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## **Introduction**

This paper will focus on modernist fiction and Joseph Conrad. The main question that should be answered is why Conrad is considered to be a typical modernist writer. In order to deal with this subject efficiently it has first to be made clear what modernism exactly is. This will be the first part of the analysis and it should give a precise pattern and contain features that can be used to be exemplified on Conrad's texts in the second part. Conrad, therefore, will be picked out as a central theme in the second part only. Part 1 should, furthermore, include aspects that make clear what marks this literary epoch in contrast to earlier and later trends in literature. The second part of the paper consists of the argumentation that these features can actually be found in Joseph Conrad's texts. The novels which will stand in the centre of interest are *The Secret Agent* (1906), *Heart of Darkness* (1898/99) and *Lord Jim* (1899/1900). The stress of the analysis will lie on *The Secret Agent*. The third part, finally, should sum up the main ideas.

## **I. General phenomena of Modernism**

Modernism is a term used in the western hemisphere to describe not only a literary epoch in the first decades of the twentieth century but also to refer to a more general idea. *Modern* means a contrast to traditional methods and established rules and regulations, particularly in art, architecture and religion. However, the term itself has been more often used in a retrospective sense since the 1960's than in everyday speech at the time. "The roots of the change in the novel lie tangled deep in the modern experience. Causes in the fields other than literature there doubtless were – a confluence of psychological, philosophical, scientific, social, economic, and political causes, analogues, and explanations"<sup>1</sup>

Many features of modernist literature can be found in earlier works. An accumulating process of certain characteristics finally resulted in what today is labelled as modernist writing. As always in creative innovations exterior influences helped to shape the form and content of the new style. At the beginning of the twentieth century technical development changed the outlook of the people, as the pace of living suddenly became faster. The German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche pointed out the connection between technology and art. Technology also changed the print medium. Mass production led to a reduction in book prices which led to an increase in literacy. Nevertheless, it was a time of social polarization. The gap between the rich and the poor grew larger constantly.

The effects of technological advances had a strong impact on the human psyche: loss of individual value resulted in fear. Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis greatly influenced the writers of that time, and his discoveries found their way into modernist literature. While nineteenth century literature was mostly concerned with sociological matters, modernist fiction often focused on the psychological phenomena of the individual. James Joyce was one of the innovators of this technique using the stream of consciousness. After Joyce used this technique in *Ulysses* (1922), many writers tried to give this method a new twist. Probably the most interesting variant can be found in William Faulkner's

*The Sound and the Fury* (1929), in which the reader is confronted with the point of view of a mentally handicapped character. Time and space seem to be rescinded in this chapter of Faulkner's novel.

### ***1.1 The ambivalent Nature of Knowledge***

It was a widespread belief in society that science would change the world for the better. The belief in the sciences and technology reaches its climax in Nietzsche's statement *Gott ist tot* (God is dead). Everything seemed to be possible in the not too distant future. The artist faced a dilemma, since he was by nature located outside this scientific arena. What happened in result conveys the impression of a logical consequence: language and literature were investigated with academic methods. The Swiss linguist Ferdinand De Saussure had a powerful effect on the linguistic concepts that existed prior to his *Cours de linguistique générale* (1915), making them obsolete. He was the first to understand language as a *system of mere values*. His works influenced the development of Russian Formalists and Structuralists. Claude Lévi-Strauss and Roland Barthes founded their works on De Saussure's fundamentally new ideas. The effect on the writers was, if not as strong as on the literary theorists, nonetheless present. Knowledge, thereby, became a theme in modern literature. Severe changes, a shift of paradigm, took place in the first two decades of this century, giving literature a new, more academic, appearance.

At the same time, however, it became obvious that science could not explain everything (cf. *Heisenberg's Unschärfetheorie*). Knowledge, therefore, was always seen as something that had to be questioned. It was this ambivalent relation between accepting and questioning knowledge that gave modern literature a unique characteristic.

### ***1.2 Interior versus Exterior***

This feature of modernist writing is closely linked to Sigmund Freud. Freud's psychoanalysis changed the view of understanding human behaviour. According to Freud to comprehend the characteristics of a person one had to take the subconscious into account. This theory is sharply reflected in modernist

literature. Elizabeth Dew explains that modern novelists found “the older technique too clumsy for their purposes” because of an “engrossing interest” in “conscious and deliberate psychology”<sup>2</sup>. One possible technique of investigating the subconscious of characters is to describe their dreams. Freud began to publish *The Interpretation of Dreams* in the late 1890’s and his works were quickly translated into English. German speaking novelists such as Stefan Zweig (cf. eg. *Verwirrung der Gefühle*, *Der Amokläufer*) and Arthur Schnitzler (cf. eg. *Fräulein Else*, *Traumnovelle*) were among the first to put Freud’s ideas into stories, giving their characters traits that could easily be interpreted with the help of Freud’s theories. Thereby the credibility of literary characters increased immensely, at least from the scientific point of view, giving them a completely new dimension.

In terms of literary techniques it can be seen that interior and exterior are often contrasted in a novel. At first external appearances are described and then the focus shifts to the feelings, emotions and problems of the character. One means for describing a character’s interior is, of course, Joyce’s stream of consciousness.

Cinema arguably contributed more than any other medium to the significant change in literature. The montage technique used by Griffith (*Birth of a Nation*) and Eisenstein (*Battleship Potemkin*) connected for the first time different narrative strands and may have influenced the structure of some modernist novels. Cinema may also explain the tendency towards the internal. No literary style, not even the Naturalist, can create images that are as precise as cinematographic pictures throughout the length of a novel. “Concentration within inner consciousness ... may reflect a recognition that film could be more effective than written narrative in recording external reality.”<sup>3</sup>

The conflict in a novel was not necessarily bound to exterior influences anymore. Conflict could arise internally. In nineteenth century literature inner conflict was often caused by external circumstances. In Gaskell’s *North and*

*South*, for example, problems surface when a family decides to move away from their home, in the Sherlock Holmes detective stories a crime is usually the engine of the story, and in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* the creation of "the wretch" initiates conflict. Modern civilization, for which the individual was not crucial, led to a retreat into the self. Accordingly, the term "conflict" must be modified. It is no longer the "conflict" but the "self-conflict" that seems to be in the centre of interest.

The Modernist discourse about selfhood owed considerably to the psychoanalytical movement, as has already been evidenced. With respect to the problems of self-deception and self-conflict, the new perceptions of psychoanalysis were highly relevant. Whatever the developing struggles of emphasis within the Freudian group, their theory and practice clung tenaciously to the key of notions of the Unconscious, repression and the work of censorship. Phantasy, projection, introjection and all manner of defence mechanisms were accepted as basic functions of the self. Man, the neurotic animal, was thus seen as condemned to self-conflict at the very heart of his intentions and motives – a confused state which only therapy could begin to unravel.<sup>4</sup>

### ***1.3 Fragmentation***

World War I created the images that lead to fear of fragmentation. Words such as "torn into pieces", "fall apart", "break down", "disintegrate", "shock" and "fragmentation" all found their direct combat meaning.<sup>5</sup>

To die from a bullet seems to be nothing; parts of our being remain intact; but to be dismembered, torn into pieces, reduced to pulp, this is a fear that flesh cannot support and which is fundamentally the great suffering of the bombardment.<sup>6</sup>

Violence is thematized in modernist fiction more openly than ever before, on the one hand to shock the reader and on the other to reflect inner conflicts to the outside. It becomes a metaphor for the state of the soul.

Fragmentation is not only restricted to the story itself but can also be mirrored in the form, structure and style of the novel. Franz Kafka's *Der Prozeß* (The

Trial), for example, is an unfinished fragment. The correct chronology of the chapters remains a controversial issue. Furthermore, fragmentation is a means of demonstrating to the reader that life and meaning cannot be grasped in total, hence every possible narrative is incomplete by nature. Modernist writers were the first to stress this insight by deliberately giving the reader fragmented novels. “If narrative purpose, coherence, rationality are founded on and speak the notion of integral selfhood, then vagueness, indirection and ambiguous symbolisation express awareness of self-fragmentation.”<sup>7</sup> Metaphorically, fragmentation stands for universal breakdown. Four examples for breakdown in modernist narrative are :<sup>8</sup>

a) The breakdown of language. A language-crisis is obvious if the use of dialogue in Victorian and modernist novels is compared. While in nineteenth century literature spoken language was used by the characters to influence, convince and argue (cf. *North and South*), in modernist fiction usually only short sentences of dialogue are used. Again, this goes hand in hand with the tendency to look inwards. Moreover, it is often the case that language is misunderstood or misinterpreted by the recipient (character and reader).

b) The breakdown of signs. Signs lose their meaning. This is, of course, closely connected to the breakdown of language for language is a system of signs.

But

also religious signs, and other symbols change their meaning or become difficult to interpret.

c) The breakdown of the self. Based on Freud’s psychoanalysis an individual can no longer be understood as one unity. He differentiates between Ego,

Superego

and Id, thereby fragmenting the self.

d) The breakdown of time. “Modernist fiction rarely abandons the story altogether, or smashes up the clock entirely, but it does resist as far as possible the arrangement of ‘events in their time sequence’”<sup>9</sup>. This typical

feature can be evident in the composition of chapters, which do not follow the chronological order (cf. eg. *The Sound and the Fury*).<sup>10</sup>

#### ***1.4 Time, Space and Technology***

Not only the breakdown of time's chronology but the clock itself as symbol for time and technology can frequently be detected in all forms of modernism. In the film *Modern Times* (1936), for example, Charlie Chaplin is trapped by intricate cogs and wheels of industrial machinery as if he were being mangled by the workings of a monstrous clock.<sup>11</sup> Chaplin provides us with an image of the kind of servitude people felt towards time. The clock as instrument was perfected in the beginning of the twentieth century and while its mechanical ingenuity and precision was celebrated, at the same time many people felt a sense of unease. Consciously or unconsciously aware of the increasing peril of 'great and perfect systems', of 'rules, laws and formulae' in an increasingly complex late industrial age, modernist writing likewise drops the clock. Moving away from serial chronology, it recreates in a past recovered memory, in streams of consciousness, or in time in the mind otherwise established ... some of the organic continuity that had been divided, subdivided and sliced out of contemporary public life.<sup>12</sup>

Nevertheless, time as represented in fiction cannot generally be viewed as negative. The modernist writers were seeking to place the main action inside a character, memory can function as a neutral zone in which past, present and (an imagined) future collide. Time and space are unbound in this territory, offering the writer new possibilities of creating interesting and unknown situations.

"For modernist novelists, memory becomes an essential structuring device in the creation of a 'time in the mind' able to move - through the randomness of recollection - away from 'mechanical succession' and the oppressive control of the clock."<sup>13</sup>

While the characters of the novels became much more passive in modernist literature, inanimate objects (mostly technological devices) became particularly active. The clock, for example, moves in a regular, seemingly unstoppable,



rhythm. Animation of objects has been a literary technique for a long time. In modernist writing, however, it becomes established through the opposing passiveness of the living.

## **II. Joseph Conrad – A Modernist Writer**

Considering the dates in which the three novels (*The Secret Agent* (1906), *Heart of Darkness* (1898/99) and *Lord Jim* (1899/1900)) were written it becomes clear that Joseph Conrad was definitely ahead of his time.

'...on or about December, 1910, human character changed'<sup>1</sup>. Thus intoned Virginia Woolf. She was referring specifically to the first English showing of postimpressionist French painting but had in mind revolutions occurring at that time not only in all the arts but also in the ways man thinks of his universe, his social organizations, and himself<sup>14</sup>

Conrad was a pioneer, as sailor and author. His new techniques not only influenced but helped initiating the next generation of writers. What exactly are his literary techniques?

### **II.1 Knowledge and Thinking**

In *The Secret Agent* knowledge is problematized in so far as there is no single person who knows everything. Each character has a limited knowledge of what is happening to and around him. Mr. Verloc, for example, is convinced that his wife loves him 'for himself'. In truth, however, she married him for economic reasons and because he treats her imbecilic brother mildly. Winnie Verloc is not told by her husband of his contrivances dealing with her brother, she only finds out at the end of her life.

Stevie, Winnie's brother, is used by Verloc as if he were an instrument. One can assume that Stevie does not know what he is actually doing at the zero meridian. The lack of knowledge in Stevie lets him live by his instincts, which tell him the difference between right and wrong. Interestingly, he is probably the most likeable character in the novel, perhaps *because* his knowledge is so reduced. "Stevie's breast heave[s]"<sup>15</sup> when the cab driver whips the horse. His

simple but decent words “Bad world for poor people”<sup>16</sup> are more truthful than the words of any other character in the novel.

Even the reader has no total understanding of the action for a long time, because the fragmented nature of the text does not allow for a complete picture of the plot until the end of the novel. Many events occur not only in absence of the characters but also of the reader. By breaking down the chronological cohesion Conrad is questioning knowledge the notion of knowledge as absolute.

In *Heart of Darkness* Marlow is driven by an indefinable urge towards Kurtz, hoping to broaden his understanding by meeting him. The last five pages of the novel contain the word “to know” thirteen times only used in direct reference to Kurtz (eg. “I alone know how to mourn for him”<sup>17</sup>; “But you have heard him! You know!” she cried. ““Yes, I know”<sup>18</sup>; “>I knew it – I was sure!< ... She knew it. She was sure.<sup>19</sup>”).

The eponymous hero of *Lord Jim* is liable to be in most error when he feels that he knows what to think:

This is demonstrated early in the conclusion he draws from his first missed opportunity. When there is a chance to rescue survivors of a collision, Jim appears paralysed by the storm and fails to join other training-ship boys in the rescue cutter. As soon as the cutter returns, successful, his whole attitude changes: ‘The tumult and the menace of wind and sea now appeared very contemptible.’<sup>19</sup> The reconstitution of Jim’s sense of his romantic heroism is ironically accompanied by descriptions of his ontological recovery: ‘Now he knew what to think of it ... He exulted with fresh certitude’.<sup>20</sup> Knowing ‘what to think of it’ is in Conrad the mark of a self-deceived simpleton<sup>20</sup>.

## ***II.2 Interior versus Exterior***

*The Secret Agent* is based on actual events. In the year 1894 a bomb exploded in Greenwich Park killing the anarchist sympathizer who was carrying it. The

*Times* described the deceased as “a young man of about 30, supposed to be a foreigner. The only evidence of identification was a card bearing the name ‘Bourbon’”<sup>21</sup>. The fact that Conrad uses a real life event for the telling of a story can be viewed as an attempt to widen the frame of reality, thereby giving the reader a direct connection to the novel. The outside world of the reader collides with his own interior. In this way Conrad goes beyond the border of pure fiction.

Many examples of this trait of modernist literature can be found in *The Secret Agent*. Every character in the novel seems to have to suffer from a disharmony between the outside world and the self.

Chief Inspector Heat’s strong sense of integrity, for example, is not directed inwards but outwards. He would like to be seen as the honourable and decent man that he is not:

“... he did not like the work he had to do now. He felt himself dependent on too many subordinates and too many masters. The near presence of that strange emotional phenomenon called public opinion weighed upon his spirits, and alarmed him by its irrational nature. No doubt that from ignorance he exaggerated to himself its power for good and evil--especially for evil; and the rough east winds of the English spring (which agreed with his wife) augmented his general mistrust of men's motives and of the efficiency of their organization. The futility of office work especially appalled him on those days so trying to his sensitive liver.”<sup>22</sup>

Mr. Verloc is quite similar to Chief Inspector Heat in this aspect. He prefers to hold information from his wife and Stevie but it does not bother him – he thinks that he acts in a perfect manner by doing so.

Winnie’s interest in marrying Verloc can be seen as another example of a

discrepancy between the internal and external world.

The Professor is the only exception in this context<sup>23</sup>. He wants to purify the human race by eliminating the weak. He would rather kill himself than being caught. In contrast to his weakly physical description he is supremely self-confident. His sense of power derives from the bomb he always carries with him. Like most characters in the novel he has problems in interpersonal relations. In a way he resembles Shakespeare's Richard III and Schiller's Franz Moor who use their resources (intelligence and cunning) to take revenge on the world and to feel powerful. Like the Professor they are ugly. However, both Richard and Franz justify their deeds with their ugliness, while the Professor substantiates his with pseudo-ideology.

*Heart of Darkness* also problematizes the opposition between interior and exterior. References, and sometimes comparisons, to the inside and outside worlds can be found throughout the novel. Internal emptiness is described as something shocking: "Perhaps there was nothing within him. Such a suspicion made one pause - ..." <sup>24</sup>. Conrad transforms the classic adventure narrative into "an exploration of tormented inner space" <sup>25</sup>. Emptiness of the inner self, incarnated by the station manager who is visited by Marlow, gives the reader the impression of being even more gruesome than characters who appear passive on the outside.

Kurtz is described to Marlow as "The Chief of the Inner Station" <sup>26</sup>. The title itself insinuates inner richness. Marlow's trip to Kurtz is a trip to the Inner Station, a trip into the self.

### ***II.3 Fragmentation***

*The Secret Agent* contains different aspects of fragmentation. In order to differentiate between the different kinds of fragmentation the table given in I.3 will be used.

- a) The breakdown of language can be observed at different points in the novel. Most obvious is the lack of communication between Mr. Verloc and his family. There are relatively few dialogues in *The Secret Agent* and they demonstrate the inability to communicate, the degeneration of communication.
- b) The breakdown of signs.  $\Delta$  is Verloc's designation as agent. In chapter IX "the skirts of his heavy overcoat [are] hanging in a triangle on each side of the chair"<sup>27</sup>. A triangle occurs additionally in connection with the 'darkness' and 'solitude' of Brett Street where "few lamps defin[e] its triangular shape"<sup>28</sup>. This shape is especially emphasized when Winnie tries to escape after she murders Verloc. Originally, the triangle is a symbol for the Trinity in Christianity, representing the union of Father, Son and the Holy Spirit as one God. Stevie's circles are also Christian symbols. Conrad uses the term 'cosmic chaos' to describe Stevie's drawing. A circle represents eternity, with no beginning and no end. Here, however, both geometrical figures are taken out of their Christian context. The exactness of the triangle and the chaos of Stevie's circles are contrasting. It is difficult, though, to make a religious interpretation of the novel. The signs have lost their traditional meaning.
- c) The breakdown of the self. In *The Secret Agent* the characters seem to be subordinate to the plot. Human instances give the impression of ineffectiveness. They are often not portrayed as animate beings but rather as objects. Verloc is often described in that sense: "Mr. Verloc obeyed woodenly, stone-eyed, and like an automaton whose face had been painted red. And this resemblance to a mechanical figure went so far that he had an automaton's absurd air of being aware of the machinery inside him."<sup>29</sup> Because of his

mechanical self, Verloc loses emotional dimension.

*Heart of Darkness* is seen by critics as “an attempt to dissolve the very concept of the integral self: ‘he was hollow at the core’ (p.83). The hollowness is no mere vacuum, but rather a central chaos where conflicting desires, intentions and conceptions whirl about in a dark vortex. We have the spectacle in Kurtz of supreme ‘egotism’ in the absence of any coherent ego.”<sup>30</sup>

The breakdown of time. On the one hand *The Secret Agent* is fragmented in its chronology making it difficult for the reader to understand. He has to put together the pieces of the puzzle. On the other hand the novel is full of traditional literary techniques. In the first three chapters the narrative is clear and chronological (with a long flashback in chapter I), then it breaks after the bomb outrage and is reassembled with difficulty, like Stevie’s body. It reflects a chaotic universe in which the Greenwich Observatory acts as centre of the world (and of the book), trying to give sense and order to it. The Greenwich meridian has to do with time, which is often denied by the narrative structure of the novel. However, structure and literary techniques are present on a subtle level. For example, the novel is framed by two similar situations: a man walking down the street. At the beginning it is Verloc on his way to the foreign Embassy, who is as it seems alone in the streets. At the end it is the Professor who “passe[s] on unsuspected and deadly, like a pest in the street full of men.”<sup>31</sup> This framing creates unity and contrasts the fragmented nature in which the story unfolds. Other techniques used by Conrad for the same reason are foreshadowing (cf. Stevie’s playing with fireworks at the very beginning) and repetition (the relationship between Winnie and Stevie is reinforced through sentences like “She could not bear to see the boy hurt. It maddened her.”<sup>32</sup>, which can be found throughout the novel).

#### ***II.4 Time, Space and Technology***

Modernist novels often rise above the concept of absolute time. As already mentioned, the Greenwich Observatory, which is the symbol of time, not only

functions as target for the anarchists but also as centre of the book. It may be seen as the central symbol of the novel. The attempt to blow up Greenwich Observatory is a symbolic attempt to annihilate time itself.

Greenwich Observatory is symbolically significant because it is a place of science and rationalism. The act of destruction must be irrational to be truly terrifying. The contrast between rationality and irrationality is also reflected in the opposing symbols of  $\Delta$  and Greenwich Observatory on the one hand and Stevie's circles on the other. Conrad uses contrasting symbols and archetypes such as light and darkness, crowds and emptiness. They often stand in connection with one recurring theme: alienation, which can be found principally in the relationship between the city (London) and its citizens. This is particularly apparent in the Commissioner's journey in chapter VII.

Some characters in *The Secret Agent* express their hostility towards clocks. Winnie, for example, "cared nothing for time"<sup>33</sup> after she murdered Verloc. Winnie, at first, mistakes the ticking sound of Verloc's blood dripping on the floor for the sound of a clock. Time and death are directly linked at this moment. Four pages later Conrad writes:

This time she managed to refasten her veil. With her face as if masked, all black from head to foot except for some flowers in her hat, she looked up mechanically at the clock. She thought it must have stopped. She could not believe that only two minutes had passed since she had looked at it last. Of course not. It had been stopped all the time. As a matter of fact, only three minutes had elapsed from the moment she had drawn the first deep, easy breath after the blow, to this moment when Mrs Verloc formed the resolution to drown herself in the Thames. But Mrs Verloc could not believe that. She seemed to have heard or read that clocks and watches always stopped at the moment of murder for the undoing of the murderer. She did not care. "To the bridge--and over I go." . . . But her movements were slow.<sup>34</sup>

Time is passing very slowly in these moments for both Winnie and the reader. Even the stopping of time is suggested here, which is exactly what the anarchists wanted and what modernist writing tries to accomplish: “temporal autonomy”<sup>35</sup>.

In *Lord Jim* Captain Brierly is given a kind of gold chronometer as a reward. In this case the measurement of time is celebrated. It is an example of worthwhile human achievement; nevertheless, it is an instrument that allows “to regulate with minute precision the movements of workers or machines”<sup>36</sup>.

C.B. Cox points out the confrontational nature of characters and inanimate objects in the novel. While the characters seem to lack energy, objects become peculiarly active. The automated piano in the restaurant, whose “keys sank and rose mysteriously”<sup>37</sup>, the city of London that appears like a beast with an appetite for people, the door bell of Verloc’s shop which “is hopelessly cracked, but ‘at the slightest provocation, it clattered behind the customer with impudent virulence’”<sup>38</sup>, an armchair that seems to bite The Assistant Commissioner’s elbows, Winnie’s defective gas-burners that whistles ‘as if astonished’ and purrs comfortably like a cat and Verloc’s hat which seems to live on even after Verloc died. Hats “often act as symbols of identity”<sup>39</sup> in Conrad’s fiction.<sup>40</sup>

### **III. Summary and Conclusion**

The aim of this paper is to exemplify features of modernist fiction in Conrad’s novels. Therefore, the major characteristics of this epoch were defined at first and then demonstrated on textual basis. This structuralist method was chosen for reasons of clarity.

Modernist fiction can be defined as a literary epoch characterized by breaking with traditional methods, such as innovation in point of view (stream of consciousness technique), dissolving of the self, fragmentation and breakdown of various narrative traits, which accounts for the loss of the cause-effect relation. Symbols, signs and language change or lose their meaning. Time becomes both a symbol of progress and of enslavement. Conrad, who wrote the



novels that were being discussed before the actual period of modernism “was announced”, included all these issues in his works. Accordingly, he had the impact of a pioneer and is consequently seen as one of the most typical modernist writers.

The differences between modernist fiction and the fiction of the nineteenth century, and especially the Victorian novel, are plentiful.

The difference to postmodernist fiction can be considered to be not that drastic, since the modernist features are still being used, only in a modified way, making it even more difficult for the reader to follow the plot.

In conclusion, it is safe to assume that modernism was the most influential period of writing in the twentieth century. *Ulysses*, first published in 1922, contains certain traits of modernist writing, although it is problematic to label it as a modernist book. It was recently announced by *Time* magazine to be the ‘best book’ written in the twentieth century. Even though the term “best” is not very concrete if referred to literature, it once again underlines the importance of that era.

The term ‘modern’ is still being used to describe phenomena that appear to be new. In that sense the period of modernism is not finished yet, it has just changed its face. Needless to say, that modernist fiction as it was discussed ceased to be written in that form by the second half of the century at latest. However, the impact can still be recognized today.

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## Notes

[[← 1](#)]

Alan Friedman, cited in: Randall Stevenson, *Modernist Fiction* (London, 1998) vii

[ ← 2 ]

Elizabeth Drew, cited in: Randall Stevenson, *Modernist Fiction* (London, 1998) 65

[ ← 3 ]

Randall Stevenson, *Modernist Fiction* (London, 1998) 133

[ ← 4 ]

Dennis Brown, *The Modernist Self in Twentieth-Century English Literature* (Hampshire, 1989)

[ ← 5 ]

cf. *ibid.*, page 43

[ ← 6 ]

unknown cited in: *ibid.*, page 43



[ ← 7 ]

Dennis Brown, *The Modernist Self in Twentieth-Century English Literature* (Hampshire, 1989)

[ ← 8 ]

Textual examples are given in II.3

[ ← 9 ]

Randall Stevenson, *Modernist Fiction* (London, 1998) 87

[ ← 10 ]

This device is also often used in film: cf. *Once Upon A Time In America* (1984) or *Pulp Fiction* (1993)

[ ← 11 ]

cf. Randall Stevenson, *Modernist Fiction* (London, 1998) 127

[ ← 12]

ibid., pages 127-128

[ ← 13]

ibid., page 96

[ ← 14 ]

Alan Warren Friedman, *Forms of Modern British Fiction* (Austin, 1975) 3



[ ← 15]

Joseph Conrad, *The Secret Agent* (Oxford, 1998) 157

[ ← 16]

ibid., page 171

[ ← 17 ]

Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* (London, 1995) 119

[ ← 18]

ibid., page 121

[ ← 19]

ibid., page 123

[ ← 20]

cf. Dennis Brown, *The Modernist Self in Twentieth-Century English Literature* (Hampshire, 1989) 119

[ ← 21 ]

The *Times* (London), Feb. 16, 1894. This quotation is taken from: Eloise Hay, *The Political Novels of Joseph Conrad* (Chicago, 1981) 221

[ ← 22 ]

Joseph Conrad, *The Secret Agent* (Oxford, 1998) 99-100



[ ← 23]

Stevie, who only lives his instincts, cannot be included in this group of characters for he simply lacks the ability to differentiate between those two spheres.

[ ← 24 ]

Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* (London, 1995) 42

[ ← 25]

Dennis Brown, *The Modernist Self in Twentieth-Century English Literature* (Hampshire, 1989)

[ ← 26 ]

Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* (London, 1995) 47

[ ← 27 ]

Joseph Conrad, *The Secret Agent* (Oxford, 1998) 183

[ ← 28]

ibid., page 273

[ ← 29 ]

Joseph Conrad, *The Secret Agent* (Oxford, 1998) 197

[ ← 30]

Dennis Brown, *The Modernist Self in Twentieth-Century English Literature* (Hampshire, 1989)



[ ← 31 ]

Joseph Conrad, *The Secret Agent* (Oxford, 1998) 311

[ ← 32 ]

ibid., page 38

[ ← 33 ]

Joseph Conrad, *The Secret Agent* (London, 1998) 264

[ ← 34 ]

Joseph Conrad, *The Secret Agent* (London, 1998) 268-269

[ ← 35 ]

cf. Randall Stevenson, *Modernist Fiction* (London, 1998) 128

[ ← 36 ]

Randall Stevenson, *Modernist Fiction* (London, 1998) 127

[ ← 37 ]

Joseph Conrad, *The Secret Agent* (London, 1998) 67

[ ← 38 ]

C.B. Cox, Joseph Conrad: The Modern Imagination (London, 1974) 84



[ ← 39 ]

C.B. Cox, Joseph Conrad: The Modern Imagination (London, 1974) 85

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A symbol that tends to get used in this context up till today in contemporary film such as Miller's Crossing (1990), directed by Joel Coen.