

Conrad's Victory

Resurrection Lost

Conrad's Victory: Resurrection Lost

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Acknowledgments

Thank you Daya Mata, President of Self-Realization Fellowship, for giving me the courage to drop out of the legal profession and devote time to service, in my case service to the art of a few novels. Thanks also to Brother Brahmananda of Self-Realization Fellowship who helped me to understand this novel.

To my beloved son Egan, may he have his own victory.

Debts and Protocol

First let me admit that my knowledge of Buddhism, its many versions and its predecessor Hinduism, is shallow. I learned what little I shared here from various summaries, particularly from the Encyclopedia Britannica [abbreviated as EB]. For ease of discussion I treat Buddhism as if it were one body of thinking and as if it were separate from Hinduism and other religions unto which it was grafted. This of course is not the case. I have also assumed that the nihilism preached by Heyst's father is a product of Buddhism, since I believe Conrad presents that view in this novel.

I have used a few Sanskrit words since Conrad seems to have punned off of some of them. My machine does not make all the kinds of marks that are necessary for proper Sanskrit so you will find some of the words improperly rendered.

I used Boyd's *Satan and Mara* to understand the different meanings of evil in Christianity and Buddhism. For various aspects of the devil in Christianity, I read in Rudwin's *Devil in Legend and Literature*. I used in this literary analysis Christopher Alexander's tools for defining wholeness in nature and art from his **The Nature of Order**. When speaking of Conrad's view, I mean the one expressed in this novel.

Holy Spirit is capitalized but no god, father or son is. No disrespect is intended. I have intentionally varied the gender of the Holy Spirit. The issue of whether the Holy Spirit is a purely external source, or purely a potential in the human or a mixture of outside and inside is a serious issue that I have not tried to tackle, other than to present Conrad's view.

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Introduction

Despite the title *Victory*, this novel gives us not one but two victories. As rendered by Conrad, one victory is genuine and the other counterfeit. The genuine victory is over death. It is achieved by way of emotional connection. The counterfeit victory is over life, and is achieved by way of emotional separation. This novel is about the contrast of the two victories, the contrast of connection and separation.

In this novel subtitled *The Island Tale*, Baron Axel Heyst is living alone on a remote south sea island. He chose this location as part of a life-long philosophy of emotional separation—to avoid emotional entanglements and remain self-possessed. His mantra is “Don’t get involved.” On one of his unavoidable trips to a neighboring island, he meets Lena [also named Magdalen], an attractive young woman indentured by poverty and lack of options to a painful life with a touring orchestra. Despite his “don’t get involved” philosophy, Heyst rescues her from the orchestra, and they escape to live together on his remote island.

Isolated on the island, Heyst and Lena are together all the time, one on one 24/7. The only activity on this island is their relationship. There is no distraction: no child to tend, no television, no radio, no Hi-Fi set and no community to serve. Life is boiled down to just one thing, one emotional relationship. And in that one emotional relationship there is only one issue, the degree of connection or separation. By this concentration, Conrad points to what he believes is the most important aspect of life.

Nurtured by this intense personal concentration, Lena’s connection to Heyst matures from initial interest to sexual love to selfless or spiritual love. But Heyst’s response to her remains immature. He remains stuck emotionally in sexual possession, familiar enough in our brutish early ancestors and modern teenagers but emotional autism for a modern adult. His entanglement but limited

response to her creates an insecure, agitated and restless emotional life for him. He is involved but not connected.

This asymmetrical emotional connection is the grinding point in their relationship and arises from their different attitudes towards life. Lena is naturally personal, loving and giving. She acts with hope and gumption. Heyst is constitutionally impersonal, detached and removed. He hesitates in timidity and pessimism. He values style she motivation.

Even sexual communion does not ease these deeply based differences. Lena and Heyst have sex only once. She consummates in sex her love and sacrifice for him. He consummates in sex his possession and taking of her. She gives, he takes. Given this failure of love connection, representatives of evil arrive on the island shortly thereafter. The presence of evil prevents further sexual communion.

Their contrasting attitudes toward life chart the plot. Eventually Lena sacrifices her life to protect Heyst from real evil in the form of Jones & Company, the three arch criminals drawn to the island in search of plunder. After she dies saving him, Heyst commits suicide. He refuses Lena's final gift of life.

Lena's genuine victory is over death, the fear of death that generates the selfish "me first" attitude in humans. She is connection and "you first" oriented. Grounded in her love for Heyst, she achieves a permanent and real sense of self, personal power and an ability to deal with the evil ones. The more she sacrifices the more real and powerful she becomes. Finally she connects to the Holy Spirit force field and it powers her ultimate sacrifice for him. In this force field, death has no sting because the bliss is overwhelming.

Axel Heyst's counterfeit victory is over life, the emotional connections that make life with others. His victory is achieved by an emotional disconnect from all other humans. Even as Lena dies in his arms having saved him, he cannot feel love. He remains self-possessed, ultimately

giving nothing of himself to Lena, but ironically without a secure sense of self. A nihilistic Buddhism sponsors his separation-driven counterfeit victory. Because he is connected to Lena only through selfish possession, he suffers a personal power failure. He is incapable of dealing with the evil ones.

Conrad designed the two victories around tension producing contrasts—connection and separation, givers and takers, life and death and Christianity and Buddhism. These contrasts generate a high degree of tension. The tension builds up to a death-loaded climax. Death marks not only the two victories but three defeats as well. The climax produces a holocaust, in fact the death of five, a Pentecost.

In the most general sense this novel is about spiritual change. Viewed in Buddhist terms, Lena experiences a change that cannot be viewed as a product of cause and effect. She moves beyond and free of background and her karma. In Christian terms, she experiences the Holy Spirit. By contrast, Heyst is incapable of spiritual change, and remains stuck in cause and effect from his background.

Conrad's artistic method in this novel reinforces its *subject* matter about spiritual change. As a *process* this novel unfolds from stem-cell metaphors about change. In a highly unusual and sophisticated structure, these stem-cell metaphors morph and mutate into more specialized metaphors as the novel proceeds.

Conrad's large structure for Heyst's failure is as a failed resurrection. This structure is derived largely from the elements in the New Testament rendition of Resurrection of Christ the son, particularly those involving Mary Magdalene. Here those elements are reversed, thus producing a failed resurrection, a resurrection lost.

Plot

Now for some more about the plot from the Oxford Companion to Twentieth Century Literature in English:

Victory, a novel by Joseph Conrad, published in 1915, serialized in *Munsey's Magazine* (1915). Its central character, Axel Heyst, a Swedish aristocrat, lives on an island in the Malay Archipelago. Influenced by the skeptical philosophy of his father, and trying to avoid forming any attachments, his way of life is challenged when he rescues Lena, who has been touring the islands as part of a Ladies' Orchestra, from the sexual harassment of the hotelkeeper, Schomberg. The novel explores their relationship and the difficulties precipitated by the arrival of the devilish "Mr. Jones" and his two companions.

The novel explores such typical Conradian concerns as isolation, identity, and the relations between fathers and sons, but it also displays Conrad's interests, in his late novels, in relations between men and women, in concepts of masculinity, and in the construction of female identity. . .

These explanations prove to be mere teasers for the real show this novel puts on.

Buddhism and Christianity

It is important to understand something of Buddhism in order to understand what Conrad tries to achieve with his Heyst character. It is also important to renew your understanding of the Christian doctrine of the Holy Spirit in

order to understand the presentation of Lena and the big lightning storm and flames at the end of the novel. These two spiritual systems are the formatting palettes with which Conrad constructed the characters Heyst and Lena. But rest assured that this novel is not a polemic for either system but only an exploration of their effect on life as it is lived. However, this novel is a testament for the kind of human love Lena gives to Heyst.

Outlook on Life

The fundamental difference between Christianity and Buddhism is the outlook on life. In the field of life, what is genuine in one system is counterfeit in the other. Passionate, personal love is genuine for Lena and for the Holy Spirit but counterfeit for Heyst and for Buddhism. Likewise, self-possession is genuine for Heyst and Buddhism but counterfeit for Lena and her power source for giving.

Lena's Christian based outlook is optimistic and life affirming. She believes with hope that life can be made better and the best realized through the emotions. Heyst's Buddhist based outlook is pessimistic and life denying. He believes that life is inevitably one of suffering and cannot be made better. He believes that in order to reduce suffering, all emotional entanglements are to be avoided, even those emotions like personal love otherwise deemed good. You can love everyone impartially but not just one intensely.

Keep in mind that Lena doesn't have these attitudes because she is a Christian. She has these attitudes in her heart "naturally," and I describe her natural attitudes as those of the Christian Holy Spirit. The same is true for Heyst, except that his Buddhist-like attitudes are in his head, where his father planted them, not his heart that his father froze. Only playfulness and pity survive in his Buddhist heart, and both are condemned by Conrad as aspects of self-indulgence.

Life as Nothing

Buddhism rejected the authority of institutional religions and taught an independent morality starting from the concept that this life is nothing. Not accidentally, “nothing” is the last word in this novel. As explained by the Buddhists, this life is nothing because it is impermanent and illusory. It is made up of cause and effect but has no permanent substratum—there is nothing real and permanent that causes events in the life experience. Only cause and effect are operating; you and others do something and other things happen because of what you and others did, even in past lives. Discounting the laws of nature, no independent power or influence “out there” affects what happens. Only karma from past actions, yours and others.

Because this life is nothing, the Buddhist objective while alive is to die to this life, to defeat desires and emotions. If you can manage this denial then karma and reincarnation stop operating. You die to this life in order to defeat multiple rebirths through reincarnation into the same bad kind of impermanent and illusory life. In other words you die to this life so you don't have to die in other lives. You try to avoid rebirth in order to avoid redeath.

While modern readers might consider rebirth good, rebirths are bad in this belief system because they mean just another impermanent and illusory life of inevitable sickness, aging and death. All you have to look forward to is death, death over and over again, hundreds of times unless you achieve breakout. The breakout objective is freedom from desire, to free oneself through denial of desire from the continuous round of rebirths and deaths, and escape into the timeless *nirvana*. Nirvana is the only real and permanent experience possible, the only genuine currency. All else is illusion and counterfeit.

In the effort to achieve freedom, desires and emotions in this life are generally bad. The image of entangled living

for the Buddhist is a fire burning, the fire of passion and cravings. Emotional fire is bad for the effort at freedom. By contrast the non-entangled and enlightened man is cool. Cool is good. Impersonal and impartial charity is the maximum human connection recommended.

Chartered by his father within this belief system, Heyst tries to remain independent, impersonal and inactive. Conrad shows that in this very process Heyst creates his own impermanent and illusory life. In an attempt to avoid redeath, he forfeits rebirth, his spiritual resurrection.

Love

Now for Christian love. Christians believe that each of us is born in original sin but can be reborn in the spirit during life. The rebirth is accomplished by experiencing the eternal in selfless love, selfless love being the visitation in humans of the Holy Spirit. This “defeats” death through the operation of the eternal, since the eternal is outside of time in which death operates.

In the eternal, one escapes into the timelessness of god. This is valued experience because in all normal human experience the fundamental background is fear of inevitable death. This escape to the eternal is a mini-version of the Resurrection, a mini-escape from the hold of death. The eternal experience is the precursor of heaven, a taste of god but just a *hors d’oeuvre*. In an effort to keep matters straight, I refer to spiritual rebirth of mere mortals as resurrection and of the original as Resurrection.

So for Christians achieving spiritual rebirth is the main objective. The model for spiritual rebirth is the Resurrection of Christ. For Buddhists, however, avoiding corporeal rebirth or resurrection is the main objective.

Contrary to Buddhist dogma, Christians believe (and this novel adopts the view) that there is a permanent substratum in this world, a real power external to humans

that affects life as it is lived. That permanent substance is god as human spiritual love. In this form god is known as the Holy Spirit. This spiritual love is permanent and real. Spiritual love is not just a potential in you but is always “out there” waiting for you, like a signal broadcast by god that your own soul radio can play. You can connect with it.

Without the Holy Spirit, your own built-in potential for connection to others is largely limited to “clan” and community cooperation and the instinct-driven erotic, nesting and child raising desires. For major self-sacrificing love beyond the instincts, you participate in the Holy Spirit, in spiritual love. And this novel says that spiritual love can be experienced as part of the heat of a one on one emotional and sexual relationship, as opposed to impartial love for all.

Regardless of your own personal belief, I think that you will find that this is an accurate description of Conrad’s rendition of the love experienced by Lena for Heyst. Conrad is quite explicit in locating outside of Lena the impersonal force that creates the final dimension of her highly personal love and fuels her sacrifice for Heyst. That force comes with its own awesome lightning storm.

Lena’s sacrificing love for Heyst is personal, exclusive and intense. By contrast, the Buddha recommended love for all impartially. This is a broader love. It would also be, inevitably I fear, a shallower love.

Desires and Fires

Unlike the Buddhist system that generally discourages emotions, the Christian system encourages good emotions and discourages bad ones. Living the life of Christ involves the right emotions. Sin results from bad emotions, mostly from the survival instinct that there is not enough for all. Formatted in Christianity, Lena is ultimately personal, emotional and active. She creates through spiritual love a

permanent and real life, even if a short one. In that life she feels like a burning flame at the welding flash point of becoming. In an open Christian system, this kind of emotional flame is sacred and encouraged. However, the institutional church had trouble dealing with ecstasy.

Since emotional flame is an important image in both systems, it is not surprising that fire plays important roles in the plot of this novel. The volcano shows fire at night. Jones & Company threaten Schomberg with arson, fire is used by Wang on Round Island to clear the jungle for his commercial garden, fire comes in a huge lightning storm and Heyst apparently takes his own life with flames.

Death

In Buddhism one dies to this life in order to avoid multiple deaths. In Christianity one loves in this life in order to escape even if briefly the effect of inevitable death. One loves in order to rise above the perishable condition of humanity and the limiting self-interest associated with the desire for maximum survival. In both cases the effort is to defeat death's hold on life. That is why both victories in this novel are achieved through death.

Conrad's message seems to be that the Buddhist view is ultimately circular, just like Round Island, the isolated island where Heyst exists. The extended argument in logic would go something like the following. The impermanent and illusory condition of this life is generated by the Buddhist's own devaluation of emotions. Thus the impermanent and illusory condition of life cannot be used to justify the devaluation of emotions. The argument is circular. This life inevitably seems impermanent and illusory if you don't know spiritual love. For Conrad life need not be impermanent and illusory, as Heyst's life is. It can be permanent and ultimately real, as Lena's life is.

The Unrestful Hotel

Now we may be ready to benefit from the following quote from Boyd about the method and goal of impersonal Buddhism and the contrast with personal Christian doctrine:

Buddhism is a method of analysis, a highly analytical approach toward all aspects of experience, practiced in order to realize the cessation of *dukkha*, that inherently imperfect, misaligned, ill-at-ease condition of ordinary existence. . . . Buddhists found what they considered to be the Holy and True not in the *person* of the Buddha, but in his teaching of the Path to true freedom . . . and Enlightenment.

For early Christians the Holy and True was centered in an historical event, the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and it was the proclamation . . . of this event and its meaning for man that became the basis of the Christians' doctrine and creed.

In the very first paragraph of the novel Conrad refers to this kind of misaligned, ill-at-ease condition of ordinary existence as analyzed by Buddhism. Conrad describes it as the experience of "bewildered travelers in a garish, unrestful hotel." Hotel life is transitory and impersonal by its very nature. And Heyst's life becomes unrestful when he meets Lena at Schomberg's hotel, a hotel most garishly decorated.

More from the EB:

According to the Buddha, all is impermanent . . . a flowing reality, whether of external things or the psychophysical totality of human individuals. . . . Yet human beings are caught in the cycle of births and deaths (*samsara*) because the extinction of life—if the effect of a completed deed . . . has not been

stopped—does not mean the end of existence [rebirth into another life of suffering if karma is still operating]. He also perceived and taught that existence is subject to misery connected with the unpleasant, especially sickness and death, and separated from the pleasant.

Awareness of these fundamental realities led the Buddha to formulate the Four Noble Truths: the truth of misery . . . the truth that misery originates within us from the craving for pleasure and for being or non being; the truth that this craving can be eliminated; and the truth that this elimination is the result of a methodical way or path that must be followed.

Heyst experienced the impermanent state of the world in the earlier traveling portion of his life, before the time frame of the opening of the novel. In that earlier period, he experienced the world as fleeting because he deliberately never stayed in one place for long. He avoided entanglements merely by moving often rather than by denying desire. This aspect of Heyst reminds me of Anne Taylor's male protagonist in *The Accidental Tourist*.

Note that Heyst's life is transient because he chooses to travel, not because all life is transient regardless of what one is doing. Lena senses life as real even though she constantly travels with the touring orchestra.

As the novel opens, Heyst has decided not to travel any more and instead to stay on his island [named Round Island], apparently on a permanent basis. The first paragraph discusses his reasons for doing so. What is important about Heyst's choice to remain on Round Island is his attempt to achieve permanence through detachment, spiritual detachment, rather than travel. This is a higher level of withdrawal.

Unfortunately for Heyst, he is successful at this higher level of withdrawal. He is so successful that he is incapable of spiritual rebirth or resurrection when real love comes along in the form of Lena. Note that although his life is permanently anchored to one place, his emotional life becomes restlessly agitated and transient because he is entangled with Lena but incapable of love. He steals her from a hotel and takes her home but in the process creates his own hotel-like transient emotional existence.

More from EB in terms of steps toward spiritual advancement in Buddhism:

Here enter the seven factors of Enlightenment: clear memory, the exact investigation of the nature of things, energy and sympathy, tranquility, impartiality, and a disposition for concentration. These are assisted by subsidiaries, such as love for all living creatures, compassion, delight in that which is good or well done, and, again, impartiality.

Conrad also relates in detail through an exploration of his many nicknames that Heyst has also experienced [before the novel opens] the progression of changes in outlook recommended by Buddhism and almost in the right order. As “Hard Facts Heyst” he explored the **nature of things**. As “Spider Heyst” he displayed **sympathy** in his dealings with Morrison. As “Utopist Heyst” he expended **energy** on behalf of the Tropical Belt Coal Company and regional forward progress with coal-fired steam. Finally after all that he withdrew to **tranquility** on Round Island. He is **impartially charitable** since he is impersonal. This previous scattering prepares him for a **disposition for concentration** when he meets Lena.

These changes in the past life of Heyst are given in a kind of chain of dependent events, one following from another. This chain echoes the karma view of reality known

in Buddhism as dependent origination. You need dependent origination, in other words cause and effect, since there is no permanent substratum of reality that could make things happen.

Heyst is successful in detachment from others but he remains proud of himself, proud that he has never known love or hate, even in his dreams. By fashioning Heyst as a hapless male, Conrad condemns his attitude toward life, his pride and his lack of love.

Charity and Baptism

Joseph Campbell:

So that here, then is a third point, the chief point of the Mahayana [a kind of Buddhism] . . . It is known as the Bodhisattva Way, the way of living in the world, not retiring to the forest; acquiring an experience and thereby knowledge of the truth of egolessness through giving—boundless giving—doing selflessly one’s life task.

In this the more popular form of Buddhism, one stays in the world, not in the woods, in order to do charity for others in the spirit of egoless ness. Less ego means more charity, that is real charity not “look at me charity” for the symphony. In the more ascetic form of Buddhism, one stays in the woods, out of the world. Heyst is torn between these approaches.

In the “living in the world” form of Buddhism, charity is a necessary step to achieve freedom but is not sufficient for that purpose. Desire must be eliminated. In this sense charity serves a similar role to baptism in Christianity. Baptism removes original sin but not sin generated during life. The rite of the mass is for that. Baptism is necessary but not sufficient for passage rights to heaven. Likewise,

impersonal charity is necessary but not sufficient for achieving freedom.

Conrad pairs charity and baptism in the Morrison episode. Heyst charitably helps Morrison free his vessel from custom duties, paying for passage rights.

Charity and Love

Emptying out is a Buddhist concept of relieving the soul from ego and its binding desires, often expressed as “thirsts.” This renunciation allows the ultimate extension of charity to others since one isn’t concerned with oneself. Charity is, at its Buddhist best, selfless but impersonal, that is not motivated by personal emotions such as compassion for one or a few. It must be impartial and the same for all. This is the emotional boundary in Buddhism.

A related concept prevails in Christianity in the concept of selfless love or spiritual love. But the difference is love, absent in Buddhist renunciation and present with the Holy Spirit. In contrast with charity, love is selfless but personal and can pack more power. Holy Spirit love packs a hemi; it can command a greater sacrifice than the maximum impersonal charity. Holy Spirit love can produce self-sacrifice, even the ultimate self-sacrifice. And it can be personal, intensely personal.

Evil

Buddhism and Christianity have very different notions of evil. In Christianity, evil is real and the adversary of good. Satan means adversary. The Holy Spirit is comforter or defense counsel. In Buddhism, evil is illusion rather than real and born of ignorance, ignorance of “that mysterious binding power inherent in ordinary existence itself.” That is why Lena is genuinely alarmed at the arrival

on Round Island of Jones & Company but Heyst is merely puzzled.

For Heyst, Lena becomes his temptation to join the world of desire. The Buddhist strives to avoid all desires, whether good or bad. In a Buddhist analysis, Lena would be evil, a temptation to entanglement, specifically a daughter of *Mara* [the devil that Buddha overcame under the famous tree]. By the starkest of contrasts, in Christianity she is the Holy Spirit.

Jones & Company are representatives of the Christian devil that arrives in the world of desire, where there are good desires and bad desires. Jones has few desires but all of them are bad, really bad.

Extinction and Suicide

Putting the main point of Buddhism through the words of Joseph Campbell:

The main point of the doctrine is clear enough, however, which is, namely, that, since all things are without a self, no one has to attain extinction; everyone is, in fact, already extinct and has always been so. Ignorance, however, leads to the notion and therefore experience of an entity in pain.

That is, if you have an “I” or an ego, you have wants, and if you have wants then you have pain since you can’t satisfy all of them. The successful Buddhist denies any importance to his desires and thus to his individuality.

Heyst’s suicide has to be measured against this the main objective—denial of any individuality of any importance. If you don’t feel individuality, you don’t feel pain or desire. This is Lena’s condition at the end, when death has no sting for her, but Heyst attains extinction by his own hand and for the wrong reason. His suicide does not

advance his spiritual development; it only ends his misery and thus is based on desire. It is a desire for non-being to avoid despair.

In most spiritual systems of this kind, Heyst would in future reincarnations be subjected to several stillbirths as karma for taking his own life. Stillbirths are the worst karma because with stillbirths, you experience repeated deaths but no life to go with them. As we are to see, Heyst has already had a philosophical stillbirth at his father's knee and karma no doubt has more of the same in store for him. Heyst is to experience still-birth rather than resurrection.

If stillbirth is his karma, then Heyst would be unsuccessful in both the Buddhist and the Christian system. He would achieve neither freedom from rebirth in the body nor rebirth in the spirit. In Heyst's unsuccessful effort to maintain emotional separation and his inability to generate spiritual love, he failed his chance in both systems. He achieves resurrection in neither.

Ironically, the selfless Lena would achieve both nirvana and resurrection.

Pentecost and Holy Spirit

The Pentecost refers to the arrival of the Holy Spirit to the gathered apostles after the death and Resurrection of Jesus. Its arrival miraculously enabled the apostles to speak in many foreign tongues.

The Spirit is described in Acts 2 as tongues of fire, cloven tongues of fire sitting on the apostle's heads:

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.

And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. [King James version]

The apostles' ability to speak in many foreign tongues created the possibility of world unity. It could reverse the scattering of language and resulting disunity caused by Yahweh in the Tower of Babel episode. Notice that speaking in tongues happened when the Apostles were all together and of one mind. The Pentecostal festival continues to this day to be about unity, spiritual unity.

The point of Pentecost was to make the apostles realize that post-Resurrection Jesus would not appear to them anymore in humanly form but the god-head would now appear in the form of the Holy Spirit, a kind of successor to Jesus after the Passion and the Resurrection. God would now visit as the Holy Spirit. No more father and no more son.

For Conrad, the principal image of Pentecost is the cloven tongues of fire. It is about fire, fire for which the normal human spirit has insufficient insulation. The fire is cloven; it comes in branching bursts. The apostles' heads were on fire. They were burning with bliss. At the end of this novel the cloven fire of the Holy Spirit arrives in a huge lightning storm. Fire in the universal spiritual force field.

Lena is the character in this novel whose soul receives the fire of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit provides power for her self-sacrificing actions for Axel Heyst. She sacrifices for him even though not sure that he loves her. In the process of saving him she dies by a bullet to the heart, a wound that mysteriously she does not feel and does not draw blood. Death has no sting for her since she has "emptied out" through selfless love.

As the Paraclete, the Greek name for the Holy Spirit meaning comforter and counselor, Lena is the one who brings comfort and aid. When the chips are down with the

evil ones, she is the one who maintains self-possession and acts effectively.

I believe that Conrad gendered this issue. I believe he thinks that woman is the natural vessel for the Paraclete because of woman's natural hard-wired instinctive talent for sacrifice and renunciation in connection with childbirth and raising. In her Holy Spirit extended self-sacrifice, Lena renounces life in the most meaningful way. She renounces life for herself and the children she could bear.

The Holy Spirit is also described as the force that has the potential to renew in a believer the relationship with god that prevailed in innocence in the all-providing Garden of Eden. Renewal is the ultimate business of Holy Spirit. Lena's love gives Heyst a chance at spiritual renewal, but he can't change and can't be reborn. His emotional condition remains desiccated. The Garden on his island is walled off and used to grow vegetables for sale.

The link of the Holy Spirit to Eden renewal sponsors the heavy use in the novel of references to the Garden of Eden story—eyes being opened, punishments, etc. The Eden story also lends the general notion of deception, deception of Eve by the serpent and Adam by Eve. Deception moves Conrad's plot.

A traditional metaphor for the Holy Spirit is the breeze, particularly in "as free as the breeze." Conrad frequently uses a description of the breeze or lack thereof to signal the good or evil inherent in the scene.

Again the EB:

The essence of the expression of the Holy Spirit is free spontaneity. The Spirit blows like the wind, "where it will." But where it blows it establishes a firm norm by virtue of its divine authority.

The Holy Spirit appears as the true creative element in the life of the church. It works in an apparently contradictory sense: by virtue of its authority, the Holy Spirit establishes law and breaks law; it institutes order and breaks order; it founds tradition and breaks tradition. It is the conservative as well as the revolutionary principle in church history.

As the fundamentally uncontrollable principle of life in the Church, the Holy Spirit considerably upset Christian congregations from the very outset.

Reflecting these aspects of the Paraclete, Lena is a free spirit. She wanders worldwide with Zangiaco's orchestra, is momentarily trapped in Schomberg's hotel and vulnerable to his lust, and then flees to expected freedom on Heyst's island. She settles and then leaves, settles and leaves. She is problematic for Zangiaco and Schomberg, representatives of the institutional church, since they are interested in control. She is also problematic for Heyst because in the end he can't love her and is also only motivated by possession, sexual possession. The free spirit cannot be controlled.

The Holy Spirit is said to have impregnated the Virgin Mary with the seed for the infant Jesus. According to the authorities, this the Incarnation took place through Mary's ear, not her pristin sexual organ. This aspect of the Holy Spirit's generative activity sponsors Conrad's emphasis on Lena's voice, a constant source of enchantment for Heyst.

The Holy Spirit is pictured in the Bible as a dove, so working off the general color of a dove Conrad gives Lena grey eyes and mentions them frequently. He also makes several references to ghosts.

Conrad first introduces the Holy Spirit, the power for spiritual renewal, in two stem-cell metaphors about change that open the novel.