The Border that Beckons and Mocks: Conrad, Failure, and Irony in O'Neill's *Beyond the Horizon*

The horizon is a border that cannot be crossed. "Beyond the horizon" is thus a meaningful locution only in the language of metaphor, where, like "the end of the rainbow," it beckons and mocks, promising delight and abundance even as it emphasizes limitation.[1] Eugene O'Neill's Robert Mayo, poet manqué and protagonist of *Beyond the Horizon*, is drawn to the metaphor but curiously unequal to it.[2] Place-bound by circumstance (as he realizes) and torpid by nature (as he does not), he cannot ground the metaphor in his own experience or animate it with his own imagination. His principal mode of conceptualizing life "beyond the horizon" is imitative. Specifically, Robert tries and fails to reify the metaphor after the fashion of Joseph Conrad, whose biography is a record of traversed national borders and whose fiction, abstractly a sustained negotiation of borders between description and metaphor, more concretely concerns experiences at sea, on land, and, yes, at the borders between. Robert, perennially a failure, fails thrice in this enterprise: he is unable to leave the hard-scrabble farm he loathes, to imagine life beyond the farm, and to enrich the life he does lead with the benefits of a vibrant imagination. The borders that circumscribe his life are both imaginative and geographical, and they are absolute. In this way O'Neill backhandedly thematizes the centrality of living to literature, making a Conradian play out of un-Conradian materials.

O'Neill had acknowledged his indebtedness to Conrad at least by 1920, when he remarked that during his tenure at Princeton, Conrad, Wilde, and London were "much nearer" to him than Shakespeare.[3] Princeton did not endure in O'Neill's life (he flunked out in 1907), but Conrad did. Partly inspired by *The Nigger of the "Narcissus,"* the feckless youngster "got the urge for the sea" and, in 1910, shipped out to Buenos Aires.[4] A voyage to Honduras in 1909 and 1910 had already given him a taste of the sea; another voyage, to England in 1911, would complete this phase of his life. O'Neill's nautical period, albeit short compared to Conrad's sixteen-year span, was by all accounts intensely lived. It provided fodder for at least thirteen plays written from 1913 to 1920, comprising much of O'Neill's apprentice drama as well as the work that brought him fame.

The Conradian strain in the early plays has been amply recognized, particularly in the maritime plays and mostly with respect to *The Nigger of the "Narcissus."* Peter Lancelot Mallios observes that the title of O'Neill's early *Children of the Sea* borrows the first-edition American title of *The Nigger of the "Narcissus"* and notes that in 1918 *Current Opinion* considered that novel and others by Conrad alongside O'Neill's *In the Zone*.[5] That same year, the premiere of O'Neill's *Ile* prompted Louis Sherwin to write that "[O'Neill's] sailors live as Joseph Conrad's Marlow and Lord Jim and the unforgettable crew of the *Narcissus* live."[6] A particularly regrettable passage in florid 1921 write-up supposes that with "all its kelp of thronging legends," Conrad's novel "stirred uneasily in [O'Neill's] blood." More soberly, the author notes the "scenic similarity between the opening pages of 'The Nigger of the Narcissus' and the stage directions of 'The Moon of the Caribbees.'"[7] When *"Anna Christie"* premiered a few months later, the New York *Evening Telegram* declared it payment of "one more generous installment in [O'Neill's] debt to Joseph Conrad."[8] Even *The Emperor Jones*, a maritime play only in a tangential sense, prompted the reviewer Maida Castellun to represent Brutus Jones as Conradian in his "hallucinations and reversions to the primitive savage," presumably by way of nodding at *Heart of Darkness*.[9]

More recent critics have teased out other connections. Travis Bogard argues that *The Nigger of the "Narcissus"* informs *Bound East for Cardiff* and that "the central situation" of O'Neill's *Warnings* "was quite possibly suggested" by *The End of the Tether*.[10] He detects traces of Conrad's "To-morrow" in *The Rope*, in *Chris Christopherson* and its rewrite *"Anna Christie,"* and in the short story "Tomorrow," the narrator of which O'Neill professedly conceived as "a sort of Conrad's Marlow."[11] *Chris Christopherson* is akin to *The Shadow Line*, *The Secret Sharer*, and *Heart of Darkness*.[12] Like Castellun, Bogard associates Conrad's African novella with *The Emperor Jones*, which the Italian poet Eugenio Montale had thought beholden to *Lord Jim*.[13] A recent reference work finds O'Neill's *Thirst* "heavily influenced" by Conrad.[14] Bogard is justified in claiming that "at least through 1920 . . . the impact of Conrad on O'Neill's work was deeper than that of any other writer."[15]

One might be forgiven for thinking that Conrad figures in just about everything the young O'Neill wrote—except *Beyond the Horizon*. O'Neill composed that play in 1918 and, with its producer John D. Williams and its star Robert Bennett, revised it in January 1920, preparatory to its premiere on 3 February.[16] The play is essentially if uneasily tragic. O'Neill traces the decline of Robert Mayo, whose appearance (he is "*tall [and] slender*"with a "*high forehead and wide, dark eyes*"), constitution (he is tubercular), and aspirations (literary, of course) place him among the alternate versions of himself to which O'Neill was drawn throughout his career.[17] The young man aborts his plan to ship out with his Uncle Dick when he abruptly decides to wed the depressive Ruth Atkins. Marriage destroys the literary ambitions that Robert had cherished but never prosecuted. Landlocked and bitter, he mismanages his and Ruth's family farms past hope of recovery. His tuberculosis returns and kills him. Robert's robust, bibliophobic brother Andrew, a skilled farmer and seaman, comes home to say goodbye and perhaps to take up with his brother's widow, whom he had once loved.

Less blunt in its recognition of its author's indebtedness to Conrad, *Beyond the Horizon* is no less beholden to the novelist. The producer Williams said something comparable when he observed that the script gave him the "feeling of the sea" that he admired in Conrad but, happily for its prospects on stage, did so "without the sea scenes."[18] Bogard is unique among scholars in noticing a Conradian strain in the play, but he sees Conrad serving only as a source for the play's putative interest in the "power of hope to sustain men."[19] This is an odd remark, given the falseness and fugitivity of hope in *Beyond the Horizon*. What Bogard misses, I think, is O'Neill's ironic use of an influence that the playwright had previously used without much in the way of inflection. Predecessors like Smitty in *The Moon of the Caribbees* and *In the Zone* embody the amalgam of unlearned wisdom and unflagging gumption evident in, say, Singleton from *The Nigger of the "Narcissus"* andCaptain MacWhirr from *Typhoon*. But Robert pointedly fails to attain this status.

O'Neill built the irony of contrast into his conception of *Beyond the Horizon*. He meant to write an inversion of his maritime one-acts, its theme fortified by the hardening of borders that are permeable in the geographically expansive maritime plays. In an April 1920 letter to the *New York Times*, O'Neill remembered a Norwegian sailor—"a bred-in-the-bone child of the sea"—much given to complaining about his decision to abandon his family's farm for the sea. What would have become of such a man, the playwright wondered, had he stayed put? O'Neill continued: "from that point I started to think of a more intellectual, civilized type—a weaker type . . . who would have my Norwegian's inborn craving for the sea's unrest, only in him it would be conscious, too conscious, intellectually diluted into a vague, intangible, romantic wanderlust."[20] As he would throughout his career, O'Neill imagined a misfit.

The finished play retains this anti-Conradian conception of its protagonist. Robert's tuberculosis, for example, is an instance of a larger "weakness" and the emblem of a defining isolation. Robert thus anticipates Tennessee Williams's tubercular and solipsistic Lot Ravenstock in *The Kingdom of Earth* more nearly than he recalls the "calm, cool, towering, superb" James Wait in *The Nigger of the "Narcissus,"* who introduces himself by saying, "I belong to the ship" and whose worsening tuberculosis facilitates his creator's meditation on the nature of the commonweal.[21] The energies of the novel are coalescent and productive, if troubled. O'Neill's diminution of his source is to the point; and Robert's failure to achieve even the incidentally agential status of Wait, or the generalized vigor of Singleton, MacWhirr, and others of their type, is central to the playwright's method here as it is in his creation of later characters. Haunted inadequacies like Don Parritt in *The Iceman Cometh* and Jamie Tyrone in *Long Day's Journey into Night* and *A Moon for the Misbegotten* are destroyed by their inability to achieve the status of those whom they admire and resent. Robert differs from them principally in O'Neill's selection of an extratextual point of comparison for him.

Read in this way, Robert exemplifies the anxiety about "belonging" that O'Neill would soon explore in *The Hairy Ape* and that would remain central to his sense of tragedy. The tragic and ironically Conradian elements of *Beyond the Horizon* collaborate against Robert, making him contextually ajar in the manner of the proletarian "ape" Yank on Fifth Avenue or the passed-out city-slicker Jamie on the steps of a farmhouse. I have argued elsewhere that Robert's inability to learn from his failures gives him "Aristotle's reversal without the recognition."[22] If this makes Robert unlike Oedipus, it also marks his distance from those exemplary sailors whom the narrator of *The Nigger of the "Narcissus"* describes as "men enough to scorn in their hearts the sentimental voices that bewailed the hardness of their fate."[23] Robert actually searches for a "fate" on which to pin his misfortunes, as what sturdy tar or tragic hero ever did? In stage direction, Robert "*looks about him wildly, as if his vengeance were seeking the responsible fate*" (60; 600). Having failed at farming, Robert blames "the farm" for his failure (131; 635). Nemesis was never so inert. Neither is anagnorisis often so elusive: Robert's promising admission that he has been an "utter failure" is followed by his cockamamie assertion that he will henceforth "write, or something of that sort" (130-31; 635). Robert blames fate even as he greases its wheels; a Dunciadic incompatibility of skill and aspiration has precipitated his poverty and could hardly be expected to remedy it. He oscillates between tempting fate and, to recur to Conrad, bewailing its hardness. His temperament distinguishes him from the sturdy generation that Conrad had celebrated in *The Nigger of the "Narcissus"*: Robert recalls the "successors" of such as Singleton, those "grown-up children of a discontented earth" who "learned how to whine."[24] More generally, Robert's sedentariness and blame-mongering point up his remove from Conrad's Victorian ethics, expressed as an aphorism in *Nostromo*: "Only in the conduct of our action can we find the sense of mastery over the Fates."[25] Against the contrastive backdrop—the dynamism and stoicism of the sailor shadowing the physical and moral slackness of the pretender—O'Neill's attitude toward his protagonist becomes evident. Robert's "weak[ness]" and his "intellectual" inclinations cordon him off from the sphere of action celebrated by Conrad (and Carlyle, Tennyson, Dickens, Charles Kingsley, and many others). This prevents him from even attempting the crossings and straddlings of Conrad's bona fide travelers and indeed those of the earlier O'Neill.

Robert's adherence to a skewed, roseate version of Conrad's Asia provides the sturdiest evidence of O'Neill's ironic use of a familiar influence. Robert remains ignorant of the novelist's proviso that one must earn "Eastern" transcendence by labor, maturation, and the acceptance of risk. Marlow of "Youth" and Captain MacWhirr of *Typhoon* represent the proper synthesis, as does Captain Whalley of *The End of*

the Tether, who has spent "fifty years at sea and forty out in the East."[26] A "peevish Hamlet who whines and snivels through his futile and dismal life," as St. John Ervine called Robert years ago, O'Neill's protagonist never works up the sweat that sanctifies the maturity of Conrad's better sort of China Seaman.[27]

In the opening scene, Robert tells Andrew about his urge to travel: "it's just Beauty that's calling me, the beauty of the far off and unknown, the mystery and spell of the East, which lures me in the books I've read" (13; 577). Getting from here to Conrad requires some winnowing, because the writers whom O'Neill openly references in his plays tend to be poets. From what "books," we must ask, does O'Neill intend Robert to have wrung this platitude? Surely none by the English decadent poet Arthur Symons, author of the one book we see Robert reading: although O'Neill uses him, as he uses Conrad, to emphasize Robert's shortcomings, Symons is all Eurocentrism and muffled libido.[28] Edward FitzGerald and Rudyard Kipling seem likelier candidates, as being the "Orientalist" poets whom the young O'Neill most admired and who appear most often in O'Neill's plays.[29] But FitzGerald's translation of *The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyam* essentially catalogues a set of mythopoetic attitudes, remembered fondly but wryly in O'Neill's later comedy *Ah, Wilderness!*[30] Its mannered and vinous melding of body, mind, and spirit recommended it to O'Neill in his attempts to seduce the teenaged Beatrice Ashe in 1914–15 but could hardly have served the tepid Robert, who even at the moment of death declines to accept the purely metaphorical status of his fancied destination and for whom romantic companionship proves antithetical to travel.[31]

Asiaphiliac dreamers of Robert's sort will always be drawn to poems like Kipling's "The Long Trail," from which O'Neill's young surrogate Richard Miller quotes in *Ah, Wilderness!*[32] That poem, however, is geographically promiscuous, more about smashing through boundaries than savoring the yield of their traversal. Kipling's point is that sailing about anywhere is great fun; dawdling, much less pausing to ponder "Beauty," is contrary to his purpose. The other poem referenced in what Doris Alexander calls Richard Miller's "ecstasy of Kipling" is "Mandalay."[33] Robert seems an unlikely admirer of this poem as well. That poem's narrator is no dreamer like Robert, no brainy and fretfully repressed Symons. He is a louche and mouthy man's man intent on trumpeting the superiority of his "Burma girl" to the "fifty 'ousemaids outer Chelsea to the Strand" who do not "understand" what he calls "lovin'."[34] Risibly, Richard Miller quotes from this poem in order to convey to his fiancée an aura of sexual sophistication, as he had earlier quoted from Kipling's "The Ladies"—more sex, Burma again—to impress an (unimpressed) prostitute.[35] Robert kisses Ruth "*passionately*" once before they tumble into a Strindbergian marital inferno (26; 583), but on the whole he seems no more interested in sex than he is in farming or for that matter sailing. It is easier to appreciate O'Neill's enthusiasm for Kipling or FitzGerald than to imagine Robert's.

But we need not imagine a poet behind Robert's effusion about "the mystery and spell of the East." In the second edition, O'Neill cut or allowed to be cut Andrew's response to Robert: "You've got that idea out of your poetry books" (14). The numerous eleventh-hour deletions were motivated by a mandate to prune a bulky script; but they are potent, thematically, and the poetical or "feminine" Robert of the first edition was attenuated in the revision.[36] The first-edition reading perhaps encodes a joke (Andrew wouldn't know Conrad from Kipling), but the revision allows a writer of prose in Robert's fantasy. And O'Neill, having at least acquiesced in the deletion for performance, chose not to restore the original reading in the second edition. Especially given that this edition debuted in the stately, canon-making *Complete Works* (1924), his retention of the truncated passage may be considered an endorsement.

The language of Robert's attraction to "the East" feels Conradian, recalling for example the passage from "Youth" in which Marlow remembers his first exposure to "the East of the ancient navigators, so old, so mysterious, resplendent and sombre, living and unchanged, full of danger and promise."[37] Both Robert's and Marlow's accounts stress alterity, mystery, and a familiar if imprecise transgressiveness. Marlow's past is the future for which Robert vaguely yearns, but Robert's ignorance of the demands imposed by a life like Marlow's renders his fantasy fatuous and, again, ironic. When he adds bits about his "need of the freedom of great wide spaces" and "the joy of wandering on and on," his error becomes clear (13; 577). He is ignorant of the difference between land and sea that Conrad treats dialectically, and he is therefore able to imagine a maritime approach as similar to a terrestrial terminus in its compatibility with the act of "wandering." Robert regards "the mystery and spell of the East" as a place to be stridden through as Wordsworth might stride through a field of daffodils; and he imagines Captain Whalley's "unsurveyed tracts of the South-Seas" as navigable without the nuisance of captains, shifts on deck, and Sartre's hell of other people generally.[38]

Robert has failed to recognize a border that Conrad thematizes in "Youth" and *The Nigger of the "Narcissus,"* as he does in *The End of the Tether*, the opening passage of which contrasts "the low swampy coast . . . a mere smudge of darkness beyond a belt of glitter" and "the adamantine surface" of the sea, where the sun's rays "seemed to shatter themselves . . . into sparkling dust."[39] Whalley, blind by the end of that novella, is inured to the contrast, but this merely ironizes Conrad's emphasis of it. Water may protect, mediate, bound, or serve as a foil for the culturally specific "mystery and spell" that Robert craves. It does all these things in Conrad's fiction. It cannot, however, convey or mimic the qualities generated by a land and its people. Robert doesn't grasp this simple point.

Furthermore, the "great wide spaces" that Robert imagines are guarded by ports packed with bodies, and there is no interior Asia in Conrad to balance the interior Africa of *Heart of Darkness*, no Kurtz to push past those who guard the border. In *The Nigger of the "Narcissus"* and "Youth," a thin coastal strip constitutes a border that is impermeable but richer in theme for being so. Bombay Harbor in *The Nigger of the "Narcissus"* is cacophonous, actively in dispute with the Western presence. Bangkok Harbor in "Youth" is silent, somberly resistant to it. Both sites are teeming; neither is penetrable. Conrad's panoramic description of Bangkok Harbor distinguishes between a spacious marine zone and a crowded quay: Marlow sees "the wide sweep of the bay, the glittering sands, the wealth of green infinite and varied, the sea blue like the sea of a dream, the crowd of attentive faces, the blaze of vivid colour . . . ."[40] And Conrad's ports are not observable outside the context of observation; the author assures us as much by his almost Brechtian interest in the spectator's power to animate spectacle. When the captain of the *"Narcissus"* negotiates wages with new recruits in Bombay Harbor, "the feverish and shrill babble of Eastern language struggled against the masterful tones of tipsy seamen, who argued against brazen claims and dishonest hopes by profane shouts." Unavoidably, "the resplendent and bestarred peace of the East was torn into squalid tatters" by the din.[41] Robert longs for a place whose "spell" would be broken by his presence. He shares interests with Conrad, not ideas or modes of imagination. "A good dose of sea-sickness" would cure Robert of his silliness, Andrew suggests in a deleted passage (14). Reading Conrad carefully would help, too.

Andrew Mayo, not his brother, ships out as Conrad and O'Neill had done, embarking on the voyage to the Asia that Robert relegated to imagination when he married Ruth. Now and then Andrew sends letters home. Singapore, he writes, is "a dirty hole of a place and hotter than hell." This annoys Robert, who, absorbing the brunt of O'Neill's irony, complains that his brother's letters "read like the diary of a—of a

farmer!" (88; 615). The irrationality of Robert's irritation conveys the intensity of his frustration about being unable to experience "the East" in a manner consistent with his imagination, first hand or through the agency of his brother, who remains comically unaware of Robert's desire to make him the Marlow that Robert himself has failed to become.

Andrew's return in act two, scene two, allows Robert another opportunity to criticize his brother's perceived lack of sensitivity to wonders about which he, Robert, has only fantasized. Robert chides Andrew for the inadequacy of his letters. "Oh, I know I'm no author," replies Andrew, "I'd rather go through a typhoon again than write a letter." Robert jumps on this: "*With eager interest*," he responds, "Then you were through a typhoon?" (98; 619). Indeed, he had been, and in the China Sea at that, where Captain MacWhirr and his crew had survived such an inclemency in *Typhoon*. Andrew describes the ordeal:

Had to run before it under bare poles for two days. I thought we were bound down for Davy Jones, sure. Never dreamed waves could get so big or the wind blow so hard. If it hadn't been for Uncle Dick being such a good skipper we'd have gone to the sharks, all of us. As it was we came out minus a main top-mast and had to beat back to Hong-Kong for repairs (99; 619-20).

In the second edition, that's it. In the first edition, Andrew presses his point as best he can. He describes the typhoon as "Hell," echoing his remark on Singapore. "And as for the East you used to rave about," he adds, "well, you ought to see it, and *smell* it!" Finally, this land of "Chinks and Japs and Hindus and the rest of them . . . . has the stink market cornered" (100–01). One may detect an echo of the narrator of *Typhoon* on the "repulsive smell" of the breath of a "Chinaman," and Andrew's reliance on racial amalgamation recalls Conrad's descriptions of Bombay and Bangkok Harbors, although experiences that inspire painterly nuance in Conrad prompt in Andrew mere biliousness.[42]

Robert is crushed by Andrew's account. He might have been embarrassed, too: he has missed a joke at his own expense, and the culprit is a lack of perceptiveness, not "fate." Andrew's plodding, elliptical narration links its speaker to MacWhirr, him of the laconic epistolary style and the hostility to "the use of images in speech."[43] Particularly in the second edition of *Beyond the Horizon*, the description that Andrew squeezes out is as free of "images" as MacWhirr could wish—suitably so, as both characters mistrust speech and regard books as inadequate records of human experience. But Robert, not Andrew, is the butt here: if he has read *Typhoon*, he has failed to apply its lesson to himself. Egoless and plain-spoken good is beyond Robert's grasp, and his diminution of Andrew recalls the loquacious chief mate Jukes's inability to regard MacWhirr as anything but "stupid."[44] Jukes at least senses the dignity that undergirds his quiet captain, and ultimately he provides the contrast required to bring MacWhirr into proper relief. Of course Jukes accomplishes this by writing, an act as alien to Robert as the celebratory impulse that belatedly takes root in Jukes. The complementarity of MacWhirr and Jukes gives way in *Beyond the Horizon* to a set of antitheses: Robert, who cannot act as Andrew does, lacks both MacWhirr's intellection and Jukes's admittedly muted capacity for discovery.

O'Neill's intentions in this matter are impossible to prove but not difficult to infer, and no great imagination is required to find Conrad behind proximate references to "typhoon" and "China Sea" in a play by an admirer of Conrad still in search of his own voice. More broadly, it would have been hard for any serious writer of the period to take up voyages to Asia without nodding at Conrad. But in *Beyond the Horizon* O'Neill does more than nod: he employs ironically an influence that he had once used without

much in the way of inflection, drawing on Conrad to critique character where he had formerly paid him the simpler compliment of imitation. He thus extends his long homage while demonstrating the deft use of sources widely recognized in his gleanings from Strindberg and, in *Mourning Becomes Electra*, Aeschylus and Sophocles.

Beyond the Horizon is in this sense crucial. In the four- or five-year period initiated by its composition, O'Neill would establish himself as the theater's premiere destroyer of once firm "borders" between, for example, serious tragedy and modern American drama, the inner and outer lives of characters, and naturalistic and experimental modes of dramaturgy. O'Neill's hyperkinetic experimentalism belies the stasis that characterizes *Beyond the Horizon*. Even the metaphor embedded in the play's title mocks a protagonist embordered geographically and imaginatively, in contradiction, as O'Neill surely knew, to the temperament and practice of the playwright's model Conrad.

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[1] The author is grateful for the assistance of John G. Peters.
[2] William J. Scheick notes that "everything in the play . . . implies the inability of humanity to get beyond the horizon in any sense." See William J. Scheick, "The Ending of O'Neill's *Beyond the Horizon*," *Modern Drama* 20 (1977), 295.
[3] Eugene O'Neill, qtd. in Olin Downes, "Playwright Finds His Inspiration on Lonely Sand Dunes by the Sea," *Boston Sunday Post*, 29 August 1920, reprinted in Mark W. Estrin, ed., *Conversations with Eugene O'Neill* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1990), 10. Stephen A. Black has O'Neill reading Conrad in 1905; see Stephen A. Black, *Eugene O'Neill: Beyond Mourning and Tragedy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 87.
[4] Eugene O'Neill to Arthur Hobson Quinn, 13 June 1922, in Travis Bogard and Jackson R. Bryer, eds., *Selected Letters of Eugene O'Neill* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 170; in this letter O'Neill says he read *The Nigger of the "Narcissus"* "some time before" sailing for Buenos Aires. Travis Bogard asserts that O'Neill read the novel in 1911. See Travis Bogard, *Contour in Time: The Plays of Eugene O'Neill* (1972), rev. ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 39; the claim derives, unreliably, from Croswell Bowen and Shane O'Neill, *The Curse of the Misbegotten: A Tale of the House of O'Neill* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 195), 30.
[5] See Peter Lancelot Mallios, *Our Conrad: Constituting American Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010), 141, 223. Mallios remarks that "the subject of Conrad and O'Neill is largely unexamined," 420, n. 4.
[6] Louis Sherwin, "Ile" (1918), in Oscar Cargill, N. Bryllion Fagin, and William J. Fisher, eds., *O'Neill and His Plays* (New York: New York University Press, 1961), 132.
[7] Pierre Loving, "Eugene O'Neill," *The Bookman* 53 (August 1921), 515, 517.
[8] "How Joseph Conrad Influenced O'Neill," *Evening Telegram* (New York), 16 November 1921.
[9] Maida Castellun, "O'Neill's 'The Emperor Jones' Thrills and Fascinates" (1920), in Jordan Y. Miller, ed., *Playwright's Progress: O'Neill and the Critics* (Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1965), 23. A thin piece by the young William Faulkner links Conrad and O'Neill by supposing that Conrad has transcended the "age" and "locality" in which he wrote and that O'Neill seems likely to do

so; see Faulkner, "American Drama: Eugene O'Neill" (1920), in Carvel Collins, ed., *William Faulkner: Early Prose and Poetry* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1962), 85.
[10] Bogard, *Contour in Time*, 24, 38–42.
[11] Eugene O'Neill to Waldo Frank, 31 March 1917, in *Selected Letters*, 78. See Bogard, *Contour in Time*, 106n., 154n., 161n.; see also Peter Egri, "*The Iceman Cometh*: European Origins and American Originality," *The Eugene O'Neill Newsletter* 5.3–6.2 (1981–82) http://www.eoneill.com /library/newsletter/ (accessed 7 April 2014).
[12] See Bogard, *Contour in Time*, 158.
[13] See Bogard, *Contour in Time*, 135; see Montale, "O'Neill and the Future of the Theatre" (1943), in Horst Frenz and Susan Tuck, eds., *Eugene O'Neill's Critics: Voices from Abroad* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1984), 71.
[14] "*Thirst*: A Play in One Act," in Robert M. Dowling, ed., *Critical Companion to Eugene O'Neill: A Literary Reference to His Life and Work*, vol. 2 (New York: Facts on FileInfobase, 2009), 460.
[15] Bogard, *Contour in Time*, 39.
[16] See, for example, Louis Sheaffer, *O'Neill: Son and Playwright* (Boston: Little Brown, 1968), 472-73.
[17] Eugene O'Neill, *Beyond the Horizon* (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1920), 2; O'Neill, *Beyond the Horizon*, in O'Neill, *Complete Plays, 1913-1920*, ed. Travis Bogard (New York: Library of America, 1988), 573. Subsequent references to the play appear intratextually. Initial locators refer to the first edition, which, as representing O'Neill's unalloyed intentions, seems likely to constitute the best record of an influence that need not have concerned Bennett and Williams. Second locators refer to the second edition, reprinted with corrections in *Complete Plays, 1913-1920*.
[18] John D. Williams, qtd. in Sheaffer, *Son and Playwright*, 422.
[19] Bogard, *Contour in Time*, 126.
[20] Eugene O'Neill, "A Letter from O'Neill," *New York Times*, 11 April 1920.
[21] Joseph Conrad, *The Nigger of the Narcissus: A Tale of the Forecastle* (1897; New York: Doubleday, Page, 1924), 18.
[22] Alexander Pettit, "A Touch of the Wrong Poet: Arthur Symons and the Ironizing of Tragedy in *Beyond the Horizon*," *The Eugene O'Neill Review* 34 (2013): 97.
[23] Conrad, *Nigger of the "Narcissus,"* 25.
[24] Conrad, *Nigger of the "Narcissus,"* 25.
[25] Joseph Conrad, *Nostromo: A Tale of the Seaboard* (1904; New York: Doubleday, Page, 1925), 66.
[26] Joseph Conrad, *The End of the Tether* (1902), in Conrad, *Youth, Heart of Darkness, The End of the Tether*, ed. Owen Knowles (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 131.
[27] St. John Ervine, "Counsels of Despair" (1948), in *Eugene O'Neill's Critics*, 86.
[28] For Robert Mayo and Arthur Symons, see Pettit, "A Touch of the Wrong Poet," *passim*. Robert is reading Symons's ode "To Night" as the play opens.
[29]For the young O'Neill and FitzGerald, see, e.g., Black, *Beyond Mourning and Tragedy*, 87. For O'Neill and Kipling, see, e.g., O'Neill, qtd. in Kyle Crichton, "Mr. O'Neill and the Iceman" (1946), in *Conversations with Eugene O'Neill*, 193; and Black, *Beyond Mourning and Tragedy*, 64, 66.
[30] See Eugene O'Neill, *Ah, Wilderness!*, in O'Neill, *Complete Plays, 1932-43*, ed. Travis Bogard (New York: Library of America, 1988), 49.
[31] The dying Robert hears the "old voices" of the fairies in which he once believed, "calling him" to "start [his] voyage . . . beyond the horizon" (163; 652). Scheick argues that "just as abstract words reveal the essentially vaporous nature of Rob's youthful dream, the use of this same language, now fragmented and brokenly articulated, in order to create a modified version of the early dream likewise suggests Rob's

self-delusion" ("Ending," 295). Scheick's Robert descends from an "initial articulateness," which I struggle to detect, to a near incoherency that I find broadly characteristic of him (293). For O'Neill, Ashe, and FitzGerald, see Doris Alexander, *Eugene O'Neill's Creative Struggle: The Decisive Decade, 1924-1933* (University Park: Penn State University Press, 1992), 173-74.
[32] See O'Neill, *Ah, Wilderness!*, 97.
[33] Alexander, *Eugene O'Neill's Creative Struggle*, 184; see O'Neill, *Ah, Wilderness!*, 97.
[34] Rudyard Kipling, "Mandalay," in Daniel Karlin, ed., *Rudyard Kipling* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), lines 2, 37–38.
[35] See O'Neill, *Ah, Wilderness!*, 58; see Rudyard Kipling, "The Ladies," in *A Choice of Rudyard Kipling's Verse, Made by T. S. Eliot* (New York: Scribner's, 1943), 211.
[36] For the thematic effects of the 1920 revisions, see Alexander Pettit, "The Texts of *Beyond the Horizon*: Ruth Mayo, Agnes Boulton, and the Women of Provincetown," *The Eugene O'Neill Review* 15 (2014): 20-28.
[37] Joseph Conrad, "Youth" (1898), in Conrad, *Youth, Heart of Darkness, The End of the Tether*, 38.
[38] Conrad, *End of the Tether*, 131.
[39] Ibid., 129.
[40] Conrad, "Youth," 38.
[41] Conrad, *Nigger of the "Narcissus,"* 4.
[42] Joseph Conrad, *Typhoon* (1902), in Conrad, *"Typhoon" and Other Stories* (New York: Doubleday, Page, 1924), 13–14.
[43] Ibid., 25.
[44] Ibid., 102.

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