart of Darkness” (1802)—female muteness destabilizes the tragic spectacle of masculine wreckage. By introducing (feminine) melodrama into the framework of (masculine) tragedy, these fictions raise questions about the power of a confident male narrator to contain his story within the conventions of language itself.
Figures of wrecked males and the women who silently love them are dramatically intertwined in tales that Melville and Conrad wrote early in their careers. In Melville's projected "Agatha" story (perhaps written under the title of "Isle of the Cross" in 1853) and in Conrad's "Amy Foster," women rescue shipwrecked men, nurse them back to health, marry them, bear their children, and then in some vital sense suffer betrayal at their hands. In Melville's "Agatha" correspondence, the wife remains faithful to her wandering husband, but in "Amy Foster" she self-protectively flees, leaving him to die of exhaustion and thirst—or, as the doctor-narrator explains, "heart failure." Both these stories exhibit certain salient textual peculiarities, as they represent efforts at collaboration: Melville planned his in consultation with Nathaniel Hawthorne, while Conrad based "Amy Foster" on a tale by Ford Madox Ford, during the period in which they wrote several novels together. Thus both are inherently hybrid texts. And in their reliance on powerful narrators who intervene visibly, though not successfully, to unite the conflicting elements in their tales, these stories focus on the problem of narration itself. Furthermore, both stories introduce themes that develop more fully and substantially in related works—Melville's The Encantadas and Conrad's "Heart of Darkness"—where the spectacle of masculine wreckage and female devotion reveals the insufficiency of utterance in even more complex ways. Hunilla chokes on the narration of her sorrows, as she remembers the demise of her husband and brother who, while innocent themselves, leave her vulnerable to the depredations of marauding sailors; and Kurtz's women in their different ways swallow his lies in a silence that contrasts with his charismatic voice. Speech breaks down in all these stories as Agatha waits for letters that never arrive; Amy Foster flees Yanko Goorall's incomprehensible jabberings; Hunilla abdicates her own storytelling; and Kurtz's unnamed women retreat to a language of codes and gestures. In these works, female muteness creates a space for the authors' questions about and experiments with language, even as the male narrators seem supremely in command of their powers of speech.

In suggesting that this pattern signifies a crisis over literary genre as well as over utterance, I am drawing on Peter Brooks's theory of melodrama as a radical mode in which figures of muteness challenge logocentric emblems of power. According to this explanation, the intervention of melodrama into tragedy represents the liberation of revolutionary energies from below, expressing themselves in gestures and poses rather than in words. Silence in the face of the unspeakable suggests a powerful ethical and political position. Although critics have assumed that Melville and Conrad do little justice to their silent women, we may read their muteness as a principled and active response to the wreckage of masculine dreams of heroism—often a mask for oppression and cruelty. In this context, we see more clearly the central conflict in these narratives over language as an instrument of colonialism and mastery.

The surprising parallels between these different stories, with their intertwined themes of wreckage and salvation, gender and utterance, melodrama and tragedy, occupy the larger part of this paper, but I am also interested in the differences between Melville's and Conrad's treatments of female silence and male wreckage. Although, in both authors, silent women undermine the tragedy of masculine ruin, Melville's narrator appears to view his female characters, Agatha and Hunilla, more sympathetically than Conrad does Amy Foster or the Intended (the African woman's meaning is more ambiguous). Whereas Melville suggests the possibility, for the narrator, of identifying with both sides of a linguistic equation—the woman who does not speak and the man whose speech undoes him—Conrad's narrator seems to avoid coming too close to either option. Melville's narrator's mission appears to be to inhabit the wreckage of his characters' lives; Dr. Kennedy's and Marlow's are to
escape it. Both attitudes represent daring experiments in the treatment of the writer’s task.

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**Malika Rebai-Maamri – The Human Factor in Conrad's “Heart of Darkness”**

**Abstract:** Conrad's use of language, his depiction of the people of colour in Heart of Darkness as “savages,” “primitives,” “niggers” and “cannibals” disturbs the contemporary mind. In a 1975 lecture at the University of Massachusetts, the Nigerian novelist Chinua Achebe accused Conrad of projecting "the image of Africa as 'the other' world, the antithesis of Europe and therefore of civilisation." and using Africa “as setting and backdrop which eliminates the Africans as human factor.”

The aim of this paper is to “write back” to Achebe and to demonstrate that Conrad was not a racist and that Heart of Darkness transcends prejudice. The very description of the natives and Africa should be read as a critique of racism. When Marlow used the word “nigger,” “negro” or “black,” it was when an African had been physically abused by somebody else, when the African had already been completely dehumanised.

Conrad used the language of the oppressor to criticize the oppressive culture. Through his position as representative of a marginalised culture, who truly knew what it means to stand on the periphery, he attempted to bring about a change through the interface of literature and politics. Many a passage from the novella show that Conrad never rejected the image of the natives as a people without civilization or culture who compared with the Europeans are empty shells. Conrad aimed somehow at liberating the Africans, at decolonising Africa.

Moreover the tragedy the writer unfolds in “Heart of Darkness” is one of the human condition. Conrad reveals to the reader the very truth of imperialism. His commitment is to the “human factor.” Indeed Conrad shows that the contemporary situation is not simply the outcome of socio-political forces but the result of something deeply ingrained in human nature. In “Heart of Darkness,” Conrad condemns modern civilisation and its deceptive gloss.

**Bio:** I am a Lecturer at the University of Algiers. My research interests include literature with a focus on cultural contact. Teaching areas: phonetics, British civilization, writing and English literature. My field of expertise is English literature of the late Victorian era and early twentieth century. Research areas: W.B. Yeats, Joseph Conrad, James Joyce, Chinua Achebe, Assia Djebar, Graham Greene. I also teach EFL, especially TOEFL and Proficiency classes in private schools.
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Art Redding – Melville’s Cold War: Re-reading C. L. R. James’ Mariners, Renegades, and Castaways

Abstract: Published in 1952, penned while the author was imprisoned at Ellis Island for “passport” violations,” pitting the rabble insurgency of the Pequod’s crew against both the proto-totalitarianism of Ahab and the vacillating ineffectuality of Ishmael (whom James terms “an intellectual Ahab”), and offered to the public, in part, as a plea for US citizenship, C. L. R. James’ populist “Story of Herman Melville and the World We Live In” reads at once as a critical diagnosis of ascendant technologies of repression mobilized by the Cold War, and as a popular summons to map a detour through the increasingly sclerotic configurations of personal and political life at mid-century. My aim in this paper is two-fold; initially, I will demonstrate how James’ reading of Melville mobilizes a theoretically astute oppositional strategy to what Alan Nadel has accurately termed a “culture of containment,” which policed ideological waywardness precisely through the complex regulations of space and mobility in the US and globally. As I have argued elsewhere, the critical space to negotiate a geopolitical or cultural alternative to the Cold War divide between a spurious “freedomism” and totalitarianism had been decisively whittled away by 1952; even as late as the 1980s, James might lament of his important study that “publishers don’t publish it.” Ultimately, I hope to posit something like a “C. L. R. James, our contemporary,” by asserting that his emphasis on the transnational dimensions of Melville might offer a roadmap for thinking through the perplexities of globalization and diasporic practices in the twenty-first century. As Donald Pease underscores in his introduction to Mariners, “the irreducible differences and inequivalent cultural features characterizing the ‘mariners, castaways and renegades’ would not conform to a state’s monocultural taxonomy and could not be integrated within a nationalizing telos” (xxviii). If an awareness of the transformational potential of these latent, mobile, differences embodied in the motley crew of sailors aboard the Pequod was submerged in the shipwreck of McCarthyism, it has resurfaced, with something of a symptomatic vengeance, with the deracinated flotsam and jetsam of the New World Dis-Order.

Bio: Art Redding is the author of Raids on Human Consciousness: Writing, Violence, and Anarchism (South Carolina, 1998) and the forthcoming Turncoats, Traitors, and Fellow Travelers: Culture and Politics of the Early Cold War (Mississippi, 2007). He also has a manuscript in progress on ghosts in contemporary US literature. Currently an Assistant professor of English at York University in Toronto, he has taught in various universities in eastern and central Europe and the US.
Abstract: When Harper’s New Monthly Magazine published an extract from Herman Melville’s The Whale, in October 1851, they chose the chapter ‘The Town-Ho’s story’. In the opening scene Melville emphasizes how the sea was perceived as a ‘great highway, where you meet more travelers than in any other part.’ Whale-ships were manned by multi-racial crews; travelers from all over the world. They were European, American, Australian, native and colonial. As Melville observed at least one whale-ship was ‘almost wholly manned by Polynesians’¹. From the perspective of Australia little research has been done on Aboriginal participation in pelagic-whaling. Generally Indigenous people are depicted as unwitting victims of British colonialism. Using the framework presented to us by Melville’s whaling novels this paper offers a post-colonial reflection on race-relations and cross-cultural friendships that emerged onboard nineteenth century whale-ships in the Antipodes².

European colonialism disposed and disadvantaged most Aboriginal people. By the mid-nineteenth century many Aboriginal people had been rounded up onto missions or government stations. At sea, Indigenous men were judged not on the basis of their skin colour but rather on the basis on their skills and expertise. William Lanné, the so-called ‘last Tasmanian Aboriginal man’ first went whaling in 1851, the same year Melville published Moby Dick. Melville’s writings on shipboard race relations and friendships has particular pertinence and value. It is assumed that Lanné ‘found more acceptance from his seafaring friends than any of his compatriots experienced from the rest of European society’³. Lanné, his relative Henry Whalley and their compatriot Walter George Arthur all joined the chequerboard crews of Pacific whalers, they escaped the miseries of the Government run Oyster Cove station where death and deprivation prevailed. Using post-colonial theory (which is heavily indebted to analyses of Joseph Conrad’s writing), a biographical approach to the lives of Lanné and others, and the rich tapestry of materials offered in Melville’s whaling novels, this paper explores how race, friendship, gender and colonialism might be re-configured and re-considered.

Bio: I trained as an archaeologist before turning to historical and Indigenous studies and the application of post-colonial theory. Consequently I have published widely in

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² The Antipodes is an 18th and 19th century term often used to refer to New Zealand and Australia.
³ Lyndall Ryan 1996 The Aboriginal Tasmanians, University of Queensland Press: 214
the areas of Archaeological theory, Aboriginal History, post-colonialism and representation of race. *Savage Imaginings* explored authorised historical and contemporary constructions of Australian Indigeneity, however *A Little Bird Told Me* presented a more personal account of Aboriginality based on the life of a Wotjabaluk woman imprisoned in a series of mental institutions in the early part of the 20th century. I have edited *Colonial Frontiers: Indigenous-European Interactions in Settler Colonies* and co-edited *Constructions of Colonialism: Perspectives on Eliza Fraser’s Shipwreck* and recently completed a book with Dr Ian McNiven on the colonial underpinnings of archaeology as practiced in settler societies entitled *Appropriated Pasts: Archaeology and Indigenous People in Settler Colonies*, (forthcoming 2005 AltaMira Press). In 2005 an edited volume will be published: *Boundary Writing: Living Across the Boundaries of Race, Sex and Gender*, University of Hawaii Press. I am currently working on a new book on Indigenous workers in the early sealing industry. I am the director of the Centre for Australian Indigenous Studies (CAIS)

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**Kevin Goddard – The Great and Saving Illusion: Melville, Conrad and the Masks of Colonialism**

**Abstract:** Both *Heart of Darkness* and *Benito Cereno* present the colonial enterprise from the point of view of palimpsestic re-tellings. Both use this narrative strategy to question the authenticity of the colonial enterprise, but also the authenticity of any possibility of telling the “truth” about the colonial encounter. This paper proposes to explore the function of masking as a narrative strategy in both texts. This masking operates on two levels: the first is that which shows the masks of mimicry adopted by characters in response to the colonial enterprise. This is evident in the characters of both Kurtz and Babo. The second form of masking is that adopted by the narrators themselves, whose palimpsests mask or “shadow”, as both narrator’s have it, the stories on which their narratives are based. A third form of masking is evident in the divide between narrative and reader, so that both narratives deliberately unsettle the reading process by instigating the reader in the colonial enterprise.

The paper argues that these acts of masking are deliberate ploys on the part of both novelists to undermine the colonial enterprise’s emphasis on an essentialist knowledge of the “other”. They undermine colonialism by drawing the reader into the palimpsestic nature of all colonial “telling”, which overwrites reality in its own terms. Having shown something of how these various masks operate in the texts, however, the paper proceeds to argue that in their essence both texts are victims of the very masking they attempt to uncover. By applying layers of narrative “shadowing” to the colonial encounter, the novellas both fall into the trap of assuming that demonstrating the opacity of “truth” is equivalent to revealing truth itself. The “heart of darkness” may, hence, be seen to lie within the narrative process itself, the great “Lie” of the mask, one which prevents full access to the actual colonial experience, but which offers itself as a “great and saving illusion” in which the reader is meant to
share. Instead of countering colonialism’s essentializing, they may be read as entrenching it by making the “truth” of the encounter appear justifiably opaque.

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T. Walter Herbert – Apocalypse Then: Melville’s *Typee* and American Empire

Abstract: The political and ethical convictions now invoked to debate America’s use of global power are vividly dramatized in Melville’s *Typee*. Early 19th-century American projects in the Marquesas Islands were heralded by their proponents as models for the eventual rise of the new nation to imperial dominance; they put forward conflicting theories about how this should happen, and Melville judged these theories against what he found taking place on the ground.

Captain David Porter took possession of the islands in the name of the United States in 1813, and insisted that America should aid backward nations in achieving “civilization,” their movement upward from “savagery” to a social condition like our own, what we now term “development” or “modernization.” Porter believed that an incremental process of education would bring this about, by cultivating the innate virtues of the islanders, in particular their native love of freedom. In pursuing such purposes, Porter soon found it necessary to devastate the valley of the Typees.

The missionary project that arrived at the Marquesas in 1833 believed that "civilization" could be only be achieved through dramatic confrontations in which the power of goodness vanquished the forces of evil: they preached a lineal ancestor of doctrines that have recently taken command of United States foreign policy.

In *Typee* Melville sharply attacks the doctrine of civilization itself, with its assignment of moral superiority and political entitlement to the "civilized." Melville is a precursor of those who speak against the current international trajectory of United States policy, and his analysis of Polynesian immiseration bears a grievous relevance to current events.

Bio: I am Emeritus Professor of English at Southwestern University in Georgetown, Texas. I have written *Marquesan Encounters: Melville and the Meaning of Civilization* (Harvard, 1980); *Dearest Beloved: The Hawthornes and the Making of the Middle-Class Family* (California, 1993); and *Sexual Violence and American Manhood* (Harvard, 2002). I am now at work on a project tentatively entitled *Meditations on Religion and War in American Literature*. 
Heidi Libesman – Questioning the Sources of our Sense of Normativity: Reflections on Conrad’s Journey into the Deep Heart’s Core

Abstract: By the “deep heart’s core” I am referring to that elemental region of human being that Conrad discovered in the *Heart of Darkness* --- the “place” from which human action and judgment mysteriously spring when normal sources of restraint associated with conventional rules of law, social mores, custom, traditions and other sources of normativity break down and our normal socially constructed (and personally embodied) normative-world bearings are thrown into disarray. The otherness which we may be tempted to associate with other places (European-colonized Africa, Nazi Occupied Europe, Rwanda), other people (Kurtz in the Congo, Himmler in Nazi Germany) and other times (late 19th century, mid 20th century, late 20th century) provide no reason for complacency against the risk of unexpected barbarism and terrible cruelty prevailing in human affairs. To the contrary, I want to suggest that Conrad’s explorations of the heart of darkness transcend the context of his narrative and provoke us to think about the persistence of evil and conditions of the possibility for building personal resistance to the inhumanity with which we may be confronted or which we may, without thinking, come to embody in our own life. Reading *Heart of Darkness* may in other words artfully serve to ethically counsel those of us privileged enough to live in conditions of relative freedom, peace and security, of our responsibility to actively cultivate our human capacity for faithfulness.

Yet, we may find ourselves asking ourselves and each other, as a preliminary condition of the possibility of such questioning or at least as a generative source of commitment motivating our willingness to spend time thinking or not thinking through this question and its pedagogical consequences, whether it is possible to learn how to resist the impulse towards evil of which human history is filled with evidence and the history of European imperialism in Africa provides ironically such a terribly good example. What are the sources of “our capacity for faithfulness” of which Conrad speaks? Is it possible to cultivate what Marlowe tells Conrad, and Conrad tells us, is an “innate strength”? Can our personal capacity for faithfulness be learnt or at least influenced to some extent through human action, interaction and cultivated attentiveness, or is it something entirely determined by the sovereign of mysteries, beyond human ken and influence --- an innate goodness or evil with which we are either blessed or cursed? What can we say, in light of Conrad’s narrative and other sources of evidence in human history (Auschwitz, for example or European imperialism in the Americas) which problematize the relationship between learning conventional signs of human civilization and cultivation of that capacity for faithfulness which seems to penetrate through all the complex layers of cultural manifestation to the heart of good and evil in human beings who under normal restraints would not be demonic and are neither fools nor gods? Conrad’s choice to write *Heart of Darkness*, I suggest, might be interpreted as a sign of his own wager
on these difficult questions - a wager we are invited to reflect upon and perhaps choose for ourselves. In the end, as Paul Ricoeur says: “We cannot eliminate from a social ethics the element of risk. We wager on a certain set of values and then try to be consistent with them; verification is therefore a question of our whole life.”

**Bio:** Heidi Libesman is a doctoral student at Osgoode Hall Law School, York University, Toronto, Canada. Her thesis is entitled: Constitutionalism in an age of diversity: the hermeneutic challenge of indigenous difference to the quest for unity without imperialism. She has a masters degree from Harvard Law School. Her research interests are primarily in normative political theory, intellectual history, phenomenology and hermeneutics. She has published articles in The Canadian Journal of Political Science, Yale Journal of Law and Humanities and Osgoode Hall Law School.

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**Stephen B. Hodin – Melville’s Re-View of “the blackness of darkness beyond”: Literature, Race, and the Southern Voice in “Hawthorne and His Mosses”**

**Abstract:** My essay places Herman Melville’s “Hawthorne and his Mosses” (1850) within its historical and biographical context. Ostensibly a review of Hawthorne’s short-story collection *Mosses from the Old Manse* (1846), Melville’s “Hawthorne and his Mosses” rivals the preface to Whitman’s *Leaves of Grass* (1855) and Emerson’s “The American Scholar” and “the Poet” (1837, 1844) for standing as one of the era’s most important literary manifestos. Published amidst Melville’s whirlwind composition of *Moby-Dick*, this multifaceted text praises Hawthorne’s unique voice and his distinctly American aesthetic, calling, in the end, for a national literature that will both represent and showcase to the world a rapidly emergent and flourishing American culture. Yet Melville’s uncharacteristically optimistic tone in the review and his call for a unifying cultural ethos is directly challenged by the political divisiveness that pervades the late antebellum era. That same summer, congress reached a tenuous compromise over slavery, passing the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, a law wildly unpopular in the North. Moreover, Melville credits his review to “A Virginian Spending July in Vermont” -- an intriguing choice considering the deep sectional differences that absorbed the nation at that time. In my essay, I explore the ways that Melville re-imagines what he refers to as Hawthorne’s poetical “blackness,” his “puritanical gloom,” within the present political climate and, cognizant of Hawthorne’s distinctive regional appeal, within a broader national context. I posit Thomas Jefferson as a plausible model for Melville’s Virginian narrator, allowing for Melville to apprehend in Hawthorne’s “blackness ten times black” not America’s “Innate Depravity” but rather the unresolved burdens of race. I further demonstrate how the contemporaneous composition of *Moby-Dick* and the Hawthorne review
inform one another. Indeed, many of the major thematic concerns of “Hawthorne and His Mosses,” especially the submerged issue of race, manifest themselves in fascinating ways in Melville’s writing over the next six years, when he produces some of his most important novels and nearly all of his short fiction. Melville was, in many ways, ahead of his time. In concluding my essay, I trace the ways that Melville’s themes are taken up by other important literary figures such as Joseph Conrad and Ralph Ellison. Also enamored with nautical themes, Conrad elaborates on the figurative and psychological correlation between man’s capacity for evil and the problematics of race, most notably in *Heart of Darkness* (1899). Similarly, Ellison chooses a passage from Melville’s *Benito Cereno* (1855) as an epigraph to *Invisible Man* (1952), and he echoes Melville’s term, “the blackness of darkness,” in his “Prologue” to the novel. For Melville, Conrad, and Ellison alike, what we have long referred to as the blackness in men’s souls can best be understood in cultural terms within the context of racial subjugation.

**Bio:** I currently serve as a Lecturer in the Program in History & Literature at Harvard University. Quite recently, I received my PhD from Boston University in American Studies, and I have a MA in English from the University of Vermont. I teach primarily interdisciplinary classes and tutorials in 18 and 19c American literature and culture, African American studies, and North/Latin American comparative studies. A recent publication of mine on Thomas Jefferson, adapted from my dissertation, can be found in the *Journal of the Early Republic*. I am currently at work on a book project which traces the Jeffersonian image and mythology in antebellum American literature, especially in relation to slavery and technology.

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**Carola M. Kaplan – Translating Trauma**

**Abstract:** In an 1899 letter to the socialist Cunninghame Graham, Joseph Conrad attempts to define who he is, to suggest the experiences that have formed him, and, above all, to distinguish himself from his philanthropic and activist friend: “I look at the future from the depths of a very dark past, and I find I am allowed nothing but fidelity to an absolutely lost cause, to an idea without a future” (*Letters* 2:161). Bleakly deterministic in outlook, the letter alludes to a tragic personal and national history that Conrad can neither abandon nor express. In consequence, he insists on his isolation and permanent estrangement from hopeful causes: “I’m not indifferent to what concerns you. But my concern is elsewhere, my thinking follows another path, my heart wants something else, my soul suffers from another kind of impotence” (161).

This letter is remarkable as much for what it cannot say as for what it admits: “Everything vanishes. Only truth remains—a sinister and fleeting ghost whose image is impossible to fix. I regret nothing, I hope for nothing, for I realize that neither
regret nor hope means anything to my own being. Towards myself, I practice a fierce and rational selfishness. Therein I pause. Then thinking returns. Life starts again, regrets, memories, and a hopelessness darker than night” (161). This last passage, in its strain, incoherence and disjunction, in the tension between resolve and passivity, in the phrase “Therein I pause,” does not merely allude to the ineradicable trauma of Conrad’s life: it enacts it, textually.

What I want to focus on in this paper is the textual enactment of trauma in Conrad’s fiction, on the ways in which his texts present the “dark history” to which his letter to Graham merely alludes. Drawing upon the insights of trauma theory, in particular on the writings of Cathy Caruth and Dominick LaCapra, I will argue that Conrad deals narratively with his own traumatic history by displacing it onto the victims of cultures different from his culture of birth. In particular, he suggests the dark past of his Polish childhood in his depictions of women and of colonized subjects. At times, he emphasizes the commonality of experiences of these two groups by considering, albeit tentatively and at one remove, the lives of colonized women. To support and illustrate these assertions, I will focus in the following paper on Conrad’s fictional treatment of the colonized and of women in his early novel Lord Jim.

Bio: Carola M. Kaplan, professor emerita of English at California State University, Pomona, and past president of the Joseph Conrad Society of America, has co-edited Seeing Double: Revisioning Edwardian and Modernist Literature (Palgrave 1996) and Conrad in the Twenty-First Century (Routledge 2005); as well as published many essays on Conrad, E. M. Forster, T. E. Lawrence, and Christopher Isherwood. She is completing a book on trauma in modernist British fiction.

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Scott Loren – Social Disintegration in the City: The Secret Agent and "Bartleby the Scrivener"

Abstract#1: Primarily regarded as novelists of the sea, the 'city stories' of Conrad and Melville hold an unusual and sometimes controversial place in their respective works. For those familiar with Conrad's The Secret Agent (1907) and Melville's "Bartleby the Scrivener" (1853) this should come as no surprise. Where the sea often serves, like a vast mirror, as the locus in which to explore the pre-Freudian psychological depths of the human experience, the city functions as a backdrop for social or socio-political critique. Far from depicting the sense of community and camaraderie necessitated by the conditions of ship-life (even when mutinous!), the city is the site in which various elements contributing to a general deterioration of the social come under scrutiny. As Conrad tells us in his preface to The Secret Agent, "[t]he vision of an enormous town presented itself, of a monstrous town more populous than some continents and in its man-made might as if indifferent to heaven's frowns and smiles; a cruel devourer of the world's light. There was room enough there to place any story, depth enough there for any passion...darkness
enough to bury five millions of lives." With this description, Conrad sets this dark city in direct opposition to the sea, "the reflector of the world's light." The city he has in mind, as we know, is London. With this tale of "utter desolation, madness and despair," Conrad sketches a scathing portrait of society, from the rudimentary social unit of the Verloc family, to the broader social field of governmental and ideological politics.

Entirely different in style, but equally political and also set in a world metropolis is Melville's "Bartleby the Scrivener: A Story of Wall-Street." Set in New York's financial district, "Bartleby" begins with and continually returns to the topic of capitalism. With an unreliable narrator who does "a snug business among rich men's bonds, and mortgages, and title-deeds," hiring social misfits in order to save on wage costs, "Bartleby" sets itself up as a critique of capitalist ideology. Like The Secret Agent, the political climate and commentary manifest in "Bartleby" has in its foreground a bleak and disturbing display of interpersonal relations.

Reading "Bartleby" and The Secret Agent together and against one another, we will consider where the socio-political commentary in these stories meet, and where they depart. Of particular interest to our inquiry will be how these stories provide commentary on community, on capitalism, on anarchism, and how the city acts as a medium for this commentary. Open for discussion will also be the varying dramatic approaches Conrad and Melville employ in these social critiques: one with a thoroughly modern and humorous 'theater of the absurd', the other with an earnest, if, as Terry Eagleton has put it, self-parodic naturalism and imaginative realism. Recourse to particular biographical elements will also supplement a textual analysis of the political and dramatic approach in each.

Scott Loren – Entropy and the City: Thermodynamic Metaphors in The Secret Agent and "Bartleby the Scrivener"

Abstract#2: The Second Law of Thermodynamics states that “the entropy of an isolated system not at equilibrium will tend to increase over time, approaching a maximum value.” First formulated by Rudolf Clausius in 1850, thermodynamic entropy can be basically understood as a measure of unusable heat-energy in a closed system. Entropy has various implications regarding order and disorder, time and deterioration, and isolation and dissipation. Since C.P. Snow's famous lecture on “The Two Cultures” (1959), in which he addresses a breakdown in communication between the sciences and the humanities, using an anecdote about the Second Law of Thermodynamics to illustrate the lack of basic scientific knowledge among the literati, the use of entropy as a trope in literature has only expanded. With novelists such as Thomas Pynchon, Philip K. Dick, William Gibson and Martin Amis, among others, the thematic employment of entropy in literature has become something of a postmodern, sci-fi hallmark. We are less prone to find it in any era or genre predating postmodernism. Be this as it may, there are particular works from the pre-modernist and early modernist period, particularly those of H.G. Wells, in which 'heat death', or entropy, plays a distinct role. Herman Melville's “Bartleby the Scrivener” (1853) and Joseph Conrad's The Secret Agent (1907) are to be counted among such works.

Although it is difficult to ascertain whether Melville was actively interested in this development in thermodynamics, characteristics central to the discussion revolving around entropy in the 19th century are evident in his portrait of Bartleby: particularly the elements of isolation and dissipation in relation to usable energy. With Conrad, on the other hand, it seems clear through his letters that he would have been aware of the Second Law of Thermodynamics, or at least the implications associated with it at the turn of the century. With its focus on time (the attack on the
Greenwich Observatory) and various forms of deterioration, in addition to opposing non-work (the slothful Verloc) to active-work (detective Heat – note the name), *The Secret Agent* employs a thematic application of entropy as a trope throughout. As a trope for what, though?

With a thorough substantiation of the thematic use of entropy in both of these ‘city stories’, I intend to show how Conrad and Melville employ ‘entropic concepts’ as tropes for social deterioration and, further, how this relates back to and is reflected through the city setting. In contrast to their ‘sea stories’, where the sea often serves, like a vast mirror, as the locus in which to explore the pre-Freudian psychological depths of the human experience, the city functions as a backdrop for social critique. Interpreting “Bartleby” as a model of entropy in a closed system can be shown to mirror the social commentary on isolation in the city. Similarly in *The Secret Agent*, the attack on science and time itself, the presentation of cold, inorganic elements of the city in relation to the people that populate it, and a general opposition of organization and chaos can be shown to mirror the socio-political deterioration depicted in the novel.

**Bio:** I’ve attended San Francisco State University (B.A.), the City University of New York (M.A.), and the University of Zurich, Switzerland (Ph.D.). I currently teach English at the University of St. Gallen, Switzerland, where I also work as a research assistant. Forthcoming publications are: "Out of the Past: Freedom, Film Noir and the American Dream’s Myth of Reinvention." Ricardo Miguez, ed. American Dreams: Comparative Dialogues in U.S. Studies. Amersham: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2006; and "Mechanical Humanity, or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Android: the Posthuman Subject in 2001: A Space Odyssey and Artificial Intelligence: A.I." Gary Rhodes and John Springer, eds. As yet untitled anthology on Stanley Kubrick. North Carolina: McFarland and Company, 2006/07.

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**Abstract:** Conrad's denial notwithstanding, Melville and he are conjoined by a generally negative worldview and a correspondingly pessimistic philosophy, clearly revealed in the two novels. These two short works, both "simple tales," portray a nasty, unjust, godless Darwinian world in which men have no intrinsic value but are merely "bricks": building blocks used by others to construct their own personal edifices, as Melville notes in *Israel Potter*. Although Melville has more sympathy for his characters in this cruel world, both Melville and Conrad perceive the planet and its inhabitants ironically. As Melville asks in *Israel Potter*, "Is civilization a thing distinct, or is it an advanced stage of barbarism?" The novels have much in common, especially in their revelation of how human beings are used in societies that wear the mantle of "Civilization." And mantles, of course, are standard currency in both books; they are disguises, whether worn by people or nations. My paper will focus on specific uses of characters who are "cannibalized" or "ploughed under" by laws, institutions,
and fellow human beings. Although Israel's character seems most parallel to the naïve Stevie in Conrad's text, not many characters escape victimization in either book. And even though Verloc is far more suspect than Israel, given his cold ambition, as compared with Israel's basic idealistic decency, Conrad shows that even he is much used and abused. Verloc is a professional spy "simply trying to make a living," and not caring much who gets hurt in the process or how false he has to be to "get the job done," and he always understands that given the nature of his work he must watch his back. Israel, on the other hand, is an honest neophyte who must learn to falsely assume far more identities than Verloc if he is to continue breathing, much less have any hope of returning to what he remembers as the innocent Paradisiacal America (which Melville shows as totally changed by the end of the novel, if it ever existed at all). I shall discuss the use of people by governments, politicians, society's caste system, employers, strangers, friends and relatives and lovers, megalomaniacs, scientists, and indeed homelands, with their empty monuments and legalized plunder. Both novels show London as a "City of Dis," but Melville does not let the state of Massachusetts off lightly, either.

Along the way I shall show parallels between Melville's "Benjamin Franklin" and Conrad's "Professor," as well as Melville's "John Paul Jones" and Conrad's "Ossipon," and I shall also demonstrate how Israel Potter himself is analogous to Conrad's sacrificial lamb, Stevie. Although my proposed paper has not reached full definitiveness, it is one which I have been mulling over for some time. It certainly will be gelled, with realistic boundaries drawn, by the time of the conference. When one thinks "Melville and Conrad," the problem is not what to say but where to begin. I have chosen to begin not on the more obvious parallels (i.e. Conrad's "Heart of Darkness"), but to tease out just why The Secret Agent makes me think of the neglected Israel Potter, both of them novelized versions of non-fiction historical realities. (Talk about "using" people, what is plagiarism if no a prime example of how "gentlemen" disregard the right to intellectual property! Oh, I see... It's not plagiarism is an author's disguising of the material is clever and seductive enough.)

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Yukiko Oshima – Melville’s Late Sea Visions—A Prescription of Going to the Paradise Twice

Abstract: I will examine how in his late poetry Melville united various non-Christians, particularly South Seas islanders and indigenous peoples of the Americas. This conflation of races is epitomized in the title piece of John Marr, as John Marr praises the visions of his ex-sailor-friends as “barbarians of man’s simple nature.” Other poems of this period, “To Ned” and “The Archipelago,” sing of paradisiacal South Seas and “Harba Santa” relishes the healing power in a Native American pipe.
These works show how Melville valued the indigenous peoples’ natural way of life before their contact with white modernity.

In the first half of my presentation, I will focus on “John Marr” and “Rip Van Winkle’s Lilac.” I read “John Marr” against the backdrop of the Native American mound culture and the Black Hawk War. The work maintains peculiarly pro-Native American views by criticizing the settlers’ lack of the “flower of life” as opposed to the protagonist’s cosmopolitanism. “Rip Van Winkle’s Lilac” similarly attacks utilitarian settlers through its satire of the American picturesque whose ideology was to be shared by the Manifest Destiny.

I will next apply the same theme to a seemingly innocent love poem “Crossing the Tropics” by focusing on its epigram “from ‘The Saya-Y-Manto.’” Saya, a peculiar fashion for nineteenth-century Lima women, was earlier used in Melville’s novella “Benito Cereno” as an implicit symbol of Indian desire for revolt. This desire was deftly overlapped with that of the African slave’s. Considering possible influence on Melville by Jack Chase who had participated in the Indian revolt in Peru, my interpretation of “Crossing the Tropics” might not be far-fetched. Thus the poem’s racial implications can be expanded to the whole Americas; the woman sung in the poem can have Indian blood.

Melville optimistically sings that smoking can lead to paradise in the Indian Psyche in the South Seas in another poem “To Ned,” set right before “Crossing the Tropics,.”: “…breathed primeval balm/ From Edens ere yet overrun; Marveling mild if mortal twice,/ Here and hereafter, though a Paradise.” I will probe how late Melville came to uphold a non-Christian gospel to the world.

Bio: I teach American literature at Fukuoka University, Fukuoka City, Japan where I am Professor of English. Some of my articles on Melville have been printed thanks to the Melville Society: "The Red Flag of the Pequod/Pequot: Native American Presence in Moby-Dick” in Melville “Among the Nations”, “Isabel as a Native American Ghost in Saddle Meadows” in Leviathan, Vol.5, 2003., ”Reading Israel Potter as National Amnesia” in Sky-Hawk No.22 (based on my paper read at the Melville & Douglass Conference), “From Hope Leslie to Moby-Dick” in Ungraspable Phantom.
judgement,” since “truth alone is the justification of any fiction.” He realizes that truth demands impartiality and detachment and claims to have sought them “scrupulously” in his novel. However, he admits that his objective was to express the truth “imaginatively” and, in this way, demonstrates his awareness of the fusion of the political and the literary. This merger of the political and literary imaginations has become a given in the modern world, as observed by Leonidas Donskis in *Forms of Hatred: the Troubled Imagination in Modern Philosophy and Literature* (2003). While it is interesting to observe such modern awareness in Conrad, it is equally interesting to question the “truthfulness” of his representation of Russian character molded by Russia’s political realities. After all, Russia’s psychology is under the scrutiny of “Western Eyes.” Although the Western observer in the novel is heavily guided by Conrad’s consciousness, his construction is undoubtedly imaginative. So is Conrad’s construction of his Western narrator.

**Bio:** I am a Ph.D. of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, currently employed at VDU, Kaunas, Lithuania. My field is American and British literature from mid 19th century to mid 20th century.

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**Mark Dunphy – Native Heart of American Darkness: “A Great Civil War of Heathen Antiquity” in Melville’s Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War**

**Abstract:**

**Bio:** Mark Dunphy is Professor of English at Lindsey Wilson College in South-Central Kentucky. He has presented and published papers on Herman Melville, John Steinbeck, Kate Chopin, Emerson, Mark Twain, Jack Kerouac, Francis Allyn Olmsted, Edgar Allan Poe, Simone de Beauvoir, Henry Roth, Walt Whitman, Gurney Norman, Robert Louis Stevenson, Robert Frank, and James Joyce.

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Bruce A. Harvey – Melville, the Errant Romance of Cargo, and the Global Scene

Abstract: In our contemporary global, nearly instantaneous economy of delivery, we do not think much about cargo or the commodity in transit. We do not think about the way our goods endure the vicissitudes of shipping, become instinct with the geographies of their travels, or in their loss or arrival, measure anxiety about and desire for home-ness, for all things to be brought into the monad of our singular being. I want to tease out what it might mean for cargo to be spendthrift, irregular, prodigal, and illicitly mobile. The so-called “classic” writers of the American Romantic era obsessively pose selfhoods and fluidic spaces at odds with the topography of possessive individualism, i.e., the expansion of property and aggrandizement of selfhood via Manifest Destiny. By conjoining the terms “romance” and “cargo” I want to propose an alternative vision of American Romanticism/American Renaissance writing, one that reveals new connections between interiors of selfhood and the exteriors of actual material conditions of transport and trade.

My talk will focus particularly on Melville’s sea texts (from Typee and on), but in so doing the goal is to convey a larger cultural thematic of the era. I argue that for literary, political, and economic reasons, “cargo” became intensely thematized and fetishized throughout key antebellum texts: from Cooper’s sea novels to Poe’s description of “promiscuous cargo” (the disarrayed crates of goods in the hold in which Pym has sequestered himself) in Arthur Gordon Pym onto the conclusion of Douglass’s 1845 Narrative. My core argument—speculative and theoretical rather than strictly interpretive—is that cargo became a vexed token or stand-in of a fluid selfhood that, although always mobile or transgressive, continuously and impossibly sought to become stable and find its proper home.

Bio: I am an Associate Professor of English and Director of Humanities at Florida International University. In American Geographics: U.S. National Narratives and the Representation of the Non-European World, 1830-1865 (Stanford, 2001) and a number of articles, I’ve focused on the relations among selfhood, nation, and broader/global geographical domains. My talk, “Melville, the Errant Romance of Cargo, and the Global Scene,” derives from a chapter in a book-project entitled “The Muse of Melancholy in the New World.”

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Susan Fanning – Rowing the Man to Doom: Self-Implication and Narrative Irony in Heart of Darkness and Moby-Dick
Abstract: This paper will compare Conrad’s and Melville’s use of narrative irony and a disjunctive style in Heart of Darkness and Moby-Dick to criticize the great political-moral crises of their days. Conrad was directly implicated in the colonial exploitation of Africa, having commanded a Congo River steamboat for Belgian investors and having packed ivory for the European market. Melville, too, suffered pangs of conscience as he wrote Moby-Dick. Antislavery in outlook, he was surrounded by members of the majority Democratic party who regarded slavery as a constitutional issue that should not be interfered with. Kurtz’s rebellion against the imperialist enterprise that seeks to control him and Ahab’s struggle with the whale spring from deliberations taking place in the consciousnesses of both authors, and it is apparent that they rejected traditional narrative forms that would smooth over and bury what each regarded as history’s greatest outrage. Conrad’s and Melville’s objects of attack are uncannily similar: Kurtz and Ahab have succumbed to iniquitous powers that have ravaged their sanity and physical health; each engages in intimidation, manipulation, and “certain midnight dances ending with unspeakable rites” with his subalterns, proving himself unfit to govern. Yet Conrad’s and Melville’s objects of attack fan outward to include societies whose own brutal, hypocritical practices produce these mutant offspring to begin with. Conrad’s and Melville’s use of disjunctive narrative modes and ironic personae who speak from both inside and outside the framework of their stories will be examined to show how the authors juxtapose conflicting ideologies. Conrad’s manipulation of the detached first-person narrator in the outer frame of Heart of Darkness and Marlow’s counter-perspective in the inner narrative will be analyzed, as well as the multitude of other voices that erupt in the text. Moby-Dick’s more deeply disjunctive narrative style pits Ishmael’s double-voiced discourse in the digressions against Ahab’s monologic rhetoric in the linear plot. Together, the pair engage in an indirect dialogue that contests the ethics, morals, and political “systems” of each other, yet which also illuminates the complexities of each ideology. The haunting sense of mental imbalance and psychological exile that infuses each work will be considered to better understand Marlow’s and Ishmael’s perverse identification with their respective nemeses. Marlow may defend Kurtz’s reputation to company officials, and Ishmael may raise his voice with the rest of the Pequod’s crew, casting his lot with Ahab; however, the kinship between the two narrators and their objects of attack is ultimately based on rivalry, for each rejects the values Kurtz and Ahab uphold. Marlow’s and Ishmael’s acts of “swallowing” their enemies’ speech into the framework of their narratives—and telling and retelling of their stories to generations of readers—enables them to contain, control, and dissect these societal aberrations, and expose the connection between historical “truths” and the brutal hypocrisy of imperialist ideology.

Bio: Susan Garbarini Fanning is Assistant Professor of English at Suffolk County Community College – Eastern Campus on Long Island, New York, where she teaches literature, writing and journalism. Her area of specialization is 19th-century American literature, with sub-concentrations in Renaissance and Eighteenth-Century English literature. She has presented papers on numerous authors and published articles on the writings of Henry James and Herman Melville. Her latest essay, “Travels in the Interior: Typee, Pym and the Limits of Transculturation,” will appear in the Whole Oceans Away: Melville and the Pacific volume to be published by the Kent State University Press.

Timothy Hayes
UNC-Chapel Hill
Timothy Hayes – “Travelling Across Trajectories”: Marlow, Ishmael, and Narrative Multiplicity

Abstract: Many of the similarities between Conrad’s Charlie Marlow and Melville’s Ishmael are clear: they are both seamen, both storytellers. Both have survived near-death experiences following encounters with larger-than-life figures that they feel compelled to share. But one less obvious characteristic that they share is their interest not only in telling stories but in hearing and, in some sense, collecting others’ narratives. Ishmael achieves a fast friendship with the “cannibal” Queequeg and seems to revel in the multiplicity of cultures represented by the crew of the Pequod, a fascination that at times rivals his growing focus on Ahab. Marlow, as he meets the imperialists and Africans that precede his encounter with Kurtz, seems keenly interested in the narratives that they employ to survive in the extremities of the Congo. Both demonstrate through their adventures, then, both an awareness of and, to some extent, a respect for the idea that others, particularly those with whom they share no cultural past, have their own unique worldview based on a different story or set of stories. They recognize, in other words, the multiplicity of narratives that defines the spaces that they encounter.

In For Space (2005), geographer Doreen Massey proposes “that we understand space [...] the sphere in which distinct trajectories coexist; as the sphere therefore of coexisting heterogeneity” (9). In the multicultural world of 2006, such a definition is both compelling and not all that surprising. But what a closer study of the narrative universes of both Ishmael and Marlow’s tales reveals is how Massey’s vision of space as not just a physical locale but a realm of coexisting “trajectories” (her attempt to describe the thoroughly globalized space of the present) exists in both Moby Dick and Heart of Darkness. Marlow and Ishmael do not simply escape the physical and social realities of the relatively homogeneous societies that they call home. Rather, they enter incipiently globalized spaces, the Pequod and the Congo, spaces where individuals of diverse backgrounds are thrust together. How each narrator reacts to this space, though, is starkly different. Compared with Marlow, Ishmael shows a more marked willingness to show respect for other cultures from the beginning. Yet this initial multicultural fascination—his interest in the multiple trajectories of the crew members—is ultimately overwhelmed by his obsession with Ahab’s maniacal quest. Conversely, while Marlow harbors some doubts about the imperial mission on which he is sent, he remains largely invested in discovering how fellow Europeans face the “darkness” for much of his journey. Unable to understand his surroundings or, more importantly, the language of the Africans around him, Marlow does not initially grasp the multiple trajectories of the Congo. But his disgust with his fellow Company men, coupled with a growing sympathy for his African crewmates, and finally his compassion for Kurtz’s Intended in the novella’s final scene, allow him to recognize the heterogeneous realities of his world. “Travelling across trajectories” (Massey, 119), Ishmael and Marlow strive to recognize and appreciate the heterogeneous spaces that they encounter.
Bio: Tim Hayes plans to receive a PhD in English from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in May 2007. He specializes in 19th century British literature, with a special emphasis on the late Victorian period. His dissertation, currently entitled "Hybridity, Narrative, and the Imperial Self in Victorian Adventure Fiction," explores how novels by Melville, Rider Haggard, R.L. Stevenson, and Conrad consider the implications of imperial failures on selfhood. He also received an MA in English from UNC (2002) and a BA in English literature from Rhodes College in Memphis, TN (2000).

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Victor Verney – The Influence of Mahan on Melville and Conrad

Abstract: In Chapter Three of Billy Budd, Sailor, Herman Melville’s narrator describes the 1797 Nore Mutiny as “more menacing to England than “the armies of the French Directory.” Writing ninety years after the event, Melville referred to the British naval fleet as “the right arm of a Power then all but the sole free conservative one of the Old World.”

Writing contemporaneously with Melville of that historical moment, noted American naval officer, historian and theoretician Alfred Thayer Mahan, in The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660-1783, concurred: "Those far distant, storm-beaten ships, upon which the Grand Army [of Napoleon] never looked, stood between it and the dominion of the world." The dominion referred to by Captain Mahan was, above all, a mercantile one. Considered by many as the single most influential American writer of the Nineteenth Century, Mahan (1840-1912) was something of a real-life Captain Vere, widely seen as having “a queer streak of the pedantic running through him” by his fellow officers, whom he urged to go beyond the standard professional journals to read more widely in history and literature.

Among other things, Mahan was also an imperialist, capitalist, Anglophile, racist, Protestant fundamentalist and social Darwinist, according to his biographer Robert Seager. However, he was no simple militarist espousing the buildup of a dominant naval force for its own sake. His idée fixe was that national power, security and prosperity were dependent upon foreign commerce, which in turn called for a strong merchant marine, a protective navy, and a global network of bases to support both. Mahan became intellectual preceptor and muse to President Teddy Roosevelt and his “Great White Fleet” which established and secured American global dominance in the Twentieth Century.

Dispossessed scions of aristocratic lines fallen upon hard times, both Melville and Conrad were “gentility in tatters” driven to sea by economic necessity. After both had exhausted their own resources and options, they took to the seas for material sustenance and expanded financial opportunity, much like the countries under whose flags they sailed. As British and American trading outposts provided the raw material for commercial production, so too these same “outposts of progress” provided Melville and Conrad with the raw material for their literary productions.

Both writers not only saw the face of colonialism, as projected by naval power, in a very real sense they were that face, and both men wrestled with its implications. Neither writer was enamored with the Noble Savage, and while dismayed at the abuses of colonialism, both were nonetheless willing to countenance it as a necessary
evil. Although both writers are generally seen as standing apart from Anglo-American colonialism as critical observers, this perception is undercut by the complicity they had in it as vested participants, as sailors and writers.

Both Melville and Conrad, this paper will submit, authored an auto-conflicted discourse regarding Anglo-American expansion, discovery, and invasion that makes their work increasingly problematic to the modern reader, imbued as s/he is with the implicit moral criticism of 21st-century post-colonial assumptions. I will argue against the dubious comfort of any presentist-minded efforts to appropriate these writers into those assumptions, arguing instead that they must be seen as men and seamen of their era, an era dominated by Mahan and his powerful disciples.

Bio: I earned a graduate degree in American literature at the State University of NY/Buffalo, writing my doctoral dissertation, “John Brown: Cultural Icon in American Mythos,” under direction of the late Leslie Fiedler, renowned literary and cultural critic and author of the acclaimed “Love and Death in the America Novel.” After a few years as an English professor, I entered the field of journalism, working as editor at both weekly and daily newspapers. A desire to focus on specific projects led to a career as freelance writer. In addition to Conrad and Melville, other authors of special interest to me include Hawthorne, Kafka, Camus and Orwell. A history minor in graduate school and a veteran of four years of sea duty in the U.S. Navy, I have written extensively on the intersection of literary and military history, with particular emphasis on the American and Spanish civil wars. Having performed for several years as a semi-professional jazz pianist, I have a strong avocational interest in jazz as well as a life-long fascination with baseball — two of my favorite writing topics.

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Nancy Ruttenburg – Confidence and the Conventional Conscience

Abstract: The paper examines Conrad’s and Melville’s novelistic meditations on the social-political meanings of “confidence,” particularly in relation to democracy (revolutionary and bourgeois), in Under Western Eyes and The Confidence-Man. Conrad’s plot takes the student Razumov from tsarist Russia to democratic Geneva, situating “confidence” in the contexts of autocracy and revolution. His reactionaries and radicals similarly abuse but also succumb to the expedient of confidence, especially when it is exercised in tandem with what Razumov assails as the “conventional conscience.” Melville’s novel extends Conrad’s observations of the social and political valence of confidence in three ways. First, his Mississippi steamboat reveals the grotesque underside of bourgeois democracy’s complacent banality. Second, whereas confidence is the engine of Conrad’s tragic plot which entangles Razumov in a kind of spatial and temporal drawing out of the liar’s paradox, Melville disallows plot as the vehicle for revealing the otherwise invisible or
untraceable workings of confidence. Confidence in Melville is not permitted a tragic or comic telos, and so it retains its characteristically diffuse energy which doesn’t really require a referent even if it is invested in particular individuals. Third, and relatedly, Melville dispenses with any transcendent point of view or principle of coherence in the presentation of confidence and its sidekick, the conventional conscience, which Conrad provides in the figure of his narrator, the Englishman who comes into possession of Razumov’s diary and personifies the unseeing “Western eyes” under which the Russian drama unfolds. I’m particularly interested in the role each author ascribes to confidence in the workings of a democratic social order, whether revolutionary or bourgeois. Therefore, in Under Western Eyes I will focus on the scene of Haldin’s intrusion into Razumov’s room and the latter’s subsequent interview with his father and the General, as well as those scenes in Geneva in which the role of confidence is foregrounded, as when Nathalie Haldin reviews her reasons for trusting Razumov. In The Confidence Man, I’m especially interested in the friendship chapters for their presentation of confidence as that which helps forge democratic links as well as opportunities to swindle and manipulate.

Bio: I'm a comparatist whose fields of expertise are colonial through antebellum American literature and nineteenth-century Russian literature. The particular aim of my research has been to examine the varieties of democratic thought and expression in modern cultures. In this regard, I wrote extensively on Melville in my first book, Democratic Personality: Popular Voice and the Trial of American Authorship (Stanford, 1998), which concludes with a chapter on Billy Budd. I've just finished a second book called Dostoevsky's Democracy which analyzes the transitional period between the writer's early works and the great novels--the period of arrest, exile, and incarceration in a forced labor camp--in terms of his encounter with the Russian common people and its effect on his aesthetic and ideological development. I am currently chairing the Department of Comparative Literature at New York University.
In critical commentary, the writings of Melville and Conrad seemed to share, for a long time, an apparent lack of women, not a surprising similarity for authors often drawing on their sea voyage experiences for their fictional material. Critical attention began to notice Conrad’s women in the 1980s, suggesting their significance and importance, and the 21st century has already seen a marked interest in this area in Melville studies. The lack of attention paid to the women has not only been the result of critical blindness; the female presence in Melville and Conrad is often elusive. Not only are prominent women characters scarce in many of their works, but the female presence is not expressed exclusively through them. Melville and Conrad engage with a female presence in different ways, but a triad that involves the interweaving of “exotic” women, feminized spaces/places and silence seems common to both.

As the entry in Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies reminds us, the word "exotic" first meant "alien [...] not indigenous." For the white sailors of Melville's and Conrad's early sea stories, island women are twice "othered," as they function to define the seamen's identities through both racial/ethnic and gender difference. But the Key Concepts entry goes on to point out that by 1651, the meaning of the word "exotic" "had been extended to include ‘an exotic and foreign territory,' ‘an exotic habit and demeanor' (OED)." The second element of the triad, then, relates to the various ways in which Melville and Conrad feminize situations and places in their fiction, a process that inevitably carries ambivalence; domestication, for example, generally associated with women in the 19th and early 20th centuries, can bring familiarity and reassurance, but can also emphasize the threat of difference (and misunderstanding) contained in gendered othering. The final element in the triad is Melville's and Conrad's deployment of silence. In the works of both, silence is often associated with women. The extent to which silence is gendered female by these writers and the implications and significance of this process in relation to the representations of the exotic woman and feminized situations form the focus of this paper in approaching, among others, Melville's Typee and Conrad's Lord Jim.

Bio: Rita Bode is a faculty member of the Department of English Literature, Trent University, Canada where she teaches a wide range of courses from Renaissance drama to the modern period. Her research interests include American and British writers of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Her published work has appeared in _Conradiana_, _CreArta_, _ESQ_, a

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Tatsushi Narita – Kurtz, Dravot, Magruder and “Transpacific” T. S. Eliot

Abstract: In 1905 Eliot published “The Man Who Was King,” a crucial short story which fully deserves an analysis to illuminate the peculiar character Magruder which the young author created.
No doubt Eliot, an ardent reader of Rudyard Kipling, modeled this story of a renegade king on his “The Man Who Would Be King” (1888). Judging from the way Eliot wrote “The Man Who Was King,” his attention should have been focused on Kipling’s failed white king Daniel Dravot, whose grave error in governing the targeted society caused the final expulsion from the alien land he invaded. Despite the common points that the two stories share, the Eliot piece is unique in the creation of Magruder. I shall try to illuminate his later obsession with Conrad, in particular, Kurtz, another failed king through the discussion of “The Man Who Was King,” notably Magruder.

Here is a practical description of how I present my proposal. Drawing on new biographical discoveries I was fortunate enough to make concerning his formative years of his life in St. Louis, I first argue that, in 1904, when the World’s Fair of St. Louis was held, captivated by the Igorot Village at the co-jointly held Philippine Exposition, Eliot incorporated into the story his own experiences of encountering cultural Others. Secondly, I shall discuss in detail what the nature of the visits he made to Igorot Village was. Thirdly, I seek to explore how Eliot conceived the story by comparing the story and Kipling’s “The Man Who Would Be King” and shall make it clear that Eliot fully consciously changed the Trans-Afghan setting to that of Transpacific crossing. That is, Eliot was “contrapuntist” in the creation of this setting. Fourthly, I delineate how Eliot concerned himself with the idea of “failed king” as a youth aged 16 in 1905 and “failed king” in his yet later years. Fifthly, I shall compare “Transpacific” Magruder with “Trans-Afghan” Dravot; make a further comparative study of “Trans-African” Kurtz and Magruder, focusing attention on the “failed king.” The last point is concerned with how Eliot confronted in composing The Waste Land and “The Hollow Man.”

This paper is a deliberate attempt not to start from the too much trodden path of starting discussion from Eliot’s use of Conrad in “The Hollow Men.” I shall use quite a few relevant visual slides.

Bio: I teach at Nagoya City University, Japan. Founding President, Nagoya Comparative Culture Forum; also a Member of the Executive Council of the International American Studies Association (IASA) serving on IASA’s Committee of Membership, Finance and Development; I gave conference papers in Japan, the UK, the USA, the Netherlands, Poland, Korea, India, Cyprus and China. My most recent published works include "How Far is T. S. Eliot from Here?" in How Far Is America from Here? (Rodopi Publishers, 2005); and "T. S. Eliot, Polynesia and the Philippines." American Freedoms, American (Dis)Orders (University of Warsaw, Poland, 2005).

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Abstract: South America, ‘the Queen of Continents,’ as the site of “a vast colonization scheme” forms the core of both Melville’s “The Encantadas” (1854) and Conrad’s Nostromo (1904). Fifty years separate both texts, but the main issues keep them united. Sailor writers as well as visitors to those lands, Melville and Conrad embark their characters on a (de)colonizing adventure, for, as they explicitly narrate, South America has been both conquered and freed by sailors.

Certainly, many have been attracted by the riches of the South American continent, whale and turtle oil in the Gallipagos, silver mines in Peru. A Paradise, El Dorado, frequently turned into a Tartarus, as Melville described the Encantadas. Formerly possessed by Spain, and newly independent, both authors reflect upon the problematics of the South American (post)colonization, for new ties will come to substitute the old.

Melville concentrates upon the expectations created by new colonial enterprises in the Gallipagos, such as that undertaken in Floreana – Charles Island – in 1832, which will end in failure, and will anticipate the riots and chaotic political future of the South American continent that Conrad portrays in Nostromo. Somehow, Conrad develops in his novel many of the items Melville exposed, particularly in Sketches Seventh, and Ninth of the “The Encantadas.” Thus, the President-Dictators that play such an important role in Conrad’s Nostromo had already been foresighted by Melville. Likewise, both devote a lot of importance to the role of religion in colonial processes.

The neo-colonial struggles among European, North American and South American creoles depicted by Melville and Conrad allow the reader to perceive their prejudiced views. In fact, Melville’s vision of the natives, especially the mestizos, shows his intent not to be complicit with the oppressive system of colonialism he is so critical of, whereas Conrad’s narrative, in spite of his critique, can be seen as more complicit with it. Interestingly enough, both coincide in their negative portrait of the Spanish rule, symbolized by the Spanish Dons.

Bio: I am a Senior Lecturer at the University of the Basque Country – Departamento de Filología Inglesa y Alemana- in Vitoria, Spain, where I teach North American Literature to undergraduate students and postcolonial and global theories to postgraduates. My fields of research are: deconstruction, gender, postcolonial studies, and global and local theories. My first book, Presencia-Ausencia de la Mujer en la obra de Herman Melville (1996) was based on my PhD. I have also published several articles on Melville, my last “When Silence Speaks: The Chola Widow” in Melville and Women, ed. Elizabeth Shultz and Haskell Springer. Kent State UP, 2006. I have also published some articles on Native-American Literature: “Travelling Across Identities” (2000), "Beyond Borders: The Native-American C(h)ase" (2003), as well as on Native-American authors, Louise Erdrich in particular. I have also edited two books: AZTLAN: Ensayos sobre Literatura Chicana (2001) and AMERICAN MIRRORS: (Self)-Reflections and (Self)-Distortions (2005).

William Merrill Decker
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William Merrill Decker – “Who Aint a Slave?” Ishmael, Pip, and the Slave Narrative Tradition

Abstract: Like other antebellum authors not directly concerned with the politics of slavery and abolition, Herman Melville recurrently ponders what he looks upon as the exotic humanity of the African subject while constructing tales of allegorical manumission whereby the emancipated black becomes a trope for a supposedly universal human liberation. The multifarious *Moby-Dick* includes among its carnival of modes what by 1850 is the highly evolved genre of the fugitive slave narrative, and through the person of Pip—perhaps the most subtle of Ishmael’s several doubles—places the slave narrative at the center of Ishmael’s tale of escape.

With a view to European-American literature’s longstanding derivation of political and spiritual metaphors from the African’s condition of bondage in the New World, this paper will revisit the centrality of Pip’s story, and thus the slave narrative tradition, to the larger narrative movement of *Moby-Dick*. It will explore Pip’s ocean immersion and his transformation into an escaped and lost soul as well as what may be termed the double incorporeality of his posthumous speaking body. It will assess Ahab’s recognition of Pip’s power to impeach the master subject position and gain access to what are left of Ahab’s “humanities.” It will examine the ways in which Melville, ever mindful of America’s (and indeed New England’s) complicity in the horrors of the middle passage, proposes the black body as a metaphor of the human soul, lost and found and lost again. Finally, it will consider the ways in which Pip’s immersion anticipates Ishmael’s fate as a more and less redeemed castaway, and thus the subtleties by which Melville (albeit falsely) Africanizes Ishmael’s outlaw status. Throughout, I will argue that Pip represents the translation of a topical figure and topical narrative of the late antebellum period into a genuinely transnational context, one that at once clarifies and destabilizes period binaries of black and white, bond and free.

Graham MacPhee – Conrad, Englishness and Empire

Abstract:

Conrad’s realization is that if, like narrative, imperialism has monopolized the entire system of representation [...] your self-consciousness as an outsider can allow you actively to comprehend how the machine works, given that you and it are fundamentally not in perfect synchrony or correspondence. Never the wholly incorporated and fully acculturated Englishman, Conrad therefore preserved an ironic distance in each of his works.


Joseph Conrad’s fortunes at the hand’s of postcolonial criticism have experienced an extraordinary turn around: famously attacked for his racism in Chinua Achebe’s 1975 article “An Image of Africa”, over the next decade Conrad’s work would increasingly come to be seen as performing a paradigmatic deconstruction of the imperial project. In Edward Said’s influential formulation, the ironizing potential of Conrad’s text is grounded in his own ironic relationship to the ‘eccentric’ English national identity he was to adopt as a seafarer and émigré Polish aristocrat.

This paper will reassess this critical trajectory – from Eurocentric racist to deconstructive subversive – in the light of Conrad’s relationship to Englishness. It will focus on issues of social visibility (of colonialism, of the political, of the nation) in *The Heart of Darkness* and *The Secret Agent*, both as they are thematized (for example in the mass media or in accounts of popular consciousness) and as they organize narrative at the level of action, motive and existential meaning/non-meaning. The aim of this paper is to examine Conrad’s relationship to Englishness and the British Empire, and to reflect on the critical terms underlying his varying treatment within postcolonial criticism. In particular, this paper will pose the question of the ‘nationality’ of Conrad’s nihilism.

Bio: I have taught at universities in Britain and the US, and am currently Assistant Professor of English at West Chester University of Pennsylvania. I have written widely on modern culture and philosophy, and am the author of *The Architecture of the Visible* (Continuum, 2002), the co-editor of *Empire and After: Englishness in Postcolonial Perspective* (Berghahn, 2007).
Leslie Petty – A Sort of Love-Quarrel: Amasa Delano’s Bachelor’s Sensibility in Benito Cereno

Abstract: Much has been made of Melville’s decision to alter the name of Benito Cereno’s ship to the San Dominick in his fictional re-telling of an actual slave mutiny; however, comparatively little attention has been paid to his equally suggestive alteration to Amasa Delano’s, which was changed from the historical Perseverance to the Bachelor’s Delight. This lack of attention is surprising, given that Melville described at length a “Paradise of Bachelors” just three years earlier and given that his vexed, violent marriage has become an increasingly important interpretive lens for reading his fiction. In this presentation, I will rely on this recent scholarship, as well as discussions of nineteenth-century masculine sentimentality and bachelor culture to analyze the significance of Delano’s implied status as bachelor (and a delighted one at that). In part, I will rely on Katherine Snyder’s delineation of the bachelor narrator in pre-modernist and modernist novels (including Conrad’s) to elucidate how Delano’s naiveté and interpretive obtuseness are informed by his position as a “threshold figure” who marks the “permeable boundaries” between “domesticity [and] normative manhood” (Snyder 7). I am particularly interested in how Delano “reads” the relationship between Benito Cereno and Babo as a domestic, intimate bond, relying on a conventional notion of slave/master relationships as quasi-familial (a notion perpetuated in part by the romantic racialism of texts like Uncle Tom’s Cabin). Clearly, Delano’s bachelor status positions him as a sexually indeterminate figure who is easily aligned with what Melville (like Hawthorne) saw as the feminine sentimentality of popular fiction, and thus, through his ironic treatment of this bachelor consciousness, Melville can deflate the power of such sentimentality. Specifically, he can undermine the status of a novel like Uncle Tom’s Cabin, whose position both in the marketplace and in the slavery debate sits in direct contrast to Melville’s writing.

Bio: I am an Assistant Professor of English at Rhodes College in Memphis, Tennessee, USA. At Rhodes, I teach nineteenth-century American literature and Women’s Studies. My book, Romancing the Vote: Feminist Activism in American Fiction, 1870-1920, will be published by the University of Georgia Press in December 2006.

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Giuseppe Lombardo – Political Melville: Issues and Strategies in the Civil War Poems

Abstract: In the long run, Melville’s world of political discourse has come to look as a type of “loose-fish”, a “fair game for anybody” wishing to put his/her waif on it as a
sign of possession, but also an elusive one. Whalers from different nations have repeatedly tried to cope up with the basics of its chase, but it is still far from being “snugly” towed alongside.

The difficulty might lie with the multiplicity of issues and perspectives the author’s writings usually address. Readers are not called to face rhetorically complex, though ideologically simple, versions of “Manifest Destiny”, cast in the well-known emersonian cadences or whitmanian catalogues. They are involved in the construction of plots which are overtly “political” (such as the story of Don Benito Cereno or the story of Captain Edward F. Vere are, in the light of their being “illuminating” of conflicts involving class, race, and legal powers), but at the same time covertly “symbolical”. The nature of this symbolism is what usually troubles the waters of critical interpretation. How explain the final, eloquent silence of Cereno, or Billy’s utmost resounding “God bless Captain Vere!”, without any forced deconstruction of Melville’s original political context? In both cases, political and historical mechanics do not account for attitudes and words which seem to be already pointing at an individual (not to say “modern”) acceptance of defeat, eventually ending in death, which shows an acute awareness of the erratic nature of man’s world and destiny. Certainly, it is easier to appreciate Taji’s ideological mapping of the Mardian Archipelago or White Jacket’s committed discourse about the virtue and value of democracy. But then, where does the point of balance lie? Is Ahab’s furious striking at “pasteboard masks” a type of the only road modern man may take? Or, should we just take sides with Ishmael and his much less involving approach to a human reality seemingly bereft of sense? To put it another way: should we accept Matthiessen’s famous “common denominator”, that is the “devotion to the possibilities of democracy”, as the true ground on which the Republic builds the glory of the future, and subscribe for a subversive Melville, a master in the technique of ideological counterpoint? Or, would it be better to look at the writer’s work as an artful combination of past and present, envisioning future under the disguise of the American Dream as reality and myth (Bercovitch)?

The Civil War poetry (Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War, 1866) seems to be the elective ground for anyone striving to focus themes and strategies in Melville's political world. Here the writer renounces the mediation of fictional though historically coherent “personae”, and confronts the central issues in the national tragedy. Law and order as moral and political values define the boundaries of political discourse, tracing back the foundations of democracy to the basic opposition between “natural” and “civic or federal” liberty (John Winthrop, 1645). Melville’s idiosyncratic verse and language open broad perspectives on such crucial political Gordian knots as the conciliation of freedom and power, individual and collective breakthroughs, personal and institutional duties, etc. Consequently, can the world of political debate, as Melville de-constructs it, be considered an open field in which actors alternately play the changing roles of a “a Loose-Fish and a Fast-Fish, too”?

Bio: I teach American Literature at the Faculty of Letters and Philosophy of the University of Messina (Sicily, Italy). My main fields of research are the literature of the American Renaissance and the social novel between the two World Wars. My articles and essays on Benjamin Franklin, Edgar Allan Poe, Ralph W. Emerson, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, Oliver Wendell Holmes, John Steinbeck, Ezra Pound, Pietro di Donato, Dylan Thomas, have been published in a variety of well-known Italian scholarly journals. Mondadori and Bompiani in Milan have printed my translations from Herman Melville and Benjamin Franklin. Book-length studies on the poetry of Herman Melville (“Through Terror and Pity”: Saggio su Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War di Herman Melville, Messina 1984), and the

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Mark Wollaeger – Class Status and the Authority of the Word in Conrad

Abstract#1: My talk would pose the broad question, what is the relationship between class and the waning authority of the literary word in the rapidly changing media ecology of early twentieth-century England? Conrad is an interesting case study in this context. Highly attuned to the difficulty of making his own words “tell” in a public sphere increasingly saturated by mass journalism and the relatively new phenomenon of the bestseller, Conrad developed a profoundly ambivalent relationship to an elusive readership he wished both to seduce and slap in the face. The impulse to épater la bourgeoisie competed with a felt need to assimilate to English culture and the financial necessity of selling books. Complicating Conrad’s own class position was his childhood affiliation in Poland with the szlachta, something like England’s landed gentry but with inherited political privileges and quasi-noble status. Sometimes in England Conrad was mocked and resented for what were perceived as his aristocratic airs, but having squandered his meager inheritance and then worked steadily as a mariner (rising to the level of captain) and then as professional author, Conrad had more experience with the necessity of work than he did with privilege, though undoubtedly the memory of lost privilege remained potent. At all events, as interesting as Conrad’s own complex class positioning is, I would want to turn to the dynamics of class in several fictions, with greatest emphasis on The Secret Agent. In the absence of a central controlling consciousness in the novel, Conrad splits himself into a range of authorial surrogates, all of which are strongly inflected by class: the Assistant Commissioner represents a kind of managerial consciousness to which Conrad aspires (and which to some extent he enjoyed as a sea captain); the Professor, a failed academic, is the would-be “classless” intellectual consumed with resentment over his failure to reach a mass audience (one imagines that he would have wanted to become what we now call a public intellectual); Mrs. Neale, abjected female labor; Verloc, the frustrated bourgeois wage slave, angry about his boss’s abusive control; and so on. But what’s most interesting about this dynamic to me is the relationship between the encompassing consciousness of the narrator and the relatively limited (though variable) awareness of the characters, for this imbalance of power, I want to suggest, represents a compensatory assertion of the power of the literary word over the activities of an urban scene that has little use for the literary word; it amounts, in other words, to an assertion of a higher order managerial control suffused with the political privilege that a lord holds over his manor, here in the form of an author’s power to control his characters in the house of fiction.
Mark Wollaeger – Conrad and Propaganda

Abstract#2: In this talk I would develop material that didn’t fit into the Conrad chapter of my forthcoming book, *Modernism, Media, and Propaganda: British Narrative from 1900 to 1945* (Princeton, December 2006), or into my essay on Conrad and propaganda in *Conrad in the 21st Century*, ed. Carola M. Kaplan, Peter Lancelot Mallios, and Andrea White (New York: Routledge, 2005). In these publications I discuss Conrad’s one official piece of propaganda, “The Unlighted Coast,” in relation to *Heart of Darkness* and *The Secret Agent*. In this talk I would want to expand on the very brief treatment of “The Tale,” Conrad’s only WWI story, that I offer in my new book, and also to sketch out a sense of how Conrad’s early interest in propaganda plays out later in his career.

Bio: I received my B.A. from Stanford University and my Ph.D. from Yale University, where I taught before coming to Vanderbilt in 1994. Currently I am Associate Professor of English and teach graduate and undergraduate courses on Anglo-American modernism, modernist culture, twentieth-century British literature, and literary theory. I served as President of the Modernist Studies Association (MSA) in 2004-6 and currently serve as Past President. I am also running the 2006 MSA Book Prize. My first book, *Joseph Conrad and the Fictions of Skepticism*, was published by Stanford University Press in 1990. I’ve also edited two books on Joyce: *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man: A Casebook* (Oxford 2003) and *Joyce and the Subject of History* (co-editor with Victor Luftig and Robert Spoo, Michigan 1996). My articles on Joyce, Woolf, Conrad and others have appeared in journals such as Modernism / Modernity, Modern Language Quarterly, English Literary History, and James Joyce Quarterly. My new book, *Modernism, Media, and Propaganda: British Narrative from 1900 to 1945*, is forthcoming from Princeton University Press in December 2006. I’m working on two projects right now, an edited collection of essays on global modernisms, and a monograph on the roles particular literary modernists (Conrad, Joyce, and Lawrence, among others) have played in formation of modernism and postcolonial studies as fields.

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Cristina Arizzi – *Billy Budd* and *The Secret Sharer* as challenges: is breaking the law a way to be just?

Abstract: Both Joseph Conrad and Herman Melville have emerged from an aristocratic background and have abandoned an unsatisfactory society. Melville’s desire to sail away rapidly expired and he was swallowed up in his society system again, while Conrad’s escape was more radical. Probably they sought in the sea the fulfilment of their frustrated expectations and that ‘pursuit of happiness’ that read the American Declaration of Independence. In their stories the sea is a sort of out-of-place geographical place where it is possible to be free, nevertheless the ships are
fragments of land and host the same old problems. *Billy Budd* and *The Secret Sharer* deal with a trial and administration of justice. The dichotomy between human justice and its laws and the natural rights of men is questioned and the results seem to resemble their authors’ life experiences. Billy is defeated and dies; actually Melville himself was almost ‘dead,’ half-forgotten by public and cultural environment. On the contrary Conrad’s heroes have different destinies: one is able to ‘adapt’ the rules to the actual case, so that his double gains a second opportunity that lets him survive, even though as an outcast of society, a sort of Ishmael. In both of the literary works youth seems to be the only hope for society, while old age, far from representing wisdom and experience, seems to be a stickler for the rules. This might derive in Melville’s thought from the influence exerted by “Young America” when he was a young man and in Conrad from a desire for the renovation that he sought in other people and places distant from his roots.

**Bio:** I graduated in Foreign Languages at the University of Messina (Italy) in 2000 with a dissertation on Shakespeare’s influence in *Moby-Dick*. I took a Ph.D. in English and American Studies at the University of Catania (Italy) in 2006 with a dissertation on the dichotomy between “ruthless democracy” and “aristocracy of the brain” as it emerges from *White-Jacket* and *Billy Budd*. In 2005 I presented a paper at the AISNA Conference in Bari (Italy) on “Herman Melville’s Disenchantment: Against the Democracy of Society.” Since 2005 I’ve been a tutor at the Linguistic Centre of the University of Messina.

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**Laurie Robertson-Lorant – "Some Juggling Play": Music, Minstrelsy and Black Performance Art in Melville’s “Benito Cereno”**

Through allusions to racist ethnology and popular racial iconography, Melville subverts popular images of Africans to create a critique of slavery and white supremacist ideology so subtle that some commentators have accused him of perpetuating stereotypes rather than deconstructing them. This presentation of visual images and contextualizing commentary is designed to throw light on the shadowy but important role the iconography of race plays in Melville's highly theatrical retelling of Captain Amasa Delano’s encounter with a stricken slaver.

_About 40 minutes._

**Laurie Robertson-Lorant – Poetry Reading: The Man Who Lived Among the Cannibals: Poems in the Voice of Herman Melville, including one poem in the voice of his wife, Elizabeth**

A reading of persona poems by Melville biographer Laurie Robertson-Lorant, with occasional remarks about the composition of poetry and biography and the interplay of speculation, fact and truth.
Bio: Laurie Robertson-Lorant is the author of Melville: A Biography (New York, 1996 and UMass paperback, 1998) and The Man Who Lived Among the Cannibals: Poems in the Voice of Herman Melville (Spinner Publications, New Bedford, 2005). These and other poems have appeared in October Mountain: An Anthology of Berkshire Writers, edited by Paul Metcalf, We Speak for Peace, edited by Ruth Jacobs, and a dozen poetry magazines, including Leviathan, Igitur, Atlanta Review, The North American Review and The Worcester Review. Her one-act play "Good Mother, Farewell," on the relationship of Elizabeth Freeman ("Mumbet") and Catharine Maria Sedgwick, has been performed by Shakespeare and Company of Lenox, Massachusetts, and The People’s Players of Salem State College. A graduate of Radcliffe College/Harvard University with an M. A. and Ph. D. from New York University, Dr. Lorant has taught Literature and Writing at Berkshire Community College, St. Mark’s School in Southborough, Massachusetts, School Year Abroad in Rennes, France, UMass Dartmouth and MIT. She has written articles on various subjects and given talks and papers in the U. S., Mexico, France, Germany, Italy and Greece. She has also designed and directed NEH workshops for teachers on “Melville and Multiculturalism” and “Visions of Slavery and Freedom in the Writings of Lydia Maria Child, Frederick Douglass, Herman Melville and Harriet Jacobs.” Currently, she is a Full-Time Visiting Lecturer in the Education Department at UMass Dartmouth, teaching a course and a seminar and supervising student teachers.
(De)Constructing Melville,
(De)Constructing Conrad
Abstract: Bartleby, “of whom nothing is ascertainable”⁴, absconds and yet, „he was always there”⁵: He is “absent-present”. In this respect, Bartleby embodies the fundamental structure that makes possible language and textuality at all:

Essentially and lawfully, every concept is inscribed in a chain or in a system within which it refers to the other, to other concepts, by means of the systematic play of differences. Such a play, différance, is thus no longer simply a concept, but rather the possibility of conceptuality, of a conceptual process and system in general.⁶

The difference between the signifier and the signified makes up the condition of possibility of language as without the distinction between word and thing nothing (and not even that!) could be denoted. As such, however, it is not composed by language, i.e. can be put into words again, because every expression or concept always already takes up this difference, which therefore is always already a différance:

So-called phonetic writing, by all rights and in principle, and not only due to an empirical or technical insufficiency, can function only by admitting into its system nonphonetic ‘signs’ (punctuation, spacing, etc.). And an examination of the structure and necessity of these nonphonetic signs quickly reveals that they can barely tolerate the concept of the sign itself. Better, the play of difference, which, as Saussure reminded us, is the condition for the possibility and functioning of every sign, is in itself a silent play. Inaudible is the difference between two phonemes which alone permits them to be and to operate as such. The inaudible opens up the apprehension of two present phonemes such as they present themselves. If there is no purely phonetic writing, it is that there is no purely phonetic phōnē. The difference which establishes phonemes and lets them be heard remains in and of itself inaudible, in every sense of the word.⁷

Language and thus, textuality, too, are characterized by a paradoxical structure: “At the heart of language lies what language cannot express”⁸ – différance.

In “Bartleby”, Herman Melville reflects this necessary condition for his work as a writer once again and thereby makes literature become self-conscious: Bartleby is not only the precondition of the story named “Bartleby” in respect of content in particular, but also represents in respect of form the very structure that allows for textuality in general.

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For instance, Bartleby, being the difference that makes a difference, makes it impossible for the lawyer to grasp him in a “frame of mind” in contrast to Ginger Nut, Turkey and Nippers, that can easily be characterized by the lawyer in the sense of Spinoza’s “Omnis determinatio est negatio”. Bartleby and his behaviour, however, can neither be understood by the distinction of freedom and necessity (with the help of “Edwards on Will” and “Priestley on Necessity”) nor by a logical approach according to which “one of two things must take place. Either you must do something, or something must be done to you.”

In the end, only the paradoxical “explanation” of the Dead Letter Office remains: As language rests on a ground that language itself cannot express (without becoming paradoxical), “every letter also marks the nonoccurrence of something; every letter is always in this sense a ‘dead letter’.”

Bartleby himself is such a “dead letter” – a letter that is undeliverable and yet being delivered to us (by Melville) as well as the “dead” or silent letter “a” in différence, that makes us speak and write.

Bio: Born in Würzburg, Germany, in 1981, I studied philosophy at the University of Munich and the Munich School of Philosophy where I received the M.A. in 2005 with a thesis on the mind-body problem. Since 2006, I am a student of German and English at the University Passau in order to become a teacher.

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Michel Arouimi – A simple tale, or An inside narrative? The Melvillian “symmetry” in The Secret Agent

Abstract: The intertextual presence of Melville’s works in some works of Conrad seems to have a deep reason: a poetical critic of Christian metaphysic; that is to say the divine Word, a melvillian topic, so obvious in Billy Budd. Melville, already in Mardi, seems to examine the link between this metaphysic (the Word, key of Harmony) and the « symmetry of form » of his own masterpieces. What is the sense of symmetry? A religious sense, or just an exorcism of duality?

In Heart of Darkness, Conrad seems to pursue this poetical experience. Kurtz, and the Harlequin, incarnate the main aspects of the poetical word. As Melville in Billy Budd, the violence of the thoughts ands occupations of these characters suggest the violent and hidden sources of the Sacred and of Art, Harmony : the deep subject

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of *Heart of Darkness*. If the influence of Melville in Conrad is not so obvious in *Heart of Darkness*, this novel reveals, with its topics and « harmony of form », the spiritual brotherhood of both writers.

A little like Melville, but in a more clear way, Conrad points, here and there, at the exotic cultures (the African coast, as well as the “Buddha,” at the beginning and at the end of the novel). We can speak of the “illusion” of the differences in “World cultures.” Any culture, Christian or not, Western or exotic, is rooted in the same mythical space, a space familiar to literary creators. But the greater mystery remains the thematic and formal similarities between *Billy Budd* (published in 1924) and *The Secret Agent*, published many years before *Billy Budd*, in 1907... More : terrorism, in *The Secret Agent*, seems to reflect the violent sources of the sacred.


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**Yael Levin – A Spectral Temporality: The History of Nostromo as Perpetual Return**

**Abstract#1:** Although evolving around a material and tangible core, the language of *Nostromo* is pervaded by the spectral. Ghosts, spells, curses and possession form an integral part of the experiences of both the people and their patria. From the novel's ghost-story exposition to Nostromo's tragic death the narrative teases out the supernatural thrall of material treasure, upholding, throughout, an inexorable link between the material and the spiritual. This paper does not, however, set out to trace this link, a link that has already been the subject of critical discussion. Rather, it proposes to analyse a more covert correlation between the language of the spectral and the novel's historical discourse.

The ghostly is perceived as a revisitation, a presence in a state of return, an echo divorced from its origin. The history of *Nostromo* follows the temporality of the spectre; it is always already a repetition. Like the spectre, it eludes an originary moment or an originary present; to tell the history of Sulaco is to retell it, to return to it. This paper, then, examines the spectral history of the novel: the manner in which the supernatural propels the personal lives of the people and the political life of the nation and the manner in which it infuses and suffuses the narrative method, that is,
the way in which the tale is told, or rather retold. Drawing from *Spectres of Marx*, I will use Derrida’s conception of a time that is out of joint to illuminate the inner workings of chronology and spectrality in the novel. In addition, I will discuss the significance of the spectral play of absence and presence that informs Conrad’s method of telling history. The indelible slippage of the two diametrically opposed binaries is suggestive of an attempt to perform rather than document history. It is a writing of history that, by resisting the notion of a sequential logic, offers instead its perpetual re-enactment.

**Bio:** Yael Levin conducted her doctoral studies on Joseph Conrad under the supervision of Robert Hampson at Royal Holloway, the University of London, where she graduated in 2003. She has since presented papers at Conrad conferences in London, Amsterdam and Washington and has published on Conrad in *The Conradian* and in *Partial Answers*. In 2005 she was presented with the Bruce Harkness Young Conrad Scholar by the Joseph Conrad Society of America. She is currently teaching at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

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**Ilana Pardes – Infidel Pilgrims: Melville's *Moby-Dick* and Conrad's *Heart of Darkness***

**Abstract:** I read Melville's *Moby-Dick* and Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* as texts that question normative perceptions of pilgrimage. *Moby-Dick*, I suggest, is a counterpilgrimage that calls for a voyage whose purpose is not to visit the well-known sacred sites of Palestine, Sinai and Arabia Petra but rather to seek revelation in what remains uncharted in Holy Land travel narratives: the "wild and distant seas," where the "portentous" White Whale roams about. To pursue the "grand hooded phantom" of an inscrutable White Whale, though analogous to a wild goose chase, seems to be the ultimate way to approach the inner voyage all Holy Land travel narratives attempt to display, albeit in different ways. And yet, even the quest for the White Whale is not devoid of skepticism: it takes place on the horrifying, though unmistakably intoxicating, brink of meaninglessness and death.

Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* is another counterpilgrimage of sorts. Here too normative constructions of sacred geography are dislocated as Africa becomes the site of pilgrimage. Calling the company agents "faithless pilgrims," Conrad imagines a voyage where white ivory is idolized and all morals are relinquished. Accordingly, the climactic moment of revelation – when Marlow finally meets Kurtz – turns out to be a dark revelation about evil, madness, and the grand horror of colonial enterprises. Special attention will be given to the aesthetic implications of these inverted pilgrimages. My comparison between the two works will also entail a consideration of recent theoretical accounts regarding the question of sacred geographies, primarily Hilton Obenzinger’s *American Palestine* and W.J.T Mitchell’s *Landscape and Power*.
Bio: Ilana Pardes received her Ph.D. degree in Comparative Literature at the University of California, Berkeley in 1990. She taught at Princeton University in 1990-1992 and as visiting Professor at UC Berkeley in 1996 and in 2006. She is an Associate Professor of Comparative Literature at the Hebrew University, where she has been teaching since 1992. Among her publications: Countertraditions in the Bible: A Feminist Approach (Harvard University Press, 1992), The Biography of Ancient Israel: National Narratives in the Bible (University of California Press, 2000), Melville’s Bibles (forthcoming).

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Mikayo Sakuma – Melville’s Quest of Life-World: Pitting Religion against Evolutionary Theory

Abstract: Melville writes in the epilogue of Clarel that “If Luther’s day expand to Darwin’s year,/ Shall that exclude the hope-foreclose the fear?” However, we know Melville’s interest in natural world which is exemplified in whales of Moby-Dick and tortoise of “The Encantadas, or Enchanted Isles.” On the face of it, Melville’s problematic struggle against religion, which culminates in Clarel, seems to be a Darwinian enterprise, a finding of a place of the natural order in nineteenth-century American culture. When Darwin was writing Origin of Species, Melville made his Mediterranean voyage and later weaved his poem into Clarel: A Poem and Pilgrimage into the Holy Land. Walter Bezanson notes that “the poem is an intricate documentation of a major crisis in Western civilization—the apparent smash-up of revealed religion in the age of Darwin.” Although Clarel has been studied as a spiritual journey into the Holy Land and the mythical world in the age of science, due attention has not been paid to how Melville understood science, especially Darwinian evolutionary theory. I wanted to inquire into the influence of evolutionary theory on Melville’s quest for religion and myths beneath Clarel. In so doing, I would like to argue that Melville represents the harshness of life-world through his depiction of animals which signifies his application and understanding of evolutionary theory.

According to Merton Seals, Melville read Darwin’s Journal on the Beagle and used it on “The Encantadas.” Melville’s observation of creatures in the Galapagos islands is worthy to pay attention to know that Melville was interested in the interaction between men and animals, while Darwin depicted the variety of creatures in the Galapagos Islands. Melville was apparently engaged in constructing “culturally configurated life-world,” as Clifford Geertz stipulates. Following his trajectory of animal representation culminated in the mythic world in Clarel, I would like to delve into his notion of life-world in the age of Darwin.

Bio: I teach in the Department of English at Wayo Women’s University and currently work on representations of animals and scientific discourse in nineteenth-century
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Fabio de Leonardis – “Good God, What Is the Meaning?” the Representation of the Other in Conrad’s Heart of Darkness

Abstract: Few works of literature have received as much critical attention as Joseph Conrad’s Heart of Darkness. One of the most hotly debated issues has been that of the representation of the Other in the tale. The different views on the subject can be ranged in a line, the two extremes whereof are constituted by Chinua Achebe’s and Cedric Watts’ positions. The former considers Conrad’s tale as a work full of racism and stereotypes, which depicts Africa as “the antithesis of Europe and therefore of civilization, a place where man’s vaunted intelligence and refinement are finally mocked by triumphant bestiality,” whereas Watts finds in the tale a strong attack against imperialism, though he cannot deny Marlow’s prejudices towards the Africans, which nevertheless must not be overestimated, given the wide currency of such racist attitudes in Victorian England (and, more generally, in XIX century Europe). The purpose of my paper is to demonstrate by an accurate scrutiny of the text based on Foucault’s concept of “discourse” and Bachtin’s view of the novel as a “polyphonical genre” that the representation of the Other in the tale is not strictly monological, but is the result of a mix of different discourses which clash with each other and are unable to create a unitary, coherent picture. As a narrating subject, Marlow follows a path of gradual recognition of the Africans’ point of view; but in the end he does not prove able to take on - let alone represent - their own standpoint. The only ‘objective truth’ that Marlow is able to attain is a negative one: the destructiveness and the falseness of the dominant colonialist discourse, only apparently restored at the very end through the lie to the Intended.

The fact that a text can allow such different interpretations of a single aspect of the narration is the ultimate evidence that a literary text is irreducible to a thoroughgoing, single-minded approach. This does not mean, however, that we intend to support an entirely subjective approach in literary criticism: quite the contrary. What we intend to do here is to propose a reading of Heart of Darkness which could somehow account for all the complexity of the aspect we have chosen to focus on, a reading which we may call a dialogic approach to the tale.

The theoretical limits of a monological approach are well exemplified by Achebe’s essay. All his analysis aims at demonstrating that Conrad was “a thoroughgoing racist” (Achebe 1977: 257), and that consequently Heart of Darkness, being imbued with racist stereotypes, cannot be considered a work of art. The Nigerian novelist and critic quotes many passages from the text in which Marlow actually dehumanizes the Africans and attributes those words to Conrad himself. Achebe also maintains that, though the tale-within-the-tale structure can suggest a
distancing on the part of the author, this indeed constitutes just a narrative device. A device which cannot reach its goal, inasmuch as there is no “alternative frame of reference by which we may judge the actions and opinions of the characters” (ibidem: 256). However, Achebe’s inferences are debatable: the dominant discourse on Africa in the Victorian Age was deeply racist (see Kiernan 1969), and if Conrad meant to dehumanize Africans, he need not any kind of distancing from his hero’s opinions. Moreover, to imply that Marlow is the spokesman of Conrad means to underestimate the importance of the dialectical relationship between the author and the hero in literature, a relationship accurately studied by Michail Bachtin, who defines this relationship as characterized by what he calls the unenachodimost’, that is the “being outside” or “extralocalization” of the author (Bachtin 1979: 13, our translation). The Russian philosopher rejects any approach “based on the confusion of the author as a creator, who is a moment of the work, with the author as a man, who is an ethical moment, a social event of life” (ibidem: 10). Human language is inherently dialogic, but literary language is dialogic to the highest degree, and particularly the language of the novel, that he considers a polyphonical genre. In Bachtin’s wake, Augusto Ponzio writes that “a text becomes a literary work only when its language is not an objective language but an objectified language” (Ponzio 1994: 184). The author is he/she who represents, and as such he/she is an active subject, not the object of the representation. Therefore, literary language is never a direct expression of its author, but it is an oblique genre of discourse: consequently an ironic distance from the author is always present. This dialectic between the author and the hero in Conrad’s tale has well been pointed out by C. P. Sarvan, who states that “This ironic distance should not be overlooked though the narrative method makes it all too easy” (Sarvan 1980: 282). This orientation does not imply that the author is completely detached from his work, but it clearly shows how misleading can be an approach which does not appreciate the different levels of the author and of the hero. Achebe fails here too, for he tries to reinforce his assumptions by quoting Conrad’s diaries and letters: but a thorough analysis of the text evidently contradicts them. Marlow’s attitude towards the Africans is not at all univocal, it rather seems indeed to be oscillating between two poles: but most of all it is affected, in a great part of the tale, by a distorted preception of reality. Besides, Achebe himself writes in the end that “Travellers with closed minds can tell us little except about themselves” (1988: 260): it is precisely the reason why Marlow is not a reliable narrator.

Bio: Born in Bari (Italy) in 1977, I majored with first-class honours in Foreign Languages and Literatures (English, French, Russian) at University of Bari in March 2002, with a thesis entitled "The Representation of the Other: Malraux and Conrad". In 2001 I participated in an Erasmus exchange program spending three months at Universite de Paris XII-Val-de-Marne, and from 2000 to 2003 I spent some periods in Russia attending to courses of Russian Language and Culture at St. Petersburg State University. Since December 2004 I've been attending to a Ph.D course in Theory of Language and Science of Signs in the Faculty of Language at the University of Bari. Since then I've published four articles on literary and semiotic topics and I'm currently completing my first book.

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Hildegard Hoeller – (Im)Possible Gifts in Herman Melville’s *Typee* and *The Confidence-Man*

**Abstract:** The talk will highlight the importance of gifts in both texts and use gift theory—a conversation that spans from Marcel Mauss’s anthropological studies of gift exchange to Derrida’s philosophical ruminations on the (im)possibility of the gift—to read *Typee* as an important companion text to or pre-text for *The Confidence-Man*.

In an earlier MLA talk on Melville a few years ago, --and in a chapter of my current book project “From Gift to Commodity: The Economics of 19th Century American Fiction” -- I showed how *The Confidence-Man* strongly resonates with Jacques Derrida’s thoughts on the gift in his books *Given Time* and *The Gift of Death*. Like the latter texts, Melville’s novel is an obsessive and brilliant rumination on the impossibility of the gift, of faith. Derrida considers the gift (im)possible because it is thinkable as an act of goodness but it is annulled—turned into obligation and debt—the minute it is exchanged. “For the moment the gift would appear as gift, as such, as what it is, in its phenomenon, in its sense and essence,” writes Derrida, “it would be engaged in a symbolic, sacrificial, or economic structure that would annul the gift in the ritual of the debt” (GT 23). I argued that Melville’s *Confidence-Man* is a novel obsessed with the (im)possibility of the gift, in Derrida’s terms. It specifically and repetitively if not obsessively in each chapter tries to capture the moment in which we give, we trust, we face the other, God, and show faith. This moment, according to Derrida, is a moment outside of logos—a secretive, mysterious, lonely, and unaccountable, (ir)responsible moment; thus, it implies another important (im)possibility for Melville: the (im)possibility of writing about the gift—the very thing Melville needs to write about and attempts to write about in each chapter of his (im)possible novel.

But while Melville considers the gift (im)possible on the “civilized” ship in *The Confidence-Man*, he depicts the gift as a possibility in a more anthropological vein (the other pole of gift theory) amongst the “savages” of the Typee Valley. *Typee* is filled with descriptions of gift giving—an aspect of the text critics have not sufficiently examined--, and my talk will concentrate on these depictions. Over and over throughout the text, Tommo is mystified by the natives’ unaccountable “generosity” towards him. Equally, that the Typees could be friendly amongst themselves and ferocious to their enemies is a fact that confuses and puzzles Tommo. Essentially, what Tommo observes and describes is a gift economy that can be fruitfully illuminated through gift theory. My talk will bring anthropological descriptions of gift economies to Melville’s text in order to analyze the specific elements of the gift economy Tommo describes in *Typee*.

In *Typee* then—with its coherent, ethnographic narrative structure—we see Melville expounding on the practical, possible kind of gift exchange, the kind that structures non-monetary economies and that relies—unlike market capitalism—on abundance rather than scarcity. But, --and this is consistent with gift economic thinking a la Marcel Mauss and Lewis Hyde and other anthropological thinkers about the gift—this very economy binds and imprisons Tommo. In *Typee* then Melville shows how gift economies, while appearing utopian in their seemingly unaccountable magnanimity and generosity, are also oppressive forms of tribal structures. In response to the gifts bestowed upon Tommo, he is expected to become a Typee since gift economies function by drawing clear distinctions between brother and other—the former bound within the community through gift exchange, the other treated as enemy with different far less “generous” rules.

Melville, I argue, can be seen as using *Typee* and *The Confidence-Man* to reflect on the (im)possibilities of the gift in “savagery” and “civilization.” In other
words, gift theory offers an important economic lens through which to understand Melville's reflections on the gains and losses of "savagery" and "civilization." In these two texts he thinks about the possibilities of the gift in a non-monetary tribal gift economy on the one hand and in an alienated culture of strangers thrown together in an emergent finance capitalism on the other. This economic approach to the question about the gains and losses of "savagery" and "civilization" seems entirely appropriate and poignant since these two economies inevitably clash in any colonial encounter and conquest. My talk will employ gift theory to highlight the sophisticated (im)possible angle Melville offers us on this issue in both *Typee* and *The Confidence-Man*.

**Bio:** I have a PH.D. from Rutgers, have written a book on Edith Wharton (*Edith Wharton's Dialogue with Realism and Sentimental Fiction* 2000), co-authored with Rebecca Brittenham a book called *Keywords for Academic Writers* (2004), am the editor of a Norton Critical Edition of Horatio Alger's *Ragged Dick* (forthcoming 2007), and am currently working on a book entitled *From Gift to Commodity; The Economics of 19th Century American Fiction*. I have written articles on African literature and on Conrad (the latter published in Research in African Literatures), and my articles on American literature have appeared in journals such as *American Literary Realism, American Literature, American Transcendental Quarterly* and others.

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**Benjamin A. Ruby – The Island House: Jacques Lacan and Geographic Space in Joseph Conrad’s *Victory***

**Abstract:** In recent years, Lacanian concepts of the gaze and the mirror stage have played a major role in both film and literary criticism. Too frequently, though, it has been analysis hyper-nuanced to the degree of problematic abstraction. Despite this trend, such criticism has lent itself to achieving at least one positive effect: the remedying of the routine pigeonholing of Lacanian principles as that which can merely be applied to psychoanalytic criticism. The critical landscape has been enhanced, revealing greater theoretical potentialities. Therefore, in applying certain Lacanian principles to my reading of Joseph Conrad's *Victory*, I suggest a similar interpretative, perhaps even speculative, opportunity. I shall address how psychoanalysis intersects with other fields, namely post-structuralism and post-colonialism.

I will begin my talk by underscoring the importance of actual geographic space by providing an account of the region referred to as the setting for the novel, the archipelago within an 800-mile radius of North Borneo. My primary concern, however, is with its fascination for Conrad during the years he spent in that region, and how it became the fictionalized zone for not only *Victory* but also for his other Malaysian novels. Even more important, is to demonstrate that by undergoing a close
reading of the spatial dynamics present in the text, we can implement Lacanian principles of the gaze in order to gain insight into just how the lines of mappable space are liquidated and, in turn, supplanted by the lines that frame projected sites of desire. I propose to tease out place-scenes divided by inner and outer realms, show how fetishes lead to imagined depth, and exhibit just how images of unmoored phalli disappear off the map. Through Lacanian theory, we should be able to see just how such objects of desire are made real through their disappearance but also to become more cognizant of the way in which these objects allude to the nonreferential ambiguity of language.

Heyst’s island dwelling serves as the main scene for promiscuous gazing and language. Through cross-gazing and rigid panoramas tense with motility, the boundary of the dwelling is undoubtedly threatened, leading to outer and inner perspectives becoming juxtaposed. Its boundary does not prevent penetration because of Heyst’s confining impotence. The house then is an image of a latent masculinity of sorts; it projects that which Heyst must feel he essentially lacks. The house is the hollowed out spatial realm from which Heyst chooses to view the world. It also could be viewed as a real place on a charted island that seemingly undergoes transference into one of metaphoric significance: it becomes representative of Heyst’s conscious mind itself. There is a reason the house is so porous. It is mainly metaphorical, a place-scene for Conrad’s neurotic fiction.

Bio: I have finished my coursework for my M.A. in English Literature at Florida International University and am currently writing my thesis dissertation. I received a B.A. in Economics from Florida Atlantic University. I currently instruct English and coordinate the writing/research center at the Art Institute of Ft. Lauderdale. I live in Hollywood, Florida. I am married with two children, a four-year old boy and a two-year girl.

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**Fiona Tomkinson – Conrad’s geopoetics of wandering**

**Abstract:** The paper discusses Conrad’s treatment of the theme of wandering or roving as an existential state, with particular reference to his later novels (*The Rover, Suspense* and *Victory*), though I also hope to demonstrate how the more explicitly philosophical treatment of this theme in his later work can be brought to bear on the earlier novels.

I also seek to demonstrate how Conrad’s presentation of the interaction between human subjectivity, landscape and space can be said to constitute what, borrowing a phrase from Kenneth White, I call a geopoetics of wandering. This could be more accurately described as a geopoetics of the dialectic of wandering and settlement: the two contrary states are not mere opposites in Conrad: each of these states can be seen in a number of instances to be on the point of passing over into the other. In particular, the isolated and castaway states experienced by a number of
Conrad’s characters, from Almayer through Decoud to Heyst, though they are literally the reverse of wandering, can in fact be seen as its sublation.

In outlining Conrad’s geopolitics of wandering, I shall use a number of insights taken from Hegel, Heidegger, Bachelard and Kenneth White to illustrate the way in which the relationship between the human being and landscape can be interpreted existentially.

My analysis focuses on Victory, where, in addition to the rover-wanderers Mr Jones and Ricardo, and the involuntary wanderer Lena, we are given, in the person of Axel Heyst, both the most self-conscious of Conrad’s wanderers, and also the quintessential wanderer though whom we can arrive at a better understanding of the others. The philosophy of non-commitment and non-participation which Heyst inherited from his father and ultimately regrets having embraced is not consciously articulated by other Conradian characters, but we can, I claim, find elements of it in their behaviour and in their response to geographical landscape.

Bio: I have taught English Literature at Yeditepe University, Istanbul since 1997. I have a BA and MA in English Language and Literature from Oxford University and an MA in Philosophy from Boğaziçi (Bosphorus) University, Istanbul, where I am currently completing a doctorate on Paul Ricoeur and the question of metaphoric reference. I have published various articles in the areas of literature and philosophy, including two articles on Conrad: ‘Spectral Nationalism in Conrad’s Last Novels’ (in Conrad’s Europe, eds. Andrzej Ciuk and Marcin Piechota, Opole Yearbook of Conrad Studies, Poland, 2005) and ‘“For this miracle or this wonder touches me right gretly”: Conrad’s αλεθεία’ (in Joseph Conrad and His Work: The 10th METU British Novelists Seminar 19-20 December 2002 ed. Nesrin Eruysal and Bengu Taskesen, Department of Foreign Language Education at Middle East Technical University, 2004). I also write and translate poetry: some of my translations from Turkish are in The Dirty Goat, ed. Elzbieta Szoka and Joe W. Bratcher III (Host Publications, Austin, 2005).

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Yuji Kato – In the Dark Narcissism of Sh(e)aring Se(a)cret/Se(a)cret Sh(e)aring: Joseph Conrad and Herman Melville on the (Im)possibilities of the Other/Self in the Global Post-Colonial Contexts

Abstract: As writers who addressed themselves to analyzing and opposing the implications of romanticism and its political ramifications, Herman Melville and Joseph Conrad count as the foremost theorists among the writers that delved deep into the narcissistic sea that reflects both the romantic self and its other aspects. Melville’s explorations into the political and philosophical dimensions of romanticism and individualism urge him to reexamine the concept of the self and the impossibility of validating the self as itself, in the enigmatic endings of Typee, Moby-Dick, and “Benito Cereno.” Conrad’s seemingly realistic, imperialistic characters and
narratives reveal similar radical absence at their cores as “heart of darkness,” which is the representative representation of the otherness that overpowers the positive, imperialistic logos and the self. “The Secret Sharer” eminently shows in miniature the structure of Conrad’s dark narcissism that might also speak for Conrad-Melville/Melville-Conrad relation. In their juxtapositions of the patriarchal individual self and the ineffable other, they explore the implications of the alternations of the self and the other as the “uncivilized” chaos that reflects the natural meaninglessness of the constructed concept of the self, and present anticipatory visions that overlap with modern and postmodern thoughts on the implications of the 19th century Western Eyes/I’s by Sigmund Freud, Anglo-American modernists, and postmodern thinkers such as Jacques Derrida and Edward Said on their ruminations on the (im)possibility of verifying the self, the nation, the law, and the history after the revolutionary and romantic era, when the mechanism of othering and the consequent revelation of the (non)structure of the romantic self loom large as most relevant psychoanalytical and philosophical problematics.

Bio: I received B.A. and M.A. in English from The University of Tokyo, and have taught critical theory and American literature, with emphases on Faulkner and Melville, at Tokyo University of Foreign Studies since 1991.
MELVILLE AND/OR CONRAD: PHILOSOPHERS OF THE SEA
There is no doubt that the symbolism of the sea is central to interpretations of the mind in *Moby Dick*; the sea's perpetual movement is analogous to thought's continual processes while its depth and vastness renders it analogous to life's impenetrable mysteriousness. However, the surface of the sea offers irresistible visual concepts that not only presents a panorama that extends to the horizon, but provides a unique surface on which to reflect sun and moonlight without interruption.

In Chapter 51 ‘The Spirit-Spout’ Melville’s narrator, Ishmael, poeticizes the reflective qualities of the ocean and conjures depictions that record a philosophically perspectivist vision which I argue is the critical impetus for the development of photography and predicts Nietzsche’s Perspectivism.

I argue that Ishmael, as a perceiver and recorder of images, denotes a break from the accepted hermeneutics of Romanticism where Nature, and more specifically Light, is considered spirit absolute. For Ishmael, not only is light a subjectively creative tool where its brilliance on the ocean’s surface conveys to the reader his aesthetic interpretation of the seascape but, more fundamentally, in Ishmael Melville rejects the mimetic paradigm for the mind where it is seen as a receiver of mirrored images, as is conventionally modeled by the *camera obscura*. The notion of reflected light is shown to be problematic because mirrored or reflected light should, according to the mimetic paradigm, produce a ‘copied’ imitation of light. Conversely however, reflected light sheds greater light and therefore the simplistic model of the ‘copy’ mirrored image is rendered unstable.

In particular, I draw comparisons with a seascape of the Romantic photographer Gustave Le Gray (Fig. 1) and demonstrate how text and image perform crucially related tasks in using light as both an interpretative and technical element. I argue that Le Gray and Melville invert the symbolic relationship between whiteness and goodness and re-evaluate accepted interpretations of light and darkness. They reveal that perspective is matter of physical and moral position.

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**Fig. 1**

*Solar Effect in the Clouds – Ocean, 1856*
I conclude that Melville assumes that the individual is the essential interpreter of his environment and that in conveying Ishmael’s visual imagery he reveals an intellectual format that precedes the view of photography as a subjective enterprise.

Bio: Sarah Thwaites is undertaking her doctoral studies under the supervision of Prof. Mark Currie of the University of East Anglia in Norwich. She graduated from Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge, in 2005 where her dissertation on the visual imagery in Melville’s Moby Dick was awarded the Ian Gordon Prize for Best Dissertation in English. She has taught nineteenth-century American fiction at Anglia Ruskin and has recently given lectures on Billy Budd, Sailor.

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Raja Sekhar Patteti – Beyond Nationalism: Reinterrogating the Post Colonial Perspectives

Abstract: The common proposition that binds Joseph Conrad and Herman Melville is the philosophical reflections that emanated from the voyages of the world of sea. The post colonial perspectives that confined Conrad’s understanding to Chinua Achebe’s interpretation and Melville’s understanding to Eurocentric perception have to be re-interrogated. In trying to perceive the genuine understanding of Conrad and Melville, there is a dire necessity for the Post Colonial perspective to encompass the vision of life that defied the boundaries of Nation preferred by Conrad and Melville. Conrad’s experience of Austro Hungarian citizenship and the British citizenship enabled him to define nationalism at the backdrop of his vast experience of life on the sea. Similarly, Melville’s sea life has given new perception of life. Conrad writing in the third language ‘English’ has succeeded in drawing a panoramic view of the evolution of Nation with the problems of revolution, terrorism and espionage. Conrad’s Nostromo is a serious observation of revolution in South America. The Secret Agent and Under Western Eyes elucidated the aspects of terrorism and espionage. Writing in the age of the heights of realism, Conrad has offered a new perspective of Nationalism that defied the boundaries of Nationalism. Herman Melville with his Moby-Dick and Billy Budd offered similar connotations of nationalism that went beyond the representation of American spirit.

The proposition of the paper is explore into the failure of Post colonial criticism in offering a genuine perception of the philosophical reflections of Conrad and Melville in the very discourse of drawing racial and gender constructions. The paper would also aim at substanting the visualized philosophical reflections in the light of the literature of the sea as a different Nationalism that went against the National constructions of the early 19th century. The paper will offer authenticity by drawing textual examples from the novels of these two writers.
Bio: Dr. Raja Sekhar Patteti. Associate Professor. Holds M.Phil. in West Indian Literature and Ph.D in Canadian Literature. Worked as Assistant Professor (1996-2000) in the dept. of English of University of Kerala, Trivandrum, India. Published a book: Discursive Displacement. 2000 Published 15 articles in the National and International journals. Presented 13 papers in the National and 15 papers in the International conferences. Delivered 16 lectures in the Refresher Courses conducted by Academic Staff Colleges across India. Supervised 17 scholars for the M.Phil degrees and guiding 15 Ph.D scholars. Areas of Specialization: Native American, Native Canadian, Aboriginal literature of Australia, Dalit literature of India, west Indian literature & Modern literary theory.

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Bryan Sinche – The Sea and the Memory of the Sea: Melville’s Maritime Aesthetic

Abstract: This paper will venture new readings of “John Marr” and “The Encantadas” with the ultimate goal of positing a uniquely Melvillean maritime aesthetic. Melville’s early maritime works (Typee to Moby-Dick) will serve as a backdrop for my examination of his later writings, which traffic almost entirely in memory as opposed to experience (the province of Melville’s first maritime writings). The space between experience and memory as well as the chronological distance between Typee and “John Marr” explain Melville’s difference from his American contemporaries: The maritime aesthetic of memory celebrates sailor individuality and community while posting means for affiliation beyond flag and nation.

Each of Melville’s early maritime fictions focuses on a solitary character who remains aloof or entirely isolated from most of his fellow sailors: Tommo, Typee, Taji, Redburn, White-Jacket, and Ishmael. These men, while reveling in the independence and freedom offered by the sea (a fairly standard antebellum trope), also keep themselves separate from the larger community of seafarers, isolatos, and wanderers who populate the maritime world. Though Ishmael’s friendship with Queequeg signals a small change in this attitude, Melville abandoned sea fiction for several years following Moby-Dick, and when he would return to the genre in the middle 1850s, his own seagoing experiences and his recollections of them were more remote.

In “The Encantadas,” (1856) Melville constructs the maritime world outside of a single first-person narrative perspective, a shift that moves nautical that world into a space beyond both national and temporal boundaries and into the realm of memory and possibility. For example, in the “Charles’s Isle” sketch, sailors of many nations league themselves into a “permanent Riotocracy,” membership in which is defined by occupation and dedication to a particular code of conduct rather than national affiliation. Furthermore, by employing a detached, reportorial style, Melville is able to represent the anarchy of Charles’s Isle without explicitly celebrating or rejecting it through a first-person narrator. The focus on a larger, diverse community—a marked contrast with the narrator/friend dyads typical of his early works—and Melville’s own suspension of judgment are central to his emerging maritime aesthetic, as is the fact that Charles’s Isle becomes a “universal nation” for the “oppressed of all navies.”
John Marr and Other Sailors (1888) is Melville’s attempt to reanimate the sailor characters of his own memory and to place them within a larger community outside of the circumscribed space of Charles’s Isle. In the first poem in the collection, Marr conjures these diverse in vivid color: “Ye float around me, form and feature:—/Tattooings, ear-rings, love-locks curled;/Barbarians of man’s simpler nature,/Unworldly servers of the world./Yea, present all, and dear to me.” What stands out here is not a particular man or even a particular crew; Marr’s memories have resurrected all of his sea-brothers in their motley array. It is this larger community, outside of a particular momentary experience or single voyage, that exists in the province of memory. These sailor communities serve as a bulwark against the uncertainty that defined seafaring life, and the multinational, multiethnic men who comprise those communities are at the heart of Melville’s maritime aesthetic.

Bio: Bryan Sinche is Assistant Professor of English at the University of Hartford, where he writes about and teaches American Literature. He is at work on a book tentatively titled “Sailors, Slaves and Citizens: The Contest for Democracy in the Antebellum Sea Narrative,” which explores social class and citizenship within fictional and non-fictional sea narratives by Cooper, Melville, Dana and a host of now-forgotten sailors.

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Graham J. McAleer – Ship of State

Abstract: The essay brings together three authors: Joseph Conrad, Michael Bakunin, and Carl Schmitt. All three wrote about anarchism. Carl Schmitt, the most important philosopher of law in the last century, wrote his seminal works on law and the state in reaction to Bakunin. The Russian anarchist describes the proletariat as an elemental, unconscious force of hatred and violence. For him, social reality is divided into the brotherhood of the international working class and the enemy, the commerce and privilege of the bourgeois protected by state and church. A friend-enemy distinction is basic to the social world. Carl Schmitt famously made this idea central to his theory of the state. Schmitt’s reaction to anarchism is dialectical: thinking in terms set by Bakunin, he argues that the state must remain ever vigilant over the friend-enemy distinction.

Said to be the twentieth century’s Hobbes, Schmitt saw the state in terms of protection: protection from the elemental violence of disorder. Importantly, for Schmitt, the state was independent of moral values. Bakunin had spoken so eloquently about the hatred and war lust of the international working class that Schmitt conceived of the state as stability, and no matter the means used, that stability would be a more welcome state of affairs than anarchy.
Although Schmitt was fascinated by Hobbes’ image of the Leviathan, he did not favour it as an image of the state. After WWII, he saw another distinction was fundamental to jurisprudence, the land-sea distinction. He viewed Britain and America as sea powers, leviathans, arbiters of a planetary power. For Schmitt, sea power is no Hobbesian Leviathan, stabilizing the social order by the enormity of state power: rather a roving state projected globally destabilizing the fixity of the land powers.

There is a striking similarity between Joseph Conrad’s depiction of “the sea’s implacable hate” and Bakunin’s vision of the intentional working class. The sea has ever “remained the irreconcilable enemy of ships and men.” Little wonder then that the anarchists of The Secret Agent have as a target the Royal Observatory at Greenwich. Conrad observes that the sea has shown man no hospitality or generosity as has the land. Man has left no furrows, enclosures or pastures on the sea. The anarchists target the Royal Observatory at Greenwich, home of British sea power, for what little order the sea acknowledges stems from there. Ships and men gain what purchase they have over the sea from the art of navigation and especially the plotting of longitude. To destroy the Royal Observatory is to release the elemental sea and its hatred.

Conrad’s response to the Russian Bakunin is not dialectical. Instead of stressing the role of power unmoored from morals like Schmitt, Conrad thinks of ships, and to a lesser degree, men, in terms of virtues. The ship of state is a precarious thing, a combination of virtues coping with the violence of political animosities amidst the securing of order, trade and industry. I suggest in the paper that Conrad’s vision is quite classical and promotes a welcome *via media* between anarchy and reaction.


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Leon Harold Craig – Interpreting Hobbes’s *Leviathan*: The Peculiar Relevance of *Moby-Dick* and *Heart of Darkness*

Abstract: Anyone familiar with *Israel Potter* is aware of Melville’s high regard for Thomas Hobbes. It is verbally expressed in the context of his appraisal of Ben Franklin: “In some of his works his style is only surpassed by the unimprovable sentences of Hobbes of Malmesbury, the paragon of perspicuity. But Melville’s admiration had earlier been expressed ‘in deed’: his philosophical masterpiece, *Moby-Dick*, was crafted with Hobbes’s *Leviathan* especially in mind. Melville’s profligate use of ‘leviathan’ to refer to whales is itself the first clue, for as a result of Hobbes’s disinterring that name to title *his* masterpiece, the term comes trailing clouds of political implications. The fact that *Moby-Dick* was originally entitled *The Whale* and that
whales are ‘leviathans’ is meant to suggest the affiliation of these two great books. And as I shall show, their kinship is deep and pervasive. However, the fact that the white whale is a sperm whale, and that Melville calls these greatest and fiercest of whales ‘Platonian Leviathans,’ hints at another profound philosophical dimension of his book which I shall sketch. Likewise regarding the third major presence in it, Shakespeare – e.g., Ahab’s ‘sane madness’ is modeled on that of King Lear – and a fourth, that of the Bible, especially the Book of Job, whence Hobbes lifted the name to title the book in which he conveyed the most successful political teaching in history.

Allusions to the works of Plato and Shakespeare are of similar importance in the writings of Conrad. But his Heart of Darkness has a special pertinence to Hobbes’s Leviathan. As many have noted, this novella is a meditation on the State of Nature, both in the anthropological and the psychological senses. However, what seems not generally appreciated is how cleverly Conrad has managed to bring ‘face to face,’ as it were, the two very different versions of this State that a deeper understanding of Hobbes’s Leviathan requires: as experienced by pre-civil, as opposed to post-civil man. Moreover, the narrative frame of the story is that of the Hobbesian commercial republic, a form of regime that naturally inclines towards imperial expansion. But as I shall elaborate, there is much more to be said about the Hobbesian quality of this unforgettable story.

Bio: I recently retired from the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Canada, where I had taught political philosophy and philosophy of science for thirty-five years. My major publications include The War Lover: A Study of Plato’s “Republic” (Univ. of Toronto Press, 1994) and Of Philosophers and Kings: Political Philosophy in Shakespeare’s Macbeth and King Lear (Univ. of Toronto Press, 2001). My latest scholarly project is a critical re-examination of (mainly) the metaphysical framework of Hobbes’s Leviathan, and a new interpretation of its political prescription. The book begins and ends with chapters on Moby-Dick, and the central chapter – separating the two large Hobbes chapters – explores Conrad’s “Heart of Darkness” as a means of “seeing” substantially the two versions of Hobbes’s State of Nature.

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J. Gill Holland – “Eying the Old Man with Sympathy”: The Question of a Sympathetic Resolution to the Quarrels over the Conclusion to The Confidence-Man: His Masquerade (with parallels to Lord Jim and “Heart of Darkness”)

Abstract: In the nineteenth century it was accepted that the modern novel had been joined from birth with the concept of sympathy. In the “Author’s Note” to Lord Jim and “in the certitude of my sympathy” at the end of “Heart of Darkness” Conrad puts sympathy front and center. But the importance of sympathy to Melville is not so clear. In The Confidence-Man: His Masquerade a look at sympathy in the closing scene of the novel helps us understand this highly ambiguous novel, the criticism of which (one scholar wrote in 1968) “is so snarled that nothing can be gained, least of all clarity, by adding one more argument” (Sidney P. Moss). Sympathy played an operative role in Melville’s earlier writing, as in Moby Dick. In The Confidence-Man,
his last novel (1857), if full weight is given to the word sympathy we may recognize a new and brighter conclusion if not resolution to the conflicts in the story and the contradictions in Melville’s view of the human condition. The concluding dialogue between the old man and the perplexing figure of Goodman, the cosmopolitan, is the key:

“Then, good-night, good-night; and Providence have both of us in its good keeping.”

“Be sure it will,” eying the old man with sympathy, as for the moment he stood, money-belt in hand, and life-preserver under arm, “be sure it will, sir, since in Providence, as in man, you and I equally put trust.”


**Bio:** I am Professor Emeritus of English, Davidson College, North Carolina, USA. I have written on American, British, Norwegian and Chinese literature and the visual arts. Most recently my essay “Teaching Narrative in the Five-Character Quatrain of Li Po” was published on-line in <EnterText 5.3> (London, March 2006). I have translated a chapbook of Classical Chinese poems (Keep An Eye On South Mountain, 1986) and, most recently from the Norwegian, The Private Journals of Edvard Munch (U Wisconsin P, 2005). In 2003 I taught at the University of Łódź, Poland, on a Fulbright. I retired from teaching in 2004. I also taught on three sabbatical leaves in Taiwan and Beijing. (B.A., Washington and Lee U., Ph. D., U North Carolina at Chapel Hill)

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**Maria Camelia Dicu – Melville’s Moby Dick or the Quest for the Absolute**

**Abstract:** Melville’s *Moby Dick* represents the great art of telling the truth and this is the condition for an oeuvre d’art to endure throughout the centuries and every generation of readers and of critics to discover new values and new interpretations of that writing. Apart from the documentary or epical vein, the philosophical one alter *Moby Dick* into a valuable work of art and to speak the truth, in my opinion the philosophical vein penetrates both the documentary and the epic ones. Melville’s philosophy resides in his life experience, in his great art of telling the truth about this experience, in the fact that everything that he experienced made him wiser, made him not to make the same mistake twice.

As Melville himself states in *Moby Dick* in the motto “meditation and water are wedded forever.” I think it is in the nature of water itself that it makes us more thoughtful, more pensive, makes us draw some conclusions, no matter how much of philosophers we are.
As for Melville's vision of the universe he is one of the best fortune teller so to say, because his visions about life about the place the human being occupy in the universe, about how petite he is comparatively to the great secrets of the universe, are still valid.

Speaking about Melville in his time, I have to say that his oeuvres were not properly understood or better said his co-nationals did not understand or did not want to understand the meaning of his writings since he was even considered a plagiarist.

In his works, the man is only a small part of the universe and if he does not understand that some of the secrets of the universe have to remain hidden, well then the punishment will come one way or another. I myself studied this aspect in my doctoral thesis under the title *Moby Dick and Lostrița or the Metaphor of the Absolute* (*The Huck*, written by a Romanian writer, Vasile Voiculescu, who describes pretty much the same aspects as Melville, but at another scale, *The Huck* is a story).

In one of the chapter of my comparative study I dealt with the problem of the absolute ideal as it was seen by philosophers like Parmenides, Plato, Spinoza, Schelling, Fichte, Hegel or Kant that answered differently to this philosophical questions: Does the existence exist in the ego independently from the thought that thinks about it? The problem of the absolute is also considered the fundamental problem of philosophy.

Whereas, on the one hand, Melville finds a possible answer to the fundamental philosophical problem, on the other hand the hermeneutic consequences of Melville's philosophic inter-texts makes you think twice, makes you say that fate is the Great Wizard that leads our lives.

**Bio:** I was born on 6th of March 1967, in Târgu Jiu, the town of Brâncuși, the great sculpturer, whose works are well known worldwide, where I actually live. I graduated from High School No. 6 (back then, now Spiru Haret), philology profile in 1985. In 1990 I became a student at University of Craiova, English-Italian section and I became a Bachelor of Arts in 1995. After the graduation I have been an English teacher at a secondary school for a year after which I became an employee at the University Constantin Brâncuși in 1996, first as a tutor, then an assistant lecturer and then a lecturer since 2003. I am a Ph.D. Candidate at Chişinău University, which is a Public Institution of Education, where I am about to graduate with the thesis *Moby Dick and Lostrița, or the Metaphor of the Absolute*, which is a comparative study. I am married and I have a boy born in 1996. My hobbies are reading and travelling, knowing people and finding out about their cultures. I like to spend my spare time with my family or visiting friends.

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Yael Levin – “Water, Water, Everywhere”: Vertiginous Inter-subjectivity in Conrad and Melville

Abstract#2: For Herman Melville and Joseph Conrad, the sea voyage stages an encounter with a space that is absolutely Other. The loss of a spatial, social and moral perspective that comes with an immersion in an endless stretch of water effects a vertiginous disorientation. In a space that is circumscribed by nothing but the imaginary and elusive border of the horizon, perception is infected by the uncanny: moonlight assumes a sinister and ghostly aspect; darkness solidifies and the unforeseeable is transformed into a threatening inevitability.

The loss of perceived boundaries is mirrored in the blurring of the demarcation between the subject and the group. In both Moby Dick and The Nigger of the Narcissus this process is marked by an oscillation between the limited perspective of a first-person homodiegetic narrator and the unlimited vantage point of an omniscient narrator. The transitions between the two are fluid, suggesting that at sea the idea of subjectivity undergoes a radical modification. The mind becomes, as it were, a shared entity. The inter-subjective dynamic of an isolated and enmeshed social milieu subsequently contributes and exacerbates the expansion or distortion of perceived or imagined objects. The group subsequently becomes a source of power, but also of weakness, as it promotes superstition, falsehood and fear.

The encounter with the absolute Other, however, effects a radical transformation of this magic circle. The bond of inter-subjectivity is severed and the distinction between the subject and the group is restored. The narrative treatment of this event in the fictions of Melville and Conrad demonstrates that the eruption of an absolute Other negates the existence of a subjective community. The all-encompassing perspective of the omniscient narrator similarly gives way to a limited subjectivity; it is always a sole witness who is burdened with the task of observing, interpreting and remembering.

Bio: Yael Levin conducted her doctoral studies on Joseph Conrad under the supervision of Robert Hampson at Royal Holloway, the University of London, where she graduated in 2003. She has since presented papers at Conrad conferences in London, Amsterdam and Washington and has published on Conrad in The Conradian and in Partial Answers. In 2005 she was presented with the Bruce Harkness Young Conrad Scholar by the Joseph Conrad Society of America. She is currently teaching at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

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Jürgen Kramer – The Sea as a Culturally Constructed Space in Melville’s and Conrad’s Writings
**Abstract:** I have been interested in the topic of the sea as a culturally constructed space for quite some time. This paradigm encompasses not only a configuration of whole ways of life, but also the production, circulation and regulation of meaning, i.e. those processes which create, construct and communicate such ways of life.

To come to grips with such a vast subject area, I made myself a kind of mental map to help me find my bearings. As with any mental map, it is anything but complete. On the one hand, there are the sea and its dimensions: water, fauna, flora, and the weather. These basic units can then be subdivided: water, for example, can be regarded as an element (with a set of specific features) or as a space (with a different set of features). The subdivisions can, again, be further subdivided. On the other hand, we have sea-faring people living on the coast (or beach) or on an island. They build and man ships for voyages – and the concomitant processes produce, circulate and reproduce ideas and concepts as well as norms and values. The dimensions ‘ships’, ‘crews’ and ‘voyages’ can also be further subdivided: voyages, for example, can be ones of exploration, trade, or war; they can be successful or end in shipwreck; crews are the products of many different and highly contradictory processes, of which factors like class, race/ethnicity, gender, age, nationality and language present only a preliminary list; ships can be rightly looked at as a means of transport, but also as social systems (or models of society). These two sides have to be imagined as complex networks opening up towards each other so that specific (thematic or theoretical) connections can be made.

Moreover, and more importantly, all these natural and social relations as well as processes are flooded with, shot through and informed by innumerable discourses (historical, social, political, philosophical, literary etc.) which reflect and constitute them. It is these discourses I am particularly interested in, and in my paper I want to look at the contributions of Herman Melville and Joseph Conrad to them. The topics I want to tackle in my paper mainly relate to those pertinent to Section 1: How do Melville and Conrad construct the sea as a cultural space? Are these constructions part of a more comprehensive vision of the universe (or philosophical perspective)? Others (related) questions take up topics from Sections 2 and 3: What historical and political views are represented in Melville’s and Conrad’s constructions of the sea as a geographical and cultural space? What are Melville’s and Conrad’s positions in the traditions of American and British literature of the sea? How do they fit in and/or transform these traditions?

**Bio:** I am Professor of British Cultural Studies at the University of Dortmund (Germany). My main research areas are the history of the British Isles and the British Empire, the sea as a cultural space, transatlantic slavery, literature of the Pacific, cultural memory, anti-colonial resistance, Joseph Conrad and, of late, Robert Louis Stevenson. Among my publications are Cultural and Intercultural Studies (1990) and British Cultural Studies (1997); since 1994 I have co-edited the Journal for the Study of British Cultures.

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Aubrey MacPhail – Epistemological Vertigo: Knowledge and Skepticism in *Moby-Dick*

**Abstract:** Given the preponderance of references, both implicit and explicit, to philosophers and philosophical notions, it is surprising that little critical attention has been paid to the precise epistemological position *Moby-Dick* seems to underwrite. In a contemporary review of *Moby-Dick*, Evert Duyckinck called the novel, somewhat disparagingly, “an intellectual chowder,” and asserted that “it becomes quite impossible to submit such books to a distinct classification as fact, fiction, or essay.” Duyckinck’s remarks do suggest an integral feature of *Moby-Dick*—the attempt to understand experience by continuously exploring and re-ordering conventional sources and means of acquiring knowledge. This, of course, is fundamentally an epistemological enterprise, and it is referred to in the chapter entitled “Cetology.” Ishmael tells the reader that “It is some systematized exhibition of the whale in his broad genera, that I would now fain put before you […] The classification of the constituents of a chaos, nothing less is here essayed.”

Ishmael’s comments on his taxonomy of the whale may be profitably applied to the novel since much of it essays the classification of a chaos. That is, much of *Moby-Dick* involves the impulse to know and deals with the possibilities and limitations of various ways of knowing. Specifically, Ishmael insists on a practicable balance of the intuitional and empirical components of experience, and on a measured skepticism with respect to any absolute or transcendent certainty.

Ishmael suggests the limitations to human knowledge when he says, “any human thing supposed to be complete, must […] infallibly be faulty”; similarly, after his thorough adumbration of the physiology of the whale’s tale, he still insists, “Dissect him how I may, then, I go but skin deep; I know him not and never will.” Yet, Ishmael also insists on the practical efficacy of (Lockean) empiricism since he repeatedly appeals to “experience” or “skill” at whaling, and he asserts that “the only mode in which you can derive even a tolerable idea of his [the whale’s] living contour, is by going a whaling yourself.” However, at times, Ishmael also affirms the need for (Kantian) intuitive apprehension; in his attempt to explain the “mystical and well nigh ineffable” whiteness of the whale, he asserts that “in a matter like this […] without imagination no man can follow another into these halls.”

Drawing on Emmanuel Levinas and Mikhail Bakhtin, I argue that these seemingly inconsistent assertions are reconciled in the novel through its treatment of the problem of relation—of subject to object and self to other. Ishmael is a skeptic concerning absolute or final knowledge, whether sought through empiricism or intuition, yet he affirms their efficacy within certain parameters. Ishmael finally invokes the lesson of the whale’s “divided and diametrically opposite powers of vision” and affirms the need for a unified epistemic “vision” or “equal eye”:

And so, through all the thick mists of the dim doubts in my mind, divine intuitions now and then shoot, enkindling my fog with a heavenly ray […] doubts of all things earthly, and intuitions of some things heavenly; this combination makes neither believer nor infidel, but makes a man who regards them both with equal eye.

**Bio:** Aubrey MacPhail is co-editor of Ken Saro-Wiwa: *Writer and Activist*. He has published on Arthur Nortje, Wole Soyinka, Ken-Saro Wiwa, Mikhail Bakhtin. His interests include 18th-19th-Century British and American literature and the relation between philosophy and fiction.
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Daniel Brudney – Vere, Jim, and Fiction’s Moral Task

Abstract: It is said of Captain Vere, in Melville’s Billy Budd, that he was an avid reader with a taste running to “books treating of actual men and events no matter of what era –history, biography, and unconventional writers like Montaigne, who, free from cant and convention, honestly and in the spirit of common sense philosophize upon realities.” And it is said of Jim, in Conrad’s Lord Jim, “that after a course of light holiday literature his vocation for the sea had declared itself.”

So we have two types of books, each crucial in guiding a particular character’s outlook on the world, an outlook with an impact on that character’s important decisions. What is interesting is that neither type of book is the type written by Herman Melville or Joseph Conrad. So what might Vere and Jim have learned if they had read not history or light literature but great novels, works of fiction that reach the status of art? And how might such “learning” have affected Vere’s decision to hang Billy Budd or Jim’s jump from the Patna?

One proposal would be that what is missing in each character is what can be thought of as the “realistic imagination.” On the one hand, Vere could have used some cultivation of his imagination in order to deal less rigidly with the case Billy Budd presents to him. Vere’s particular brand of reading has given him “some positive convictions which he forefelt would abide in him essentially unmodified so long as his intelligent part remained unimpaired” – convictions that are in fact not clearly correct about the world. Most importantly, Vere has convictions about the psychology of sailors – convictions that are key to his argument that Budd must hang – that the tale, Billy Budd, belie. On the other hand, Jim’s imagination runs riot in shallow ways, unsuiting him for the satisfactions of ordinary life at sea (as the narrator stresses) as well as for the unexpected demand thrust on him when the Patna appears ready to sink. A particular kind of moral education provided by works of art in fictional prose might have mitigated these character flaws. But it is crucial that what such works provide is not mere corrective information about the world. For that purpose, the fact that these are works of fiction and of the quality of works of art would be irrelevant. Rather, at their best, works like these prompt (at least briefly) a transcendence of the self, a way of getting past one’s own blinkers and narcissism – and that is something both Vere and Jim deeply need. I shall argue that, among other things, this capacity of the novels to prompt one past narcissism helps make sense of Kant’s claim that beauty is a symbol of morality.

Bio: Daniel Brudney is Associate Professor in the Department of Philosophy, Associate Faculty in the Divinity School, and member of the MacLean Center for Clinical Medical Ethics at the University of Chicago. He writes and teaches principally in political philosophy, philosophy and literature, and philosophy of religion. He is the author of Marx’s Attempt to Leave Philosophy (1998). His publications include

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**Samuel Otter – The Mirror of the Sea: Melville, Conrad, Lem**

**Abstract:** In “Initiation,” the pivotal section of his memoir *The Mirror of the Sea* (1906), Joseph Conrad reflects upon his fascination with the ocean. First in exposition and then in a story from his youth, the narrator portrays an encounter with a force distinguished by “an irresponsible consciousness of power” that has “no compassion, no faith, no law, no memory.” The narrator describes how, twenty-five years earlier, he helped to rescue the survivors of a brig that had been disabled in a hurricane and had drifted for weeks. Seeing the ship disappear beneath the surface cadences of the water on an exquisite day, he wonders at, and is transformed by, the “unfathomable cruelty” of the sea.

I will use Conrad’s “Initiation” as the pivot for comparing the resonant encounters with the ocean in Herman Melville’s *Moby-Dick* (1851), Conrad’s *Mirror*, and Stanislaw Lem’s *Solaris* (1961). Whether or not the two later writers had Melville specifically in mind, they certainly were aware of *Moby-Dick*. (Conrad dismissed the book as a “strained rhapsody” and Lem associated the symbolic layers in his *Solaris* with Melville’s technique in *Moby-Dick.*) Contemplating the ocean across time, nation, and genre, the three writers offer a remarkable, symmetrical (each fifty-five years apart) meditation on encounters with the nonhuman.

Melville suggests that a romanticized version of the story of Narcissus is “the key to it all,” and he savors his personifications, but he also hints that such self-indulgence in confronting the nonhuman is a mistake, and possibly a fatal one. Conrad severs the ocean from its sailors, implying that the title of his memoir is ironic. The “mirror” does not reflect its observers; instead, its deceptive surface conceals implacable depths. Lem magnifies and literalizes the issues, covering his planet with an ocean that has a “psychic function,” a vitality beyond human analogy or metaphor. This ocean experiments with human consciousness, incarnating and exposing what is hidden. Images emerge through the distorting mirror of Solaris. For the three writers, the attempt to represent the ocean raises fundamental questions about epistemology and tests the reach and limits of language.

**Bio:** I am the author of *Melville’s Anatomies* (1999) and recent essays on Philadelphia literature, Harriet Beecher Stowe and race, American literary criticism, fact and fiction in *Typee*, and landscape and style in Melville’s Marquesan writings. I have co-edited a special journal issue on “Melville and Disability” and a volume of essays on *Frederick Douglass and Herman Melville*. Currently, I am working on a
book about race, manners, violence, and freedom in the period between the U. S. Constitution and Civil War, entitled *Philadelphia Stories*. I am an Associate Professor of English at the University of California, Berkeley.

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**Tobin Craig – Conrad's Critique of Rousseau: A Reading of *Under Western Eyes***

**Abstract:** Few ideas have so captured the imaginations of modern artists, and novelists in particular, as that of the ‘State of Nature’. From Defoe to Melville to Kafka, the imaginative effort to recreate and revisit a period or situation or creature existing beyond, or at least before Good and Evil, has been an informing feature of some of the most profound and provocative artistic creations of modern times. One could argue that no author’s opus was as centrally concerned with the idea or image of the state of nature as that of Joseph Conrad. *Heart of Darkness*, as most any informed reader can see, is, if nothing else, the chronicle of one modern man’s journey ‘up-river’ to his pre-political, or rather, pre-civil past. But one could add *Nostromo*, Conrad’s meditation on the founding of a nation, and *Victory*, the strange chronicle of the son of a pessimistic philosopher, whose attempt to escape civil society and live a solitary life on an uninhabited island fails as the result of the intrusion of a strange trinity of criminals. In the jungles of each of these dark and difficult works a reader of Rousseau can frequently detect the Genevan’s footprints leading Conrad’s way. But, for Conrad’s most direct, sustained and perhaps ultimately most challenging meditation on Rousseau’s state of nature, one must turn to the modern Europe of *Under Western Eyes*.

In this paper I propose a reading of *Under Western Eyes* guided by the numerous and conspicuous references to Rousseau, and in particular his *Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality Among Men*, that Conrad has woven into his narrative. I argue that such a reading discloses a critique not merely of Rousseau’s dangerously explosive anti-establishment rhetoric, but also, and more fundamentally, of the understanding of human being that grounds Rousseau’s thought as a whole. I conclude by offering some suggestions on what this critique of Rousseau might indicate about Conrad’s own understanding of man’s place in nature.

**Bio:** I currently hold a post-doctoral fellowship co-funded by the Lefrak Symposium on Science, Reason, and Modern Democracy and James Madison College. I teach in the Political Theory and Constitutional Democracy Field at the College, and am developing the political theory curriculum for a specialization in Science, Technology, the Environment and Public Policy. My own research interests focus on the philosophic foundations of modern science and technology, and the moral and political implications of the development of modern science and technology. In both
my teaching and research I favor an interdisciplinary approach, relying heavily on literary presentations of and reflections on the tensions and conflicts raised by the advance of science and technology. I am currently working on a study of the thought of Francis Bacon.

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**Katarzyna Spiechlanin – Melville, Philosophy, Nature**

**Abstract:** Herman Melville’s approach to sea and human voyages at sea signify his entire system of philosophy of space and human relationship with nature. Many writes, philosophers and poets assumed Melvillean idea as a foundation of their own concept of human place in nature and universe. Charles Olson, a poet, but also a philosopher and sailor at the same time, claimed to be Melville’s follower. In his book, *Call Me Ishmael* he discusses the way in which humanity approaches space. The opening of this famous book clearly defines Olson’s concept of space – rooted in Melvillean approach, yet also very idiosyncratic: “I take SPACE to be the central fact to man born in America [...] I spell it large because it comes large here. Large, and without mercy.”

*Call Me Ishmael* can be read as Olson interpretation of Melville’s philosophy, but also as his presentation of literary trends that shaped American mind – he devotes a lot of attention to Shakespearian dramas perceiving them as a turning point in defining human concepts of nature, strength and weakness, authority and manhood. The book is also a presentation of Olson’s understating of American mind as opposed to European mind: “It is geography at the bottom, a hell of white land from the beginning. That made the first American story: exploration”.

The last and not least, *Call Me Ishmael* is also a journal of a journey of the mind – from the mind of an academic (specializing in Melville) to the mind of a sailor who at sea ha to “unlearn all the truths that he was taught before” to harbor finally in the mind of a poet that managed to encompass all the previous experiences of his life.

**Bio:** I have been employed at the post of a junior faculty member at the Institute of American Studies at the Jagiellonian University in Cracow, where I teach American and Canadian literature. I graduated from the Department of English Studies of the same university in 1996 and in the same year I started doctoral studies there. At that time I was a faculty member of the Department of English Studies. My Master thesis, written under the supervision of Professor Irena Przemecka concerned contemporary American poetry. In 2002 I submitted and defended my doctoral thesis devoted to Projectivism and Black Mountain College. Since 2004 I have been a staff member of the Institute of American studies of the Jagiellonian University. Apart from teaching American and Canadian literature I also teach American arts. My academic interest
concentrate on American and Canadian poetry and this is the field in which I pursue my academic career.
POLSKI CONRAD, POLSKI MELVILLE
Joanna Skolik – Polak, zdrajca czy Kosmopolak albo: ewolucja recepcji Conrada w Polsce


Na przestrzeni lat powstawały i rozwijały się dwie legendy Josepha Conrada: jedna mówiąca o zdradzie ojczyzny i dziedzictwa rodziców, druga mówiąca o Conradzie jako o spadkobiercy i dziedzicu polskiej tradycji romantycznej. Później widziano w Conradzie „obywatela świata” – Kosmopolaka. Wreszcie ocenia się pisarza z szerszej perspektywy, dostrzegając w nim apologetę wartości wypracowanych w tradycji śródziemnomorskiej. Mówi się o Conradzie jako o pisarzu – Europejczyku, który potrafił zmienić polskie doświadczenie: cierpienia, wierności straconej sprawie, alienacji w doświadczenie uniwersalne.

To, w jaki sposób postrzegano twórczość pisarza zależało od kontekstu historyczno-kulturowego, w jakim czytane były jego utwory. Sytuacja, w której znaleźli się czytelnicy, czego poszukiwali w dziełach „ostatniego z romantyków” miała ogromny wpływ na sposób odczytywania dzieł Conrada.

Recepcja Conrada w Polsce to swego rodzaju barometr nastrojów społecznych, uczuć patriotycznych czy przekonań politycznych. Oskarżenia o zdradę Polski i późniejsza rehabilitacja pisarza w latach poprzedzających odzyskanie niepodległości, „wybaczanie” dezercji Conradowi w chwili gdy ojczyzna staje się wolną, doszukiwanie się oznak patriotyzmu, zarzuty obojętności wobec „Sprawy Polskiej” i wreszcie nazwanie Conrada moralistą w przeddzień wybuchu drugiej wojny światowej, wiele mówi o nastrojach panujących w danej chwili w kraju. W czasach wojny i okupacji etos Conradowski stał się etosem Polski Walczącej; obezna w książkach pisarza trudna wierność „straconej sprawie”, wierność „kilku prostym zasadom”, kodeksowi, współbraciom pozwalać dokonywać trudnych wyborów i przetrwać. W Polsce powojennej, pisarz znalazł się na czarnej liście, oskarżany, podobnie jak żołnierze Armii Krajowej, o bezmyślny kult heroizmu. I znów walczyło o dobre imię pisarza, wskazywano, że w jego dziełach odnaleźć można wartości największe, te, bez których nie można mówić o człowieczeństwie, lojalności czy sensie ludzkiego istnienia. Wówczas, gdy nie było znikąd nadziei, a świat pograżony był w zawieruchę wojenną, zacząto w Conradzie dostrzegać pisarza-Europejczyka, który przekazuje prawdy i mądrości uniwersalne. Dziś Conrad jest postrzegany jako pisarz jednocześnie narodowy i wielokulturowy.
Bio: I teach English at the Institute of East-Slavonic Studies at Opole University. My Ph.D. thesis presented “The Ideal of Fidelity in Conrad’s Works”. I have also published several articles on Conrad, among others, in Slavonic Studies and Essays. My main interests are: Conradian fidelity (the ideal which originates from the tradition of the chivalric code of honor) and Conrad’s reception in Poland (discussed in terms of fidelity and betrayal).

Ewa Kujawska-Lis – Udomawianie i uwspółcześnianie Jądra ciemności

Abstrakt: Dawno temu Schleiermacher wygłosił sławne stwierdzenie, iż są tylko dwie możliwości tłumaczenia: albo autora sprowadza się do języka odbiorcy, albo to odbiorca wysyłany jest do języka autora. Innymi słowy, albo sprowadzamy autora do domu, albo wysyłamy czytelnika za granicę. Obecnie te same koncepcje wciąż wywołują gorące dyskusje, zmieniła jednak terminologia i podejścia teoretyczne. We współczesnym piśmiennictwie częściej można spotkać rozróżnienie Venutiego (udomowienie i egzotyzacja), a prace Even-Zohara dotyczące pozycji literatury tłumaczonej w polisystemie literackim rzucają więcej światła na związki zachodzące między tymi dwoma ogólnymi podejściami do tłumaczenia a przekładem z systemu literatury dominującej na system literatury peryferyjnej i odwrotnie.


Wydaje się, że wbrew panującym obecnie tendencjom do egzotyzacji tekstu tłumaczenia, współczesna wersja Jądra ciemności, przyjmując na poziomie język, może być określona jako „udomowiona” w porównaniu z wcześniejszym tłumaczeniem utworu Conrada. Na ogół Zagórska stara się odzwierciedlić w swoim przekładzie sformułowania użyte przez Conrada, dlatego też na przykład jej tłumaczenia metafor są często dosłowne, podczas gdy celem Sochy, czy jego skopos, wydaje się być stworzenie jak najbardziej naturalnego tekstu w języku docelowym. W związku z tym, współczesny Marlow to biznesmen z końca dwudziestego wieku, który brzmi bardzo „polsko”, gdyż posługuje się typowymi polskimi wyrażeniami, porównaniami, metaforami czy wykrzyknikami, w odróżnieniu od Marlowa z początku wieku. Celem referatu jest wskazanie w jaki sposób wybory tłumacza odnoszące się do strategii i poszczególnych elementów językowych wywołują, używając terminologii Antoine Bermana, tendencje deformujące tekst.

Bio: Pracuję jako adiunkt w Instytucie Neofilologii na Uniwersytecie Warmińsko-Mazurskim w Olsztynie, gdzie prowadzę seminaria licencjackie i magisterskie z zakresu translatoryki oraz zajęcia praktyczne z tłumaczenia i literatury angielskiej. W roku 2003 na Uniwersytecie Łódzkim obroniłam pracę doktorską dotyczącą twórczości Karola Dickensa. Moje główne zainteresowania badawcze to adaptacja