

Public Gains and Literary Goods: a coeval tale of Joseph Conrad, Rudyard Kipling, and Francis Marion Crawford

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Atop the pyramid of nineteenth-century literary achievement are rarities such as Joseph Conrad; at some (considerable) distance below, is Rudyard Kipling, whose texts, despite their significant critical presence in the first third of the twentieth century, were later found to be brimming with the colonialism that Conrad found problematic and criticism found unacceptable. However, prior to this historiographic assessment, in the late 1800s and early 1900s, both Kipling and Conrad operated within a market that was more or less undifferentiated because it was saturated by colonialism. At one point they were evenly matched, since qualities other than colonial criticism were the primary goods offered by their publishers in the task of capturing market share. Readers eagerly read Conrad and Kipling alongside a host of other works, many by authors now forgotten but who were once household names. The qualities that those writers of the early twentieth-century popular market shared differed from the qualities valorised by later literary historiography.

Published literature at the end of the nineteenth century, like all published literature, was tied to its commercial mediation. But what makes late-nineteenth century published literature interesting is that the changes around that period in production and distribution coincided with changes in literary form that literary historiography distinguishes as emergent modernism in literature. Often, those twinned changes are woven into a history of modernist literature as a 'high' literary form with an independent mode of production distinct from other forms, most notably mass-market cultural production (Frow, 1995: pp. 20-21). Large changes, typically discussed in histories of printing, such as linotype or photomechanical processes; in histories of dissemination, such as the expansion of fiction-bearing mass-market journals and newspapers; and in histories of literary organisation, such as international copyright with the Berne Convention, the founding of the British Society of Authors and the rise of the literary agent, are bundled into a supposed package that Norman Feltes liked to think of as a fully-capitalised publishing system. Breaking away from the large-scale production of an over-capitalised publishing system, while

taking advantage of the new business structures and technologies thereafter, were the independent publishers of modernism and their literatures: the prime example being the Woolfs' Hogarth Press that is commonly regarded to have operated in a sub-field of restricted production.

The problems with this model of the commercial distinctions between modernism and mass culture are multiple. Although the model does not posit a directly determining economic base along vulgar Marxist lines, it does retain an indirectly determining economic system. In principle, the literary superstructure would still be reducible to questions of culture and class without any need to understand the internal logic of business within the literary field. Furthermore, the accumulation of contradictory detail is large. Earlier in the nineteenth century, much literature that is now part of the canon, as Literature, was produced for the most effective commercial publishers of the day – George Eliot being a good example – so commercialism *per se* is not uninvolved with the mediation of 'great' literature. By the 1890s, authors producing what we now call 'advanced' literary fiction were as likely to appear in the Establishment *Cornhill*, as in the avant-garde *Savoy*. Similarly, presses such as the Hogarth Press were not as adverse to commercial tactics as might be assumed: they simply tailored those procedures to their market. The suggestion that modernist literatures needed separate publishing modes because they differed significantly from other forms only becomes problematic when literary historiography privileges the difference as 'advanced' (read 'superior'), and transfers its valorisation to the (small) publishing mode that represents not simply specialised commercial scope but – to satisfy the need for the disinterested aesthetic contemplation prescribed by art theory grounded in Kantian aesthetics¹ – commercial disinterest.

Used to endorse this approach are the internal structures to Pierre Bourdieu's conception of the literary field; namely its sub-fields, as applied in studies by scholars such as Peter McDonald (1997: pp. 9-21). Published almost two decades ago, when it was crucial to reconnect literary studies to literature's material and sociohistorical conditions as well as overcome book history's resistance to theory (Howsam, 2006: p. 39), McDonald in interpreting Bourdieu deploys the fundamental opposition in the literary field between the 'sub-field of restricted production' and the 'sub-field of large scale production'. "In the British Literary field of the 1890s, this could be represented as the difference between a small, under-capitalised avant-garde publishing firm [...] and a large public company [...] which specialised in cheap, mass produced periodicals' (McDonald,

1997: p. 13). The problem, here, comes in positing a fundamental difference between the two sub-fields, where rivalry between the two is structurally innate. Again, the devil lies in the details. By the turn of the century, the major international publisher Blackwood's had compounded its interests in mass markets and literary distinction. Suffering from 'under-capitalisation', it survived into the 1900s largely by publishing repeated cheaper editions of mid-century George Eliot to a popular audience (Frost, 2012: pp. 9-13, 23), while its *Blackwood's Magazine*, although soliciting newcomers like Conrad, placed those newcomers next to prolific writers of popular horrific fiction like Bernard Capes. Similarly, a 'restricted production' such as the preeminent aestheticist handbook, *Marius the Epicurean*, was already going into its bankable fourth edition by 1909 for the business-savvy "archetype of the general trade publisher" Macmillan & Co (Feather, 1988: p. 140). Room was made for both innovative and far from innovative texts within the same publishing house and even within the same journals.

So for all but the most extreme cases, the model of sub-fields must cope with oppositions that are fuzzy rather than fundamental. If a short fiction such as Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* could appear in the same issue of *Blackwood's Magazine* next to Capes without structural rivalry, or aesthetic dissonance, then either the model is wrong, or we have misunderstood the fiction: or both.² What is needed is a change of perspective.³

As a remedy for this impasse between theory and evidence, it may be wise to momentarily set aside questions of literary merit, or to restrain those questions from expropriating our investigation of the literary field in the dawn of modernism. An alternative would be to think of literature as a resource, which is a source for private gain. Buyers of fiction, as much as any other consumer, buys for personal gain, and the fiction industry that had become a mass production and distribution service by the end of the century was not exempt. Opportunity costs were incurred in buying fiction: the opportunities for extra furnishings, clothing, a bicycle, or excursions to the theatre or pub were lost when precious disposable income was instead spent on fiction. But, while other products such as garments or bicycles could promise to improve status or identity, there were some needs that only fiction could satisfy. When the desire was for guidance, encouragement, inspiration, or even for a remedy against loneliness – then fiction satisfied in a way no other sort of material good could. Such literary benefits – utterly below the literary critical radar – represent one crucial and unexplored way in which readers use and value literature. When

literary fiction is approached from the perspective of reading history and readers' markets, literature becomes contextualised to the extent that context more than the text determines meaning, and demand rather than disembodied labour or intrinsic quality determines value. Any fiction by Joseph Conrad, Rudyard Kipling, and the prolific but now-neglected Francis Marion Crawford could, for some readers, be another item of mass-market cultural production. The same text proffered in another material form and context could be an example of proto-modernism. It depended on which readership was passing judgement. According to Crawford's sole volume of criticism, *The Novel, What It Is!* (1893) – the principal reason for including Crawford in this comparative study – there was no reason why great fiction should not be judged according to mass market criteria.

In a period from the 1880s to 1914, fiction writing gelled into a recognisably professionalised service. Nationwide commodity culture emerged in Britain (Frost 2012, Richards 1990, Trentman 2008); and great literature still retained a popular appeal, before modernism ostentatiously carried literature into niche markets (Rose 2008, Wicke 1994, and Turner). That period is ripe for investigating not structural rivalry between productions but rivalry between the right to judge what any given production might mean. Three authors around 1900 held in high popular *and* critical esteem were Joseph Conrad, Rudyard Kipling, and Francis Marion Crawford. They supplied adventures about forceful Anglophone males in far-off lands, often with an element of the macabre seen in the ghost-, horror-, and supernatural elements in their short fiction that emphasised the exotic Other. Such market-competitive fiction – as insightful as self-help books, as exciting as sports weeklies, as exotic as travelogues – sold nothing less than a philosophy of life. Regardless of whether the authors liked it (and often Conrad did not), theirs was a trade not so much in books but in the satisfaction of readers' intangible wants.

However, only Conrad and Kipling acquired a critical heritage (though later criticism developed important distinctions between them). Initially, all three writers were sold to a popular market that eventually closed. Whereas Conrad and Kipling, due to additional features of their texts, successfully crossed to a new literary market, Crawford did not. By comparing what Kipling and Conrad in their early short fiction shared with a neglected giant like Crawford, we can isolate their early joint commercial appeal. This topography of commercial appeal, before later critical

appreciation obscures our view, reveals how market behaviour takes part in candidacy for literary greatness, but without totalising fundamental oppositions.

When Joseph Conrad's magazine-published short stories were being collected into *Tales of Unrest* (1898) for international release (Wise, 1964: pp. 14-16), Kipling was already a star. His reputation had begun with *Plain Tales from the Hills* for Thacker Spink's Railway Library series, Calcutta (1888), and was consolidated through a strategy of multiple publication by the time of *Life's Handicap* (1891), for Macmillan & Co in London and New York. But ahead of them both was another, immensely successful writer. The New York edition of *The Bookman*, discussing "Balzac and Zola and Tolstoy, Thackeray and Meredith and Henry James [...]" noted how comparatively limited was their cumulative response to the question "what have they really said? [...]" forcing readers to exclaim "How original, and how very true!". The one conspicuous exception to this rule of unfulfilled promise was "Mr Marion Crawford" (June 1908: pp. 395-96).⁴

Crawford was an international phenomenon. With a declared aim of one novel per year to finance his genteel lifestyle, and regularly producing two, he published 44 novels between 1882 and his death in 1909, in addition to journalism, short stories, public lectures, extensive works on Italian history, and criticism. His meticulously crafted romantic fiction was far from prescient in terms of modernism, but at that time we can still see these three writers as common competitors within the same literary market. This grouping seems plain when considering the supernatural elements –mesmerism, spirits, ghosts, trance states, astral travels, and wicked eyes – in Crawford's novels and short stories, alongside the ghost and horror stories of Kipling and tales of what Conrad called "unrest".

Born in Italy in 1854 to an Italian aristocratic mother and an American father, a sculptor, Crawford grew up as an expatriate English speaker.⁵ In his youth he left Italy for education in New Hampshire, at Cambridge, and at Heidelberg and Karlsruhe, in Germany. He spoke Italian, English, German, and French fluently, knew Latin and Greek and, from studying at the University of Rome, became an expert in Sanskrit: the latter interest taking him to India in search of a profession. There, Crawford contributed articles to the *Bombay Herald* and, also from 1879, became editor of the *Indian Herald* based in Allahabad. A journey to Simla – Kipling territory and the summer residence of the British administration in India – provided Crawford with material for his first novel, *Mr Isaacs* (1882), published by Macmillan Company in New York and Macmillan & Co. in

London. Apart from occasional sales to publishers such as Houghton, Mifflin and Co., Scribner's, and Blackwood's, Crawford published almost exclusively for Macmillan's, who would later take on Kipling. Though his novels flirted with many locations, including Germany, America, Turkey, India, Persia, and Arabia, Macmillan consolidated Crawford's success with his twenty Italian novels. These largely followed a set pattern. A romantic conflict was played out in an Italian setting. Two courageous lovers, "uniformly individuals of high moral purpose" (Pilkington, 1954: p. 62) invariably have to preserve their love from idiocy, greed, or arranged marriages served up by lawyers, clerks, exhausted families, or even by their weaker selves, further set in relief by the full cast of Italian society from the religious to the labouring classes. The inviolable condition, though, is that the lovers should not become uncoupled from their personal integrity.⁶ The settings could be historical or contemporary: often Rome, but also Umbria, Abruzzi, or Calabria. The Saracinesca family trilogy – *Saracinesca* (1887), *Sant' Ilario* (1889), and *Don Orsino* (1892) – deals with Italian life in an earlier half of the nineteenth century, while *Pietro Ghisleri* (1893), *Taquisara* (1896), *Corleone* (1897), and *Casa Braccio* (1895) are stories of 'modern' Italy: *Corleone*, set in Sicily (also featuring the Saracinesca family) is arguably the first 'Mafia' novel ever.

What gave *Corleone* its distinction, though, was "Crawford's use of his own extensive knowledge of Sicily and the Sicilian people [...] [particularly] the organisation, purpose, and operation of the Sicilian Mafia [...]" which left the *Atlantic Monthly* finding *Corleone* "difficult to over praise" (Pilkington, 1964: p. 133). Crawford's tales were, to use Kipling's phrase, "stories of mine own people".⁷ This matches an early assumption about Conrad: Unwin's note to *Almayer's Folly* teasingly declared that the author was intimate with Borneo and its people, leading a *Bookman* reviewer to assume he was unmistakably "a wanderer who has lived far from the atmosphere of European capitals" (Carabine 2009: p. 62).

The authenticity of Crawford's descriptions, from one who had explored such wild regions in detail, was one of his strongest selling points. In a letter about *The Roman Singer*, Crawford describes a heroine abducted to "Trevi, a place in Abruzzi [...]" In that wild and desolate country I can introduce any romance I please. I know the scene very thoroughly, certainly better than any English living writer, for I have visited many places where no foreigner has ever set foot" (1964: p. 60). Like Melville, Pilkington suggests, Crawford lived most of his novels before writing them

(1964: p. 49); and as Crawford corroboratively wrote, "I would almost say that to describe another's death [the novelist] must have died himself" (Crawford, 1893: p. 80).

Alongside the promise of authenticity in their descriptions of wild frontiers, Crawford shared with Conrad and Kipling an adventurous masculinity, which may be most directly expressed through their fascination with the sea. Crawford was an accomplished, even obsessive sailor, connected with a propensity to escape domestic responsibility and a failing marriage. He wrote in an 1894 letter: "The Sea is a nice place because there are no people in it. It would be nicer if the whole world were all sea, and if there were no one, not even one self, anywhere" (1964: p. 136). Apart from annual passenger-ship travel between the Americas and Italy, he extensively sailed the Mediterranean in a felucca, the *Margherita*, writing and collecting material for his novels on summer-long trips. A first-class captain's examination passed in 1896 allowed him to cross the Atlantic in his own nineteen-foot schooner, the *Alda*. Sea descriptions appear in nearly all his works: such as sailing by moonlight to Capri in *The Children of the King* (1893), and in his most reprinted ghost stories: "The Upper Berth" (1894 [1886]) and "Man Overboard!" (1903).

Crawford like many of his heroes was physically impressive with an unassuming resilience that filtered into his work. As the San Francisco *Chronicle* noted, Crawford was "cool, unimpassioned and deliberate [...] His sentences are perfectly balanced, and there is not a single excrescence left unpolished. Yet he is never elocutionary" (1964: p. 151). Dutiful, with a strong individualism, and a faith in self-reliance uncomplicated by any lack of privilege, Crawford had no taste for revolutionary socialism and was nominally democratic, so long as political power remained with an elite: a theme he explored in *An American Politician* (1885). And as Paul Griggs, Crawford's Marlow-like first person narrator, explained in the first lines of *Mr Isaacs*, "In spite of Jean-Jacques and his school, men are not everywhere born free, any more than they are everywhere in chains, unless these be of individual making [...]" (1882: p. 1).

Crawford's popularity throughout the 1880s and 1890s was astounding. Macmillan's strategy was to release a London edition (often in two or more volumes) with a simultaneous edition (or soon thereafter) in New York for the Macmillan Company. The multiple-volume London first printing was thereby followed by a single-volume second printing as a U.S. first edition, doubling as a British second edition (Blanck, 1957: 341). Of Crawford's big Macmillan hit, *A Cigarette-Maker's Romance* (1890), more than 153,000 copies were printed for UK sales within

several years of its appearance while the US figures probably exceeded that number (Pilkington, 1964: p. 94). It was met with combined public enthusiasm and critical acclaim: the *Westminster Review* (May 1891) wrote “no other word than ‘beautiful’ in any degree fits it”, while the *Athenaeum* (26 October 1890) believed it “a story of exquisitely pathetic interest”. “Reviews from the *Spectator* (13 December 1890) and the *Critic* (27 December 1890) left little to be said in the way of extravagant endorsement” (1964: 94).

For *A Tale of a Lonely Parish* (1886), Macmillans paid an impressive 31,250 lire for 25,000 copies, and for *Saracinesca* (1887) serialised in *Blackwood’s Magazine*, he received £1,350 for the serial rights and for a meagre 1,500 volume copies, beyond which all copies would belong to Crawford for international publication. Crawford described his installation into the literary field after a visit to London in 1893: *gratis* business management from the editor of the *Fortnightly*, and “Henry James has got me in to the Athenaeum Club and is everything that is kind and friendly” (1964: p. 72).

So rewarding was Crawford that Macmillan’s provided him with an office at their 66 Fifth Avenue, New York premises, and they advanced him extensive funds to buy ‘Villa Crawford’ in Sorrento. Sir Frederick Macmillan was said to have specially selected the artist Joseph Pennell, Slade School lecturer and friend of McNeill Whistler, to illustrate Crawford’s *Salve Venetia* (1905), sending Pennell to Italy during the spring of 1901 and 1902 (Pilkington 1964, p. 162), while no less a person than the actress Sarah Bernhardt at the peak of her career commissioned Crawford to write a play for her about Guelf and Ghibelline struggles, emerging as *Franscesca da Rimini* (1902) (Pilkington 1964, p. 161).

Crawford’s popularity was intentional. He was hardly commercially disinterested and one chief motivation for his novelistic forms was public demand. In a discussion of Crawford’s self doubt, Pilkington remarks that “the one genuine talent which he possessed was the ability to write novels that exactly satisfied the literary demands or desires of millions of readers” (1964: p. 66), and many of Crawford’s letters would support this. Perceiving a popular interest in ‘sword and sandal’ history at the end of the century, Crawford produced four related titles including *Ave Roma Immortalis* (1898) and *Via Crucis* [Stations of the Cross] (1899), hotly on the heels of Lew Wallace’s *Ben Hur* (1880) and Henry Sienkiewicz’s *Quo Vadis* ([1895-96], London 1898).

But his demand-driven production was not ill-considered: “The Novel is a distinctly modern invention, satisfying a modern want” (Crawford, 1893: p. 47). Several essays of criticism were distilled into *The Novel, What It Is!* (1893),⁸ and outline a programme for the serious novel that is pointedly commercial. “The novel is a marketable commodity, of the class termed ‘luxuries’, as not contributing directly to the support of life or the maintenance of health. It is of the class ‘artistic luxuries’ because it does not appeal to any of the material senses – touch, taste, smell; and it is of the class ‘intellectual artistic luxuries’ because it is not judged by superior senses – sight and hearing” (Crawford, 1893: pp. 8-9). This physiological economy of the novel, for Crawford, covered the novel’s essential requirements that, beyond being “a story or romance”, it should both “appeal to the intellect” and “satisfy the requirements of art” (p.9). That it could be “of no use to a man when he is at work” meant it was a luxury, but one that should “conduce to peace of mind” during leisure (ibid.). Crawford posited readers’ gains as access to not simply a story (in all its complexity) but to an intellectual arts praxis for leisure-time meditation and peace of mind. By pinpointing precisely why the opportunity costs were worth bearing, therefore, Crawford in effect provided the basis for a theory of literature as a resource.

Furthermore, the gains Crawford elaborated on are not trivial: especially when what he supplied was a political rhetoric of discipline, private integrity and heroic but world-weary resolve. “Modern civilisation has created modern vices, modern crimes, modern virtues [...] The crimes of today were not dreamed of a hundred years ago’ (Crawford, 1893: p. 105). But “under the hand of genius [the novel] may purify the heart and fortify the mind” (ibid.: p. 16). What the novel should attempt, therefore, was an investigation “of the prime impulses of the heart [that] are, broadly speaking, the same in all ages and *almost* in all races” (ibid.: p. 107) [emphasis added]. “Those deep waters the real novel must fathom, sounding the tide-stream of passion and bringing up such treasures as lie far below and out of sight [...] until the art of the story teller makes him [the reader] feel that they are or might be his” (ibid.: p. 108). Crawford was aware of the wasteland. He knew the dangers that accompanied modernism, when “applied science is doing her best to eliminate distance as a factor from the equation of exchanges, financial and intellectual” (ibid.: p. 106). He simply preferred not to be captured by modernism, and invited the reader also to feel that this freedom “might be his”; wherein far more profitable textual guidance could be gained from stories of the brave man’s heart, the coward’s heart, and that “men and women still suffer

for love, and the old still warn youth and manhood against love's snares" (ibid.: p. 107). This was not a complicated philosophy of life, and in Macmillan's hands it sold.

Circulating throughout this Crawfordian literary territory were published items by Kipling and Conrad. On 25 May 1895, *The Milwaukee Journal* announced the second number in Macmillan's Novelist's Library series: 50 cent editions of "leading modern novelists [...] satisfactorily bound in attractive paper covers and the print is excellent". "Mr Crawford's novels make delightful reading but few of them have been available in cheap form". The May number was Crawford's *Sant' Ilario*, while "the June number of the series will be *The Naulakha*, by Rudyard Kipling [and Walcott Balestier]" (*Milwaukee Journal*, 1895: p. 16). Next to an advertisement for Macmillan's illustrated edition of Kipling's *Puck of Pook's Hill* (1906), *The Manchester Courier* (19 October 1906: p. 9) ran a 'New Novels' review of Crawford's *Lady of Rome* (1906), another "story of Italian life". Listing the most popular books for 1900, the London *Bookman* of January 1901 placed at number nine, preceded by Marie Corelli and James Barrie, Crawford's Madrid novel *In the Palace of the King* (1900). In its wake, among novels finding "a place more than once in the list of the six best-selling novels" (*Bookman*, 19, 112: p. 113), was Conrad's *Lord Jim*, Kipling's *Stalky and Co.*, and Crawford's *Via Crucis* – Kipling's *From Sea to Sea* taking fifth place under 'History, Biography and Travel'. In its literature section, the *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser* was keen to praise Kipling's best characteristics "especially love of the sea and sympathy with England's soldiers, sailors and roving men" (31 December 1903: p. 6) and noted that *The Four Feathers* still commanded favour, along with "'The Typhoon' by J. Conrad [...] and 'The Heart of Rome' by F. Marion Crawford": the latter being one of the best three novels of the year.

Links between Conrad and Kipling are long-standing, most obviously in studies of colonialism (McClure, 1982) or in supporting collations of contemporary material (Carabine, Hubbard, Stiebel, 2009). Their market links, however, were already evident by the turn of the century. Again, the *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser*, reviewing *The Way of the Sea* by Norman Duncan (1904), noted "that with the exception of Mr. Joseph Conrad and Mr. Rudyard Kipling no writing about the sea has ever probed so deeply and faithfully into its mysteries" (02 June 1904: p. 6). Scott Cohen details Conrad's first literary journalism in 1898 for the magazine *The Outlook*, published in both the U.S. and U.K., the London edition of which

Conrad described as favouring “Imperialism, tempered by expediency” (Cohen, 2009: p. 49).⁹ Despite a private ambivalence to Kipling, Conrad’s second piece for *The Outlook* was 1500 public words defending Kipling against what Conrad called “silly criticism”.(Davies, 2009: 49) As Stephen Donovan suggests, Conrad’s unflattering private comments about popularly successful writers such as “Hall Caine, Rudyard Kipling and John Buchan not only betray a more than passing acquaintance with the work and public personae of popular authors, they attest to a preoccupation with literary competitors who had succeeded in taming what he called ‘the public that mysterious beast’” (Donovan, 2005: p. 174). Whether the 250 words printed in *The Outlook* were indeed Conrad’s or a redaction, we cannot be sure, but it made dialogic use of Conrad’s writing.¹⁰ Defending Kipling’s use of the metrically inappropriate word “parade!” in a poem, the writer is pained to explain that Kipling, unlike the critic, has “frequented the barrack yard” where the word is rooted in parade-ground drill and, whether “belonging to poetry or not”, it was a “compendious symbol to all implied in ‘learning’ their [military] trade” (*Outlook*, 2 April 1898: p. 258). The specific value of Kipling that was worth maintaining was not an aesthetic gain but an advocacy of diligence and expertise.

Conversely, Kipling’s appreciation of Conrad is apparent from Edmund Bojarski, who notes that Conrad’s 1898 estimation of Kipling as among the first persons in literature who deserved attention was reciprocated in Kipling’s 1906 letter to Conrad congratulating him on his exceptional *Mirror of the Sea*, with its vivid descriptions of the wind and of darkness, which Kipling read and re-read, amazed at their potency(Bojarski, 1967: p. 12). Despite comparable private reservations about Conrad (his equivocal Britishness), Kipling’s enthusiasm was for a public Conrad, whose “unusual talent [...] in recent years had been overshadowing [Kipling’s] own work” (ibid.: p. 13).

Blackwood’s Magazine, too, connected the two with ease. In an extensive piece on Lord Tennyson in 1897, *Blackwood’s* mused on who might be the laureate’s successor: “We venture to predict that English poetry will be permanently enriched by Mr Kipling’s pen more signally than by that of any other living writer” (*Blackwood’s Magazine*, vol. 162, no. 985: p. 629).On the following page, *Blackwood’s* readers could then find part one of Conrad’s “Karain: a Memory” in serial. When treating literature as a resource, it is the magazine’s context rather than textual difference (between Kipling’s poem and Conrad’s prose) that guides investigation of the work’s value, as do readers’ demands rather than intrinsic textual quality.

From the full range of goods that Conrad and Kipling could provide, only some matched those of Crawford that were circulating in the market at the time: the advocacy of doggedness, of service and a belief in the potential for overlooked men to learn and triumph. The *Manchester Courier*, also seeing literature as a resource, wrote: “We study geography now-a-days by means of fiction [...] The advantages to *our* little island of such stories as those of Kipling [...] in teaching *us* about India [...] cannot be questioned’ [emphasis added] (02 June 1904: p. 6). Not only was there instruction but the instruction was about “there and they” for the benefit of “us”. In the meeting place between a market of “we” and the marketed Other, what purported to give market readers an advantage were fictionally-mediated endorsements of hard work and “our” personal integrity. Of Kipling, *The Outlook* said he carved with his jack-knife an oath into his desk as galley slaves did into their oars. He was “without the germ of self-conceit” and “believed in downright dogged hard work” (*Outlook*, 15 April 1899: p. 357). In the same *Outlook*, Conrad contributed his assessments of Marryat and Fenimore Cooper as “Tales of the Sea”. Marryat’s “pen serves his country”; “What sets him apart is his fidelity”; “[...] in Marryat’s novels we find the mass of the nameless [...] an insight into the spirit animating the crowd of obscure men who knew how to build for their country such a shining monument of memories”. Conrad also finds this latent heroism of overlooked men in Cooper: “He has the knowledge of simple hearts”. Of both, Conrad writes: “no two other authors of fiction had [...] given to so many the initial impulse towards a glorious or a useful career” (*Outlook*, 4 June 1898: p. 560).

Equipped with such dogged self-determination, the adventurer-narrator was in no position to communicate, let alone learn from the people he encountered or, more-often, overlooked. The glorious useful career that fiction was “an initial impulse” towards was far more important than what lay beneath the adventurer’s steps. And as with adventurers, so with writers. Another reviewer of *The Outlook*, in “A Book of Naughty Niggers”, chastises Haldane McFall’s romance of “modern negro life in the British West Indies”. The chastisement, however, was not based on any absent compassion for West Indian workers – evident in other writings of the time¹¹ – but chiefly for not fully absorbing “the influences of Stephen Crane and Rudyard Kipling”: “A little blend of honesty and sincerity would have gone a long way in relieving so fatiguing an atmosphere” (*Outlook* 16 July 1898: p. 762). The conclusion to be drawn is that Kipling had conducted his writing well. That his fiction reduced countless unnamed punkawallahs to the brute material of the

punkas they operated was less important than Kipling's descriptions of the un-engaged-with others should be approved "honest and sincere". The "adventurer-narrator", like his adventure, was primarily important for how issues such as strength of character were negotiated according to structures of value at home.

In committing disposable income, readers not only provided publishers with a return, but they added to the stock of outputs from publishing in the act of reading. From this perspective, reading itself becomes an output of publishing. What readers gained from this output was the attention of fine writers, who 'selected' them as intimate addressees for fictionalised representations and writerly demonstrations of personal integrity, presented against a contrastive backdrop of fictionalised exoticism. For Conrad, Kipling, and Crawford, this heightening of contrasts between readers and writers of integrity and others without is accentuated in their short horrific fiction of the end of the 1800s; in enactments of what Tabish Khair identifies as a troika of Gothic, postcolonialism, and Otherness (Khair, 2009: pp. 1-17). Reading stories from Conrad's *Tales of Unrest* and Kipling's *Life's Handicap*, for example, next to the supernatural elements in Crawford's Italian novels, and specifically his ghost stories "Man Overboard" and "Upper Berth", allows us to reconstruct a market. In these tales readers could be enthralled by encounters between the narrator and worlds of indistinct Otherness, wherein white representatives of the class succeed or fail to maintain personal integrity.

The indistinctness or a lack of noteworthy individuality amongst this general Otherness is reflected in a late-Victorian reduction of the Empire to one vast global network or, as the bookseller Edward Petherick described in 1872, a series of "ante-rooms in which we all dodge about before entering the next. In that we can all meet, be it sooner or late" (Rukavina, 2010: 73). Discussing courageous English national traits, Crawford's narrator in *Mr Isaacs* finds them uniformly "in the tropical kettles of Ceylon and Singapore [...] on the deck of the steamer in the Red Sea, in the cabin of the inbound Arctic explorer, in the crowded Swiss hotel, or the straggling Indian hill station [...] (1882: 136-7). In "The Mark of the Beast", a New Year's Eve has men "forgather from the uttermost ends of the Empire", whereupon "then some of us went away and annexed Burma, and some tried to open up the Sudan and were opened up by Fuzzies in that cruel scrub [...]". (1919 [1890]: p. 241). Other ghastly tales from *Life's Handicap* switch effortlessly between Ireland, India, Russia, Africa, or East Asia. Nurkeed the Sultan of Zanzibar, who will

debauch himself equally in Bombay or Pulu Penang, drunkenly fights a Malay lascar, Pambé, who sails the China Seas to England in a life dedicated to revenge; the distinction between each protagonist and location in “The Limitations of Pambé Serang” being lost in a whirl of incidental Oriental details that the cool narration frames with a final line of bathos and the ironic comment of its title.

Conrad’s *Tales of Unrest* sail smoothly from a Malay archipelago to the Congo and London, but also surprisingly to France’s windswept Brittany. However, the strangeness for Anglophone readers of that French coast should not be underestimated. This was the region that Gauguin headed for in the late 1880s just before Arles and then Tahiti, which his biographer described as “the gloom, the melancholy inertia [...] this land of small trees, granite coasts and menhirs” (Fletcher, 1921: p. 56). The exoticism of the market’s unrestful tales do not derive from phenomena that Conrad encountered – unexotically humdrum to locals – but from accounts of the encounters printed, as the narrator to *Karain* says, in the “befogged respectability of their newspapers [...] Sunshine gleams between the lines of those short paragraphs – sunshine and the glitter of the sea. A strange name wakes up memories; the printed words scent the smoky atmosphere of to-day faintly, with the subtle and penetrating perfume of land breezes breathing through the starlight of bygone nights [...]” (*Blackwood’s* 1897: p. 630).

The horror of the Otherness derives from the behaviour of Others towards each other, from failure to differentiate oneself significantly from Otherness and, on occasion, from behaving or failing to behave horrifically in order to maintain the differentiated order, which justifies the horrific action and defines integrity. From a volume of Crawford’s supernatural short stories published posthumously as *Wandering Ghosts* in New York and *Uncanny Tales* in London (1911), “The Screaming Skull” can be read as a retired sea captain’s failure to rid himself a skull that torments him. Trapped by the need for a rational explanation, he commits the crime of inaction, and is implausibly bitten to death by the skull; failing to act resolutely in the face of horrific otherness. Similarly, in “Man Overboard!”, a sailor fails to save his twin brother from drowning, so as to assume the twin’s identity and marry the twin’s fiancé. Having failed to preserve the bonds of brotherhood above sexual desire, the surviving twin is duly haunted and finally drowned; tacitly judged by the narrating sea captain. In “The Upper Berth” the ghost of a drowned passenger haunts cabin 105. The plot disappoints, and the ghost’s presence is simply verified. The crime,

though, is in failing to either ignore the ghost or eradicate it, and what impresses is the contrast between vivid descriptions of the ghost, “[...] the dead white eyes [...] the putrid odour of rank seawater” (1911: p. 231), and maritime procedure aboard an up-to-date ocean liner; echoed in the narrator’s incredulity that in such modern contexts could be found a “creeping horror that began to take possession of me” (1911: p. 220).

Among very many examples from Kipling, the phantom rickshaw of that eponymous story drives ‘I’, the narrator, toward madness and death because ‘I’ failed, during the passage to Bombay, to maintain psycho-sexual propriety. In Kipling’s “The Strange Ride of Morrowbie Dukes” (1885), ‘I’ falls into a land of the half-dead where he is forced to fight viciously for survival against duplicitous Indian wretches, with only British resolve for support. (No suggestion of a common front to escape the land of the half-dead.) Their all-round descent into corruption is only halted when Dunnoo, ‘I’s “dog-boy, who attended to my collies” (ibid.: p. 38), tracks the narrator and throws him a lifeline, thus restoring the contract between master and faithful servant. The most graphic example, however, comes from Kipling’s “Mark of the Beast”, wherein ‘I’ and Strickland of the police are compelled to use what might be called advanced interrogation techniques on “a leper” – named either by his disease or as the Silver Man – whom they believe has bewitched an unwise British compatriot. “I understood then how men and women and little children can endure to see a witch burnt alive” (ibid.: p. 255). Unlike glittering seas, however, the torture cannot be created in print without compromising the required “honesty and sincerity”: instead “[...] and we got to work. This part is not to be printed” (ibid.: p. 256), which is followed by a line-space and five points.

Within the parameters of this joint market, the stories of broken pledges, weak integrity, and killing that make up Conrad’s *Tales* can be similarly read. “The Lagoon”, first printed in the stately *Cornhill* (1897), becomes a story of betrayal between Indonesian brothers. A weakness in otherwise fearless, half-naked Arsat has brought about his brother’s death, caused by Arsat’s too-great need to possess a woman: this is presented to *Cornhill* readers for adjudication through the narrator, called simply “the white man”, addressed as Tuan, meaning “sir”. With “The Idiots”, first printed in the *Savoy* (1896) a slightly different picture emerges. Run by Arthur Symonds, Aubrey Beardsley, and onetime pornographer Leonard Smithes, it is conceivable that the *Savoy* magazine was attracted to the story’s idiocy, which a decadent like Huysmans might approvingly call *à*

rebours, or against nature. But the Savoy wished to be “exclusively literary” (*Savoy* ‘prospectus’, Nov. 1895: p. 1). By the second-to-last, seventh number that bore Conrad’s piece, the magazine’s editorial admitted “it has not conquered the general public, and, without the florins of the general public [...] [can not] expect to pay its way’ (*Savoy*, 7 November 1896: p. 1).¹² Reprinted for another market in *Tales*, however, “The Idiots” could now become a tale of failure by a couple to preserve the contract of their marriage from brute nature: the wife to provide healthy children and the husband to stay loyal and loving. The failure produces only ‘idiot’ children, murder and suicide.

In the Congo-set “An Outpost of Progress” (1897), the Other’s horrific behaviour comes from Makola. He is openly beyond the pale (also the title of a Kipling tale from 1888) – cherishing “evil” entrepreneurial “spirits” and trading slaves for ivory – and so beyond censure. But the true crimes are committed by Kayerts – un-Britishly Dutch – and the suspiciously Francophone Carlier, an ex non-commissioned officer “in an army guaranteed from harm by several European powers” (*Cosmopolis*: p. 610). They are guilty of complicity and of failing to maintain discipline. Both die cruelly. Like the Dutchman Willems of *Outcast of the Islands*, who preceded them, they fail to master themselves. Pre-empting *Heart of Darkness*, “An Outpost” signals not so much a criticism of colonialism but of colonialism done badly. As William Atkinson has argued (2005), and as I have argued elsewhere (2008), when considered as a specially commissioned short story for the anniversary, 1000th number of *Blackwood’s Magazine*, whose advertising strapline once proclaimed itself to be “the empire in little” (Finkelstein, 1995: xiv), *Heart of Darkness* can be read not as a condemnation of colonialism but of Francophone colonialism that lacked the British ability to maintain the careful borders and self-discipline necessary for successful civilising commerce. No-one but the British could navigate the Other’s waters, whether by boat or in print.

The possible exception to *Tales* is “The Return”. Although encompassed in a Conradian symmetry of risks from too little civilisation to contain brute nature and too much civilisation to acknowledge it, this not-unsuccessful study of repressed sexual tension in suburbia falls outside of the successful joint market this essay is endeavouring to describe. “The Return” was not previously published in magazine form and subsequently disappeared from the Conradian repertoire at that time.¹³ It is with “Karain”, however, that the market is best revealed. To the crew aboard the narrator’s schooner, Karain is “incomparably dignified” (almost British, one is tempted to say). About him there is an “expectation of something heroic going to take place”. But Karain

disappoints. He has murdered his brother to save a faithless woman or, rather, save her ghost that has transgressively become his spectral talisman. For this crime, Karain is haunted by the brother's spirit and he seeks refuge aboard the schooner. Recognising Karain's mighty and "obscure Odyssey" (ibid.: p. 648), the crew and narrator decide to help. But the material talisman they give Karain and which rescues him is a sixpence – the smallest silver cog to British global commerce. And some years after, in the company of the narrator, the spirit that animates the sixpence, superior to the spirits of Karain's forest, is witnessed amongst the wheels of business in London's Strand.

Conclusion

Publishing history rather than textual analysis provides the early historical imbrications of Conrad, Kipling, and Crawford. Crawford's "The Upper Berth" first appeared in *The Broken Shaft*, an Unwin's Annual for 1886, published by the same firm that published the *Cosmopolis*, which, besides articles on Friedrich Nietzsche and the spiritist Mme. Sardon, published Kipling's "Slaves of the Lamp" and Conrad's "Outpost of Progress". *The Broken Shaft* was edited by Henry Norman who had previously edited the *Pall Mall Gazette*, its offshoot, the *Pall Mall Magazine*, later publishing numerous Conrad and Kipling texts. Conrad followed Kipling in the pages of *Blackwood's*. Crawford preceded both in *The Bookman*. All three were amalgamated in fiction-bearing magazines of the day, and amongst their circulations these magazines created a market in which a limited range of readings for these three authors thrived. Furthermore, some reconstitution of that market is still possible. The Catalan publishers Leartes in 1995, brought out *Els Esquitos del Mar* [Sea Spray]: *Contes de Terror* [Tales of Terror], featuring Crawford's "Upper Berth", next to Kipling's "A Matter of Fact" and Conrad's "The Secret Sharer".

But in addition to publishing history, we can return to the text; if not to a full textual analysis then to effects of the text in specific historic market conditions. With their instructional, geographically detailed fictions of masculine nobility revealed in the teeth of Otherness, Conrad, Kipling and Crawford sold readers a platform for empire-wide recognition. In believing positively these fictions to be celebrations of personal integrity, of duty, and of hard work – that each reader in (his) reading created – readers could see the same integrity being publically honored throughout the magazine's market. Circulation created an empire-wide platform; reading created the celebration of values; and individual readers could interpret those values to match their self-

image. What Conrad, Kipling and Crawford could sell to readers engrossed in masculine integrity was public recognition on a vast scale.

At the intersection between Conrad, Kipling, and Crawford lay a specific market, and the readings carried out in that market were one of publishing's outputs. Other readings were certainly possible. Other readings left once-mighty Crawford neglected, untraceable now in either Sutherland's *Companion to Victorian Fiction* or Kemp, Mitchell, and Trotter's *Companion to Edwardian Fiction*. Other readings, outputs too, carried Conrad and Kipling into a modernist world beyond WWI, but later discarded Kipling with the loss of Empire and the emergence of post-colonial criticism after WWII; Conrad emerging from the post-colonial critique battered but not beaten. But by treating literature as a resource, we do not need to explain these transitions solely in terms of internal textual features in a context of literary-critical historiography. Nor need we claim any partisanship from these texts between mass markets or modernist literary distinction, or sub-fields of restricted or large-scale production. While the meanings to these texts remain mutable, their values lie in how they are read; and, from one perspective, how they are read is partly a function of publishing, itself a function of commerce.

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- ¹ An introduction to the invention of disinterestedness as a prerequisite for art is given in Woodmansee, Martha, “The Interests in Disinterestedness”, *The Author, Art and The Market: Rereading the History of Aesthetics* (New York, Columbia University Press 1994) 11-34; and in Frost, Simon, *Business of a Novel: Economics, Aesthetics and the Case of Middlemarch* (London, Vermont, Pickering and Chatto, 2012) pp. 28, 48-50.
- ² The main resource for serials which first published Conrad’s work is ConradFirst, an online open-access archive: see <http://www.conradfirst.net/conrad/home> [accessed June 2013].
- ³ Although referring to works from the 1920s onwards, a similarly changed perspective has been suggested by David Earle, in his precisely titled *Re-Covering Modernism* (Farnham, Ashgate, 2009), on the successful life of modernist works (re)packaged for pulp magazine and other large-scale productions.
- ⁴ This is the New York, Dodd and Mead edition, no. 4, vol. 27 (June 1908) BL shelfmark p. p. p. 6365b.
- ⁵ Details of Crawford’s life and works can be found from only a limited number of sources, the main sources being as follows: Pilkington, John, *Francis Marion Crawford* (New York, Twayne Publishers 1964); Blanck, Jacob, comp., *Bibliography of American Literature*, vol. 2 (New Haven, Yale University Press 1957) 341-63; Pilkington, John “A Crawford Bibliography” *University of Mississippi Studies in English*, vol. 4 (1963), 1-20 ; Pilkington, John “F. Marion Crawford: Italy in Fiction” *American Quarterly*, vol. 6 (spring 1954) 59-65.
- ⁶ “The woman who falls in love with a man for his looks alone is not of a very high type, but the best and bravest men that ever lived have fallen victims to mere beauty, often without much intelligence, faith or honour”, Crawford, Francis Marion, *Corleone: a Tale of Sicily* (New York, Macmillan Company, London, Macmillan and Co. 1897), p. 80.
- ⁷ This is the subtitle of Kipling’s story collection *Life’s Handicap* (1891) XXXXXX In Calibri font and not Times. Should the endnotes be in a different font to the body text?
- ⁸ Preparatory work for his theorisation can be seen in three Crawford publications: ‘False Taste in Art’, *North American Review*, 135 (July 1882), 89-98; ‘What is a Novel?’ *The Forum*, 14 (Jan. 1893), 591–99; and ‘Emotional Tension and the Modern Novel’, *The Forum* 14 (Feb. 1893), 735-42.
- ⁹ Cohen, Scott, “Imperialism Tempered by Expediency: Conrad and *The Outlook*”, 41, 1, *Conradiana* (Spring 2009) pp. 49-66.
- ¹⁰ Stephen Donovan confirms that Conrad’s review has ‘vanished without trace’ (Donovan 2005 : 162). Donovan, Stephen, *Joseph Conrad and Popular Culture* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).
- ¹¹ Others voices had long been available. By 1878, George Holyoake had identified the political affiliation between Jamaican and British workers in his *The History of Cooperation* (London, Fisher Unwin 1908) 12-14. Former slave Fredrick Douglas published his third autobiography, *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass* in 1882 (revised 1892). Dominica-born Celestine Edwards, in a weekly ‘Christian Evidence paper’ *Lux* that he edited from 1892, wrote on topics such as the British seizure of Uganda and how ‘the day is coming when Africans will speak for themselves’ cited in Hoyles, Asher and Martin, *Caribbean Publishing in Britain*, (London, Hansib 2011) 13-14; while Trinidadian Henry Sylvester Williams, general secretary of the first Pan-African Conference held in Westminster, in July 1900, launched the journal *The Pan-African* in 1901, its first issue editorial stating ‘no other but a Negro can represent the Negro’ (2011: 17).
- ¹² Symonds claimed the lack of revenue was its unusually low purchase price and lack of advertisements, although by October there were plenty of these.
- ¹³ Of all the bibliographic data collated in ConradFirst, on “The Return” it remains poignantly silent.