CHAPTER - II

THE MALAY TRILOGY
Conrad's Malay trilogy comprises his three Eastern novels: *Almayer's Folly*, *An Outcast of the Islands*, and *The Rescue*. The first two in this trio, namely *Almayer's Folly* and *An Outcast of the Islands*, were published in 1895 and 1896 respectively. Portions of *The Rescue* were also written within 1896 and 1900 and then the book was abandoned for some personal reasons. Finally the book came out in 1920. These three novels have the Malay Archipelago as their principal setting. Another connecting link in this trilogy is the character of Tom Lingard, a British sea-captain, imbued with some sort of colonialist ideology. The main action in each of the novels takes place under the auspices of Lingard, if not always in his presence.

The Malay Archipelago was evidently a politically disturbed region where different national groups vied with each other for ascendancy. There were the Malays who ruled over the Dyaks. These Malays, in some sense, were subordinate to the Arabs. Over the Arabs, there were the Dutch. Apart from them, the English and the Chinese too made their political presence
felt in some areas. What is noticeable here is the fact that for none of the groups there was any fixed domain within this many-layered structure of power. Martin Green has observed in this respect: "These layers do not lie neatly one above the other, moreover, but interweave; and the sense of such complex political situations is one of Conrad's strengths - one sees it again in Nostromo;..."\(^1\). Green is right in pointing out the intricacies of the political hierarchy there. What I would like to add here is that Conrad has kept his references to the multi-national squabbles within strict limits in this trilogy. His description of the Malay society presents colonialism in action but he represents it in terms of its impact on human nature, and not in terms of exercise of political power alone.

This Malay trilogy of Conrad is closely linked with his visits to the East. As we know from his biographies, Conrad turned to fiction-writing after spending a considerable portion of time in the Merchant Marine. During his sea-fearing career, Conrad went to the East three times.\(^2\) And it is during these visits that he had an opportunity to sail in and around the Malay Archipelago. This assignment in the East was instrumental in transforming Conrad from a sea-man to a novelist. It introduced him to the people of the East, especially of the Malayan region. And probably in the observation of life here, Conrad felt a compelling need for self-expression. By this time
he had had direct experiences of life at several European countries - namely, Poland, France, Russia, Spain, Australia and Great Britain. But it was his experience of a land in the Far East, Borneo, that fired his imagination and spurred him on to creativity. Almayer, the Eurasian character of Borneo, attracted Conrad's fancy as the prototype of a fictional hero: "... if I had not got to know Almayer pretty well it is almost certain there would never have been a line of mine in print", Conrad says in one of his autobiographical essays. Elsewhere too, he has acknowledged the influence of the East as the springboard for his literary career: "As to locality it belongs to that part of the Eastern seas from which I have carried away into my writing life the greatest number of suggestions", Conrad says in a note. That the East had whetted his imagination was also evident in the considerable number of his Eastern tales. Apart from the Malay trilogy, there are stories like "Karain" and "The Lagoon" (1898), "Youth" and "The End of the Tether" (1902), Typhoon and "Falk" (1903), "A Smile of Fortune," "The Secret Sharer" and "Freya of the Seven Isles" (1912) and novels and novelettes like Lord Jim (1900), Victory (1915) and The Shadow-Line (1917). While some of these writings use occasional Malayan backdrops, the Malay trilogy records the sensitive attachment of Conrad to the Eastern archipelago in a more concentrated way. The presentation of the Malay Archipelago in his trilogy helped to familiarize this part of
the world to the average British readers. One might say it conjured the archipelago for the imaginative contemplation of the European readers. Hence a light-hearted remark made by one of his anonymous critics has a point: "He is one of the notable literary colonists. He has annexed the Malay Peninsula for us." ⁵

The question may arise as to why Conrad was so much drawn to the Eastern archipelago. In his sea-faring career, he had also been to Spain, to Australia. But these visits remained stray incidents in Conrad's life. In his fiction-writing career Conrad did never seriously turn to them for inspiration, for source-materials or anything else, whereas the Malay Archipelago figured prominently not only in the trilogy but as we have pointed out earlier, in other fictional works and even in non-fictional writings like *A Personal Record* and in many of his letters. The Malayan islands, if we follow the hints supplied in *A Personal Record*, shaped themselves in his mind, "in a hallucinated vision of forests and rivers and seas, far removed from a commercial and yet romantic town of the northern hemisphere." ⁶ For Conrad, it seems, the Malay islands had a mysterious identity, different from their geographical and socio-political existence.

This choice of Conrad may concern some more problems. As
Conrad was a white European writer, writing on non-white Eastern settlements, his exploration of the Malay Archipelago may evoke a number of questions: Did he have an anthropological and ethnographical intention? How much did he know of the Malays to write about them? Did he portray Malay life to project a sympathetic understanding of their political and social life? And lastly, how much of the colonial vision did colour his understanding of the Malays?

To take up the first question first, we know that anthropology and ethnography were vital subjects in the mid-nineteenth century. Around this time (1854-1862) Darwin’s co-discoverer of the theory of Evolution, A.R. Wallace, collected specimens on the Malay Archipelago and discovered the idea of natural selection there. He wrote a book on Malay Archipelago in 1869. Such studies were considered very helpful for colonial expansion and for consolidation of colonial power. But Conrad fervently denounced the idea of the novel being any kind of a document. He asks,

And what is a novel if not a conviction of our fellow-men’s existence strong enough to take upon itself a form of imagined life clearer than reality and whose accumulated verisimilitude of selected episodes puts to shame the pride of documentary history?
So in this view a novel projects an imagined life by organizing a sequence of selected episodes from life and affirms the existence of the people and society as a higher reality. A novel, according to Conrad, is neither discursive nor systematic but yet it presents life "clearer than reality". A novelist is not a historian or an ethnographer or a specialist in any branch of specific knowledge. So the fact is not whether Conrad's contentions are historically authentic or not but whether he had falsified the image of the people and the place by giving a biased view.

This leads us to the question: Did Conrad know the Malay Peninsula well? On this point, the findings of the critics do not go in Conrad's favour. Norman Sherry thinks that considering his short stay in the East, Conrad could not have obtained first-hand information about the East. Sir Hugh Clifford has branded Conrad's version of the "Orientals" as partisan since "Mr Conrad has seen ... as white men do -- from the outside". These critics consider his Malayan tales as rather superficial in their presentation of the people and places. What they imply is that Conrad's Malay world is fictional - the vision of an outsider. It takes shape out of the information derived from visitors, from books, from hearsay and only to a very small extent, from actual observation. But in Conrad's own estimate this indirect method of material collection was not a serious
lapse. Denying the claim to be "an authority on Malaysia", he says in a letter to William Blackwood, "All the details about the little characteristic acts and customs which they hold up as proof [of ignorance] I have taken out (to be safe) from undoubted sources - dull wise books" (13 December, 1898). So the question - how much did Conrad know about the Malays from his own observation is rather irrelevant. But Conrad did not feel his limited firsthand knowledge to be worthless. He pointed out in another letter to William Blackwood: "... as I am writing fiction not secret history - facts don't matter" (6 September, 1897). Being a novelist, his aims were to transmute the scanty details he had at hand, and to recreate a fictional world. For Conrad a novel has to depict the joy and sorrow and the manners and modes of life rather than the details of material existence. And this he could present more through the suggestiveness of his language than through the literal presentation of life.

The third question relates to the extent of empathy between Conrad and the Malay people. To this question the answer of Heliena Krenn is affirmative to some extent. In her view, if Conrad is biased in any way, it is not towards white superiority; he is rather a witness of the moral corruption of the whites and he rated the so-called Malay 'savages' in terms of their nobility and sincerity. I agree with Heliena Krenn's
observation that "Conrad's sympathy consistently seems to lie with the underprivileged," though she commented this mainly in the context of Malay women. I would like to add to Ms Krenn's view that Conrad delineated the inner essence of the Malays which went unnoticed on account of their assumed inferior 'native' status. Conrad showed the way toward an understanding of the people who were at an underdeveloped state in terms of Western civilization. It may be recalled that owing to his childhood memories of his parents' struggling against imperial power in Poland, Conrad intuitively could feel the essence of the tragedy that colonial domination generated. So the question whether his attitude in presenting the Malay life was that of a colonialist is partly answered here. But considering that Conrad was an officer of the Merchant Marine - an organization which existed for the assistance in the overseas colonial trade - we cannot assume that Conrad held strong anti-colonial views.

Zdzislaw Najder, a Polish critic, has drawn attention to the positive gains that resulted from Conrad's choice of the Eastern islands as the setting for the trilogy. Najder dealt with the subject in detail and itemized the aspects which Conrad had the opportunity to highlight through his choice of the Malayan setting:

As a background for a novel the Malay Archipelago had considerable advantages: the sur-
roundings and customs were exotic; they were made interesting by complicated national, political, and religious interrelations, and the conflicts of different civilizations and competing colonial powers. The Malay states, to a large extent independent, came theoretically under the suzerainty of the Dutch government. Conrad's descriptions are unusually accurate for those days; he was apparently intrigued by the theme of struggles aimed at preserving national independence.¹³

Thus primarily the Malay background offered Conrad profuse materials of political and psychological interests for his fiction: the exotic life-style, the national, political and religious imbroglio resulting from the conflicts of different civilizations and competing colonial powers and the scenic background. But Conrad also viewed this background in another serious perspective. He identified the Malayan people as avowed nationalists struggling against Dutch domination. Here we can say that the situations in the Malay islands partly acted as an objective correlative for Conrad: they echo Conrad's childhood traumas. At the same time, Najder views Conrad as a sensitive artist keen on exploiting the fictional potential of the contrast between the lush richness of tropical nature and the dreariness of human life within it.¹⁴

It is historically true that exaggerated accounts of the
"sweet riches of Borneo" reached the ears of the early Dutch, Portuguese and English voyagers and they regarded it as the Eldorado of the Malay Archipelago. And evidently enough, Conrad made use of the romance-elements of these adventures in his fiction. But Conrad was not a facile romancer. In his presentation of those romance elements he shifted the focus. He was interested in man and the interactions of men in difficult circumstances. As James Huneker has noted: "... it is first and last the human soul which concerns Conrad, whether that soul spills itself to him in the jungle or in the forecastle, or among the beachcombers of a South Sea island, or at St Petersburg or Geneva." Conrad opted for different locations in different novels and stories as he had the benefit of exposure to different settlements, but the human interest was basic in all his explorations. He was not merely a marine story-teller. He was an artist. As he says, when he wrote the 10th chapter of Almayer's Folly sitting in the deck of a 2000-ton steamer, he felt that the shade of Flaubert hovered over him. Flaubert whom he calls "the last of the Romantics" and who with the moustaches looked like a descendant of the Vikings enthralled his attention: "Was he not, in his unworldly, almost ascetic, devotion to his art a sort of literary, saint-like hermit?" This invocation of Flaubert was a confession of faith towards his own saint-like devotion to art rather than to history and sociology. So what Conrad wrote on the Malay Archi-
pelago should be primarily read as artistic novels and not as a documentary presentation of life. The artist should concern himself with the truth which he finds within himself, Conrad says much later in a letter to Warrington Dawson, on June 20, 1913: "For me the artists (sic) salvation is in fidelity, in remorseless fidelity to the truth of his own sensations" 17 The truth which Conrad strikes in the exotic Eastern tales is the understanding of human beings amidst the exciting episodes.

But it is historically true that colonialism was the dominant force in the Malay Peninsula which Conrad portrayed. So willy-nilly Conrad's works amount to an assessment of colonialism as an ideology in operation shaping key areas in the life and nature of his fictional characters. He shows how colonial situation moulds the lives of the characters, both familial and public. The characters act and react and have their beings in the atmosphere created by the colonial ethos, though the subtlety of it might go unnoticed by many of them. Each of the three novels in this trilogy, Almayer's Folly, An Outcast of the Islands and The Rescue, opens and ends in the colonial background. As the first two novels are his earliest works - things are less complex in them. And one can see in them the overt authorial intention to underline the colonial setting. Here the Malay community experiences a tough time because of the intruding white rulers. The professed paternal colonial
attitude and concern of Tom Lingard, the British sea-captain, runs counter to the apathetic indifference of the Dutch. The natives exhibit anger and suspicion in their tirade against the white rulers; Lingard's white protégés, Almayer and Willems, do not share his concern for the natives. Above all a debased human relationship leading to conjugal maladjustments puts the whole white-native liaison in an awkward light.

The three novels trace Lingard's encounter with the native Malay societies in reverse chronological order. In terms of fictive chronology, The Rescue comes first. It is centred round Lingard's life and action among the Malay natives. The white people of the Travers group whose arrival unsettles the whole framework are de glamorized here. They become, in a way, foils to the Malay community and Lingard decides to salvage them at the expense of his commitment to the Malays. This novel relates Lingard's life in the Malay region and his failure to achieve his ideal. In the chronological count An Outcast of the Islands comes after The Rescue. Here Willems, a Dutch national, is Lingard's protégé. Lingard attempts sincerely to ensure a stable life for him for more than once. But each time Willems undermines his trust by violating the code of civilized conduct. Almayer's Folly comes last in terms of the events of the story. In Almayer's Folly we see the end of Almayer's career which began when Lingard took him under his care. The earlier part
of his life has been shown in An Outcast of the Islands where
the principal focus was on the character of Willems. In exam-
ining the novels, we shall follow Conrad’s chronology of com-
position.

II

Conrad’s professed aim here, as he states in the Prefaces
to the trilogy, is not to highlight the difference between
“them” and “us”. He is interested in exploring the basic sameness
of mankind in civilized as well as uncivilized countries. As he
puts it in the “Author’s Note” to Almayer’s Folly, he wants to
stress the bond that exists between the whites and “that human-
ity so far away”, meaning the Malays. He further adds:

I am content to sympathise with common mort-
tals, no matter where they live -- in houses
or in tents, in the streets under a fog, or
in the forests behind the dark line of dis-
mal mangroves that fringe the vast solitude
of the sea. For, their land -- like ours --
lies under the inscrutable eyes of the Most
High. (“Author’s Note” to Almayer’s Folly,
P.X). *

It is the feeling that all human beings are creations of
the same God that makes the civilized European and the savage
Malay kin and this bond is not to be overlooked, Conrad seems
to say. This emphasis has brought the Malay setting and the

* All textual references to Almayer’s Folly are taken from
Malay characters into an organic relation with the novelist's main concerns of presenting the life of MAN in society.

Almayer's Folly tells the story of a man of Dutch origin who is a pathetic failure. The novel portrays, with flashbacks, the last stages in the collapse of his dreams of a luxurious future. Almayer was enticed by the promises of a large fortune made by Tom Lingard, the rich and dashing British trader. As a result he marries his Malay protégée and takes charge of Lingard's trading post in Sambir. Meanwhile Lingard undertook a drive to raise further capital so that his long-cherished dream of gold-hunt should materialize and disappeared somewhere in Europe. Though Almayer's Malay wife repels Almayer, he has been greatly attached to their beautiful daughter Nina. He dreams of returning home and enjoying a prosperous happy life in Amsterdam where Nina would be the cynosure of all eyes by virtue of her beauty and wealth. But Lingard did not return and hence his gold-hunt remained an unsolved mystery for Almayer. And Almayer's plans for a retired happy life in Amsterdam are baffled when Nina elopes with a Malay Prince, Dain Maroola. Almayer is left bemoaning his fate, he takes to opium and dies a broken man. This bare skeleton of Almayer's life-story can be worked upon as an allegory of the paradigmatic colonial situation. The colonizer explores far away land and makes money, though he never establishes any deep human-relationship with the people.
Almayer's life has a close parallel to it. He could never love his wife but the byproduct of their union becomes a centre of attraction for his life.

The novel starts with the shrill call of Mrs Almayer to her husband: "Kaspar! Makan!" (p.1), when Almayer was absorbed in his brown study. It startles Almayer and brings him back to reality, the bitterness of living with his Malay wife. This immersion in day-dreams and the subsequent disappointment are recurrent episodes in Almayer's life. It seems integral to Conrad's design of unfolding the lure of colonial spectacle and the subsequent frustration. The lofty and high-sounding promises of colonial enterprise stir up extravagant and limitless aspirations in Almayer and such like gullible agents. Almayer begins dreaming about a Utopian future. But he is foolish and hence overlooks the point that basically he is an incompetent worker as well as a blind victim of colonial pretensions.

As Conrad presents them, Almayer's parents are products of the colonial culture. His father, a subordinate official employed in the Botanical Gardens of Buitenzorg, "grumbled all day at the stupidity of native gardeners" (p.3). His mother "bewailed the lost glories of Amsterdam, where she had been brought up, and of her position as the daughter of a cigar dealer there" (p.4). Hence both of them were reared in the
colonial environment. This environment allows the colonialists to align themselves with outward glory and power, even though they are deprived economically. This had a direct impact on the making of their son’s outlook on life. His father made a display of his own superiority before the gardeners. His mother lamented over her past prosperity as the daughter of a cigar merchant. From them Almayer imbibed the desire for recognition of his white superiority and assumed a right to higher things. When he left home, he was, with great hope and self-assurance, “ready to conquer the world, never doubting that he would.” (p.4). He never questioned his own ability as his external heritage of being a member of a colonial power made him blind to it. To him the prosperity and the distinction of the whites appeared as guaranteed by nature. With this conviction at heart, he left home to make his career. After a period of work under Hudig in Macassar, he attracted Lingard’s attention and became his protégé, thereby bringing his contact closer with colonial trade.

While Almayer was posted under Hudig in Macassar, he acted as an adviser to Lingard. Lingard had already established himself as a rich and successful trader. He was supposed to have a secret and exclusive access to an island full of saleable commodities. Consequently, he had amassed a large fortune. While in Macassar, Lingard paid frequent visits to Hudig’s
firm where Almayer worked. Almayer deified those stalwarts of trade and business for obvious reasons: their overwhelming success in life. That is why when they had a disagreement between them owing to conflicting interest in trade, "to Almayer's ears it sounded like a quarrel of Titans - a battle of the gods." (p.8) As a product of this colonial ethos, Almayer thus mythicized commercial success.

Lingard gradually developed an interest in Almayer. He took him into his confidence and spoke about himself, "of his past life, of escaped dangers, of big profits in his trade, of new combinations that were in the future to bring profits bigger still" (p.9). In this way he hinted at a rewarding future for Almayer if he would join him. And after some time, he openly offered Almayer an enticing amount of money to get him as an active participant in his projects. But he gave one condition that he must marry a Malay girl whom Lingard had adopted. He told Almayer explicitly that marrying a Malay may not be welcome to him and added:

"And do't you kick because you're white! ... Nobody will see the colour of your wife's skin. The dollars are too thick for that, I tell you! And, mind you, they will be thicker yet before I die. There will be millions, Kaspar! Millions I say! And all for her - - and for you, if you do what you are told." (p.10)
So Lingard poured into Almayer's mind ideas which he was prone to run after. Money, dollar, riches - these are the criteria of a man's distinction in a colonial situation. All other considerations go by the board, be it complexion, race or any other thing like that, without money. Almayer fell for the lure of an extravagant dream:

... his ships, his warehouses, his merchandise (old Lingard would not live for ever), and, crowning all, in the far future gleamed like a fairy palace the big mansion in Amsterdam, that earthly paradise of his dreams, where, made king amongst men by old Lingard's money, he would pass the evening of his days in inexpressible splendour. (p.10)

The lure of extravagant splendour in near future overwhelmed his discretion and obscured his human scruples. He read in this offer a reward of opulence "for which he felt himself so well fitted" (p.10). With a covert disrespect for Lingard, Almayer agreed to accept his adopted daughter as his wife. At the same time he had some compunctions of marrying a non-white girl and secretly planned some out-of-the-way methods to get rid of her some day. He thought there should not be any hesitancy in disposing of a Malay woman, though she was his wife and had some education in a convent: "a Malay woman, a slave, after all, to his Eastern mind, convent or no convent, ceremony or no ceremony" (p.11). He was thinking of achieving an immoral shortcut to his targetted dream, even during the
wedding ceremony: "while swearing fidelity, he was concocting plans for getting rid of the pretty Malay girl in a more or less distant future" (p.25). Dreaming of material acquisitions after the marriage, without realizing his own incompetence," he felt a sudden elation in the thought that the world was his" (p.27). So the prevailing colonial ethos has generated two prominent attitudes in Almayer: since he is a white man, he has an inherited right to wealth and prosperity, irrespective of his personal qualities, and, secondly, since he is a white man, he need not bother about the safety and honour of his coloured wife. Nor need he feel remorse in violating the sanctity of marriage vows. Almayer's selfish pursuits are generated and sanctioned by the prevailing colonial environment where sacrifice of moral values at the altar of material success is a normal occurrence.

Almayer's materialistic disposition was again marked in his behaviour towards the Dutch officers. Lingard having disappeared in Europe for capital-raising to facilitate his gold-hunt, Almayer was left alone in Sambir. Almayer expected that Sambir would ultimately go to the British. As the authorial comment says: "The stir made in the whole of the island by the establishment of the British Borneo Company affected even the sluggish flow of the Pantai life. Great changes were expected; annexation was talked of; the Arabs grew civil." (p.38) For
Almayer British protection of Sambir was desirable so that Lingard's expeditions for gold could continue unimpeded. Ultimately however Sambir went to the Dutch rulers. Almayer could not conceal his disappointment at this, strange though it might look in the light of Almayer's own Dutch nationality. He voiced it in front of the Dutch officers when they paid a visit to Sambir to celebrate the occasion. He expressed regret at the non-arrival of the English "who knew how to develop a rich country" (p.41). Almayer's exclusive concern for riches made him even anti-national, an attitude which could not be considered natural by Conrad.

Almayer's avarice led him to venture on a rash, immoral project. He decided to betray Lingard, his benefactor. His previous plan to get rid of his wife did not materialize partly on account of his basic inertia and partly on account of his insatiable expectations from Lingard. In such a marital situation it was no wonder that the couple could not taste happiness in their life. To overcome his frustration, Almayer decided to make some quick money by betraying Lingard and he planned to conduct an exploration for the gold-mine with guidance noted down in Lingard's pocket book. For this purpose, he set aside his hatred of the natives and ingratiated himself with them, notably with Dain Maroola, a Balinese prince whom he supplied gunpowder to settle the internal quarrels in Bali and
with Lakamba, the so-called Rajah of the native Malay community. Though elsewhere he considered the Malays as "Great rascals" (p.151), yet, as the narrative affirms, "he had sacrificed his pride, his honour, and his loyalty in the face of the enormous risk of his undertaking, dazzled by the greatness of the results to be achieved by the alliance so distasteful yet so necessary" (p.76). It is a significant hint towards the making of morally hollow human beings in the colonial environment. Almayer lacks Lingard's dynamism, he lacks Lingard's man-power and he lacks Lingard's moral courage. Besides, he is upto something unfair and immoral. With scanty resources at his disposal, he dreams of entering into a new life of opulence - the usual colonial dream of making money in the colonies to enable him to enjoy a princely life after retirement in the motherland, "where the paradise of Europe was awaiting the future Eastern millionaire." (p.77) But Almayer is a weaker vessel to incubate such a dream. His dream of a thriving career by virtue of just being one of the white race is an audacity even in a colonial background. The successful colonialist needs also physical strength and mental shrewdness. Almayer had none. In the authorial comments we come to know, towards the end of the novel, Lingard's business-house of which Almayer had the charge, became a depressing reminder of Almayer's miserable failure as a commercial agent: "The desk, the paper, the torn books, and the broken shelves, all under a thick coat
of dust. The very dust and bones of a dead-and-gone business" (p.250). He did not have the capability to run the business but was keen on achieving prosperity.

So Almayer's one-sided vision based on dreams of riches alone brought about his destruction. His gold-hunt project ended in a fiasco as Dain Maroola, his chief assistant, became a fugitive after the gunpowder which he was carrying away to Bali caused the death of two Dutch officers. When Almayer was on the verge of breaking down, Nina, his daughter, offered him, instead of solace, the mightiest blow. She eloped with Dain Maroola expressing solidarity with the Malay way of life. Here Conrad brings into focus, along with Almayer's unsuccessful public life, the stark setbacks in his emotional life. His unhealthy addiction to unearned riches costs him Nina, his most precious possession in the emotional scale. Almayer bursts out before his daughter:

"... it was for you, for your happiness I was working. I wanted to be rich; I wanted to get away from here. I wanted to see white men bowing low before the power of your beauty and your wealth. ... I wished to seek a strange land, a civilisation to which I am a stranger, so as to find a new life in the contemplation of your high fortunes, of your triumphs, of your happiness". (p. 125).

So Nina was the inspiration behind his material pursuits.
For her sake, he longed for a total transformation of his living condition and longed for a more glamorous, more ostentatious style of living. This is the usual mode of self-representation of colonial culture: the pursuit of the appearance of grandeur. But Almayer never had the resources of body and mind. He did not make his fortune as Lingard did but accepted marriage as a business transaction hoping long-term profits in the future. Though he had colonialistic vices like the sense of racial superiority, he had none of their virtues. Besides he compromised his character by counterfeiting emotion for money. Now the heart has taken its revenge. His love for his daughter becomes a stranglehold on his heart. Though his love for Nina was genuine, it could not influence the conduct of his daughter. Nina retorted to her father's passionate exclamations:

"You were speaking of gold then, but our ears were filled with the song of our love, and we did not hear you. ... He took me in his arms, he laid his life at my feet". (pp. 224-225)

That is, Dain approached her with heart's affection, something she did not get in the colonial setting from her father. Dain brought tidings of another world. It was a world where a man adored her simply for what she was. It is in this respect that Dain surpassed Almayer. Almayer never thought
about Nina's feelings, about Nina's distinct individuality, but thought of her as an object of display.

Nina had been sent to Singapore for education where she was subjected to insufferable ignominy owing to her half-caste status. So for her "the education ended in a scene of humiliation, in an outburst of contempt from white people for her mixed blood" (p.49). Unable to cope with the unfeeling ways of behaviour of white society, Nina was forced to give up her studies. But Almayer never bothered to enquire why this abrupt termination of her career took place. Nine was humiliated in the white society for her mixed lineage. She was the victim of racial discrimination, an abiding feature of colonialism. Almayer had also been a party to this racism in his treatment of his wife. So the crudity of the white-society's disrespect for Nina eluded his insight. Consequently he could not act as a bridge between his own racial assuredness and the insecure half-caste identity of his daughter. To captivate her, he has only one way left to him: to chant the hymn of riches and of the prospect of their possessing an affluent status which could transcend racial barrier and which Almayer's mother frantically longed for and was frustrated.

In defiance of her finer sensibilities, Almayer wanted from Nina an attitude similar to his own: a sense of superi-
priority over the Malays and an orientation towards wealth. But the Malay society on her mother's side seemed better for Nina:

... the savage and uncompromising sincerity of purpose shown by her Malay kinsmen seemed at least preferable to the sleek hypocrisy, to the polite disguises, to the virtuous pretences of such white people as she had had the misfortune to come in contact with (p. 51).

In her father's overweening concern for her prosperity, she could see the vices of the white society, and so Dain Maroola, a respectable Malay, won her by the earnestness of his desire and his chivalric dedication: "I am the slave of this woman's desire, and she wills it so." (p.227). There is a transparency in his attitudes opposed to the "sleek hypocrisy" and "polite disguises" of the white society. John A. McClure has rightly observed that in his treatment of Dain Maroola Conrad attempts a severe critique of imperial ideology.\textsuperscript{18} Despite her exposure to the westernized life-style in Singapore, Nina considers that this Malay and she herself would be a perfect match for each other: "... we could see through each other's eyes; ... he saw things that nobody but myself and he could see." (p.224). Here Nina stresses the oneness of feeling which she never experienced in her relation with any one of the white society and not even with her father.
But Almayer could not understand Nina's leaning towards the Malay society and in bitter scorn asked her "Have you forgotten the teaching of so many years?" (p. 223) Nina's answer was coolly logical: "No, ... I remember it well. I remember how it ended also. Scorn for scorn, contempt for contempt, hate for hate" (p. 223). She could not obliterate from her memory the severe insult she had to bear in her school for her half-caste status. And since she was a co-sharer of her mother's humiliation on racial grounds, she never had the privilege to share her father's feelings. There was nothing abnormal in her decision to escape from the white society. When Almayer attempted to discriminate between Nina and Dain by saying "... he is a savage. Between him and you there is a barrier that nothing can remove." (p. 223), Nina retorted, in a retrospective vision of her school days, "Between your people and me there is also a barrier that nothing can remove. You ask why I want to go, and I ask you why I should stay." (p. 223). In this context we may consider Allan Hunter's observation. Regarding Almayer's plans to make Nina fit for Western society through her education, Hunter comments:

... Almayer's desire to elevate his daughter by educating her is one that betrays his lack of understanding on a biological as well as a social plane, for he seems to think that knowledge is equal to civilisation, which
will continue in its influence on genera-
tions of Almayer descendants.... Almayer has
no idea how difficult the task he is at-
tempting is, and neither incidentally, have
huge quantities (sic) of colonists and mis-
sionaries like him.¹⁹

Like other colonialists, Almayer fails to understand that
exposure to western education can give only an exterior polish.
For the native, absorption of western civilization depends on
more elementary matters like life-style, manners, behavioural
patterns and so on. Almayer spends money for his daughter's
education, but he maltreats his Malay wife who is one of Nina's
parents. Nina is exceptionally beautiful but she faces insult
in Singapore for her half-caste status. These factors militate
against the success of Almayer's plans of absorbing Nina in the
Western society.

So Almayer's racial abhorrence of his Malay wife boomer-
anged in his emotional life. Nina's grievance over the ignominy
of her school-life was increased by Almayer's maltreatment of
his wife. If Almayer had not agreed to marry exclusively on
financial grounds, or even if he did, had he behaved a little
more politely with his wife, Nina would not have taken her
Singapore maltreatment so tragically. But seeing her mother's
sad plight at home Nina could easily generalize racial hatred
as normal to the whites and developed an aversion to the whites
which included her father. She understood that Almayer had set great store on her as a support for his future life back home at Netherlands where her beauty and wealth would make her a centre of attraction. But this, in Nina's estimate, is valorizing human relationships for other ends than human feelings. She felt this more poignantly as she was a witness of the antagonistic relationship that prevailed between her parents as she pointed this out to Almayer before his separation from her: "Between you and my mother there never was any love." (p.239). That she had silently suffered from it came to be known to Almayer too late.

Before Nina's departure with Dain, Almayer lost his balance and forecast a disastrous future for Nina:

"Do you know what you are doing? Do you know what is waiting for you if you follow that man? ... Do you know that you shall be at first his plaything and then a scorned slave, a drudge, and a servant of some new fancy of that man"? (p. 222).

Almayer did not realize that his own wife had gone through all these macabre experiences except the last one he listed, of being a slave in the house when the husband had taken fancy to another woman. Almayer was a physical wreck to indulge in it. Almayer tried to stop Nina from marrying Dain by projecting his own vile character on to Dain. As Ruth L. Nadelhaft
has put it, "It is characteristic of the white European to project onto the Malay his own lack of commitment to his wife"\textsuperscript{20}. Of course Almayer need not be taken as a representative of all white Europeans. He was a weak specimen. But we can see that his weakness degenerates into a vice because of the colonial situation. It is the gulf that widens between the races in the colonial framework that made him suspect Dain's motive so malignantly. Dain was an unworthy suitor because of his race and colour. And Almayer's maltreatment of his own Malay wife makes it impossible for him to think of love across the racial barrier. This animosity to the non-white race was another reason for which Nina disowned her own identification with her father. She flung her reaction at his face: "I am not of your race."(p. 223). She found Dain closer to her than her father as racial differences had been such an obsession with him.

Towards the end of the novel when Nina, not without some remorse, leaves her father for Dain, the events of the Almayer family are recapitulated, specially, Almayer's maltreatment of his Malay wife. Mrs Almayer was brought up by Lingard and she had imbibed haughtiness in temper from the background. Lingard found her in a pirate boat which he had overpowered. She responded to the affection of Lingard and accepted the new environment. After all, she was also a daughter of warriors,
conquered in battle and in such warlike situation she belonged rightfully to the victorious Rajah. It was a part of the tradition and she submitted as a booty to Lingard who won her rightly after a fierce fight with her countrymen. But she misinterpreted Lingard's intention. She was aware of her beauty and on the same ground, considered old Lingard to be a captive of her physical charms. When Lingard, as her benevolent guardian, sent her to a convent in Singapore, she did not demur. She was only waiting for the right opportunity to subjugate Lingard completely by becoming his wife. She adjusted herself easily to the role of Lingard's adopted daughter but hoped inwardly that one day she would be able to coax him to marry her:

She called Lingard father, gently and caressingly, at each of his short and noisy visits, under the clear impression that he was a great and dangerous power it was good to propitiate. Was he not now her master? And during those long four years she nourished a hope of finding favour in his eyes and ultimately becoming his wife, counsellor, and guide (p.25).

What she saw in Lingard was not the man, but a symbol of power. Thus as a young girl poised between her Malay heritage and a white culture she adjusted herself to the colonial milieu. It was a society where the ruled should ingratiate himself or herself with the ruler to share power with him. Human relationship in such a milieu was based on shrewdness of adjustments.
Contrary to her expectation, Lingard selected Almayer for her husband. She displayed remarkable pragmatism in submitting to his will as it was not in her power to contradict. But she was determined to claim equality with Almayer by virtue of being his wife, whereas in conformity with the usual colonial practice, the institution of marriage could not endow equality between interracial couple. So the Malay girl’s conjugal life started with protest against racial discrimination. When Almayer refused to concede equality to her, she reacted violently to her disappointment, she “commenced to treat him with a savage contempt expressed by sulky violence, only occasionally varied by outbursts of savage invective” (p.29). So the conjugal life of the Almayers in the colonial environment was a complete disaster.

After her failure to dominate Almayer, she fixed Nina as her target. But then Lingard intervened and sent her to Singapore for education in a convent. Years after, when she was bidding farewell to Nina before Nina’s elopement with Dain in which she was instrumental, she expressed happiness as she thought that through this she could avenge herself on Almayer. She told Nina “You were his daughter then; you are my daughter now” (p. 187)
Lingard and Almayer tried to take Nina away from Mrs Almayer's influence to educate her in a Western environment but Mrs Almayer sent her back to the Malay society. Maltreatment of the native people breeds resistance in them and claims of self-respect widen the gulf between the ruler and the ruled. So the barrier remains indestructible as it was in the case of Almayer and his wife. As a native woman married to a white, she suffered humiliation and that made her understand the colonial system of subjugation. She advised that Dain should take upon himself the responsibility to expose the hypocrisy of white colonialists: "Let him slay the white men that come to us to trade, with prayers on their lips and loaded guns in their hands" (p. 190). Mrs Almayer touched here the paradigmatic situation of the myth of the colonial mission, exchange of the Bible with the land. She saw hypocrisy all around and forgot that she had once worshipped Lingard.

Mrs Almayer supported the Nine-Dain affair chiefly because Dain was a Malay prince and she wanted a vindication of her honour. Besides, she saw that it was a financially viable alliance. As we have already mentioned, Mrs Almayer had acquired values of colonialist culture where the possession of riches was considered a guarantor of status. She also had other characteristics inherited from the piratical Sultan's family to which she belonged. She had thus a natural proclivity to-
wards unfair exacting, bargaining and amassing of wealth like a mercenary. She did not feel embarrassed to throw away her convent education to bargain for a bride-price from her would-be son-in-law. She exacted a handsome amount from Dain and expected still more. To Nina she explained it rather shamelessly thus:

"That is all mine, and for you. It is not enough! He will have to give more before he takes you away to the southern island where his father is king. You hear me? You are worth more, granddaughter of Rajahs! More! More!" (pp. 81-82).

The more she claimed for Nina, the more, she thought, she added to Nina's repute. Towards the end of the novel, when Mrs Almayer escaped to conceal her involvement in Nina's elopement, she still set her eyes on the dollars which she had received as Nina's price; "I cannot leave my dollars behind", she said (p.195). Thus her instincts and activities hovered around material pursuits in gross violation of her motherly duty.

Tom Lingard appeared in Almayer's Folly in flashbacks only. The maker of the unfortunate match of Almayer and Mrs Almayer had something of a flamboyant nature and was proud of his paternalistic undertakings. As a member of the white race,
he took great pride in his power of intervention in the affairs of the native community. "I carry everything right through", he boasted. (p.26) Basically he was a sea-man, a dynamic one with his eyes on expeditions and conquests but with a kind of benevolence which he sought to enforce on his victims. Exercising his natural propensity in the colonial settings, he found nothing abnormal in using threats to Almayer to win his consent for something good he had envisaged for him. The result of this desire to do good to two persons with contrary visions in life led to the inevitable disaster. This megalomania of Lingard forms a sharp contrast to the humble but spontaneous zeal of Dain. He loved Nina and was ready to stake his life for her, though he was conscious of the difference that existed between them. He contemplated: "She was his, and yet she was like a woman from another world." (p.235) While assessing Nina, Dain did not consider her mixed white lineage a cause for repugnance. Brought up in a colonial household and educated in an expensive school Nina belonged to a superior category of people but Dain was not overwhelmed by it. Nina's individuality was his concern, Nina's superiority did not bother him.

In the end Almayer's refuge was "Almayer's Folly". This was the name given by the lighthearted sea-men to a half-finished building of Almayer. Almayer, as we have noticed, at the early part of his career was quite excited at the prospect
of the establishment of the British-Borneo company in Sambir. He started building this new house" for the use of the future engineers, agents, or settlers of the new Company" (p.38). But Sambir ultimately went to the control of the Dutch and so Almayer’s dream of receiving the English officers did not materialize. The building was left half-finished as a stark image of Almayer’s short-sightedness in public affairs. In the last phase of his life, he took shelter in “Almayer’s Folly” after burning his first house to obliterate the memory of his daughter. “Almayer’s Folly” became a symbol of frustration and of broken dreams, both of his public hope and private peace. He began taking opium to forget his grief and frustration. And yet the Chinaman, Jim-Eng, who shared with him the last moments of his life, renamed the house with a Chinese title which in English meant House of heavenly delight (p.257). By this ironic twist Conrad lays bare the fact that Almayer failed to arouse any sympathy in anyone. So “Almayer’s Folly” houses a totally unsuccessful man, his failures emanating from his folly which he partly acquired by pursuing the disorientated ideology of colonialism: avarice, racial pride and feeling of hatred towards the natives but mostly because of his lack of self-knowledge. Conrad carries this analysis of Almayer in his next novel, An Outcast of the Islands, where Almayer fulminates with more justification against the world: “The world’s a swindle! A swindle! Why should I suffer? What have I done to be treated
so?" (p. 367). *

An Outcast of the Islands was Conrad's sequel to Almayer's Folly, though in fictive chronology it came before Almayer's Folly. Here also the protagonist was a Dutchman called Willems. Lingard befriended him and twice assisted him to get settled in life. But twice Willems betrayed Lingard's kind and considerate plans and violated the bounds of morality. The commercial opportunism of the colonialists observed by Conrad in his sea-faring life found a reflection for the second time in this book.

The principal actions of the novel have been placed in the closing decades of the nineteenth century when European society was deeply engrossed in commercial expansionism and colonial adventures. In the "Author's Note" to An Outcast... Conrad says that he considered this novel to be "the most tropical" of his Eastern tales. (p.ix). He says that here he has been more interested in the enthralling scenery of the East than in the events of the story and confesses: "... the story itself was never very near my heart" (p.ix). But we know that Conrad had met the prototype of Willems in the East. He was a European who had the stigma attached to him as one who had "brought the Arabs into the river". (p.x). As Conrad was a shrewd observer of the colonial scenario, the possibility of an unholy nexus

between the European and the Arabs arrested his attention. The protagonist of the novel (Willems) absorbed the grabbing spirit of colonial culture of the period before he could master the use of English. While explaining the reason for his motive for departure from Holland, his home, at an adolescent age, he said to Lingard: "... not want go home. Get money here; home no good". (p.15). Like Almayer he set his eyes on money as the goal of his life, and came to the tropics to gain it.

Taking fancy to the boy, Lingard settled him in Hudig's business. After some time he got married to Joanna, a Eurasian girl of Protuguese descent, though in reality she was the illegitimate daughter of Hudig himself, an aberration unavoidable in colonial societies. Like Almayer, Willems also consented to his marriage with material gains in view, to please Hudig. Hudig was his boss. Naturally Willems was eager to win his favour and consented to Hudig's negotiations, remaining totally ignorant of the girl's parentage. So here was a man who entered into wedlock with designs characterized by avarice and opportunism.

His marriage added an extra dimension to his downfall. His wife and his in-laws offered him immense pleasure as they showed him great respect because of his racial status. As the author-narrator says:
That family's admiration was the great luxury of his life. It rounded and completed his existence in a perpetual assurance of unquestionable superiority. He loved to breathe the coarse incense they offered before the shrine of the successful white man; the man that had done them the honour to marry their daughter, sister, cousin; ...(pp.3-4).

This is the real danger of the colonial situation. Even a worthless man like Willems can begin to believe himself as a supernatural figure because of the adoration these people show him. He begins to believe in his unquestionable superiority and identifies himself with a god-like successful white man and his self-knowledge goes by the board.

A craze for power over others and an affectation of superiority had prevented the growth of any healthy human relationship between him and his wife. His sense of racial superiority reached the supreme height of illusion. Though his fortune was derived from Hudig's munificence and temporary embezzlement of his money, he could not estimate the impact of this moral lapse on him as well as on the universe to which he belonged:

... he was unable to conceive that the moral significance of any act of his could interfere with the very nature of things, could dim the light of the sun, could destroy the perfume of the flowers, the submission of his wife, the smile of his child, the awe-
struck respect of Leonard da Souza and of all the Da Souza family. (p.3)

This moral and spiritual insensitivity remained a characteristic of all his acts. He indulged himself in the thought that the white man had always enjoyed the benefit of doubt on judgement from the natives as well as from colonial establishments. And that is why he "judged himself with the indulgence that should be extended to the weaknesses of genius" (p.11), as Conrad puts it ironically. In every sphere of life he was ready to throw scruples to the winds.

But Hudig dismissed him immediately after discovering the financial irregularities. His wife, this time, did not support his action and he became a vagabond, leaving his wife and child. Later on, Lingard reappeared in his life and put him at the trading-post of Sambir under Almayer's supervision. So like Almayer, Willems also became an agent of Lingard's colonial trade. There also Willems concentrated on personal gratification rather than assuming responsibility for the expansion of trade. This time he fell for sexual pleasures as well which he derived from Aissa, an Arab woman settled in the Malay islands. It was by chance accident that Willems and Aissa met and it did not take Willems much time to win Aissa. Later on Aissa overpowered him completely. And, he noted, he had lost his self-hood as the price for this infatuation:
Where was the assurance and pride of his cleverness; the belief in success, the anger of failure, the wish to retrieve his fortune, the certitude of his ability to accomplish it yet? Gone. All gone. All that had been a man within him was gone,... (p. 77).

But still, despite this diminution in self-estimation, he failed to assess himself morally. He suggested that there were extenuating circumstances in his submission to Aissa which otherwise would have meant moral turpitude. By attributing the aberration to some external factor, he sought to give a clean sheet to himself. He was struck by the act of Providence, "that had made him what he was;" (p. 127). Moreover, he was ungrateful enough to forget his indebtedness to Lingard. His self-centred epicurean philosophy made him blind to all moral compunctions:

Scruples were for imbeciles. His clear duty was to make himself happy. Did he ever take an oath of fidelity to Lingard? No. Well then - he would not let any interest of that old fool stand between Willems and Willems' happiness. (p. 142).

What is most characteristic of Willems is that nothing is more important to him than self-gratification. Twice he took Lingard's help to ballast his fluctuating fortune. But he did not feel even the slightest compunction in betraying his bene-
factor. In the early part of his career, Lingard had taken Willems into his confidence and had disclosed the secret way by which he got his tradeswares: "Well, it's up that river of mine about which people talk so much and know so little" (p.43). Through this river, Lingard said, he had got access to a particular island: "that's where I get all my guttah and rattans" (p.43). Naturally he advised Willems: "Keep mum about my river when you get amongst the traders again" (p.43). This trust Willems decided to betray and gave away the secret to Lingard's rival traders in exchange for Aissa's company. The local Arab traders planned to use Aissa as a pawn to win Willems' allegiance and he gave in with least concern for Lingard. Through this emphasis on Machiavellian deals and hedonistic philosophy, Conrad seems to be exposing the danger of the colonial agents in regard to their moral character. Colonial adventure can be heroic to heroic men only - but colonialism does not guarantee higher values. Conrad seems to present these characters such as Willems as moral wrecks. The colonial enterprise, instead of producing higher heroic virtues in men engaged in such missions, in reality, produces only moral wrecks like Willems and Almayer. Greedy characters like willems and Almayer go to seeds in the colonial environment much too easily.

Reckless and illegitimate enterprise leads to degenera-
tion of man in the new country where the social and moral laws of the motherland do not operate. There man is free to commit crimes with impunity. Willems has fallen a prey to Aissa's sexual charms and proposes to elope with her, as he says:

"And then I would have her all to myself away from her people - all to myself under my own influence - to fashion - to mould - to adore - to soften-to... Oh! Delight! And then - then go away to some distant place where, far from all she knew, I would be all the world to her" (p. 92).

He thought once he got out of the periphery of the Malay region, he would remain accountable to nobody for his actions. Willems pinned his faith on happiness with Aissa in a distant island in primitive self-abandon. Sexuality with total unconcern for moral or social or legal sanction is a perversion, is a dream of dissipation. Little trace is here of the sacred spark of colonial idealism. To run away to some distant island is a recurring desire in Willems' psyche. Towards the end of the novel, when Lingard nabbed him and demanded explanation for his betrayal, Willems appealed to Lingard to send him to a distant island: "Captain Lingard... anything... a deserted island... anywhere... I promise...", he implored (p. 274). This is a kind of figural representation of a white man's unconscious longing for freedom from moral sanctions. As a white man Willems represents a fugitive from law and
morality rather than an adventurer with high principle and such fugitives find lease of life to commit further crimes in the colonial settings where their instincts for villainy find unrestrained expression. Willems was essentially a thoughtless man and short-sighted hopes spring easily in his breast. Led by the persuasions of the Arabs and the Malays, he openly challenged Lingard's authority and "ran up a Dutch flag to the mast-head" (p. 179). He forcibly took away the entire quantity of gun powder from Almayer's store: "The most unheard-of thing! An outrage! A fiendish outrage!" in Almayer's view (p. 180). And all this he did as he became the slave of Abdulla, the Arab trader, as Babalatchi, the distinguished Malay figure, says," Yes, he lives by Abdulla's will" (p. 229).

Even after his betrayal, Lingard left Willems physically unscathed. As a punitive measure, he made Willems a captive in Lakamba's settlements on a dark clearing of the Pantai. Willems, who initially went into rhapsodies over Aissa, started reverting to his racial prejudice. He set his mind to move to some white men's land:

There were ships there - ships, help, white men. Men like himself. Good men who would rescue him, take him away, take him far away where there was trade, and houses, and other men that could understand him exactly, appreciate his capabilities; ...(p. 329).
So his sense of white superiority has again manifested itself crudely. This rises to a crescendo in the scene when his wife, Joanna, appears. Unable to bear the long separation from her husband Joanna with her child comes one day to claim back her husband. Aissa challenged Joanna's identity and Willems silenced Aissa's challenge by saying that she was his real wife, sanctioned by both law and God: "My wife according to our white law, which comes from God!" (p. 355). The tone was one of taunting which put his association with Aissa at a lower level. The white law was invoked with some sense of superiority to put Aissa in her place. Earlier he used the same attitude to Joanna. But Aissa was no Joanna. This humiliation made her mad with anger and she shot him dead.

From her early days, Aissa had been subjected to oppression by white men. Her father Omar was a leader of Brunei rovers. He was a very prosperous man, enjoying splendour and luxury everywhere. But white rulers put an end to his daring sea-career. In an explosion he became blind and ultimately lost all his riches, and was turned into a beggar. This change of fortune was a bitter assault for Aissa. She was vocal and she voiced her resentment against white men courageously:
"What is that land beyond the great sea from which you come? A land of lies and of evil from which nothing but misfortune ever comes to us - who are not white". (p. 144).

The white rulers had encroached upon their land, had exploited them, had brought them nothing but misery. Aissa was determined to avenge herself on the oppressors. So when Willems fell for her physical attractions, Aissa immediately responded and gradually subjugated him. She entered into the relationship with proper calculation of her gain. Willems "was of victorious race", she speculated. And she had the memory of a bitter past:

With a vivid remembrance of the great catastrophe of her life he appeared to her with all the fascination of a great and dangerous thing; of a terror vanquished, surmounted, made a plaything of (p. 75).

She remembered the catastrophe in her part - the misfortunes that fell on her one-time powerful father. She was extremely satisfied over her achievement of getting a protector from the army of white rulers. She had overcome her object of terror, the white man. So this was her opportunity to get on the upward swing on the fortune's wheel. It remained for her to make him a new addition to her own community and planned accordingly that "She must put between him and other white men a barrier of hate" (p. 153). Willems must not only
stay with his physical presence, but in outlook and attitude also he should behave like a member of her community as far as practicable. Juliet McLauchlan has rightly pointed out that Willems' fixed idea at the height of his infatuation is to take Aissa right away, but she consistently urges him towards the path of greatness as her people envisage it - very much along the lines laid down by Mrs Almayer for Nina in her role as Dain's wife. Being an Arab girl, Aissa is committed to Abdulla and tries to exact Willems' allegiance to the Arab society. In fact, in Willems, she saw the right chance to revamp her drooping Arab identity. At the same time the loving care with which he spoke to Aissa on his first appearance, revived her hope for a bright future:

"When he came I was the daughter of a beggar -- of a blind man without strength and hope. He spoke to me as if I had been brighter than the sunshine -- more delightful than the cool water of the brook by which we met ..." (p. 251).

Though Willems has proved himself essentially a non-entity, the memory of those days still haunted Aissa and that is why Aissa would not surrender him to Lingard: "He is all! Everything. He is my breath, my light, my heart .... Leave him to me ..." (p. 253).
So this love-story was basically a strategy of domination within the framework of colonial culture. As a subjugated member of the colonial society, Aissa developed bitter cynicism about the whites. The Willems-Aissa encounter was clouded because Aissa was constantly looking back on the whites' unfeeling ways of behaviour towards the non-whites. Similarly, except for his overwhelming sensual infatuation, Willems was also disinclined to shake off his antipathy towards the inferior race of the people he met in the East. In the light of their respective hatred for each other, the relationship was destined to crash. Conrad projected the inescapable psychological barrier that existed between them as immensely powerful like elemental forces to intercept, influence and finally destroy their relations.

In this context, we may refer to what Wincenty Lutoslawski says about the novel. He says that in *An Outcast of the Islands* Conrad has adopted that attitude to interracial marriage as one finds in Polish literature. According to Lutoslawski,

Polish literature is full of such stories of tragic love between Poles and the children of their enemies of different race. There is no greater distance between a Malay wife and an English mariner than between a Polish girl and a German or Muscovite. In reading the Outcast I saw that Conrad, like many of our writers, was disguising thoroughly Polish feelings under the garb of exotic conditions.
According to Lutoslawski, Conrad picked up a basically Polish material and reset it in the background of the Malay Archipelago. So despite its exotic settings the novel presented an essential Polish problem and its accompanying feelings. But this is also a colonial problem of alienation and suspicion generated by a colonial environment. It does not matter whether it happens in Poland or in the Malay Archipelago. Only in the Eastern location the enmity is aggravated because of colour prejudices. The word which is often repeated in An Outcast... about the natives is "savage". The gap between the German and the Polish could not have been so wide. During the period of his Eastern tours, Conrad came across some live examples of tragic misalliances between whites and natives. These observations along with the Polish experience inspired him to identify colonialism as the cause of such tragic human relationships. Accordingly, in An outcast... Conrad marked the conspicuous absence of human understanding between races which appeared as the characteristic fall-out of colonial culture.

As for Lingard in An Outcast... Conrad presented him in the role of an enthusiastic idealistic adventurer, childlike and often a gullible individual, but, generous:
Always visiting out-of-the-way places of that part of the world, always in search of new markets for his cargoes - not so much for profit as for the pleasure of finding them... (p. 14).

He sought trading posts for some instinctive fulfilment and not for profit alone. Conrad was too lavish in itemizing Lingard's merits to set him apart from his two white protégés. The behavioural licence that white men enjoyed in the colonies perverted Almayer and Willems but left Lingard untouched so far as the first two novels are concerned. In this context, it is of interest to refer to Conrad's idea about the British adventurers in his essay "Well done". He opines "... there is nothing more futile than an adventurer, but nobody can say that the adventurous activities of the British race are stamped with the futility of a chase after mere emotions." (Notes on Life and Letters, p.190). Here, in An Outcast..., Lingard as the British adventurer, achieves something more than "a chase after mere emotions". The authorial comment says. "... he had to work hard navigating, trading, and also, in obedience to his benevolent instincts, shaping stray lives he found here and there under his busy hand" (p. 198), and "... he had an inclination to set right the lives of other people... " (p.199). He attempted to accomplish something which he sincerely believed to be his duty. His natural goodness made him think of setting the world right. Emphasizing that Lingard was a de-
voted idealist, Jerry Allen comments that the Malays, people of the forests and the sea, knew Lingard as a protector, shielding them against the pirates. 23

But at times Lingard could not avoid his susceptibility to megalomania induced by colonial power: "D'ye see, I have them all in my pocket. The rajah is an old friend of mine. My word is law..." (p. 43). Further, he says, : "I am more master there than his Dutch Excellency down in Batavia ever will be..." (p. 45). Lingard was obsessed with his awareness of self-importance which distorted his otherwise pleasant portrait. In his view, he was the supreme authority in the islands. He felt that he was in a position to command the Arabs, the Dutch, the Malays - any of the races present in those settlements. Conrad was cautious to rationalize this abnormality in Lingard's behaviour:

... a man does not live for years beyond the pale of civilized laws without evolving for himself some queer notions of justice. Nobody of those he knew had ever cared to point out to him the errors of his conceptions (p.235).

So Lingard's idiosyncrasies may be attributed to his lack of contact with human beings of the same background and culture, and to his mode of living beyond the pale of civilized
laws. Elsewhere, too, Conrad’s remark seems uncritical about Lingard:

... knowing nothing of Arcadia - he dreamed of Arcadian happiness for that little corner of the world which he loved to think all his own. His deep-seated and immovable conviction that only he-he, Lingard-knew what was good for them was characteristic of him, and, after all, not so very far wrong. (P.200)

This is characteristic of the paternalistic attitude which colonialism promoted and since Lingard spontaneously believed in his strength for doing good, he ventured into certain activities which did not always produce desired effects. His welfare projects were often conceived on a grandiose scale. In addition to that, his tendency to impose his thought on others made him often intervene in others’ personal lives, though Lingard offered his help in a more or less disinterested way, as he was always imbued with the paternalistic philanthropic mission characteristic of certain aspects of colonialism. But such imposition of will on others destroyed the beneficiaries as he had chosen wrong vessels for his blessings. He was wrong to expect moral strength and idealism in all white men. Both in the cases of Almayer and Willems Lingard later realized his mistakes.

Lingard’s expectation of moral strength and idealism in
all white characters even in Almayer and Willems is integrally connected with the colonial setting. The colonial setting creates such one-sided and blinkered vision of life. Generalization about racial characteristics and half-truths about each other are very common in the colonial encounter. As Reynold Humphries has rightly commented in an essay in Conradiana, "Trading in the East is seen as a right when exercised by Europeans, but 'piracy' when exercised by Arabs.... An Arab point of view might have talked of 'interference' from Lingard,..." He further says that both novels project the Arabs as villains compared to the white men: "... the villains of the piece are the Arabs...". What Humphries emphasizes is that the European colonialists had unfairly branded the Arabs as villains whereas in reality they were competitors to the white traders. But in a colonial situation adversaries of white men are usually stigmatized.

As Conrad has shown, the entire colonial situation thrives on this type of racial discriminations. There is Babalatchi, the influential Malay aide to the native ruler who castigates the white men:

"... you whites have taken all: the land, the sea, and the power to strike! And there is nothing left for us in the islands but your white men's justice; your great justice that knows not anger" (p. 229).
This is again a typical claim on behalf of colonialism that the white men bring law and justice to the native-ruled tyrannical states. Babalatchi does not think that this justice is any good to them as it is a mode of exploitation. But he knows that the white men have their weaknesses and that will destroy them:

"Let one white man destroy another. The will of the Most High is that they should be fools. They know how to keep faith with their enemies, but towards each other they know only deception.... I have seen! I have seen!". (p. 60).

With this basic knowledge of white men's inherent weakness and duplicity, Babalatchi planned to ruin Lingard through Willems. To quote Juliet McLauchlan once again:

Always we are aware that Babalatchi is the guiding force. It is Babalatchi who at a crucial point convinces Willems that he must "submit" to Aissa's will (that he help Abdullah). If he does not he may "have to live without her".... Very ironically, the only time we see Willems acting competently and commandingly is when he is in desperate pursuit of Aissa, thus furthering Babalatchi's aims.

Thus the natives are aware of the note of disintegration which strikes the white men almost unfailingly. The Malays
are clever enough to take advantage of this moral weakness of the whites. So here Conrad's centre of focus seems to be on the myth of native inferiority. Conrad shows that the Malays are clever enough to employ the white man (Willems) to achieve their own ends. But on account of their racial prejudice, the self-appointed white guardians are often ignorant of this shrewdness practised on them by the natives. In a colonial society, apartheid is the rule - each group leads the life of a closed unit devoid of healthy communications among each other. An Outcast... articulated the ill-feeling that each race bore to the other which created a dehumanized environment. We may even say that in this novel each race is an outcast for the other, having been denied free human communication with one another.

We have said earlier that in fictive chronology, The Rescue occupies the first position in the trilogy but Conrad wrote it as the third in the chain. On the surface level, The Rescue is the story of an extra-marital love between two English people in a Malay setting. But, for Conrad, The Rescue occupied a special status. And that is why he stopped it midway, feeling hesitant over the narrative. He disclosed that though he saw the action "plainly enough", he was looking for a matching prose-style "to master both the colours and the shades" ("Author's Note" to The Rescue p.10).* Evidently, Conrad conceived The

* All textual references to The Rescue are from The Rescue, Harmondsworth: Penguin Modern Classics, 1950.
Rescue as something more than a pot boiler.

A summary of the main events may be helpful. The Dutch have subjugated most of the native Malay tribes in the Archipelago. For this, Captain Tom Lingard, an independent cargo carrier, strongly dislikes the Dutch. He has an intimate personal relationship with two natives: Hassim, an ousted Malay prince, and, Immada, his sister. Despite the ban imposed by the Dutch government on the supply of arms to the Malays, Lingard supplies war materials to Hassim so that he may restore his position as the rajah of the island. He has the support of two other independent chieftains, Belarab and Daman and of a white man, Captain Jörgenson, who works as custodian of the arms.

In the meantime, an English yacht gets stranded near the Bornean coast where the ammunitions are secretly kept. Captain Lingard fears that if a Dutch gunboat comes to assist the yacht, the Dutch authorities will find out the cache of arms and all the plans of Lingard and Hassim will fail. So, in order to avert the calamity, Lingard proposes to help the stranded passengers. But Mr Travers, the owner of the yacht, refuses to accept his assistance and tells him that Dutch gunboats have been sent for.

While Travers and his friend d’Alcacer are walking on the
beach in the evening, Lingard comes to Edith, the wife of Mr Travers, and tells her all about his plan to restore Hassim to the throne. He also warns her of danger to the lives of the occupants of the yacht. In the meanwhile Daman's men capture Travers and d'Alcacer as Daman is afraid of the far-reaching consequences of the white invasion in the Far East. Edith requests Lingard to bring her husband and d'Alcacer back to her. By now Lingard has fallen in love with Edith. Lingard goes to Daman and tries to negotiate with him. Later on Lingard goes to Belarab who now has the custody of the whites.

While Lingard stays back in Belarab's stockade, Daman and a local tyrannical leader, Tengga, along with some sea-robbers surround the Emma, where the arms have been kept. They say that Lingard has become a slave of the yacht people and will not return. From Jørgenson, Tengga demands the custody of the ammunitions. By this time he has captured Hassim and Immada, perhaps to forestall Lingard's retaliation against his determination "to obtain possession of the Emma". Jørgenson decides to send a messenger to Lingard to inform him of the sudden danger befalling them. For some time he waits for Lingard's return or his message, but in vain. Jørgenson is least inclined to hand over to the raiders the cache of arms of which he was a very devoted custodian. In a desperate bid with a lighted cigar in his mouth he jumps down into the hatchway of the Emma,
and thus the ship explodes and kills all on board and many around the ship. All are shocked by this event. Nobody intercepts when the whites go back in peace to their yacht. Lingard and Edith meet for the last time and he tells her that so long her attraction was an overpowering influence on him and his all other commitments were neglected by him. But now he returns to his senses. Thereafter she goes to her husband whose yacht goes towards south and Lingard sails his ship northward. In this way Conrad grafted materials of heroic romance of loyalties to friends on stereotype materials of an adulterous love affair. Lingard’s commitment to Hassim highlighted the conflict between selfless devotion and selfish infatuation.

The entire plot pivots on the actions of Lingard against a background which is colonial. The location is Eastern islands, the natives there are oppressed by the aggressive Dutch control and the philanthropic British trader Lingard is there with his commitment to the restoration of the native prince to his throne. But at the very beginning of the novel Conrad makes a distinction between the types of people like Lingard and the avowed colonialists. Lingard and his types are freelancers and adventurers with a chivalrous spirit guided by simple feelings free from any link with colonial establishments or channels of trade. More often than not, people like Lingard were dubbed as 'law-breakers' rather than pioneers of orderly progress under
a colonial flag. As the authorial comment puts it,

Their lives were thrown away for a cause that had no right to exist in the face of an irresistible and orderly progress - their thoughtless lives guided by a simple feeling. (italics mine) (p.16).

But Lingard is also a product of the colonial age and is imbued with the philanthropic ideas which some colonialists generated. But this type of people, heroic no doubt, often suffers from emotional imbalance and appears "defenceless as a child before the shadowy impulses of his own heart" (p.21). The Rescue presents thus the "wasted" life of Tom Lingard who has failed to figure as a pioneer of so-called orderly progress but his activities are full of idealism and are "tinged with romance".

Thus Lingard, as he appears in The Rescue is young, emotional and romantic. When we look back on the career of Lingard from The Rescue backward, and in fact, chronologically forward, we find that the drama of The Rescue helped him to master, as Ruth L. Nadelhaft has put it, "the ambiguity of his relation to his own culture". In England, he was one of the dispossessed, "that child of generations of fishermen from the coast of Devon" (p. 21). But here on the stranded yacht, he met
the rich and the socially superior Travers family on equal terms. "I am a white man inside and out;" (p. 42), he says to Mr Travers' messenger. He has overcome the barrier of the hierarchies of his society figurally through his infatuation with Mrs Travers. He has left home "sixteen years ago" (p. 135) and hence has been out of touch with British women for this long period. Mrs Travers with her elegant aristocratic manners revives his memory of his ancestral race which he left uncared for in his pursuit of adventures over seas. Naturally he feels an overwhelming passion for her: "Lingard gazed at her with that unconscious tenderness mingled with wonder, which some men manifest toward girlhood. There was nothing of a conqueror of kingdoms in his bearing." (p. 207). Leaving aside his colonial acquisitions, Lingard views Mrs Travers as the embodiment of eternal girlhood to whom as a man he feels a very strong attraction. Thus his enforced colonial asceticism is the responsible factor behind his maddening impulse for Mrs Travers.

In this context we would like to mention Conrad's own assessment of Lingard that he makes in one of his letters to William Blackwood: "I want to convey in the action of the story the stress and exaltation of the man under the influence of a sentiment which he hardly understands and yet which is real enough to make him as he goes on reckless of consequences." (6 September, 1897) 27. The passion which stems from the ethnocultural bond between Lingard and Mrs Travers invalidates his commit-
ment to the natives like Hassim and Immada. In the end of the novel, Lingard overcomes that passion finally. Then the exorcized psyche of Lingard is ready to assume with complete freedom the role in the colonial hierarchy which has centred round him. The over-confident "Rajah-Laut" of the other two novels, unchallenged by any anxiety or fear, assumes the role of a patriarchal friend to his dependants who claimed his allegiance and affection and he never doubted his strength and power to do service to them. It is only after the attainment of this self-possession achieved through his experiences in The Rescue period that Lingard was ready to play the role he had played in the earlier two novels. The Rescue story in fact lays the foundation of the character of Lingard, though as we said earlier, this novel was written after the other two.

The colonial situation on the positive side of it breeds virtues of responsibility towards those who come under its care. Early portion of The Rescue presents the ideal side of human relationship that existed where the white man was a generous adventurer and not a commercial exploiter alone. Before the arrival of the English yacht, Lingard was a staunch and active supporter of Hassim with "idealism hidden under the simplicity of his strength" (p. 95). On account of political turmoils "fostered by foreign intrigues" (p. 76), Hassim lost his rightful claim to the throne of Wajo and became a fugitive
along with his sister. Lingard had an egoistic feeling that only he was gifted with necessary courage to undertake Hassim’s reinstatement. The authorial narrative says:

He would wake up the country! That was the fundamental and unconscious emotion on which were engrafted his need of action, the primitive sense of what was due to justice, to gratitude, to friendship, the sentimental pity for the hard lot of Immada - poor child - the proud conviction that of all the men in the world, in his world, he alone had the means and the pluck to lift up the big end of such an adventure. (p. 95).

So the story of Hassim was placed in a typical colonial scenario where foreign powers fan trouble to give rise to civil wars and thus ultimately to weaken the country. Usually colonialism pays only lip-service to the uplift of the native states and concentrates on exploitation. That is why Lingard talks of "some masquerading Dutchmen" (P. 35) and emphasizes his own difference from them.

The arrival of the yacht sets everything topsyturvy. And the antagonist here is not any man but the woman (Mrs Travers). Lingard’s philanthropic idealism to reinstate Hassim to the throne of Wajo is suspended temporarily, as he sees Edith, the wife of Mr Travers. Mr Travers represents the archetypal metropolitan white man with assumed superiority over not only the
black races but also over the colonial rulers living in the distant corners of the globe. Hence he dismisses Lingard as "a man of the lower classes" (p. 226). Lingard finds Mr Travers insufferable as he scorns him as an adventurer (p. 116). But Lingard reminds him that one reason for his escape from the mother country is to avoid serving a person like Mr Travers (p. 117). Curiously enough, the beauty and the elegant bearing of Mrs Travers bring out a totally different reaction, a reaction which was tantamount to erotic servitude. This is an unfamiliar experience for Lingard. So he felt "utterly lost" and felt an irrational anger against this superior but aesthetically very desirable people: "... he was utterly lost, unless he let all these people be wiped off the face of the earth" (p. 145). He could well understand that Mrs Travers had captivated him entirely and by this his ties with Hassim and Immada were at jeopardy even though he insisted before Mrs Travers that those bonds were indissoluble:

"What are you to me against these two? If I was to die here on the spot would you care? No one would care at home. No one in the whole world—but these two" (p. 135).

Yet the need for alignment with his own people, specially a graceful woman of his race, undermines his concern for the natives for the time being.
The transition of Lingard from his encounter with the gentry of the yacht as a free man to becoming their 'servant' is measured by his changing use of the phrases "my people". Initially he was outraged at Hassim's reference to the whites as "your people" and he took exception to Mrs Traver's use of these phrases with reference to her: "My people! are you? How much?" (p.141). But with the transfer of his primary allegiance to them, he comes to call them "my own people", he reminds Hassim of his promise to be a "friend to all whites who are of my people", (p.196). Even before the final abandonment, Lingard had already symbolically betrayed his former friends by presenting to Mrs Traver the costly garments intended for Immada (p. 238). With the growth of his infatuation for Mrs Travers, Lingard's emotional integration with his own race is complete though his flight to the East was to avoid subservience to the ruling classes in England. He now submits his services to the protection of them abroad from a position of strength. One of the ironical facts is that the colonial masters feel at one with the ruling classes at home and assume an aristocracy in the colonies to which they were not born. They begin to practise feudal hierarchy in the colonies where the white man is a member of the ruling group with psychological supremacy similar to the spirit of aristocracy at home. The ironies of this situation are observed by Jaffir, Hassim's follower, who asks Lingard: "... what becomes of the strength
of your arms before your own white people? Where does it go to, I say? " (p. 274) At the very end, with the emotional setback he experiences at his separation from Mrs Travers, Lingard turns his back to the gentry of the yacht and liberates himself once more from class infatuation and the feeling of integration with his own folk.

As we have said earlier, at the very beginning of the novel, Lingard impresses all as a white man imbued with the spirit of paternalism, humanitarianism and such-like feelings. It is a fact that on the strength of advanced technology that he inherited from his mother country, he attained his racial superiority abroad and won the title of 'Rajah Laut,' 'the Ruler of the seas' and was called affectionately 'King Tom.' But notwithstanding his concern with trade, Lingard as a colonial ruler had earned some moral distinctions which separated him from the average white men abroad. As a co-sharer of Hassim's plight, he came down from his white man's pedestal and the two coalesced both as expatriates. As an exiled prince, there was a selfish necessity for Hassim to look for active and weighty support from anyone important hiding his racial animosity to the white man. But it was Lingard's magnanimity that in spite of the framework of colonial rule he could mix with the natives freely and view the East as a counterpart, though different but not inferior, to the West. Taking into consider-
ation these positive aspects, a critic like Heliena Krenn is inclined to interpret Lingard as "a proof of Conrad's belief in a viable form of colonialism". Ms Krenn concentrates on Lingard's career as a well-meaning participator in the life and activities of the natives which, she thinks, won Lingard approval from Conrad. But this view does not seem tenable in the long run, particularly in the light of Lingard's failure to achieve his ideals. Lingard's idealism and benevolence appeared to be morally treacherous in the colonial setting in spite of his best efforts.

As Conrad presented it, if ethnic and cultural alignments are allowed to have their sway in a colonial setting, all the nobler commitments of life are likely to go by the board. And the suspicion that the white men in general are accomplices in each other's actions is so common among the non-whites that proper understanding between the races can hardly take place. That is why Daman, "the wandering chief", (p.363) captured Mr Travers and d'Alcacer, his Spanish companion, and Lingard thought it was "a move directed by Daman to secure his own safety." The narrative further adds:

The sight of the stranded yacht shook his confidence completely. It was as if the secrets of the place had been betrayed. After
all, it was perhaps a great folly to trust any white man, no matter how much he seemed estranged from his own people. (p. 245)

So Daman had serious qualms in trusting Lingard's integrity of character and sincerity of purpose. The arrival of the British yacht violently shook his sense of safety. He was afraid that perhaps this was Lingard's strategy to liquidate the natives with the help of more white men. Otherwise, why "did these strange whites travel so far from their country?" (p. 187). In Daman's view, these whites "were such men as are sent by rulers to examine the aspects of far-off countries and talk of peace and make treaties. Such is the beginning of great sorrows." (p. 187). Though this is a generalization but Daman has almost a prophetic vision to reach the origin of imperialistic process, and as the narrative affirms, his "motive for getting hold of the two white men was really the wish to secure hostages" (p. 245) This mistrust is the omnipresent evil of the colonial system.

Hassim and Immada too were conscious of the changes which overtook Lingard at the arrival of the Travers family. When they visited the stranded yacht, Mrs Travers noticed an utmost effort on their part, particularly of Immada, to check Lingard's deviation:
'Do not ! Do not look at that woman !'
cried Immada. 'O ! Master - look away'...
Her voice sank. 'Oh ! Master - look at us'.
(p.183)

Immada was vocal in expressing her resentment over Lingard's infatuation with Mrs Travers who shared racial kinship with him. Hassim was silent but in his mind too "the bright light of hopes" was substituted by "the deepened shadow of doubt" (p. 186). Lingard could feel the raging suspicion in Hassim's heart regarding his unholy nexus with the Travers group, as he mentioned it to Mrs Travers: "I believe he thinks yet I fetched you here for some reason. You can't tell what crooked notion they will get into their thick heads" (p. 141). These doubts and suspicions must have raged on in Jørgensen's mind as well, as he feared his own isolation if Lingard never returned. In a way he felt like the warriors who surrounded his ship, and considered Lingard as a man "possessing no more power than a dead man, the mere slave of these strange white people, and Belarab's prisoner" (p.363). All these views were instrumental in making Jørgensen take a fierce decision: to blow up the Emma, the ship where the cache of arms was stored. Therefore, the great catastrophe involving the death of so many men took place solely on account of fear and suspicion that friendship across the racial divide is not possible.
And, indeed, Lingard proved the truth of this notion. He turned a deaf ear to the pleas of the natives and lost himself in the worship of Mrs Travers. Jörgenson entrusted Mrs Travers with one of Hassim’s rings and sent her to Belarab’s stockade to deliver the ring to Lingard. The ring had an old story attached to it. Lingard had sworn once that on presentation of this ring, he would immediately respond to Hassim’s call for rescue. Now Hassim and Immada have been made Tengga’s captives and they urgently require Lingard’s help. Jörgenson did not disclose the story connected with the ring to Mrs Travers. But she somehow understood the impact it would make on Lingard’s mind. She suppressed the affair of the ring to Lingard. Later when she admitted this suppression to Lingard, Lingard declared that even by seeing the ring, he would have been least inclined to rescue Hassim at that moment leaving her: “Haven’t you understood long ago that if you had given me that ring it would have been just the same?” (p. 379) He confessed that at that moment he was totally immersed in his adoration of her. So Lingard admitted that he had changed from his former self and forgot his commitment to Hassim. The infatuation with the ideal image of feminine beauty of his own race made him abandon his Malay friends to their miserable and violent deaths. He could not refuse Mrs Travers’ request for the rescue of her people and stayed back in the company of the whites. He earned the release of the whites but at the cost of his Malay friends.
There definitely was a hidden irony in the question of Shaw, the red-faced sea-man of Lingard's crew, who challenged the justness of the Trojan war in presence of Lingard: "... murder and unrighteousness! And for a woman! Would anybody do it now? Would you do it, Sir? would you --?" (p. 30). The disastrous effect, brought about by Lingard's infatuation for the woman, had strange resemblance with the motive of the Trojan war.

Still, of the three Malay novels, perhaps The Rescue poses a problem for its readers: is Conrad's stance genuinely anti-imperialistic here? Daphna Erdinast-Vulcan says that she differs with R. Caserio's reading of this novel as an anti-imperialistic romance and comments that the novel is rather a "eulogy to the bold, dreaming adventurers, the pioneers of colonialism." 29

Erdinast-Vulcan assesses the novel by its conformity to the romance-genre which enshrines noble sentiments like heroic dreams of adventurers, their philanthropy and so on. But let us examine what caused the disaster in The Rescue. It is the suspicion inherent in the colonial frame which complicated Lingard-Edith relationship. This suspicion germinates too easily in the colonial framework where different ethnic groups face each other both as friends or as foes. Lingard's infatu-
ation with the English lady Edith Travers could have been a common human weakness in any other situation but in The Rescue it amounted to the betrayal of trust. And both Jörgenson and the Malays anchored their distrust in ethnic terms and not simply in terms of romantic tales. Throughout this study my contention has been that colonialism breeds mistrust and sets humanity apart in terms of races. In that sense The Rescue is as much an anti-colonial critique as his other two novels in the Malay trilogy.

Conrad's exotic settings in all these Malay novels make some critics view the novels as studies of mysterious oriental life rather than as political critiques. Donald W. Heiney, for instance, considers the 'Eastern' characters to be "inscrutable, irrational, and a little sinister." The strangeness of the East, according to Heiney, is further heightened by the portrayal of this type of characters. This view of the mysterious East is echoed by Jocelyn Baines who assigns to the East the role of a nemesis which brings the proud westerner low: "Almayer, (and) Willems... appear as trophies of that nemesis." Conrad might have had all these ideas in his mind submerged in the psyche. But we must remember that these proud westerners have come to the East with the colonial flag and hence the nemesis also symbolizes the impact of the backlash of the colonized settlements.
As I feel, Conrad selected the East as the setting because it was the ground where numerous powers were competing with each other for domination. In this melee the Westerners and the native Malays acquire a new vision of their respective identities. Conrad did not stigmatize the East as an agent of corruption, rather he made use of its dazzling landscapes to project its attractiveness as instruments to subvert the colonial idealism for greed and domination.


10. Quoted by Lloyd Fernando in “Conrad’s Eastern Expatriates” in *PMLA*, p. 79.


