الثروة نقمة وليست نعمة دراسة في رواية جوزيف كونراد نوسترومو: حكاية الساحل

Wealth is a Curse not a Grace A Study in Joseph Conrad's

Nostromo: A Tale of the Seaboard

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المستخلص :

لا شك أن امتلاك الثروة، سواء على المستوى الجمعي أو الفردي، يُعتبر نعمة وفَضْل. فعلى مستوى الأفراد فإن وجود هذه الثروة يضمن لهم حياة كريمة أو العيش الكريم، فضلا عن تأمين مستقبل آمن. أمّا على مستوى المجموعة، فإن الثروة، المتمثلة في وجود الموارد الطبيعية، هي أحدى أسس قيام الأمم وبقائها، حيث تُمثل المخزون الإستراتيجي الدائم والمستقبلي لجميع الأجيال (سواء في الوقت الحاضر أو المستقبل). ومع ذلك ، غالبًا ما يُنظر إلى هذه النعمة على أنها نقمة ، أو نعمة مُقنّعة لأصحابها ، أوعلى البلاد على نطاق واسع. تزخر رواية جوزيف كونراد نوسترومو: حكاية الساحل عام ١٩٠٤ بالمواضيع ، ومع ذلك فإن مفهوم الثروة على أنها لعنة وليست نعمة تتصدرها، لأنه مرتبط ارتباطا وثيقًا بمواضيع المادية والإمبريالية والاستعمار والتي شكلّت أغلب مواضيع

رواياته. وفيها يُصوّر كونراد المصير البائس لبطل الرواية وأغلب شخصياتها، وكذلك المصير البائس للبلاد. وحيثما هي الحال، وحيثما وجدت هذه الثروة، فإنها تكون عرضة للنزاعات المسلحة.

ستتمثل خطة البحث في إتباع المنهج التحليلي وذلك من خلال الإبحار في الرواية المشار إليها لتسليط الضوء على الموضوع المعني ، ومن ثمّ الخروج باستنتاج.

الكلمات المفتاحية: جوزيف كونراد، نوسترومو، المصالح المادية، الموارد الطبيعية والنزاع المُسلح، المادية، الإمبريالية

Abstract:

Undoubtedly, owning a wealth, whether on the collective or individual level, is considered as a blessing and a grace. On the individuals' level, the existence of this wealth guarantees them a decent life or a decent living, in addition to ensuring a secure future. As at the group level, wealth, represented by the existence of natural resources, is one of the foundations for the establishment and survival of nations, as it constitutes the long-term and future strategic deployment stocks for all generations, whether at the present time or in the future. Nevertheless, this blessing is often seen as a curse, or a blessing in disguise on its owners, or on its country on a large scale. Joseph Conrad's 1904 novel *Nostromo: A Tale of the Seaboard* abounds with themes, yet the concept of wealth as a curse not a grace is at the head, as it is closely related to the themes of materialism, imperialism, and colonization which have been the topics in most of his novels. In it Conrad dramatizes the miserable fate of the protagonist, and most of the characters of the novel, as well as the miserable fate of the country, for, and as is the case, wherever such wealth exists, it is vulnerable to armed conflicts.

The research plan will be to follow the analytical method by sailing through the novel indicated to highlight the theme in question, and then to draw a conclusion.

***Keywords*:** Joseph Conrad, *Nostromo*, Material Interests, Natural resources and armed conflict, Materialism, Imperialism.

Introduction

Born as Konrad Nalecz Korzeniowski, Joseph Conrad (1857-1924) is an English novelist of Polish descent. His sea career enabled him to master English, and then to establish a great literary career in novel writing. In most of his novels, Conrad relied heavily on his sea experiences which provide him with the literary materials. In his *Notes on Life and Letters* when he speaks of Frederick Marryat, a naval officer and an English novelist, he seems to speak about himself, as the sea also "gave him his professional distinction and his author's fame" (Conrad, 1904, p. 76)**,** to use Conrad's own words.

From an early age, Conrad had an affection for literature, because his father was a writer, translator, and poet ('World Biography' Joseph Conrad Biography, 'Childhood in Poland and Russia', para. 2). In most of his novels and short stories, which belong to the tales of the sea, Conrad reflected some of his experiences at sea. In these he depicted the suffering of oppressed peoples, who lived under the claws of colonialism and imperialistic exploitation, especially those lived in remote places – in jungles as in his *Lord Jim* (1900), and *Heart of Darkness* (1902), or by the sea, as in *Nostromo: A Tale of the Seaboard* (1904), in which he renders one of the themes that are central to his view and vision of life and humanity – materialism and the financial corruption of man in front of it.

Noteworthy, the novel has been listed with the 100 best novels written in English-language in the 20th century and considered as the best amongst Joseph Conrad's long fiction. The literary critic F. R. Leavis remarks that "[i]f … his most considerable work had had due recognition [;] it would be known as one of the great novels of the language.

For *Nostromo* is most certainly that … In *Nostromo* Conrad is openly and triumphantly the artist … it is Conrad's supreme triumph in the evocation of exotic life and colour" (Leavis, F. R, George Eliot, & Henry James, Josep, 1950, p. 190) . Even the novelist himself considered it as "his most important work" (Najder, 1983, p. 88). Its writing had taken a long time of Conrad who unburdened himself in a letter to John Galsworthy, the English novelist and playwright, and Conrad's close friend, stating that "[he exhorts himself] dishonestly to write anything, anything, any rubbish—and even *that* [he] cannot do just as if [he was] cursed with a delicate conscience. But no! It's powerlessness and nothing else alas!" (Karl & Davies, 1988, p. 47). And though he confesses at the time of his illness to J. M. Barrie, the Scottish novelist and playwright, that

> [a] certain amount of cheap sincerity there is in it, some shadow of intention too (which no one will see), and even artistic! purpose—but all this makes for failure, since I've never felt that I had my subject in the palm of my hand: I've been always catching at it all along; and I shall be just catching at it to the end. The state of feeling leads one to sheer twaddle. (Davies, ed., 2015, p. 168)

Nevertheless, Conrad regards it as the "dearest to his heart" (Roberts, 1931, p. 218).

According to Zdzislaw Najder, Conrad has "put so much work and energy into the most "imagined" of his novels—a novel less based on memories and reading than any of his others" (Najder, 1983, p. 304)**.** Adding that although the book was not received properly by critics and reviewers and that "the reviews evinced a lack of understanding of the book's structure and ideas" (Najder, 1983, p. 304), nevertheless, "[a]mong the few exceptions was [Edward] Garnett's penetrating article in the *Speaker*: Garnett turned out to be the only critic who perceived the book's real theme" (Najder, 1983, p. 304). In point of fact, *Nostromo*'s mediocre reception, according to Kenneth Ligda "was due

largely to its difficulty… the plotting … Conrad's prose … and his vast ambition to depict the totality of a diverse society in the grip of revolution" (n. d., para. 1). In addition to Garnett, F. Scott Fitzgerald, the American novelist and essayist, who was highly influenced by Conrad's works, admits once that "[he would] rather have written Conrad's "Nostromo" than any other novel" (Fitzgerald, 1996, p. 87), for, as he thinks, "it is the greatest novel since "Vanity Fair" (Fitzgerald, 1996, p. 87). In his turn, Walter Allen, the English literary critic and novelist, praises the novel and sees in it "[t]he greatest novel in English of [the twentieth] century" (Allen, 1967, as cited in "Introduction" by Martin Seymour-Smith, ed., in *Nostromo: A Tale of the Seaboard*, 1990, p. 7). For his part, Terry Eagleton, the English literary theorist and critic, sees it as "one of the finest of all English historical novels" (Eagleton, 2005, p. 246) . While Robert Penn Warren, the American novelist, poet, and literary critic sees it as a "masterwork… one of the few mastering visions of [their] historical moment and [their] human lot" (Warren, 1951).

The essence of the novel based on a story that the novelist had heard about a man "who was supposed to have stolen single-handed a whole lighter-full of silver somewhere on the Tierra Firme seaboard during the troubles of a revolution" (conard, 1917, pp. xvii- xviii) In his "Author's Note" to the later editions of the novel, the novelist comes up with the inspirational source of *Nostromo,* as he states that after twenty-six or seven years later he "came upon the very thing in a shabby volume picked up outside a second-hand book-shop" (conard, 1917, p. xviii), in which he read about the life story of an American seaman who, in turn, had worked for a sailor who claims and brags that he had stolen a lighter-full of silver (conard, 1917, p. xviii). Hence, the story evokes Conrad to the concept of wealth. As he states in his "Note" that

I did not see anything at first in the mere story. A rascal steals a large parcel of

> a valuable commodity—so people say. It's either true or untrue; and in any case it has no value in itself. To invent a circumstantial account of the robbery did not appeal to me, because my talents not running that way I did not think that the game was worth the candle. (conard, 1917, p. xix).

Adding that:

> It was only when it dawned upon me that the purloiner of the treasure need not necessarily be a confirmed rogue, that he could be even a man of character, an actor and possibly a victim in the changing scenes of a revolution, it was only then that I had the first vision of a twilight country which was to become the province of Sulaco, with its high shadowy Sierra and its misty Campo for mute witnesses of events flowing from the passions of men short-sighted in good and evil. (conard, 1917, p. xix)

It is worth noting that Ian Watt**,** the literary critic, confirmed **"**that the book Conrad refers to was *On Many Seas: The Life and Exploits of a Yankee Sailor*, published in New York in 1897. The author is listed as Frederick Benton Williams, which is actually a pseudonym for Herbert Elliott Hamblen…" (Watt, 1988, p. 2), the American author (1849 - 1908) who used his real name for publishing his other works. Hamblen's adventures as a seaman are chronicled in this book, where he, toward the end of it, specifies a page and a half, as Watt puts it, to describe how he sailed on a large schooner owned and commanded by a man whose name is Nicolo (Watt, 1988, p. 2), in whom Watt found many parallels with Nostromo (Watt, 1988, p. 3), the novel and the character, as Nicolo told him and his companions his story one night that he arrived in Panama at

the age of sixteen, rose through the ranks of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company to become captain of a lighter, then had earned his employers' trust so thoroughly that, during of what he named as 'the usual revolutions', they confounded him with a lighter holding silver, which he was supposed to transport to a port north of Panama… Nicolo set out late that night, killing two of his black crew, dumping the loot in shallow water, and running the lighter into a beach... According to Hamblen, Nicolo also brags openly about his robbery, which Conrad recalls in the 'Author Note' and copies in his Nostromo (Watt, 1988, p. 2)

Thereby, Conrad sets to retell the story of the same man but from his point of view. Dividing his novel into three parts: Part First is entitled "*The Silver of the Mine*"; Part Second is entitled "*The Isabels*"; Part Third is entitled "*The Lighthouse*". Each of these reveals something, though indirectly, about the wealth of silver. From the beginning of the novel, the readers are made aware about the materialistic essence in the novel as the title of the first part indicates, and about the fate and cycle of the symbol that stands for this materialistic essence.

The novel is set in Costaguana, a fictional name of a South American Country, which is languishing under imperialist exploitation because of its huge wealth of silver. The city is already occupied by foreigners who, under the pretext of democracy and the economic advancement of the country, have laid the bedrock to pave the way for their economic occupation. The story starts during a turbulent period of revolutionary upheavals in Sulaco, a port city of Costaguana, whose importance relied to its mine of silver.

In Chapter One of the novel, the novelist describes at length the city and its atmosphere hinting right from the beginning at the land which "as if it were blighted by a curse" (Conrad, [1904] 1956, I, Ch. 1, p. 4) and that its impoverished people who are,

"associating by an obscure instinct of consolation the ideas of evil and wealth, will tell you that it is deadly because of its forbidden treasures" (I, Ch. 1, p. 4).

The concept of the cursed side of the wealth is stressed again through his account about the two gringos (two Americans adventures) who came to search for the treasure, yet they "were never seen again" (I, Ch. 1, p. 5). They "are believed to be dwelling to this day amongst the rocks, under the fatal spell of their success. Their souls cannot tear themselves away from their bodies mounting guard over the discovered treasure" (I, Ch. 1, p. 5). Thy are believed to be "now rich and hungry and thirsty" (I, Ch. 1, p. 5) which is, according to the narrator, "a strange theory of tenacious gringo ghosts suffering in their starved and parched flesh of defiant heretics" (I, Ch. 1, p. 5), and who are since then regarded as "the legendary inhabitants of Azuera guarding its forbidden wealth" (I, Ch. 1, p. 5).

Thus, the novelist opened his novel with a scene that is almost familiar all over the world – a land that is full of treasures, yet its people are languishing in extreme poverty. And that is exactly the story of what Conrad called "the imaginary (but true)" Costaguana, the story of wasted wealth, looted money, and helpless peoples. Costaguana, especially its Occidental Province, enjoys a huge wealth of silver, but on the other hand, we find that this is not being properly reflected on the standard of living of the individual. The person here is deprived of a decent life, and is forced to work to meet the simplest necessities of life:

> The common folk of the neighbourhood, peons of the estancias, vaqueros of the seaboard plains, tame Indians coming miles to market with a bundle of sugar-cane or a basket of maize worth about [three pence], are well aware that heaps of shining gold lie in the gloom of the deep precipices cleaving

the stony levels of Azuera. (I, Ch. 1, p. 4)

The second scene, which is drawn by the novelist, is the scene of the capital corruption in this country, as he wants to show that the curse can also result from the corruption of the people represented here by the corruption of the government. Through the arrival of corrupt people to power, the economic policies pursued by some regimes in this country led to internal conflicts and civil wars. As usual, such is the case, the country is politically torn and suffering from political problems, which is one of its main causes is the wealth (represented by the mineral resources) that is buried in the earth, and which revolves around its possession a harmful conflict fueled by European countries and stakeholders with weapons and mercenary teams.

One of those Europeans, who come to live in this country, is Charles Gould a native of English descent who owns a crucial silver-mining concession, which he inherited from his father, Mr. Gould, senior. The concession that had been offered to him, against his will and desire, by one of the successive governments, "the fourth in six years" **(**I, Ch. Six, p. 53) after the overthrown of the dictator Guzman Bento on condition "that the concession-holder should pay at once to the Government five years' royalties on the estimated output of the mine" (I, Ch. Six, p. 53). The concession had become a nuisance and heavy burden on his shoulders, to the extent that the father's letters to his at then fourteen-year-old son, who was then in England, eventually became almost entirely about the mine (I, Ch. Six, p. 57). The cursed concession is spoken of as an eternal damned being that chases after those who have been afflicted with it when the narrator elaborated on his description of Mr. Gould, senior who had been cursed by this mine of silver:

> He groaned over the injustice, the persecution, the outrage of that mine; he occupied whole pages in the exposition of the fatal consequences attaching

> to the possession of that mine from every point of view, with every dismal inference, with words of horror at the apparently eternal character of that curse. (I, Six, p. 57)

The deal which is supposed to be a source of richness, was to Mr. Gould, the father, a source of anguish and anxiety, "[f]or the Concession had been granted to him and his descendants for ever" (I, Ch. Six, p. 57), to the extent that he, and as the narrator states,

> implored his son never to return to Costaguana, never to claim any part of his inheritance there, because it was tainted by the infamous Concession; never to touch it, never to approach it, to forget that America existed, and pursue a mercantile career in Europe. And each letter ended with bitter self-reproaches for having stayed too long in that cavern of thieves, intriguers, and brigands. (I, Ch. Six, p. 57)

Even that in one of his last letters to his son, as Charles recalled years later and reminded his wife (Doña Emilia Gould) of it, Mr. Gould senior conveyed his thought concerning the affliction of countries and their people as a result of their natural resources due to the conflicts around them writing that "God looked wrathfully at these countries, or else He would let some ray of hope fall through a rift in the appalling darkness of intrigue, bloodshed, and crime that hung over the Queen of Continents" (I, Ch. Six, pp. 83-94). Nevertheless, falling "under the spell of the San Tome mine" (I. Ch. Six, p. 59), the son does not listen to the threats of the father and decides to continue with the enterprise after the death of his father, as "[t]he very prohibition imposed the necessity of success" (I, Ch. Six, p. 74) to the son, and that "[i]f the idea of wealth was present to [Charles

Gould and his wife,] it was only in so far as it was bound with that other success" (I, Ch. Six, p. 74). So, according to the narrator,

> Charles Gould … had been obliged to keep the idea of wealth well to the fore; but he brought it forward as a means, not as an end. Unless the mine was good business it could not be touched. He had to insist on that aspect of the enterprise. It was his lever to move men who had capital. (I, Ch. Six, p. 74)

Thus, to follow up on his late father's work, Mr. Gould, the son, decides to take upon himself to pursue the silver-mining concession. Hence, the sequence of the story follows his adventure with the mine. In order to support the political stability of the country in which he will reside, Charles Gould employs his wealth to support Don Vincente Ribiera, the first civilian president of the country and who took over the administration after the tyrant Guzman Bento. And in order not to let this wealth fall into the hands of the enemies, like: General Montero (who was initially Minister of War under President Don Vincente Ribiera); Pedro or "Pedrito" Montero (General Montero's brother); Colonel Sotillo (the commander of a military force); and others who seek the wealth of the San Tomé Silver Mine to secure their uprising, Gould orders that the trusted and incorruptible man Nostromo (Gian' Battista Fidenza), the Italian expatriate who is nicknamed by his employers as Nostromo, to transport the silver ingots out of the mine. Through his voyage to save the treasure, accompanied by Martin Decoud (the French young intellectual and journalist), Nostromo's boat was struck accidently at night by a ship which belongs to the enemies. However, Nostromo and Decoud manage to save the boat, and then carrying its cargo of silver to be buried on a deserted island of Great Isabel (the mission that is covered by the second part of the novel). Returning to Solaco, and full of feelings of betrayal, Nostromo, the "Capataz de Cargadores" (i.e., the loader foreman), decides to avenge upon himself by keeping the treasure for himself. Thereby,

Nostromo, “the invaluable fellow” (I, Ch. 1, p. 12); the “fellow in a thousand” (I, Ch. 1, p. 12); and “the man of the people” (conard, 1917, p. xxv)) himself becomes a slave of the treasure. Eventually, and after a period of upheavals, the peace is restored to the province. Nevertheless, the curse that fell on the country and on most of the characters of the novel has also fallen on the protagonist himself (which is covered in the third part) at the lighthouse by being killed at the hands of his old friend Giorgio Viola, an ex-Italian revolutionary and a father of two girls – Linda and Giselle – who both are in love with Nostromo.

In fact, the novel is modeled after Conrad’s opinion of what literary books should be. As it is presented as a “part and parcel of humanity” (conard, Notes on Life and Letters, 1921, p. 5). As he believes,

> [o]f all the inanimate objects, of all men’s creations, books are the nearest to us, for they contain our very thought, our ambitions, our indignations, our illusions, our fidelity to truth, and our persistent leaning towards error. But most of all they resemble us in their precarious hold on life. (p. 5)

In it, Conrad has created a world that simulates the real world. After 17 years of publishing the novel, Conrad had stated in his *Notes on Life and Letters* (1921) Part I *Letters* that:

> [i]n truth every novelist must begin by creating for himself a world, great or little, in which he can honestly believe. This world cannot be made otherwise than in his own image: it is fated to remain individual and a little mysterious, and yet it must resemble something already familiar to the experience, the

thoughts and the sensations of his readers. (p. 7)

As, according to him, "[a]t the heart of fiction, even the least worthy of the name, some sort of truth can be found—if only the truth of a childish theatrical ardour in the game of life, […]" (p. 7). And an aspect of this game is the pursuit of material interests. Unquestionably, the material interests as a cause for political problems had always been the focus of the author's literary works. In Najder's opinion, "Conrad see political problems in terms of a continuous struggle between law and violence, anarchy and order, freedom and autocracy, material interests and the noble idealism of individuals" (Najder, 1983, p. 308).

In *Nostromo*, Conrad dramatized how the pursuit of material interests, from both sides (i.e. from internal and external powers), had necessitated external interventions; whose organizational arms and joints have moved across the country, especially in its Occidental Province that these forces seek to isolate it from the rest of the country because of its huge wealth. Hence, the need for "a vast colonization scheme" (II, Ch. Two, p. 144), as the narrator puts it, to facilitate the plundering of the country's wealth by the major colonial powers and their companies, so that the people are deprived of the resources of their country. In fact, Costaguana was nothing but the backyard for these powers in which their policies are implemented through conspiracies and military coups, and its wealth is plundered without restraint. So, the existence of natural resources was of no benefit to its people. It did not protect them from the evils of poverty. The infrastructure of most areas of the country remained at the bottom during the rule of successive governments. Altogether, the wealth of the mine is one of the causes of misery on the collective and individual levels, as the novelist intends to show, and as the study proposes.

On the collective level, the treasure of the mine represented by the silver metal**,** causes the conflict in the country and the misery of its people. It makes of the land an arena of conflict and a stronghold for thieves and bandits. According to Don Pépé, an old major in Costaguana and the manager of the San Tomé Silver Mine, "[b]efore, [Costaguana] was everything for the Padres, nothing for the people; and now it is everything for those great politicos in Sta. Marta, for negroes and thieves" (I, Ch. Seven, p. 89). On his part, Don José Avellanos, a well-known Sulaco resident_and personal friend and neighbor of the Goulds, describes the political situation in the country as being "Imperium in imperio" (I, Ch. Eight, p. 111), which is a Latin phrase means a government within a government. In Costaguana, Charles Gould, 'El Rey de Sulaco' (i.e. the king of Sulaco), with his silver-mining concession, which determines the system and form of government in the country, embodies this Latin expression, as the narrator notes that Mr. Gould's

> part, his inclination, and his policy were united in one endeavour to keep unchecked the flow of treasure he had started single-handed from the re-opened scar in the flank of the mountain. As the mine developed he had trained for himself some native help. There were foremen, artificers and clerks, with Don Pépé for the gobernador of the mining population. For the rest his shoulders alone sustained the whole weight of the "Imperium in Imperio," the great Gould Concession whose mere shadow had been enough to crush the life out of his father. (II, Ch. 2, p. 148)

For his part, Martin Decoud sustains the same point of view when he describes the mine in his letter to his sister as "this 'Imperium in Imperio,' this wealth-producing thing" (II,

Ch. Seven, p. 244), which was, as Decoud further explains to his sister, "[t]he real objective" (II, Ch. Seven, p. 244) for the revolted forces represented by – General Montero and Colonel Sotillo, who revolt later on against the government of the country and form a military uprising, seeking only behind the treasure of the land, not the interests of the country or its poor people. In addition to the idea of the mine as being a source of greed for those, Decoud represented it as being a curse as old as history when he agrees with Don José Avellanos on how "[t]he natural treasures of Costaguana are of importance to the progressive Europe" (II, Ch. Four, p. 170). Decoud observes that "just as three hundred years ago the wealth of [their] Spanish fathers was a serious object to the rest of Europe—as represented by the bold buccaneers (II, Ch. Four, pp. 170-171), musing that "[t]here is a curse of futility upon [their] character (II, Ch. Four, p. 171). So, what Conrad wants to point out here in his novel is that history repeats itself, wherein the same scenes – of looting of national wealth, and of how the wealth of a country is a curse on its people – are all manifested throughout the novel.

The wealth of the land was also the focus of external attention by foreigners from different parts of the earth. It was a project and scheme for Mr. Holroyd, the American financier of the San Tomé Mine who see in Costaguana a capitalist venture. His role in the novel seems to stand for the religious as well as the economic colonialism which is another form of modern colonialism that exists in many areas of the Third World, as the colonial countries work to link their economies with the economies of developing countries and restrict them to foreign debts and investments, and so on, with the aim of securing primary resources owned by the Third World, and securing markets for their industrial products. The same scheme that was later illustrated by the narrator who observes that "there was a loan to the State, and a project for systematic colonization of the Occidental Province, involved in one vast scheme with the construction of the National Central Railway" (I, Ch. Eight, p. 117). Through Mr. Holroyd's conversation

with the administrator of the San Tomé silver mine, the American financier expresses the colonial scheme under which the strong party monopolizes the privileges of exploiting the natural resources of the other weak party:

> Now, what is Costaguana? It is the bottomless pit of 10 per cent. loans and other fool investments. European capital has been flung into it with both hands for years. Not ours, though. We in this country know just about enough to keep indoors when it rains. We can sit and watch. Of course, some day we shall step in. We are bound to. But there's no hurry. Time itself has got to wait on the greatest country in the whole of God's Universe. (I, Ch. Six, pp. 67 – 77)

Then he returns to states openly and clearly these colonial goals:

> We shall be giving the word for everything: industry, trade, law, journalism, art, politics, and religion, from Cape Horn clear over to Smith's Sound, and beyond, too, if anything worth taking hold of turns up at the North Pole. And then we shall have the leisure to take in hand the outlying islands and continents of the earth. We shall run the world's business whether the world likes it or not. The world can't help it—and neither can we, I guess. (I, Ch. Six, p. 77)

Also, for Mr. Charles Gould "whose imagination had been permanently affected by the one great fact of a silver mine, had no objection to this theory of the world's future" (I, Ch. Six, p. 77), as the narrator puts it. Through his conversation with his wife, Mr. Gould

reflects similar colonial views. He states that “the great silver and iron interests will survive, and some day will get hold of Costaguana along with the rest of the world” (I, Ch. Six, p. 82). The matter that aroused his wife’s displeasure and astonishment to reply immediately by saying that “[t]his seems to [her] most awful materialism” (I, Ch. Six, p. 83).

In addition to the systematic project to possess the lands of the country for the purpose of the material interests, the operations of destroying and obliterating everything that pertains to the past or the history of the country continue in full swing, as is stated by Charles Gould when he refers to a piece of land that “belongs now to the Railway Company” (I, Ch. Eight, p. 123). Stressing that “[t]here will be no more popular feasts held here” (I, Ch. Eight, p. 123). The scene that “Mrs. Gould had seen it all from the beginning: the clearing of the wilderness, the making of the road, the cutting of new paths up the cliff face of San Tomé” (I, Ch. Eight, p.106). Thereby, everything that is related to the past was destroyed, as “[t]he waterfall existed no longer. The tree-ferns that had luxuriated in its Spray had died around the dried-up pool, and the high ravine was only a big trench half filled up with the refuse of excavations and tailings” (I, Ch. Eight, p. 106). Just a small memory saved in a drawing of Mrs. Gould, as is stated by the narrator, who observes that “she had made it hastily one day from a cleared patch in the bushes, sitting in the shade of a roof of straw erected for her on three rough poles under Don Pépé’s direction (I, Ch. Eight, p. 106).

Thus, this is the inheritance of all peoples who fall under the brunt of colonialism. These natural resources have helped only the influx of foreign interventions. Whereas, on the other hand, human life in these regions is not worth anything. Every party in the country thinks only of taking possession of this treasure of silver while the people are wrestling with the clutches of poverty. As, though Costaguana possesses varied natural resources and has abundant production of minerals, nevertheless the majority of the

population lives in extreme poverty, as they have suffered from low standards of living. From time to time, the narrator was keen to convey the image of the miserable and poor people in this country, the image of the downtrodden "on the road carrying loads, lonely figures upon the plain, toiling under great straw hats" (I, Ch. Six, p. 48).

As on the individual level, wealth plays a big role in people's lives and it is indispensable in facilitating life's affairs, but with its necessity, does it buy happiness? In *Nostromo*, the novelist sheds light on how the existence of wealth has helped ruin the lives of so many characters in the novel. Even those characters who are initially sketched in the novel as being honest and as ethical, in the course of time they turned into greedy and ruthless, or those that are sketched as being happy and stable, they ended up as sad and heartbroken people.

In regards to Mr. Gould, the owner of Sulaco's San Tomé mine, he was afflicted by the existence of this wealth even before he knew about it, or seen it, as he was repeatedly reminded through the letters of his father, and as the narrator hints in his commenting on the dilemma that the boy will go through in the future:

> To be told repeatedly that one's future is blighted because of the possession of a silver mine is not, at the age of fourteen, a matter of prime importance as to its main statement; but in its form it is calculated to excite a certain amount of wonder and attention. (I, Ch. Six, p. 57)

Even though Charles Gould at the beginning, and as the narrator pinpoints, has brought the idea of wealth "forward as a means, not as an end" (I, Ch. Six, p. 75), for the aim of bringing prosperity and stability to Costaguana (his place of birth), he was also cursed with wealth and started to dream of controlling not only Costaguana, but also "the rest

of the world" (I, Ch. Six, p. 82). According to Martin Decoud, writing in a letter to his sister, describing Don Charles Gould's relationship with his Mine of silver, stating that

> [h]e holds to it as some men hold to the idea of love or revenge… A passion has crept into his cold and idealistic life. A passion which I can only comprehend intellectually. A passion that is not like the passions we know, we men of another blood. But it is as dangerous as any of ours. (II, Ch. Seven, p. 245)

In addition to Decoud's description, the mine indeed becomes Charles Gould's preoccupation and his only topic. Even with his wife, the topic of the wealth of the San Tomé Mine took a place in their conversation, assuring her that the continued existence of such an enterprise "shall make [them] very wealthy" (I, Ch. Six, p. 72). Moreover, the mine has become Mr. Gould's priority in life to the point of neglecting his family life. According to the narrator "[t]he mine had corrupted his judgment by making him sick of bribing and intriguing merely to have his work left alone from day to day" (III, Ch. Four, pp. 364-365). It was his only weapon, as the narrator observes (III, Ch. Four, p. 365). Returning to meditate that this weapon of wealth, double-edged with humanity's cupidity and misery, steeped in all the vices of self-indulgence like a concoction of poisonous roots, tainting the very cause for which it is drawn, is also more dangerous to the wielder, always ready to turn awkwardly in the hand. There was nothing else for it to do now but keep using it (III, Ch. Four, p. 365). Nevertheless, "he promised himself to see it shattered into small bits before he let it be wrenched from his grasp" (III, Ch. Four, p. 365). What is more, his possession of the mine and his material interests had taken all his thought to the extent that "his wife was no longer the sole mistress of his thoughts" (III, Ch. Four, p. 365).

According to the engineer-in-chief of the railway, the whole issue of the wealth related to the Gould Concession is as hazardous, likens Mr. Gould to a detainee in a cavern of banditti with the cost of his emancipate in his stash, managing to buy his life from day to day, and searching for his mere security (III, Ch. One, p. 314). Further indicating that Mr. Gould was within the position of the goose with the golden eggs, recalling the tale of murdering this goose and indicating that the tale, which could never develop old, has not been advanced for nothing away from the wisdom of mankind (III, Ch. One, p. 314).

In regards to Mrs. Gould, Doña Emilia, who had been "brought up in an atmosphere of intellectual interests, [and] had never considered the aspects of great wealth" (I, Ch. Six, p. 74), as the narrator claims, wealth did not bring her happiness. On the contrary, it was a source of her misery, as it deprived her of family stability, as since taking over the San Tomé Silver Mine concession, Mr. Gould has been thoroughly engaged with the mine and its business – its earnings, its safety, its fame, … etc. It appears that it matters to him more than she is to him. In his letter to his sister, Decoud has come across this side of the Gould's life. He states,

> he defers to her because he trusts her perhaps, but I fancy rather as if he wished to make up for some subtle wrong, for that sentimental unfaithfulness which surrenders her happiness, her life, to the seduction of an idea. The little woman has discovered that he lives for the mine rather than for her. (II, Ch. Seven, p. 245)

Expounding to his sister further that each has his own aim and passion. As Don Carlos' objective is to keep the good name of his mine unblemished; and as for Doña Emilia's aim is to preserve him from the ravages of that icy, uncontrollable passion (II, Ch. Seven,

p. 245), which, according to Decoud, “she dreads more than if it were an infatuation for another woman” (II, Ch. Seven, p. 245).

On his part, the narrator observes how the wealth has affected her life. He states that:

> [t]he fate of the San Tome mine was lying heavy upon her heart. It was a long time now since she had begun to fear it. It had been an idea. She had watched it with misgivings turning into a fetish, and now the fetish had grown into a monstrous and crushing weight. It was as if the inspiration of their early years left her heart to turn into a wall of silver-bricks, erected by the silent work of evil spirits, between her and her husband. (II, Ch. Six, pp. 221-222)

Elaborating further on how her husband “seemed to dwell alone within a circumvallation of precious metal, leaving her outside with her school, her hospital, the sick mothers and the feeble old men, mere insignificant vestiges of the initial inspiration” (II, Ch. Six, p. 222). In another place of the novel, the narrator describes how ‘the Señor Administrador’ and ‘the poor boy’ was “incorrigible in his devotion to the great silver mine … Incorrigible in his hard, determined service of the material interests to which he had pinned his faith in the triumph of order and justice” (III, Ch. Eleven, p. 521), then, moves to describe how the Mine has exhausted both of them, by stating:

> [s]he had a clear vision of the grey hairs on his temples… It was a colossal and lasting success; and love was only a short moment of forgetfulness, a short intoxication, whose delight one remembered with a sense of sadness, as if it had been a deep grief lived through. There was something inherent in the necessities

of successful action which carried with it the moral degradation of the idea.

(III, Ch. Eleven, p. 521)

Besides, owing to the unsettled life in the country because of the wealth of the Mine, Mrs. Gould started to see the mountain of the San Tomé Mine, which is rising over the whole Campo, as –more heartless than any oppressor, more ruthless and tyrannical than the worst government (III, Ch. Eleven, p. 521). She personifies it as a tyrant who is ready to destroy countless lives to extend his power (III, Ch. Eleven, p. 521). According to the narrator,

she saw clearly the San Tomé mine possessing, consuming, burning up the life of the last of the Costaguana Goulds; mastering the energetic spirit of the son as it had mastered the lamentable weakness of the father. A terrible success for the last of the Goulds. The last! She had hoped for a long, long time, that perhaps— But no! There were to be no more. (III, Ch. Eleven, p. 522)

The shadows of the mine have covered Mr. Gould's mind and eyes, to the extent that he no longer sees the loneliness that his wife suffers from, and as the narrator has it that "[h]e could not see it. It was not his fault. He was perfect, perfect; but she would never have him to herself. Never; not for one short hour altogether to herself in this old Spanish house she loved so well" (III, Ch. Eleven, p. 522). Her unfathomable despair, fear for her own life, fell upon her. She saw herself experiencing the depravity of her own youthful ideals of life, love and work, which she attributes it ultimately to the "Material interest" (III, Ch. Eleven, p. 522).

In spite of being "wealthy beyond great dreams of wealth, considered, loved, respected, honoured (III, Ch. Thirteen, p. 555), yet she is "solitary as any human being

had ever been, perhaps, on this earth" (III, Ch. Thirteen, p. 555). Even Dr. Monygham (an English doctor and the long-time resident in the country of Costaguana) feels sorry for the situation of such a lady. Due to his feelings and devotion for her, he deeply feels a resentful anxiousness in the face of the San Tomé mine's success, because its expansion was snatching her of all calmness, besides Costaguana was not the place for a woman of her caliber (III, Ch. Four, p. 376).

As for Martin Decoud, the editor of the *Porvenir* (a newspaper), and the driving force behind the concept of independence of the Occidental Province from Costaguana, the wealth of silver also plays its part in shattering his dreams, and even ending his life. In spite of his passion towards Antonia Avellanos, a highly educated girl and the daughter of Don José, the wealth was his priority to fulfill his political dream in separating the province of Sulaco from the rest of the country due to the wealth that this region enjoys. Nevertheless, during his journey with Nostromo to save the treasure of silver, he agrees with the 'Capataz de Cargadores', and acknowledges that he "can see it well enough [himself], that the possession of this treasure is very much like a deadly disease for men situated as [they] are" (II, Ch. Seven, p. 264).

Earlier to his mission with Nostromo to transport the treasure, Decoud voices his opinion concerning the fate of the countries that contain such riches. He likened Sulaco, to 'a treasure-house' which everyone is breaking into it while the leaders of these countries are busy fighting over material interests and wrestling among themselves, and that by the time they will reach an agreement, by the time they will settle their differences and listen and obey the voice of reason, it eventually will be too late (II, Ch. Five, p. 174). For him, "[i]t has always been the same" (II, Ch. Five, p. 174), and as for the people of those countries he sees that "they are a wonderful people, but it has always been [their] fate to be … exploited" (II, Ch. Five, p. 174).

Ultimately, the treasure contributed to hastening the end not only of Decoud's political dreams, but also of his life. In the end, and as the plan went by that he would be staying out with the treasure where it would be buried on the Great Isabel (a nearby island) until it is safe for him to return back to Sulaco, Decoud goes insane. Being alone on that island with only the boxes of silver and being convinced that Nostromo will never return, he decides to shoot himself. He seems to take four silver ingots to weigh down and sink his body. Ironically, the wealth of the province that he dreamt of and hoped to separate it from the rest of the country, contributed to hastening his end. Eventually, he became like those two aliens who went out with the intention of finding the treasure that was rumored to be hidden in the Azuera, but they vanished without a trace (I, Ch. I, p. 5).

As for Nostromo, the leading character and the main focus of the novel, who seems to be sketched after the character of a man whose name is Anderson, whom Conrad had met in the London Sailors' Home, the place that he revisited after eighteen years in a try to check out for someone he wanted to see. A man who, according to Conrad, was one of those capable seamen who are a perfect blessing to a rookie officer in a watch. A man, as he could remember, a more courageous, or a more agile, or a man more adept in some single branch of his calling (conard, Notes on Life and Letters, 1921, p. 351). Adding further, that

> for all-round competence, he was unequalled. As character he was sterling stuff. His name was Anderson. He had a fine, quiet face, kindly eyes, and a voice which matched that something attractive in the whole man. Though he looked yet in the prime of life, shoulders, chest, limbs untouched by decay, and though his hair and moustache were only iron-grey, he was on board ship

> generally called Old Andy by his fellows. He accepted the name with some complacency. (p. 351)

Exactly just like the qualities of Nostromo, the protagonist, who has established a good reputation for leadership and courageous, the matter that earned him the title of the 'Capataz de Cargadores'. Nevertheless, Nostromo also has been corrupted and accursed by the wealth of the mine. In spite of his wish to build a good reputation and win glory for his character, he lets greed for riches controls him.

Driven by a feeling that he has been betrayed and a desire to avenge himself on those rich people, Nostromo began to think of keeping the treasure for himself, by claiming that the treasure had been sunk, especially after the disappearance of Decoud. Meanwhile, he visited the island between time to time to take a couple of ingots to secure a stable source for his living. Nonetheless, the treasure has become a curse on him.

In most of his conversations with others, the Italian Gian Batista Fidantsa describes the treasure as being a curse. Before his trip with Decoud to save the treasure, he had unburdened himself to Doctor Monygham, describing the condition in which he was placed in relation to the task assigned to him that "[i]t is as if [he was] taking up a curse upon [him]" (II, Ch. Seven, p. 259). Emphasizing that "[a] man with a treasure on this coast will have every knife raised against him in every place upon the shore" (II, Ch. Seven, p. 259). The analogy of the treasure as being a curse, is also sustained by Dr. Monygham who replies immediately that "for taking the curse of death upon [your] back, as you call it, nothing else but the whole treasure would do" (II, Ch. Seven, p. 259).

In other occasion, Nostromo describes it as a deadly disease. Through their trip, he unburdens himself this time to Decoud expressing that "[t]his thing has been given to [him] like a deadly disease" (II, Ch. Seven, p. 264). Confirming that coming to the land

with this silver in their possession is like rubbing a naked breast against a knife, and that if men find out, both will be dead (II, Ch. Seven, p. 264).

After all, he himself becomes a slave of this accursed silver, as he calls it, and for which he abandoned Decoud and Teresa Viola (the wife of Giorgio Viola and the mother of Linda and Giselle Viola) "in their last extremity, for the sake of this accursed treasure" (III, Ch. Ten, p. 501). The treasure that "was paid for by a soul lost and by a vanished life" (III, Ch. Ten, p. 501), and, as the narrator confirms, "was no one in the world but Gian' Battista Fidanza, Capataz de Cargadores, the incorruptible and faithful Nostromo, to pay such a price" (III, Ch. Ten, p. 501), stressing further that "[t]he treasure was putting forth its latent power. It troubled the clear mind of the man who had paid the price" (III, Ch. Ten, p. 502), as he, was deeply troubled by the fact that he couldn't escape the treasure and that he experienced thrilling and eager slavery (III, Ch. Twelve, p. 526), to the extent that "in his thoughts, he compared himself to the legendary Gringos, neither dead nor alive, bound down to their conquest of unlawful wealth on Azuera" (III, Ch. Twelve, p. 526).

Even after he kept the treasure to himself, Nostromo was not comfortable as the process of visiting the island became difficult and dangerous, for fear of being discovered even by his own sailing schooner's crew. In fact, the process was like theft, besides, according to the narrator, "[t]o do things by stealth humiliated him. Also, he suffered most from the concentration of his thought upon the treasure" (III, Ch. Twelve, p. 523). In addition to robbing him of his comfort, the treasure had robbed him of his sanity as well. It is resembled to "[a] transgression, a crime, entering a man's existence, eats it up like a malignant growth, [and] consumes it like a fever" (III, Ch. Twelve, p. 523). According to the narrator, "Nostromo had lost his peace; the genuineness of all his qualities was destroyed. He felt it himself, and often cursed the silver of San Tomé. His

courage, his magnificence, his leisure, his work, everything was as before, only everything was a sham" (III, Ch. Twelve, p. 523), yet, as the narrator returns to confirm,

> But the treasure was real. He clung to it with a more tenacious, mental grip. But he hated the feel of the ingots. Sometimes, after putting away a couple of them in his cabin—the fruit of a secret night expedition to the Great Isabel—he would look fixedly at his fingers, as if surprised they had left no stain on his skin. (III, Ch. Twelve, p. 523)

Over and above, the love of wealth begets selfishness in Nostromo's personality, as he supports Captain Mitchell's idea of building a lighthouse on the cliff of the Great Isabel, the place where he had buried the boxes of silver so that the treasure is safe from strangers, and even proposes that Giorgio Viola ought to be made the guardian of that light (III, Ch. Eleven, p. 514) and does not care "whether it would be good for these girls to be shut up on that island as if in a prison" (III, Ch. Eleven, p. 514), to use Dona Emilia's words when she was consulted about the project. Furthermore, his selfishness made him sacrifice his love for Giselle, the young daughter of Giorgio Viola, as though he meant to ask for Giselle's hand, but due to Viola's misunderstanding, he ended up asking for Linda's instead, for "the shining spectre of the treasure rose before him, claiming his allegiance in a silence that could not be gainsaid" (III, Ch. Twelve, p. 531), justifying to Giselle afterwards that "[t]here is something that stands between [them] two and the freedom of the world" (III, Ch. Twelve, p. 539).

By and large, the treasure becomes his new mistress, as, according to the narrator, "he yearned to clasp, embrace, absorb, subjugate in unquestioned possession this treasure, whose tyranny had weighed upon his mind, his actions, his very sleep" (III, Ch. Twelve, p. 529). What is more, the treasure has killed him at the end, as old Viola has

shot him mistakenly thinking that he is Ramirez who "was one of the five Cargadores entrusted with the removal of the treasure from the Custom House on that famous night" (III, Ch. Eleven, p. 515), and who has plans upon Giselle), mumbling "[l]ike a thief he came, and like a thief he fell. The child had to be protected" (III, Ch. Thirteen, p. 554). Ironically, the expression has suits Nostromo as well, because he himself admits to Giselle that he has seized the treasure "[l]ike a thief!" (III, Ch. Twelve, p. 540). Through his last agonies, after sending after Mrs. Gould to tell her where he was buried the treasure, Nostromo admitted to her that "there is something accursed in wealth" (III, Ch. Thirteen, p. 560), confessing to her that "[t]he silver has killed [him]. It has held [him]. It holds [him] yet" (III, Ch. Thirteen, p. 559), stressing over the wealth that the rich (including Mrs. Gould and her husband) know simply how to steal it from the hands of the destitute, on whom the world rests, as old Viola says (III, Ch. Thirteen, p. 560).

In fact, the concept of the wealth as being a curse, a danger, a burden, a hateful thing, and a killer is given its highly confirm through the words and expressions of other characters in the novel. Through one of his dialogues with the doctor, Charles Gould expresses his relief at the loss of the treasure because, according to him, "[i]t would have been a danger and a curse" (III, Ch. Seven, p. 410).

On his part, the narrator does a good job in enriching the issue of the wealth as being as a burden. He comments on the process of burying the boxes of silver in the island conceiving that "[t]he existence of the treasure, barely concealed in this improbable spot, laid a burden of secrecy upon every contemplated step, upon every intention and plan of future conduct" (II, Ch. Eight, p. 296). Through his narrative, he personifies the cargo-lighter as a human being who has been burdened and finally got rid of his burden (II, Ch. Eight, p. 298). In another occasion, he contemplates that among the things that angered the Capataz of the Sulaco Cargadores are "to be disarmed and skulking and in

danger because of the accursed treasure, which was of so little account to the people who had tied it round his neck. He could not shake off the worry of it" (III, Ch. Eight, p. 426).

For Mrs. Gould, the wealth was a hateful thing. When Dr. Monygham has come to fetch her to see Nostromo, upon the latter's request, she, and as the narrator states:

> remembered. But she did not say she hated the mere mention of that silver. Frankness personified, she remembered with an exaggerated horror that for the first and last time of her life she had concealed the truth from her husband about that very silver. She had been corrupted by her fears at that time, and she had never forgiven herself. (III, Ch. Thirteen, p. 557)

Recalling at the same time that this "silver … had been in a roundabout way nearly the cause of Dr. Monygham's death. And these things appeared to her very dreadful" (III, Ch. Thirteen, p. 557). When the doctor attributes the reason Nostromo desperately wanted to see her to maybe telling her "something concerning that silver" (III, Ch. Thirteen, p. 557), she interrupted him exclaiming – "Oh, no! No! … Isn't it lost and done with? Isn't there enough treasure without it to make everybody in the world miserable?" (III, Ch. Thirteen, p. 557). And when attending Nostromo in his last moments, she tells him that "[she], too, [has] hated the idea of that silver from the bottom of [her] heart." (III, Ch. Thirteen, p. 559), to the extent that she turned away her look from the hopeless servility of the lifeless man, horrified, wishing not to hear more about the silver (III, Ch. Thirteen, p. 560), demanding him not to tell her anything, as "[n]o one misses it now. Let it be lost for ever" (III, Ch. Thirteen, p. 560); telling Dr. Monygham, who was awaiting anxiously outside, that Nostromo had not told her anything (III, Ch. Thirteen, p. 560); asking Giselle to console herself, as "[v]ery soon he would have forgotten [her] for his treasure" (III, Ch. Thirteen, p. 561), and responding to the grieving girl's

assurances about Gian's real love to her, by replying in a bitter and severe tone that "[she has] been loved, too" (III, Ch. Thirteen, p. 561). Implying implicitly that all men, when materials interests intervene, love no one but themselves. They scarify everything for their interests.

As has been noted, the treasure has become a source of concern and even a cause of unhappiness to everyone. It turned out to be quite useless; moreover, it ruined the lives of most of the character in the novel. Conrad himself clarified in a letter to Ernst Bendz, a Swedish professor, that "*Nostromo* has never been intended for the hero of the Tale of the Seaboard. Silver is the pivot of the moral and material events, affecting the lives of everybody in the tale" (Jean, 1927, p. 226). As can be seen, it prevented Nostromo from the woman he desired, from his life, and even from his fame, as he ends up as a thief. As for Giselle, the existence of the treasure had deprived her of her beloved. Also, Señor Hirsch, the Jewish merchant who comes to Sulaco at the time of political disturbances, then finds himself hiding in a boat, ends up by being killed by Colonel Sotillo, who himself has been possessed by a maniac urge to obtain the treasure of silver of the San Tomé Mine. According to Nostromo, when returning of his mission, musing about Sotillo's condition:

> There is something in a treasure that fastens upon a man's mind. He will pray and blaspheme and still persevere, and will curse the day he ever heard of it, and will let his last hour come upon him unawares, still believing that he missed it only by a foot. He will see it every time he closes his eyes. He will never forget it till he is dead—…. (III, Ch. Nine, p. 460)

Directing his words to the doctor, wondering if he had ever heard about the story of the hopeless gringos on Azuera who are sailors like himself, who never known if they are

alive or dead. Emphasizing that "[t]here is no getting away from a treasure that once fastens upon [once] mind" (III, Ch. Nine, p. 460), the treasure that "hovered over by the anxious spirits of good and evil" (III, Ch. Eleven, p. 504), as the narrator puts it. Thus, wherever there is wealth, there is no stability, as external and internal ambitions increase, and material interest will not let anyone threaten their advancement for an insignificant thought of pity and justice (III, Ch. Eleven, p. 509), as Dr. Monygham explains to Miss Avellanos.

Correspondingly, Ivo Vidan, professor of English literature, in his "Perspective of "Nostromo"" observes that the San Tomé Mine's silver is neither a randomly chosen plot center nor an arbitrary symbol. It is the genuine, universal link between goods and people, the originator of the idol that is at the root of man's separation from himself and others, … and hence what happens to people throughout history is, as a matter of fact, a paragon of human reality (1962, p. 48). Likewise, Jerome A. Long observes that "better than any other of Conrad's novels, *Nostromo* tells us about a universe with which we are thoroughly familiar" (Long, 1961, p. 105). Thereby, this novel comes to simulate the world with its people and its problems.

In the final analysis, the concept of wealth as being a curse not a grace is manifested strongly by the novelist throughout the novel, as in each page and line of it, the novelist hints, whether directly or indirectly, to the fact that extreme wealth whether at collective level or individual level just brings a curse to the country and its people. Conrad in this novel retells the vortex of each country that abounds with natural resources, yet instead of turning these resources into a means to achieve the people's well-being and build their prosperous future, it has become a great curse. As a matter of fact, this theme is not limited to the fictional country of Costaguana, as many Latin American countries and even countries of the Third World, have experienced and suffered and still suffer from the same dilemma.

The curse that Nostromo and most of the characters have gone through, has been lived and still being lived to this day by all the countries whose destiny wanted that natural wealth to be under their soil, whether it was oil, gas, silver, copper, gold, diamonds, phosphorous, or other forms of natural wealth. It is an inevitable fate that has been proven by many humanistic scenes and experiences throughout history. Wealth did not bring happiness, peace, or prosperity to the population, but rather it brought exploitation and colonialism. As has been drawn in the novel, people remained stumbled by their poverty, ignorance, and submission to colonialism in all its forms, like most or all of the countries of the Third World, which are rich in natural resources, but their people are languishing in extreme poverty. The existence of natural wealth and the question of who owns it has been linked to the outbreak of conflicts, civil wars, and the spread of bribery and financial corruption.

Also, in one of its facets, the novel addresses one of the problems of globalization and that is the global scramble for resources. Where the colonists are scrambling to steal and plunder these wealth, whether through direct or indirect colonization, through the entry of foreign exploration companies and those countries' obtaining concessions and preferential contracts, the matter that, in turn, leads to debt-purchasing, and the entrenchment of the phenomenon of subjugation. Therefore, the absence of strong democratic governments and the lack of wise management of resources are among the things that will strengthening dictatorship, fueling internal conflict, and at the end, submission to the foreign colonizer. In fact, through the novel of *Nostromo: A Tale of the Seaboard*, Conrad provides an inductive view of what will happen to such countries.

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