

POETICS OF NATURAL ELEMENTS IN JOSEPH CONRAD'S MARINE PROSE

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Images of natural elements are among central phenomena of any national world view, because since olden times, earth, water, fire and air have been considered to be the basis of the world. These elements are essential for the writers in whose works natural phenomena play an important role in philosophical and aesthetic understanding of reality [1, p. 201].

Marinism is maritime thematics in fiction marked by aesthetic perception of seascapes and sailors' lives, unexplored space and desire for discovering something new. It includes marine motifs, images in folk, classical and modern literatures, genres of marine novels and marine lyrics, images of seafarers, discoverers, pirates and sea creatures in literary works [2, p. 1].

Among the bright galaxy of foreign marine writers such as Ernest Hemingway, Jules Verne, Joshua Slocum, etc., Joseph Conrad occupies an outstanding position. A lot of researches and articles have been written about Joseph Conrad and his creative activity. His works received rave reviews from a number of world famous men of letters (e.g., Herbert Wells and John Galsworthy). Many countries can boast of having Conrad Societies, publishing special journals, holding Conrad conferences. Joseph Conrad's works are studied and analysed worldwide. The writer is known and honoured in Ukraine, too. On December 3, 2008, the Joseph Conrad museum was opened in Berdychev (Ukraine), the author's home town.

There are numerous researches on Joseph Conrad's life and creative activity viewing them from different perspectives. For example, Ya. Bystrov [3] examines stylistic interpretation of Joseph Conrad's autobiography *A Personal Record* from the point of view of Deictic Shift Theory. G. Dubova [4] analyses Conrad's sea prose with the aim of identifying typical characteristics of the author's ideas of philosophical

morality in his construction of the sea image. M. Grigorova's [5] research focuses on the figure of the captain in Conrad's works, which is "related both to the romantic heroism of sailing and to the sober responsibility and art of ship navigation". James W. Long [6] investigates Herman Melville's and Joseph Conrad's ways of exploring the relationship between land and sea, and comparing both authors' manner, comes to the conclusion that they are "not merely sea writers, but rather world-system writers". A.C. Phillips [7] analyzing five of Conrad's marine novels, reconsiders the maritime fiction genre, explores the changing representation of ships and sailors in English maritime fiction in the early twentieth century, and suggests prospects for the development of the sea story in the following centuries.

Among the studies of Joseph Conrad's life and creative activity stands out the book by Wit Tarnawski *Conrad the Man, the Writer, the Pole* [8, 11-18]. In his book the author explains why Joseph Conrad whose life, for long years, was connected with the sea, happened to become a writer. In fact, he was destined to turn to writing. His love of reading and his literary views were inherited from his father, Apollo Korzeniowski, a poet, translator and political activist. Later, the accumulated new impressions and observations laid the foundation of his works. Besides, Conrad's naval service should not be underestimated. It taught him to pay attention to the smallest details of the environment, which proves the main law of creative activity which claims that concrete facts, one way or another, inspire every work of art. Wit Tarnawski reveals the mystery of Joseph Conrad's genius: the writer is a representative of a comparatively young race, less experienced but more dynamic than the aging races of Western Europe. A strict discipline of naval service and a twenty-year-long communication with rank-and-file people played a crucial role, too. According to the scholar, Conrad's works are characterized by universality, versatility and richness of Renaissance.

There are various writings about Joseph Conrad's naval service and his becoming a writer. For example, Captain Alpertunga Aniker in *A Seaman's Review of "Heart of Darkness" by Joseph Conrad* [9] states that his decision to become a sailor at the age of thirteen was influenced by the books he had read about the sea, especially

Viktor Hugo's novel *The Toilers of the Sea*. Thus, he moved to a British shipping company and became a British citizen. After quitting his career at sea in 1894, he devoted himself entirely to writing. "Most of his books deal with stories about the sea and sailors with original observations and views of colonialism and imperialism in the background. Their heroes are usually seafarers with their complex inner worlds, who are desperate, rough, and trying to exist in a world where change is not possible, and often faltering".

The symbolism of the sea image being among the central motifs of Conrad's works, his marine prose draws linguists' and literary critics' attention. Thus, the language of Joseph Conrad's prose was meticulously analyzed by I.V. Yakovleva in the thesis *Linguo-stylistic peculiarities of Joseph Conrad's marine prose* [10, p. 2]. The thesis presents a complex analysis of lexical stylistic system of the writer's most famous marine works. The scholar claims that realism, romanticism, psychologism and maritime exoticism are combined in the language of J. Conrad's novels, create a unique genre amalgamation and define the writer's individual style.

In the review of Marek Pacukiewicz's philosophical article *The Sea of Discourses in Conrad's Texts*, Agnieszka Adamowicz-Pospiech [11, p. 167-169] points out that the scholar discloses how Conrad is related to the sea, namely to the sea of discourses. M. Pacukiewicz highlights the semantic area which the sea occupied in European culture. Back in ancient Greece people tried to describe the essence of *sea-ness*. It was done with the help of three concepts: *pelagos* (open sea, space), *pontos* (bridge), and *hals* (saltness). Thus, tracing the connotations of these terms in Greek civilization, Pacukiewicz finds out how the original juxtaposition between *pelagos* and *pontos* gradually disappeared, and analyses the multifaceted metaphor of the sea which, at the beginning of European civilization, acquires the shape of "a fertile branch of knowledge". In the 19th century, the sea absorbed by the "rational" land, turned into an epistemological trope. Thus, contrasting the sea with the land, Conrad singles out space between man, sea and land, and creates a complicated interwoven blending with blurred boundaries.

Stefan Żeromski [12], a Polish novelist, playwright and publicist, in his essay *Joseph Conrad – autor rodak*, highlighted how skillfully the writer rendered all the greatness and wickedness of the ocean. In Conrad's works, the sea is "a stage on which actors' tragic, funny and sad shadows flicker". According to Żeromski, the foreigner Joseph Conrad was the first to make Englishmen, who were born seafarers, look at the sea in a new way. From his childhood dream it turned into his most significant saga. The author of the essay cited the famous literary critic Richard Curle, who compared Joseph Conrad's talent with that of Gustaw Flaubert's: "Musicality of Conrad's prose is a new melodiousness – romantic, mysterious and impressive musicality of a new race". Thus, the aim of the present study is the analysis of Joseph Conrad's way of presenting the man against the background of marine elements such as sea, wind, ship, ect., and interaction between them.

Conrad's own maritime experience plays a significant role in understanding his works. In most of his novels, the action takes place against the background of the sea. The author describes voyages to faraway countries, impressions of unseen-before, strange geographic objects and interaction of weather and landscape with the fate of man and ship at sea. Conrad [13, p. 7] himself wrote that in his works he tried to reflect the pulse of life throbbing in the boundless ocean, in the hearts of ordinary people sailing seas and the nature of the ships created and taken care of by them. His works make it possible to realize that the writer is an integral part of what is going on there, and his life gradually turns into an autobiographic epic where he himself appears in the capacity of the author, narrator and commentator of his experience [14, p. 89-90].

Creating the image of the sea, Joseph Conrad presents his extraordinary philosophical subjective perception of this versatile phenomenon. Thus, Conrad's sea has temporal characteristics (*There was hardly a southern-going voyage in the yesterday of the sea which meant anything less than a twelvemonth* (The Mirror of the Sea), dimensional parameters (*He would be running most of his time all over the sea trying to get behind the weather* (Typhoon)), colour (*the sea was as black as the sky, the sea the colour of lead, blue sea* (Heart of Darkness)), and sound (*a low moaning sound, longdrawn roar of some immense wave* (Heart of Darkness)). The indispensable

images which constantly accompany the sea are sky, wind, sun, ship and man. Describing the seascape in *Heart of Darkness*, J. Conrad writes that *the sea and the sky were welded together without a joint*. The sea plays a significant role in men's life, it unites them, influences them, makes them more tolerant to each other and turns into their dwelling place (*Between us there was ... the bond of the sea. Besides holding our hearts together through long periods of separation, it had the effect of making us tolerant of each other's yarns – and even convictions. Their home is always with them – the ship; and so is their country – the sea* (Heart of Darkness)).

J. Conrad describes the sea in its various manifestations and moods. Once, it is tender and quiet, another time it is raging and unrestrained. Once its mood changes (*Forthwith a change came over the waters, and the serenity became less brilliant but more profound* (Typhoon)), and at the same time it is unchanging (*a certain dignity of sameness, the majestic monotony of the sea* (The Mirror of the Sea); *It is the same wind, the same clouds, the same wildly racing seas, the same thick horizon around the ship* (The Mirror of the Sea)).

According to Marek Pacukiewicz [15, p. 168], it is difficult to find reflections on sea depths in Conrad's novels. On the contrary, depth can always be found on the surface, however, the sea always remains a mysterious creature, possessing an unsolved mystery (*a secret chamber of the sea, insoluble mystery from the sea* (Heart of Darkness)); *the craft and mystery of the sea* (The Mirror of the Sea); *no record upon the mysterious face of the sea* (The Mirror of the Sea)). An eternal mystery of the sea and the man's wish to unravel it opens up more and more sides of interpreting the sea image [16]. To Conrad, the image of the sea is a comprehensive medium that expresses life more aptly even than human language itself [17]. Interestingly, Conrad's reality is an amalgamation of his personal experience and writer's imagination. Therefore, his works are characterized by a new type of protagonist that is simultaneously both the character and the narrator [18, p. 69].

The sea being one of Joseph Conrad's central images, the writer presents it and all the marine nature as a living creature which is constantly present in all the episodes. In the novel *Typhoon* the sea is mentioned 58 times, in *The Mirror of the Sea* – 350

times. It is personified, possesses various human qualities and attributes, and it is capable of human emotions. For example, the sea talks to Captain MacWhirr in a language that is clear and easy to understand. Therefore, he cannot stop listening to it: *The China seas are full of every-day, eloquent facts, such as islands, sand-banks, reefs, swift and changeable currents – tangled facts that nevertheless speak to a seaman in clear and definite language. Their speech appealed to Captain Mac Whirr’s sense of realities so forcibly that he had given up his state-room below and practically lived all his days on the bridge of his ship* (Typhoon). Although the sea had never tried to *startle the silent man* before the typhoon, in the course of time it turned into an unfathomable, hateful and ferocious element possessing *immeasurable strength and immoderate wrath, the wrath that passes exhausted but never appeased; the wrath and fury of the passionate sea* (Typhoon). However, the man withstands its attack and turns out to be victorious in the fierce struggle. In the novel *Typhoon* Joseph Conrad describes a man’s behavior in an extreme situation from a cultural and epistemological point of view. Thus, Conrad’s image of the sea reflects the author’s thoughts about culture as a human reality which consists of *pontos, pelages* and *hals* [19, p. 169].

The language of J. Conrad’s novels is highly expressive and colourful. For making the description of the sea more emotional, the writer resorts to various epithets with positive and negative connotation: *the oily, mountaineous, languid, passionate, broken, awful, enormous, confused sea*. Besides, there are some other stylistic devices which contribute to presenting the sea in various manifestations. Among them are metaphors: *the circle of the sea that had the surface and the shimmer of an undulating piece of gray silk; a dazzling sheet; the ghostly glimmers of the sea; the steepness of the sea; the sea was but a still uncomplaining shadow; the shallow sea that foams and murmurs on the shores of the thousand islands*; similes: *within, the sea, as if agitated by an internal commotion leaped in peaked mounds*; hyperboles: *the immense volumes of water, tons of water, a wall of water, hills of water*. *The mirror of the sea* is a metaphor, which permeates through the whole novel under the same title (*The Mirror of the Sea*), emphasizes a very intimate revelation of Conrad’s relation with the sea. This piece of writing “passionately explores ships and their captains, storms, oceans,

and all other aspects of a sea-going life that Conrad experienced for twenty years". The metaphor in question occurs in the title and in various episodes of the work. E.g. *Love and regret go hand in hand in this world of changes swifter than the shifting of the clouds reflected in **the mirror of the sea**; She took the secret of her speed with her, and, unsightly as she was, her image surely has its glorious place in **the mirror of the old sea**; There is passion in all his moods, even in the soft mood of his serene days, in the grace of his blue sky whose immense and unfathomable tenderness reflected in **the mirror of the sea** embraces, possesses, lulls to sleep the ships with white sails.* In all the cases this metaphor connects the sea with other images such as the ship, the wind, the cloud, etc.

The author not only describes the colour scheme of the sea and its mood, he presents it with reference to other elements such as the sky, the sun, the wind, the stars, etc. For example: *The morning was fine, the oily **sea** heaved without a sparkle, and there was a queer white misty patch in the **sky** like a halo of the **sun** <...> An impenetrable obscurity pressed down upon the ghostly glimmers of the **sea** <..> The **sun**, pale and without rays, poured down leaden heat in a strangely indecisive light <...> He saw all the **stars** flying upwards between the teakwood jambs on a black **sky** <...> The **sea** was as black as the **sky** and speckled with foam afar. The **stars** that had flown to the roll came back on the return swing of the ship, rushing downwards in their glittering multitude, not of fiery points, but enlarged to tiny discs brilliant with a clear wet sheen* (Typhoon).

The element which is closely related to the sea, is often the cause of natural calamities and shipwrecks, and significantly affects the fates of the seamen and ships is the wind. One of the chapters of the novel *The Mirror of the Sea* can be called "a hymn to the wind" as Joseph Conrad figuratively presents the wind on the sea. His wind is personified, possessing a slew of human qualities, and it is of Masculine Gender. The writer emphasizes the West Wind's royal position on the sea in the following way: *The West Wind is too great a king to be a dissembler <...> ; The West Wind reigns over the seas surrounding the coasts of these kingdoms <...> ; The West Wind is the greatest king.* Unlike the mighty West Wind, the winds of North and South

are deprived of great power and are just *small princes amongst the powers of the sea*. They have no territory of their own; they are not reigning winds anywhere. Like men, Conrad's winds have different moods: *the mood of kingly melancholy; the clearing-up mood of the Western King; the south-westerly mood of the great West Wind is a lightless mood; there is passion in all his moods, even in the soft mood of his serene days; the temper of the ruler of the ocean has changed*, etc. In order to highlight the changeable nature of the wind, the author uses chains of epithets such as *magnificent, simple, barbarous, pensive, generous, impulsive, changeable, unfathomable*. There also occur numerous similes which make the description of the wind more poetic and expressive: *he is like a poet seated upon a throne; stronger gusts reach you, like the fierce shouts of raving fury; the East Wind behaves like a subtle and cruel adventurer without a notion of honour or fair play; I have seen him, like a wizened robber sheik of the sea; the West Wind, slept profoundly like a tired Titan*, etc. It is notable that in all the similes Joseph Conrad personified this element. The wind's changeable character is presented with the help of the following metaphor: *He is a good friend and a dangerous enemy*.

The language of J. Conrad's novels is rich and varied. One of the factors that testify to its richness and variety is the use of numerous synonymic rows. For example, as the action in the novel *Typhoon* takes place during this natural calamity, the author uses such synonyms to describe it: *storm, hurricane, cyclone, gale, wind, tempest, avalanche*. Describing the way in which the typhoon affected the man and the ship, the writer resorts to the following sets of synonyms: 1) *blown, swept, burst, twisted, smashed, broken, torn, devastated, worn*; 2) *raw places, scratches, bruises, torn wounds, gashes* and many others. In order to make all the events occurring in his marine prose more true to life, J. Conrad renders a wide range of sounds of the ocean, wind and other raging elements. For example, the following sounds can be heard in the novel *Typhoon*: *the enormous discord of noises; the frail and indomitable sound; a dull yell; a steady roar of a hurricane; the gale's howls and shrieks; a long moan; a gust of hoarse yelling; the roar and whistling of the wind*, etc. A great role in creating an acoustic effect is played by onomatopoeia: *the harsh **buzz**; a heavy **splash** and **patter***

of drop; the cargo chains **groaned** in the gins, **clinked** on coamings, **rattled** over the side. Alliteration also contributes to the rhythmicality of the narration: *smart and slippery; famines and floods; on their backs below the bridge; the shadow of her shape*.

J. Conrad's marine novels are full of dynamism not only due to the actions and events described [20, p. 268]. It results from a great variety of the words of motion with different shades of meaning and degree of quality: *to roll, to jerk, to plunge, to sweep, to quiver, to climb, to move, to whirl, to tumble, to drop, to rise, to sink, to turn over, to run, to knock out, to dash, to spring, to fling, to leap, to crouch, to jump, etc.* Among the syntactic devices which make the marine discourse more dynamic and rhythmical, parallelism (a) and different types of repetitions (b) are worth mentioning. E.g. a) *His hair was scant and sandy, his flat cheeks were pale, his bony wrists and long scholarly hands were pale, too, as though he had lived all his life in the shade* (Typhoon); b) **unentertaining and unprofitable** (morphological repetition) (Typhoon); *But he had never been given a glimpse of immeasurable strength and of immoderate **wrath**, the **wrath** that passes exhausted but never appeased* (anadiplosis) (Typhoon); *A **silence** had fallen upon the ship, a **silence** in which the sea struck thunderously at her sides* (anaphora) (Typhoon).

Another central category of Joseph Conrad's marine prose, which is closely related to the sea, is the ship, a creation of men's hands and an object of their care [21, p. 7]. The ship in his works is "a setting as well as a symbol, a microclimate as well as a microcosm" [22].

It is peculiar that all nouns in the English language which denote inanimate objects belong to Neuter Gender, however, the ship is a word of Feminine Gender. E.g. *a ship having all the open sea before **her** bows* (The Mirror of the Sea). In J. Conrad's novels it is constantly present, is described in different situations and weather conditions (for instance, in the novel *The Mirror of the Sea* it is mentioned 541 times). The image of the ship is ambivalent: on the one hand it constitutes a home and something familiar for the seamen united by their continued concern for the ship, while on the other it does not represent such security. Therefore, it is important for the reader

to understand what is happening to the ship in order to appreciate the danger of the storm and the action that needs to be taken by the sailors carrying out collective tasks to keep the ship afloat.

It is notable that in Conrad's "sea" stories, the ship as well as the sea is not deprived of magic and mystery, can be independent, have her own will and wish and act on its own: *your ship moves on with a sort of **magical** effect; the sailing ship, with her unthrobbing body, seemed to lead **mysteriously** a sort of unearthly existence* (The Mirror of the Sea).

The ship is a living creature which has its own life, fate and routine closely related to the man, sea and other marine elements: *for each day of the ship's life seems to close a circle within the wide ring of the sea horizon; the ship could not live for another hour in such a raging sea; the sea and wears stout ships to death.* Conrad's ships travel, work and succeed or fail in life: *This is the final word of a ship's ended journey, the closing word of her toil and of her achievement* (The Mirror of the Sea). The ship being personified, its movement during the storm is compared with the behaviour and psychological condition of the man fighting against dangerous sea elements [23, p. 192]. Moreover, the ship is a symbol of companionship, mutual understanding and cooperation, a creature that is equal to the man, whom it supports in every way and requires to be treated with love and affection, and as a free individual. The reader can find evidence of the ship's independence and its bond with the man in the novel *The Mirror of the Sea: A ship is not a slave. You must make her easy in a seaway, you must never forget that you owe her the fullest share of your thought, of your skill, of your self-love. If you remember that obligation, naturally and without effort, as if it were an instinctive feeling of your inner life, she will sail, stay, run for you as long as she is able, or, like a sea-bird going to rest upon the angry waves, she will lay out the heaviest gale that ever made you doubt living long enough to see another sunrise; The bond between us was the ship; and therein a ship, though she has female attributes and is loved very unreasonably, is different from a woman; Both men and ships live in an unstable element, are subject to subtle and powerful influences, and want to have their merits understood rather than their faults found out; Ships do*

want humouring; *Your ship is a tender creature, whose idiosyncrasies must be attended to if you mean her to come with credit to herself and you through the rough-and-tumble of her life.* There is a wide range of Conrad's ships which differ from each other in character. But one thing remains unchanged: their life is closely interwoven with that of the man: *There are good ships and bad ships, comfortable ships and ships where, from first day to last of the voyage, there is no rest for a chief mate's body and soul. And ships are what men make them: this is a pronouncement of sailor wisdom, and, no doubt, in the main it is true* (The Mirror of the Sea). The most commonly used stylistic devices which occur in the descriptions of ships are: 1) similes – *It had borne all the ships whose names are like jewels flashing in the night of time* (Heart of Darkness); *a kind of ship about as rigid as a concertina* (Heart of Darkness); *an iron ship begins to lag as if she had grown tired too soon* (The Mirror of the Sea); *the vision of ships frozen in a row, appearing vaguely like corpses of black vessels in a white world* (The Mirror of the Sea); 2) metaphors – *He is the satrap of that province in the autocratic realm of the ship; Such excess of virtue and good-nature on the part of a ship always provoked my mistrust* (The Mirror of the Sea).

In the novel *Twixt Land & Sea*, with great mastery, Joseph Conrad describes another natural element, the sun, which affects everything on the earth, changing the colour scheme of the world (*<...> the slowly ascending sun brought the glory of colour to the world, turning the islets green, the sea blue, the brig below her white – dazzlingly white in the spread of her wings – with the red ensign streaming like a tiny flame from the peak*); constantly moving (*But with tropical swiftness the sun had climbed twice its diameter above the horizon before we had rounded the reef and got abreast of the point*); affecting the man's physical condition (*And I watched the hat – the expression of my sudden pity for his mere flesh. It had been meant to save his homeless head from the dangers of the sun*), and his frame of mind (*<...> that sunshine which, in its unbroken splendour, oppresses the soul with an inexpressible melancholy more intimate, more penetrating, more profound than the grey sadness of the northern mists*).

None of the objects mentioned above are portrayed separately without the seamen, their behavior, thoughts, strength and ability to tame the raging elements or fail, their relationships with the sea and the ship. For instance, in the novel *The Rescue*, Joseph Conrad describes a “romance” between the *person in charge* and his small brig. By means of epithets, similes and metaphors amplified by parallelism, the author pointed out that the seaman was proud of his ship, appreciated its assets, its human qualities, was in love with it, considered it to be his whole world, his kingdom, and valued the bond which made them inseparable: *He was proud of his brig, of the speed of his craft, which was reckoned the swiftest country vessel in those seas, and proud of what she represented. <...> To him she was as full of life as the great world. He felt her live in every motion, in every roll, in every sway of her tapering masts, of those masts whose painted trucks move forever, to a seaman's eye, against the clouds or against the stars. To him she was always precious – like old love; always desirable – like a strange woman; always tender – like a mother; always faithful – like the favourite daughter of a man's heart; He was aware that his little vessel could give him something not to be had from anybody or anything in the world; something specially his own. The dependence of that solid man of bone and muscle on that obedient thing of wood and iron, acquired from that feeling the mysterious dignity of love. She – the craft – had all the qualities of a living thing: speed, obedience, trustworthiness, endurance, beauty, capacity to do and to suffer – all but life. He – the man – was the inspirer of that thing that to him seemed the most perfect of its kind. His will was its will, his thought was its impulse, his breath was the breath of its existence. He felt all this confusedly, without ever shaping this feeling into the soundless formulas of thought. To him she was unique and dear, this brig of three hundred and fourteen tons register – a kingdom!* It is notable that J. Conrad used a number of synonyms to describe the *ship*, which is another proof of his rich power of words: *she, thing, vessel, craft, brig, a thing of wood and iron.*

Moreover, the novel *The Mirror of the Sea* also mentions that men and ship are very close, in fact, they make a single unity: *Such is the intimacy with which a seaman had to live with his ship of yesterday that his senses were like her senses, that the stress*

upon his body made him judge of the strain upon the ship's masts; and claims that despite being men's companions, ships require attention and make demands on their owners: Of all the living creatures upon land and sea, it is ships alone that cannot be taken in by barren pretences, that will not put up with bad art from their masters. According to Conrad, ships and men have much in common, and at the same time they differ a lot from each other: To deal with men is as fine an art as it is to deal with ships. Both men and ships live in an unstable element, are subject to subtle and powerful influences, and want to have their merits understood rather than their faults found out. <...> But the difference is great. The difference lies in the spirit in which the problem is approached. After all, the art of handling ships is finer, perhaps, than the art of handling men.

Speaking about the relationships between the sea and the man, Joseph Conrad claims in the novel *The Mirror of the Sea* that they are contradictory. On the one hand, they are very close and friendly (*Here speaks the man of masts and sails, to whom the sea is not a navigable element, but an intimate companion*), on the other hand, they are hostile and competitive (*For all that has been said of the love that certain natures (on shore) have professed to feel for it, for all the celebrations it had been the object of in prose and song, the sea has never been friendly to man; the sea has never adopted the cause of its masters like those lands where the victorious nations of mankind have taken root, rocking their cradles and setting up their gravestones. He – man or people – who, putting his trust in the friendship of the sea, neglects the strength and cunning of his right hand, is a fool! the illusion of tragic dignity our self-esteem had thrown over the contests of mankind with the sea*). The author disapproves of it when the sea treats the man with indifference, cruelty and heartlessness (*The cynical indifference of the sea to the merits of human suffering and courage, laid bare in this ridiculous, panic-tainted performance extorted from the dire extremity of nine good and honourable seamen, revolted me. <...> but to this day I remember the dark-brown feet, hands, and faces of two of these men whose hearts had been broken by the sea*).

In the modern world, Joseph Conrad is rightfully recognized as one of the most outstanding authors of English and world literature, who promoted the development of

“transnational cultural ties” [24], molding European culture in general and contributing to the world maritime literature.

Although the action in most of Joseph Conrad’s works takes place at sea or in remote nooks of the earth, adventures are not central to his narrations. By means of presenting the images of natural elements such as sea, wind, sun, sky and the image of the ship, the author reveals the personality, inner world, thoughts and various sides of human nature, discloses the complicated, heterogeneous relationships between the man, the sea and the ship as if they were either friends or adversaries. At the same time, those images contribute to presenting the author’s peculiar philosophic worldview.

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