CHAPTER IV

LORD JIM

Lord Jim came out in 1900. It was acclaimed as a welcome relief after the bitter and complex exposure of human perversion in Heart of Darkness. On the surface, Lord Jim evokes sympathy for its eponymous hero: the high-minded young white hero (Jim) who sacrifices his life in expiation for his moral lapses. The initial incident described in the novel was based on a much condemned contemporary scandal - the affair of the Jeddah, the pilgrim-ship which was abandoned along with its nearly thousand passengers by its white crew-members. So far as the story of Lord Jim goes, Jim stands for one of the officers who, having been convicted in the court, tries sincerely to redeem his lost honour and in the process lays down his life.

In the Preface which Conrad added to Lord Jim in 1917, seventeen years after the completion of the work, he disclosed that originally he conceived Lord Jim as a short story centred around the abandonment of a pilgrim-ship, the Patna. He started writing some parts of it and then left it unfinished. Later on at the behest of William Blackwood, he took it up and completed it as a novel ("Author's Note" to Lord Jim, pp. 1-2).* Regard-

* All textual references to Lord Jim are from Lord Jim, London: Dent, 1940.
ing "Tuan Jim", the short story which was the source of Lord Jim, Eloise Knapp Hay has observed that this short story confirms Conrad's predilection for moral tales: "It seems evident from the "Tuan Jim" manuscript ... that Conrad was interested,... in Jim as a case study in desertion". Conrad must have seen in it the potentiality of an unusual psychological study: when a character of sensitivity and discretion loses his bearings in an extreme situation and has to fight a lifelong battle to overcome the guilt of the momentary lapse in judgment. So Conrad rewrites the old story into a novel on a larger canvas. In it Conrad perceived a moral idea which he thought could provide him a thread to unite his other probings. In a letter to William Blackwood written on 26 December, 1899 Conrad stated clearly: "... the three tales, each being inspired by a similar moral idea... will make (in that sense) a homogeneous book", the other two "tales" being "Youth" and Heart of Darkness. Hence, Lord Jim, as usual with Conrad's other tales, carries a moral impulse which transmutes the impact of the pilgrim-ship episode to a full length moral drama. Incidentally, this is another Marlow-narrative by Conrad.

Apart from the primary source of the Jeddah affair, other sources of Lord Jim have been traced by Conrad scholars with considerable accuracy. While following Jim's career in Patusan, Conrad may have taken his cue from Rajah James Brooke's career
in Sarawak. Rajah Brooke was a successful British ruler in the East. Martin Green has observed: "... as a legend Brooke was very important to him". Conrad called him the "first Rajah" and admitted that Lord Jim had been "inspired in great measure by the history of the first Rajah's enterprise." Besides, Jim Lingard, the son of Captain Tom Lingard who figures in the Malay trilogy, might have been one of the possible sources. Conrad met Jim Lingard in Borneo. This Jim was a trader known for his elaborate and stately manners. His deportment led people to address him as "Tuan Jim". According to Norman Sherry the fictional Jim is partly based on Augustine Podmore Williams, the first mate of the Jeddah and partly on Jim Lingard. The fictional world of Patusan is identified as Berau in Borneo, which was known to the Dutch authorities as a trouble-spot. However the sources are not important in themselves except, perhaps, in demonstrating the fact that Conrad's fiction had deep roots in the experiences of real life in a colonial frame. The real significance lies in the process by which Conrad blended them together to write a gripping tale.

For the sake of convenience, we would like to have a look at the main events of Lord Jim before starting our discussion. The key incident involving the pilgrims occurs in the Red sea on a ship called the Patna, loaded with Moslem pilgrims for Mecca. Jim has been the chief mate of the ship. The ship
strikes a derelict and is feared to be sinking. The white officers get panicky and think of their own safety. Jim, at first disdainful of their cowardice, watches them launch a boat. But a moment later the panic overtakes him. The white crew members call for George, the third engineer, who has stayed back in the ship. Jim discovers that George is dead and that frightens him, and so Jim jumps over the boat in place of George. They drift off, abandoning the passengers, and are picked up by a passing ship. But the Patna refuses to sink and the drifting ship is towed to a port by another ship. The officers are left in ignominy and are censured of gross dereliction of duty.

Jim appears at the court of enquiry and admits that he jumped from the Patna. The jury find him guilty and confiscate his marine certificate. When the enquiry begins, Jim meets Marlow who develops an affection for the conscience-stricken young man. By the help of Marlow, Jim gets other jobs at different places. But his past haunts him like a shadow: the guilt and shame for deserting the ship grill his inner self every moment. Wherever he goes he hears somebody talking of the Patna episode or meets someone who was among the ship's crew. Thus being dogged by some evidence or witness of the Patna ignominy, he moves from job to job as if the Furies were haunting him everywhere.
However, through Marlow's good offices he meets Stein whose trading-post in Patusan was running at a loss. He is ready to set Jim there to work as his manager by dismissing Cornelius, the Portuguese incumbent, with whom he was not happy. Jim settles in Patusan, in the interior of a remote Malayan island and becomes the adviser to Doramin, the chief of a tribe and virtual ruler of the land. Aiding Doramin against the corrupt Rajah of the region, Jim rapidly rises in prestige and is happy: at last, he thought, he had found a safe haven, a land where no one knew his past.

He becomes a close friend of Dain Waris, the son of Doramin. But he incurs the enmity of Cornelius through rescuing his maltreated step daughter and taking her into his household. The girl, Jewel, becomes his wife and with her encouragement Jim sets out to chart a new life for himself and the inhabitants of the island.

He leads the native people against bandit groups who have been terrorizing the countryside, defeats them through European methods of warfare, and is acclaimed by his followers as a divinely ordained saviour of the people. For years he lives in productive happiness in the isolation of Patusan. Then comes one Gentleman Brown, a white man and a wandering free-booter.
He comes to Patusan with the crew of his schooner in the hope of terrorizing the settlement and making off with some loot. The pirates find the town in arms and are soon surrounded on a fortified knoll. Jim, seeking to avoid bloodshed, decides to make a deal with Brown. The pirates agree to leave the region peacefully and Jim stands before his people as a guarantor.

But inspired by the jealous Cornelius, Brown betrays the agreement and kills Dain Waris and several tribesmen as he makes his way to the coast. The blame for the betrayal falls on Jim's head. The grief-stricken Doramin shoots him in cold blood and Jim accepts his death as a belated expiation for his transgressions a few years ago.

Though apparently not so bleak in spirit, like Heart of Darkness, Lord Jim too starts its reflection on colonialism at the beginning. There is a comparison between two types of seamen. One type led mysterious lives "with the temper of buccaneers and the eyes of dreamers" (p. 10). This category of people was fond of bohemian living and kept a distance with civilization: the demands it made and the privileges it offered. As a foil to this group, there is another group of seamen who "had now a horror of the home service, with its harder conditions, severer view of duty, and the hazard of stormy oceans." (p. 10). These people were scared of hard work
and exertions of sailors. They lived under strict conditions in their home-service and preferred instead the easy, comfortable lives free from all restrictions on some remote Eastern seashores. What they enjoyed most was "good deck-chairs, large native crews, and the distinction of being white" (p. 10). With a minimum sense of professional morality, they enter into service-contracts with Chinamen, Arabs, half-castes and, the authorial comment says, "would have served the devil himself had he made it easy enough." (p. 10). Easy money-making becomes their motto. They are not reluctant to serve non-white races to earn money. Simultaneously they cherish an unfailing sense of superiority because of their white skin. The result is that they detest the non-white natives whom they serve only for money. This is a malady which springs from the colonial framework where different categories of moral values are taken for granted. This second type of sea-men is represented by the white crew of the Patna. Since they are the products of a colonial era, they consider the non-white passengers as subhuman beings. The German skipper refers to them as "cattle" (p. 11), the chief engineer calls them "niggers" (p. 67) and Jim mentions them as "beggars" (p. 67). The idea prevails that the status of passengers in the Patna does not compel the crew to demonstrate higher professional commitment to rules of service as they are superior to them by virtue of their race. Conrad describes the crews' attitude to the passengers in stark im-
ages: "The five whites on board lived amidships, isolated from the human cargo." (p. 12). This dehumanization of the passengers into a 'cargo' was possible only within the prevalent colonial framework which makes the crew-members assume an arrogant indifference to the safety of the passengers; a seaman's ethic should not have permitted them the desertion of the passenger ship with eight hundred human beings aboard. What Jim could not affirm in the court of enquiry is the fact that the white crew-members abandoned the passengers because they were non-whites and hence non-entities, in their estimate just a cargo. Thus the colonial framework is pivotal to the understanding of the failure of the seamen to uphold their professional responsibility.

Among the large numbers of characters that we meet in Lord Jim Chester is a significant sketch in the early part of the novel. He was a West Australian and "had been pearler, wrecker, trader, whaler," everything except "a pirate". (p. 118). As an enterprising member of the business-world, he runs after all sorts of money-spinning drives. His current project is concerned with a guano island which he has discovered and which is as "good as a gold-mine" (p.118). What strikes Marlow is his extreme commercialism in taking advantage of Jim's recent calamity. In the guano island Chester requires a man. But since it is a forlorn island, he is not likely to get a competent man
normally. He has his eyes therefore on Jim who has fallen on bad days and is likely to grab at anything. "I’ll give him a job on my island", he says to Marlow, and, narrates what will be the nature of work he wants Jim to do for him:

"I’m going to dump forty coolies there - if I’ve got to steal’em. Somebody must work the stuff....Let him take charge. Make him supreme boss over the coolies." (p. 122) (italics mine)

This is definitely a very mean job for a man like Jim: a slave-driver, the supreme boss over the coolies. It marks a steep fall in status for a marine officer who had high ambitions and a noble family background. But Chester whose thoughts hover around trade and business, thinks this is an opportunity for both Jim and himself. For himself it is obviously an opening for a large gain. He explains to Marlow that for Jim too it will be a return to the world of work by doing almost nothing. It would not need much courage:

"It’s as easy as falling off a log. Simply nothing to do; two six-shooters in his belt.... Surely he wouldn’t be afraid of anything forty coolies could do-- with two six shooters and he the only armed man, too! It’s much better than it looks." (p. 123).

Obviously he has no concern for Jim’s wounded psyche and
has no interest in rehabilitating him with opportunities for some responsible work. An armed white man in the company of forty coolies: it is a pleaurably familiar picture to Chester who is trying to make a fortune in a colonial milieu, but humiliating for Jim. What Conrad highlights here is the crude materialism and extreme commercialism of these colonial adventurers. This heartless commercialism, a malady of the colonial era, characterizes Chester's proposal and distinguishes it from the role which Jim assumes later in the remote settlement of Patusan. Mark Conroy has rightly observed: "Chester's scenario for a man he sees as 'no earthly good' is a strangely inverted version of the role Jim actually assumes - though he assumes with it the altruism that is supposed to make all the difference between a 'supreme boss of coolies' and the white lord and protector (that) Jim has become for Marlow in his closing glimpse." So Chester's crude proposal could not entice Jim as he wanted to transcend that milieu to achieve his redemption and Stein's philanthropy-oriented offer eventually helped Jim to realize the best that was within him.

Stein is very old when Jim meets him - a very wealthy and a much respected German merchant with vast experience in the Malay Archipelago. He has a large inter-island business, and many trading-posts in the most out-of-the-way places.
Intelligent and good-natured, and one of the most trustworthy men alive, Stein was also a naturalist of distinction, world famous for his collection of beetles and butterflies. Marlow introduces Jim to Stein. And good old Stein - who knows a romantic when he sees one - finds Jim a new place to hide. He sends him off to be his agent up a god-forsaken river station, noted for its rattan stems and its pirates, in eastern Borneo. It is an ideal place for Jim and he stays there till his death. Obviously Stein's attitude to Jim has been much more humane and sympathetic and Jim for the first time in his wandering life gets a firm footing.

The story of Stein is an index of a typical colonial situation. He comes from the West where he had practically no opening, to a colony, gets embroiled in native politics, becomes famous and even becomes an agent of expansion of colonial rule in remote places. By birth he was German and in his younger days he took part in the great revolutionary movements in Europe of the 1840s. It aimed at the overthrow of all monarchies on the continent. The movements, however, failed and the revolutionaries fled to different countries. In the course of his wanderings, Stein met his two successive benefactors, both white. The first one was a famous Dutch explorer from whom he imbibed the interest in beetles and butterflies. After the departure of this Dutchman to his home, Stein came
under the patronage of an old Scottish trader whom he had met
in the interior of Celebes. This Scotsman became involved in
the politics of one of the islands and became an ally of the
ruling queen against her adversary. After the death of the
Scotsman, Stein continued the tradition and supported the Queen’s
son, Mohammed Bonso, in his fight against the pretenders who
staked their claims to the throne. Like Lingard in The Rescue
who pledged life-long friendship and support to Hassim and
Immada, Stein got seriously involved in Mohammed Bonso’s struggle
for the native throne of which he was the natural and rightful
heir. His involvement with the native society became complete
when he got married to Bonso’s sister by whom he got a child
also.

But suddenly he lost his wife and child in a mysterious
fever and he left the place. Then the second chapter of his
life started. With the little money he had in hand, he started
life afresh and gradually amassed a large fortune. He led a
solitary life but his attitude was not misanthropic, he was
ready to help and sympathize with others as far as possible. He
was a firm and resolute man, righteous and just:

His life had begun in sacrifice, in enthusiasm for generous ideas; he had travelled
very far, on various ways, on strange paths, and whatever he followed it had been without
faltering, and therefore without shame and without regret. (p. 157)
His sympathies in the nationalistic cause, his multifarious experiences acquired through travels and above all his erect character made him a unique colonialist distinguished easily from the commercially motivated and seedy types like Chester.

Patusan, the place where Stein sent Jim was a place more well-known to Stein than to the government officials. In fact Stein had visited the remotest parts of the Malay Archipelago before the penetration of Western civilization there:

There were very few places in the Archipelago he had not seen in the original dusk of their being, before light (and even electric light) had been carried into them for the sake of better morality and--and--well--the greater profit, too. (pp. 160-161) (italics mine).

Conrad's phrasing of this paragraph is quite central to his critique of colonialism. This commercial intrusion into remote lands for profitable trade is often camouflaged with stories of progress and pretensions of spreading civilized morality. But syntactical conjunction between 'better morality' and the apologetic, 'the greater profit', gives away the hypocritical intention of the enterprise.
Stein set up his business at the centre of Patusan. Before Jim, out of sympathy with the tragedy of a Dutch-Malay girl, he had appointed her husband, Cornelius, a Malacca Portuguese, as the manager of the trading post. But the arrangement was not a success for the firm and Stein was looking for a replacement. So Jim’s appointment displaced this person but as Stein combined philanthropy with shrewd sense of business he allowed Cornelius, the dismissed agent, to retain his old house. His sympathy was with the daughter. "... as I think there is a daughter left, I shall let him, if he likes to stay, keep the old house." (p. 161).

As a trader Stein earned fame for the fairness of his deals. He was hard working. The government members trusted his discretion, and it was understood that he took all the risks on their behalf. He was not just a greedy plunderer, he devoted painstaking attention and care to everything. And he was forever respectful to the memory of his late Scottish benefactor. So he specially befriended anyone who came from the British isles (p. 168). His treatment of Jim was sympathetic and kind and according to Marlow, "...his hinted intentions were so generous that I begged him most earnestly to keep them secret for a time." (p. 169). But we need not take all that Marlow says as the author’s truth. In this context Daniel Born’s observation strikes a different note. He feels that Conrad’s readers
should not overlook the commercial purpose behind Stein’s sending Jim to Patusan as by this arrangement Stein “serves the pragmatic end of shoring up a troubled part of the trading empire.” Born further adds: “Whenever we get too enamored of Stein’s cultured mystique, Marlow throws in a reminder of his public character...”. Hence, Born wants that Stein’s worldly deals should not go unnoticed because of his cultured mystique and refined humanitarianism. But still we feel as an individual trader Stein presents an attractive figure and, to repeat our point, works as a foil to the degenerate characters like Brown and Chester. He exhibits the paternalistic attitude of colonialism and acts as one who did not surrender human qualities like loyalty, sympathy and gratitude even in a corrupting milieu.

Jim’s unnatural death left Stein sad and dejected. When Marlow visited him in his house in Samarang, after the tragedy of Jim - he was somehow imbalanced, with “A drab sack-coat of alpaca hung, unbuttoned, down to his knees” and with “deep furrows on his pale cheeks” (p. 255). He had received the fatal news of Jim’s assassination only a few days ago and was finding it difficult to pacify Jewel, Jim’s half-caste wife. Jewel was not ready to forgive Jim for his rash decision to sacrifice himself. But Stein had a deep understanding of the colonial situation which he termed as “Terrible” (p. 258). He had heard
about Brown, had heard about public resentment against the stance Jim had taken about Brown. His single word "Terrible" articulated his version of the colonial imbroglio. Here entire human relationship is vitiated. Man and man cannot understand each other and trust each other because of the gulf that exists between the white and the non-white (black, brown or yellow). Though Jim paid utmost importance to the question of the natives' safety in Patusan, Brown's treachery destroyed his credibility. He was immediately suspected of being a secret accomplice of Brown as both were whites and in the racial division of the colonial milieu such suspicion was the norm. Stein had a clearer understanding of this unbridgeable gap between the colonizer and the colonized and this understanding sets him apart from average colonialists. Stein's "Terrible" and Kurtz's "horror" are understanding of a kind separated only in degrees.

But at least in one respect Stein could not rise above the colonial situation. It sounds unnatural that out of any unmixed compassion for a girl Stein should appoint her husband, a "thoroughly unworthy man," as the manager to his trading post. Stein himself was an intelligent and hard-working man. He would not have allowed a recurring loss to his company, had there not been more constraining factors than mere pity. As he was repaying the Scotsman's benevolence to Jim, he must be repaying his
debt to the girl through her husband. Marlow suspected something like that in Patusan though it was impossible for him "to suspect Stein" (p. 161). He said,

Of course I don't know that story; I can only guess that once before Patusan had been used as a grave for some sin, transgression, or misfortune (p. 161).

Stein must have concealed some of his personal memories there. In a colonial situation, one might ask, who could be free of sin, transgression or misfortune? Marital relation between the white colonial trader and the coloured woman is often a matter of sin and betrayal. As we see later Jewel was said to be the step-daughter of Cornelius born to his wife before his marriage with her. Stein's permission to Cornelius to retain the house for the sake of Jewel, his affectionate reception of Jewel after Jim's death, his keeping Jewel in his house for ever - all these indicate some consanguine ties between Stein and Jewel. It seems Jewel was Stein's unacknowledged daughter for whom he had a guilt-ridden pity. May be his generous "hinted intentions" for Jim (p.169) originated out of his concern for Jewel for whom he had selected Jim. But his plan did not materialize for Cornelius betrayed the trust through his villainy. Without Cornelius's inside information Gentleman Brown would not have succeeded in his murderous plan. But all these are the by-products of the colonial milieu;
Cornelius and Brown are the villains who will cause disaster to all noble designs as in the colonial backwater nobility has no place. The original sin is one of transgression and this vitiates all other moves.

Hence though Stein has been portrayed in the novel as an ideal figure, he had also something to hide and expiate for. But expiation is not easy in a Conradian frame as the story of Jim and Jewel has revealed, yet Stein is still the noblest product of the sinful milieu. Though he earned a huge fortune, the thoughts of his last years concentrated on his non-material collections: the butterflies. The narrative says:

Stein has aged greatly of late. He feels it himself, and says often that he is 'preparing to leave all this; preparing to leave...' while he waves his hand sadly at his butterflies (p. 307).

He was least bothered with his material possessions. His last years he has concentrated on his collection as a naturalist in sharp contrast with average colonial agents' materialist involvements to buy a secure retired life at home. Conrad must have used the image of butterflies symbolically. They are pretty but fragile, almost something spiritual. Mark Conroy's attempt to connect Stein's pursuit of butterflies with his other activities may sound a little overstretched, though not
irrelevant. Conroy says, "Pursued by Stein and pinned to his board, they are part of the process by which he has pursued wealth in all its varieties. Indeed, they are analogous to those living, breathing men whose labor Stein has taken and converted into storable capital". Conroy’s interpretation is compatible with the classic economic activities of capital formation based on surplus labour. But I feel this view blurs the distinction between "beetles" and "butterflies". Towards the end of his life Stein is bidding farewell to his butterflies as his most cherished wealth - his spiritual attainments. When death is imminent, he is least concerned with his material possessions as so far he had been an exception as a white colonial trader. His naturalist’s collection included both beetles and butterflies. Beetles are humble, crawling things - they stay on the ground, they are symbols of materialism. Butterflies soar to the sky - they can be imagined as fragile symbols of spiritual longings. Accepting Mark Conroy’s view in a modified way, can we say that in his life Stein has achieved a perfect synthesis of the materialistic and the spiritualistic aspirations?

The Patusan section has rightly constituted an organic part of the novel which tells about sin and expiation. Patusan is the place where Jim had his brief moments of success and achieved some sort of rehabilitation in his psyche. And we may
say that having Stein as his promoter was also no accident. There was a deeper understanding between them. Though the Patusan episode is introduced quite casually, through Marlow's remark, it is not so casual after all. Marlow gives his listeners some idea of the kind of place Patusan is in the following way:

It was referred to knowingly in the inner government circles in Batavia, especially as to its *irregularities and aberrations*, and it was known by name to some few, very few, in the mercantile world. Nobody, however, had been there, and I suspect no one desired to go there in person... (p. 160). *(italics mine)*

To Marlow it is a god-forsaken place - which attracted no business adventurers. But by emphasizing its 'irregularities and aberrations' he throws a psychic mist over the place and draws a parallel to the African interiors evoked in *Heart of Darkness*.

The island was beyond the pale of the usual civilization and culture. Marlow compares Patusan also to "a distant heavenly body" and emphasizes that if Stein had sent Jim "into a star of the fifth magnitude the change could not have been greater." (p. 160). The place where Jim could go must be
another world, "a distant star" separated from the rest of humanity. But most probably Jim could not jump out to a world where the colonial virus could never grow. He could not leave behind his skin - his racial identity which carries suspicion of transgression and treachery everywhere.

Conrad's presentation of the white man's intervention in the native society of Patusan is strikingly ambiguous. Initially Conrad shows that the native society was in a state of chaos and instability which necessitated the intervention of the colonial ruler to establish peace and order:

Villages were burnt, men were dragged into the Rajah's stockade to be killed or tortured for the crime of trading with anybody else but himself. Only a day or two before Jim's arrival several heads of households in the very fishing village that was afterwards taken under his especial protection had been driven over the cliffs by a party of the Rajah's spearmen, on suspicion of having been collecting edible birds' nests for a Celebes trader (p. 188).

This is a picture of archetypal tyranny of the Eastern potentates as imagined in all western colonial writings. Against it Conrad presents the notions of fairness and justice inherent in Jim's scheme of things. The cruel mercenary rapacity in the native society, the savage customs and the deplorable hygiene
Jim noticed provided enough justification for an individual administrator like Jim to strive to establish some semblance of order and the rule of law. Geographically, Patusan was a small area divided by a valley separating two mountain ranges, each facing the other. In that valley or the sides of the two rocks separated by a river there lived two different communities ruled by two petty chieftains - Rajah Allang and Doramin. Their mutual hatred worsened the situation in Patusan.

Rajah Allang was one of the Muslim adventurers - and in fact a colonial ruler of a kind, who occupied the area of Patusan at the meeting point of the river and the sea. The hereditary Rajah who ought to have ruled was a minor and Rajah Allang who was his uncle conducted the business of the State in his name. By virtue of his command over the passage to the interior through the river, he was able to exercise despotic sway over many of the neighbouring settlements. People who came up the river had to pay toll and tributes to him. By fleecing them through various means of extortion, he kept the whole population at the level of starvation and was little better than a robber. The confrontation between Jim and Rajah Allang is essentially one between a superior civilization with its attendant features like democratic rights, etc., and rapacious savagery not apparently associable within the context of the novel with the West.
Doramin was the chief of the Bugis tribe occupying the other part of the island. He and Stein were of the same age and had been comrades in arms. Doramin was one of the many claimants to the throne of the native Rajah who was the last ruler. There was always some sort of rivalry between Rajah Allang and Doramin. Incidents often occurred that led to clashes, fighting, arson and death. However, unlike Rajah Allang, Doramin was a man of great prestige and influence. Beside them there was Sherif Ali, an Arab half-breed, a fanatic who, on purely religious grounds, incited the tribes in the interior (the bush-folk) to defy the authorities of both Rajah Allang and Doramin. He established himself in a fortified camp on the summit of one of the mountain ranges and plundered the whole area:

He hung over the town of Patusan like a hawk over a poultry-yard, but he devastated the open country. Whole villages, deserted, rotted on their blackened posts over the banks of clear streams, dropping piecemeal into the water the grass of their walls, the leaves of their roofs, with a curious effect of natural decay as if they had been a form of vegetation stricken by a blight at its very root (p. 189). (italics mine)

Sherif Ali was a danger to Patusan. This is a typical historical situation in which usually colonial rulers intervene. The feuds among different communities help the rulers to
step in and control power. Though Patusan was not attacked by Sherif Ali, it was always in apprehension of danger from him. Sherif Ali therefore was sought after both by Rajah Allang and Doramin. It is at this point of Patusan's history that Jim entered the island. Patusan's people lived in constant fear "like a poultry-yard overlooked by a hawk". The colonial situation in this area was open to attacks from Arab-traders as well as the white mercenaries. So Jim's appearance was a source of great solace to the people. Jim's white complexion brought to them a sense of supernatural security.

But in spite of the prospect of the uplift of the native communities, I feel, in Conrad's view, the presence of the white colonial ruler plants an inferiority complex among the natives. In such a society excellence is often identified with the achievement of the colonial masters. Dain Waris, the son of Doramin, was a genuinely gifted man: bold, energetic, intelligent. But whatever be his merits, they are not considered natural. So his excellence has to be measured by similarities with the white man: "Of Dain Waris, his own people said with pride that he knew how to fight like a white man" (p.192). This was the ultimate criterion of the subjugated natives. Colonialism has inflicted a wound on the mind of the natives, that is the injection of a permanent inferiority complex before the white man. Excellence belongs to the white man only. Owing to
this type of brainwashing the colonized psyche has been stunted and crippled. This self-repression of the colonized people helps perpetuate colonialism.

In his assessment of Dain Waris and such like distinguished natives, Conrad was not a prejudiced colonialist. So he could see the potentiality of great resources among them. But as Marlow pointed out, Western colonialists see only the surface and the hidden possibility of the races remains incomprehensible to them. Here the people and the lands are subsumed by a vague notion of "the mystery of unrecorded ages" (p. 192). The result is that people are not treated as equals and the land and culture are not understood in terms of human reality. But the cultural hubris of colonialists is likely to receive a severe jolt when the hidden resources make themselves manifest, Conrad seems to foresee. On the other hand, the ignorance of the native races of their own strength makes them surrender to "supernatural powers" in the white man - here in Patusan - to Jim. (p.195)

The first movement in the Patusan section of the novel presents how it offered a refuge to Jim, so badly needed, and how it helped him to restore his dignity and self-respect. On his entry into Patusan he was arrested by Rajah Allang's men and taken before him. Jim explained who he was and what he had
come for. He further said that he wished to go to Doramin as he was sent by Stein. Jim was imprisoned by the Rajah and kept on starvation diet. The Rajah met him a number of times to ensure that there were no bigger parties coming after him as he was afraid of his own safety at the hands of the foreigners. He was also reluctant to let Jim go to Doramin. Jim therefore planned to escape from Rajah Allang's shade at the risk of his life. By superhuman efforts he reached Doramin's place, showed the memento from Stein to Doramin and was trusted and was looked after with great kindness.

Doramin's acceptance of Jim with full trust and friendliness is due to his relationship with Stein. As we have seen earlier, the situation in Patusan was ripe with possibilities for Jim to show his mettle and redeem the honour he had lost earlier. He thought of an ambitious plan to drive away Sherif Ali and undercut the power of Rajah Allang. However the project required meticulous planning and whole-hearted support from one and all. It was very difficult to execute given the narrow, selfish interests that governed the lives of the people. It was a measure of Jim's determination that he could persuade everybody to take part in the operation as one body:

He had to inspire with his own confidence a lot of people who had hidden and absurd reasons to hang back; he had to conciliate imbecile jealousies, and argue away all sorts of senseless mistrusts (pp. 191-192).
Here Conrad is hinting at two things: One is Jim’s regaining of self-confidence and the second is Jim as a representative of Western civilization making his impact on a backward society of natives who had absurd reasons to indulge in cowardice and imbecile jealousies among their own folk. Jim’s success in persuading people to work together was due to his personality and acknowledged superiority. The native people were fed on the myth of the white man’s strength and magical powers and thought that their success was inevitable if the white man supported them. With Jim’s improvised technology, it became possible indeed to defeat Sherif Ali. Sherif Ali’s own followers, who had believed in his invincibility, turned against him and surrendered themselves to Jim. The defeat of Sherif Ali helped to establish a sense of Jim’s invincible superiority. Jim’s word decided everything in Patusan (p. 197) and he became the virtual ruler of the land (p. 200). The simple folk credited him with supernatural powers. They spun out stories about his superhuman attributes and looked upon him with veneration for saving them from the oppression of Sherif Ali. The transformation of Jim in the eyes of the inhabitants of Patusan is similar to the transformation of Kurtz to a superhuman deity in the Congo. However, the distinction between them lies in the fact that whereas Kurtz identified himself with the fetish-image created of him and indulged himself in megalomania, Jim, despite his ‘fierce egoism’, remained cool, acting as a benevolent white lord.
By his own efforts, his own courage and good-will, he had become, so to speak, a white Rajah. He built a fort to house the liberated captives - "my own people" he called them - and constructed huts for them on little plots of land protected by an earth wall and a palisade defended by guns provided by Doramin. He occupied the fort in the colonial style virtually becoming the benign colonial lord of a private empire. He has not only overcome the shadow of the past, he has been able to carve out an image which could have fulfilled his childhood dream of great success; something to make his noble father proud. The authorial narrative describes how he transformed his nondescript house to a fort-like place of defence: "a place of safety, upon which every faithful partisan could rally in case of some sudden danger." (p. 250). This has a strong similarity with all colonial beginnings. So Jim has not moved out of the colonial framework in Patusan, but he has shaped it to his heart’s content. Apparently Conrad was idealizing the project as he dwelt on the positive humanitarian objectives behind such a concept. Jim created the fort for the benefit of the natives and metaphorically it is also a defence against the intrusion of his past shame. But this is also the accepted mode of consolidating power in a new place by any colonial establishment.
So the Patusan episode cannot be evaluated simply as an escape into romance or an enactment of an epic episode as explained by Daphan Erdinast-Vulcan. Rather, this episode must be looked at from the point of view of an ideal colonial set up. It is however reasonable to concede that the Patusan experience combines the ingredients of romance and epic on a realistic base derived from the colonial framework. Jim as the superhuman hero springs from romance and enlivens the epic-myth of his invincible power. He builds his citadel far from those who dismissed him for gross dereliction of duty. But one needs to remember that he is so easily venerated because of his white skin - his imperial connection in spite of the fact that he is a fugitive from that world. Garvin Young has observed: "Here he was loved and trusted for a nobility and courage for which his white acquaintances would never have given him credit." If it is true that the natives of Patusan required Jim, it is also a fact that Jim required Patusan for the fuller realization of his self-hood and his claim to be honoured as a white man abroad. In making the white man and the natives complementary to each other, Conrad both perpetuates and subverts the colonial myth simultaneously.

But Jim's new-found position is mortally undermined by the conspiracy and betrayal executed by Gentleman Brown with the help of Cornelius. Brown, a latter-day buccaneer of utmost
depravity, represents colonial aspirations gone to seed. He and his companions could not eke out a living in their own 'white' world. So they infested the Malay Archipelago as the natives there could be terrorized into submission easily and be forced to supply whatever they wanted. He landed at Patusan because he needed provisions for himself and his piratical comrades. He was confident of getting what he wanted because he knew that the place was far away from the 'civilized' world and there violations of rules of order and norms of behaviour could be done with impunity; loot the people, rob the ruler and fill his ship with booties from the far away defenceless village, "far from the beaten tracks of the sea and from the ends of submarine cables." (p. 263). So no one could detect him there. He was sure of getting the provisions he needed as well as some money from the native villagers.

Brown, a dreadful criminal, pursued by law in his own society, comes to act here as a dispenser of wild justice to the natives all because he had the destructive gun-power of modern civilization which placed this backward region under his mercy. He thinks of the native society only in terms of loot and plunder. He revels at the idea of "stealing the whole country" but is disappointed as "Some confounded fellow had apparently accomplished something of the kind" (p. 270). Brown considers Jim as one of his kind though he pretends to nobler
designs. Being a hypocritical ruffian, he could not tolerate the reputation for honesty and sincerity of another white man. He viewed Jim to be an aberration in the tradition of white-native encounter:

"He a man! Hell! He was a hollow sham. As if he couldn't have said straight out: 'Hands off my plunder! ' blast him! That would have been like a man! Rot his superior soul!" (p. 253).

Jim's moral integrity and resoluteness seemed alien to him which he interpreted as tokens of hypocrisy. He could not stand Jim's show of generosity to the natives at his expense. Jim's idealism and his earnestness are so different from his worldview that he could not understand Jim's activities in the light of his own and that of his ilk in the distant East. In the passage quoted above one notices a splendid interface of the colonial situation conceived in the attitudes of these two opposed characters. There is total opaqueness between them: one of them believes in plunder and piracy as sanctioned by the colonial opportunity - the other wants to establish progress and civilization through such an opportunity of encounter. One of them is a scum and the other a figure of nobility but the twain shall never meet. Thus Conrad subverts the tall claims of the liberal imperialists.
To Brown all of his kind thrived by exploitation and extortion of the natives, a view which, though untrue in the case of Jim, is largely true of colonialism in the far East. The colonial paradigm of intrusion as a trader and becoming a potentate in the land - stealing authority from the natives to rule over them is what Brown invoked here. Daniel Born has rightly observed:

... to Gentleman Brown, the most subversive voice in this chorus, the work of Jim is pure exploitation, nothing less than 'stealing a country', a theft made hypocritical by appeals to 'responsibility', the defence of 'innocent lives,' and 'infernal duty'. In Marlow's story, Brown is ... the unmasker who like Marlow in Heart of Darkness exposes the inherent rapacity at the heart of the benevolent 'idea'.

Brown is the typical representative of a degenerate species produced by the colonial adventures in the East where survival depends on a superior form of banditry. He has made a deliberate choice to be an outlaw from civilization to ensure his career. There is a fine irony in the title 'Gentleman Brown'. His deliberate misinterpretation of Jim's actions and his treachery frustrated Jim's efforts in establishing a new society in Patusan.

After they had been surrounded by the villagers, as a ploy Brown offered to clear out without a fight if they were guaran-
teed a free passage: "give us a fight or a clear road to go back whence we came...." he demanded. (p. 281). For himself it was a desperate situation: either succeed in his loot or die of starvation. It was evident that they would not be passive victims of misfortunes as they tasted blood. But Jim failed to see through the pretence of Brown. We way say that he had his second jump here. It is usually assumed that instead of being undone by an overactive imagination, as he was at the early part of his life when he visualized the sinking ship, now at the end of his career, Jim suffered from an underactive one. He did not perceive possibilities of duplicity and took Brown at his word. Jim showed his magnanimity to the wrong person though kindred by race and colour. When Brown and his party were allowed to leave, they demonstrated how little they merited Jim’s trust that they would keep a gentlemanly agreement and depart in peace. Brown, deprived “of a common robber’s success,” took revenge with “an act of cold-blooded ferocity” (p. 297).

One must record that Brown’s evil instincts were abetted by Cornelius and Kassim. Like Brown, they too were two by-products of the colonial situation and could not tolerate Jim’s benign activities.

Cornelius was a Malacca Portuguese who married the Dutch Malay girl whom Stein had patronized. This marriage was a
mismatch since Cornelius was a wreck. Out of compassion Stein offered him the post of the manager in his trading station. But Cornelius failed to prove his merit and the company incurred heavy losses. Hence Stein decided to replace him by Jim. This provoked Cornelius with "unsuspected depths of cunning" to plot against Jim who became the object of "intense hate" for him. (p. 253). Like Brown, Cornelius too could not accept Jim's philanthropic mission as real. They were not used to such things in the world of their experience. Jim's humanitarianism appeared to Cornelius as a breach of contract for a white man.

Cornelius was pressed into action by Kassim. Kassim was a shrewd native figure. He represented also an archetypal figure in the colonial imbroglio: his plan is to utilize the white man to achieve his own personal gratification of wealth and power. Kassim was a follower of Rajah Allang, the tribal chief and the rival of Doramin. Naturally he bore an ill-feeling against Jim who was acting as an adviser to Doramin. Kassim also did not like Brown and his plundering followers. But it immediately struck him that by the help of Brown, he could get rid of the white man who was becoming a great danger to him and he assumed that after achieving his end Brown could be disposed of:

Kassim disliked Doramin and his Bugis very much, but he hated the new order of things still more. It had occurred to him that these
whites, together with the Rajah’s followers, could attack and defeat the Bugis before Jim’s return. Then, he reasoned, general defection of the townsfolk was sure to follow, and the reign of the white man who protected poor people would be over. (pp. 269-270) (italics mine).

Kassim thus allied himself with Brown and Cornelius in their common antipathy to Jim. The white men resented the fact that Jim falsified their notions of colonial objectives. For this very reason Kassim too, disliked Jim as he was laying the foundation of a new order of things where oppression of the poor would not be possible. This antipathy united the forces of the criminal whites and the native exploiters - both eager to benefit from the colonial situation. Thus Jim cannot transcend the colonial framework though his efforts were genuinely motivated to have another dispensation.

Much of Marlow’s concern for Jim was rooted in an identification with Jim’s social and professional role as a member of the British Merchant Marine and more broadly, as representative of the British race. As Jeremy Hawthorn has rightly noted, Jim’s dreams like “Saving people from sinking ships, confronting savages on tropical shores, quelling mutinies on the high seas - all these are activities connected with Britain’s imperial position.” Though he was forced by circumstances to stay away from Britain physically, his mind and spirit always
drew their sustenance from Britain. Benita Parry too echoes this when she says that Marlow expresses a belief in "inalienable racial roots" which forever fix even the alienated in the soil of their native culture and it is this concept that makes Jim's relation with Patusan a dubious one. Here Ms Parry marks the 'racial roots' as inalienable and thereby stresses the fact that Jim could not transcend the desire to be appreciated in terms of his native culture. But Daniel Born strikes a contrary note when he observes that Jim in Patusan has turned his back to the white society. Born says:

One can serve the empire in remote places, goes the argument, but it is quite another matter to cut oneself off intentionally from the imperial community and get attached to the locals. Imperialism requires the cohesion of the white community, and in that abstract almost spiritualized imperial code by which the privileged man lives, Jim no longer qualifies.

So Born reads Jim's stay in Patusan as his deliberate attempt to separate himself from the white community. Imperialism, Born argues, is dependent on cohesion among all members of the white community. In this respect, Jim is a deviant. But the fact is that one's relationship with one's culture is not a matter that can be completely washed off from one's psyche.

I would like to suggest that Jim does not belong to the
category of the average white colonialists but yet his link with the colonial realm cannot be ignored. His training was different. He joined the Merchant Marine because he "saw himself" as "always an example of devotion to duty, and as unflinching as a hero in a book" (p. 5). He looked upon himself as one cast for achieving higher objectives in life than just live or die as the average man does. He cherished a self-conscious superiority in his mind. So he was isolated from the crew by a certain contempt and had a distaste for associating with them. Jim is presented in the novel as one who is studiedly ignorant of the conditions in which he works. He is ignorant finally on two points: that of his own dependence on the other crew members and the necessity of working with them; and of his complicity in the larger British commercial trading network as the task of the Merchant Marine is to help the colonial trade and the governments connected with it. His absentmindedness and his overactive imagination might have set him apart from the business-world of the Merchant Marine. This absence of any awareness of complicity with colonialism moves him to do what he thought was really good for Patusan, forgetting that in the psyche of men constituted by the colonial experience there always lurked a suspicion in the white man's actions. Forgetting this inevitable barrier Jim thought he was creating a "social fabric of orderly, peaceful life, when every man was sure of tomorrow" (p. 274) and could lead orderly life
in total harmony. His building of a fort with the labour of ex-
slaves, his planning of coffee plantation and obtaining a
monopoly of the gunpower, he considers them all as an expres-
sion of his duty to Stein. That he has become a centre of power
and dominance which might cause envy in others was beyond his
comprehension. He looked upon himself as a protector of the
poor and a pathfinder for orderly life in the distant East.

Jim's attachment "to the locals" which irritated many as
stated earlier, makes it evident that Jim had overcome his
earlier indifference to the coloured people. His friendship
with Dain Waris brought out the inexplicable relationship be-
tween a white man and a native. Such a relationship undeterred
by racial considerations is indeed an achievement for Jim in
a colonial society:

Dain Waris, the distinguished youth, was the
first to believe in him; theirs was one of
those strange, profound, rare friendships
between brown and white, in which the very
difference of race seems to draw two human
beings closer by some mystic element of sym-
pathy (p. 192).

Conrad's choice of words here is interesting: 'a mystic
element of sympathy' is inexplicable by reason and, as such, an
emotional bond but could it mean also that one which might be
blocked when rationality intervenes? Obviously Dain Waris has
found in Jim some genuine sympathy much above the colonial
practice where a hierarchy among the whites and the coloured is assumed automatically.

Jim's relationship with Jewel was also a link to strengthen his emotional attachment to the native society of Patusan. Jewel is the half-caste step-daughter of Cornelius. She was therefore not wholly an insider. Her role in the Patusan drama is a debatable issue among some critics.

Ruth L. Nadelhaft mentions that for some critics like Thomas Moser, Jewel represents an "intrusive presence" in *Lord Jim*. Ruth L. Nadelhaft differs from this view, as she says:

She is not intrusive, ... for readers who see the novel as an exploration of the differing ethical schemes lived out by men and women in a long age of colonisation, a colonisation which includes the conquest of women by men.

So in Ruth L. Nadelhaft's view, Jewel is not an anomaly in the novel. Rather she is a representative of the conquered women in an age of colonization and within its differing ethical standards for men and women. In the light of this observation, Marlow's reading of the Jim-Jewel affair as something idyllic seems indefensible. Marlow puts it thus: "they came together under the shadow of a life's disaster, like knight and maiden meeting to exchange vows amongst haunted ruins" (p.
237). Marlow, a typical agent of colonial culture, could romanticize such relationship but cannot rationally justify it.

When Jim first met Jewel, she was passing through a fatal phase of her life: her step-father was inhumanly torturing her. At such a moment Jim appeared in her life and rescued her and promised that "he would not abandon her to Cornelius" (p. 227). Hence though Jewel had witnessed her mother’s desertion by her white father and had reached the conclusion that "They always leave us" (p. 227), Jim’s acceptance of her with respect and honour, making her a partner and not a plaything in his life was a source of joy to Jewel. But genuine relationship does not grow out of pity and Conrad of all persons knew it. We may say that the necessity of Jewel for protection made her cling to Jim and Jim seemed to be genuinely attached to her. Jewel being a half caste, had the charm of a white woman and the emotional wealth of an Asiatic as her name 'Jewel' indicates; she was precious in more ways than one. Yet the jewel the colonialists look for is not embodied in man or woman but in money, an alienated 'fetish'. Whereas Jim’s Jewel is an embodied humanity. Here lies the difference. So 'Jewel' could bridge the gulf for Jim embodying materiality and humanity in one.

As Jim is one of the rare breed of humane colonialists, his character has grown through crises. Jim had abandoned the
pilgrim-ship as he could not then overcome his inborn indifference to the lives of the natives. But when he reaches Patusan with Stein’s ‘pity’ and commendation he becomes a missionary of light. Quoting Mark Conroy, we may assume that Jim went into Patusan “as heedless of the nature of the colonial project that engages him as he was on the deck of the Patna” 16. He had been on the lookout for a hide-out: but he thought, he had found here a firmament to shine upon. The irony of the situation is evident in Marlow’s description:

... I had quoted poor Brierly’s remark: “Let him creep twenty feet underground and stay there”... "Bury him in some sort," I explained. "one doesn’t like to do it of course, but it would be the best thing, seeing what he is". (p. 161).

Burial and resurrection are twin concepts in the Christian myth. So in Patusan Jim was resurrected. The image of an apparition in Marlow’s subsequent description could not have been totally accidental to Conrad. Marlow says:

They had him, but it was like getting hold of an apparition, a wraith, a portent.... Meanwhile he wandered about the courtyard, shunned by some, glared at by others, but watched by all ... (p. 185).

The star image of an unearthly apparition sets the new role for Jim, - it resurrected Jim: “All at once I saw what I
had to do...." (p. 191), Jim commented, as if in a state of illumination. This was said in reference to the deplorable and chaotic state of the political life of Patusan. He knew immediately how to set out and what to do. This is an unusual change over him. So he wandered over the courtyard, stunned, bewildered at first. He assumed a sense of responsibility as never before - but in wholly unfamiliar circumstances.

When Jim was confronted with the opportunities in Patusan, he raved with excitement:

"I've been waiting for that. I'll show yet... I'll ...I'm ready for any confounded thing.... I've been dreaming of it... Jove! Get out of this. Jove! This is luck at last.... You wait. I'll...." (P.173)

It is a wild excitement and proceeds out of an overactive imagination. Naturally Marlow objected to this type of bravado which appeared to him essentially hollow:

Why these vapourings? ... Where was the sense of such exaltation in a man appointed to be trading-clerk, and in a place where there was no trade - at that? Why hurl defiance at the universe? This was not a proper frame of mind to approach any undertaking; an improper frame of mind not only for him, I said, but for any man. (p. 173).
The juxtaposition of these two comments is a Conradian ploy to make us understand the frailty of such a state of mind. Conrad draws attention to the humble position that has been offered to Jim and also the unreality of material opportunity in terms of trade that was being offered. So Jim's excitement must be based on a mental construct which is essentially illusory. Yet the ground reality of the Patusan island is that it is a part of the colonial framework where Jim enters as a white trader's agent. He is proud of being trusted and given a role to play in the backward region. He is conscious of his white identity and comes to believe in the tales of his supernatural strength. This ego which had been deflated time and again - has now found a footing to breathe and expand. His attitude is unambiguous - so far as the people put under his care are concerned -

"What can you do with such silly beggars? They will sit up half the night talking bally rot, and the greater the lie the more they seem to like it" (p.195).

Jim is aware of his difference from these people whom he cannot respect but yet he would not subject them to his contempt. He feels that he has a job to do and without him this place has no future; he felt a new justification for living "... had I been wiped out it is this place that would have been the loser" (p. 180).
To the native society of Patusan he has brought the benefits of civilization from the West of which he forms an inseparable part, though he had left his country long ago and had almost become an outcast there. He knew that his achievement would be a tribute to his homeland. The cause of his alienation from his family and country was a source of pain to him. So if he could prove his mettle in Patusan, it would help him to regain his lost honour in the eyes of his compatriots. That is why he engaged himself with great nervous energy in Patusan. He exclaims,

"I am satisfied ... nearly. I've got to look only at the face of the first man that comes along, to regain my confidence" (p. 224).

The people of Patusan, scared of Jim's "supernatural powers" (p. 195) makes him feel inflated in his ego and he begins to exude overweening confidence: "... I believe I am equal to all my luck!", he says (p. 223). An interesting thing to observe is that he now swears his oaths in the name of Jove which was rather unexpected of a parson's son. Apparently he begins to feel transformed into a new being with Herculean dimension. All these are of course parts of the colonial metabolism which takes place in all incumbents after landing on a colony. Euphoria leads to misjudgment and self-delusion.
Jim's fatal blunder was assuming the reliability of Brown and his party. May be Jim was afraid of Brown that he might know of his past and divulge it, or he trusted him as a man of his common stock. Though it is difficult to agree with Arnold E. Davidson that "Jim has transformed his allegiance from the Bugis to Brown and the other white invaders of Patusan" 17, yet there are some grounds to believe that either sympathy or fear made him yield to Brown's plea:

And there ran through the rough talk a vein of subtle reference to their common blood, an assumption of common experience; a sickening suggestion of common guilt, of secret knowledge that was like a bond of their minds and of their hearts. (p. 285) (italics mine)

Brown's arrival in Patusan acted as a reminder to Jim of his transgression. He was a sort of a mirror before the face of a Caliban. The crux of his arguments was the reference to the "common guilt". That Jim was, like Brown, a social outcast was a crucial reminder. He has been running and running with a brand like Cain's as Conrad referred to it several times. It is for this connection and the fear of exposure that Jim wanted to get rid of Brown at his earliest convenience. As a convicted member of the white community he fears as well as sympathizes with Brown and trusts him stupidly, only to realize at the end
that, to quote Lloyd Fernando, "the unsuspected strength of the bond with his original group has led him to a second betrayal of the foreigners in his care." He was guilty of this second betrayal when he had fallen between the cleft of the two identities: an identity with himself, his white community and an identity with a community whose care he had taken up on himself and who are a people equally conscious of their native identity. So against this background it will be difficult to assess objectively Jim's lenience for Brown as the colonial situation is loaded here with emotionality.

Had Brown never made his appearance in Patusan, still the Patusan episode could not have been an unmixed blessing either for Jim or for the non-white natives. It helped Jim to develop both "a sort of fierce egoism" and "a contemptuous tenderness" (p. 182) as has been pointed out by Elleke Boehmer in her recent study of Lord Jim. It might be of interest to place her view in detail regarding this ambiguity of representation in Conrad of methods concerning the colonial imbroglio:

Until the end of Jim's tale, Marlow continues in theory at least to uphold the ethics of group-loyalty and self-control which safeguard the Western civilization he believes in. The same goes for his creator. Though Empire in certain of its forms was aberrant, for Conrad the values on which the cultural mission of a colonizing Europe was built were not ultimately in question. But, at the
same time, any reading of his work must allow for the ambiguity of his representations. Alongside the prevailing belief in the people who have emerged from the gloom, there are also his character studies in the pride and self-delusion on which racial superiority rested. Lord Jim exposes the tautology of the colonial hero ideal - the assumption that the British hero is great because British, because 'one of us'.

Elleke Boehmer points out further:

Marlow comments revealingly that the colonial dream, the fanciful 'empire' of 'recklessly heroic aspirations' -- though held for 'the sake of better morality' and 'the greater profit', and though sustained by a myth of white man's worth -- is in fact based on a fundamental hypocrisy. Apparently selfless acts - the civilizing mission, the expansion of responsible authority - are motivated by a 'sublimated, idealized selfishness.' But not only that. White colonial identity, the self manifested in the colonial drama, is also split and therefore critically weak. The European in the Empire rejects the native, yet he also requires the native's presence in order to experience to the full his own being as a white colonialist 19.(italics mine)

Elleke Boehmer has nicely summed up most of the salient features of Conrad's critique of imperialism which I have tried to analyse. In Jim we see a "sublimated, idealized selfishness", a "split" character and hence a "weak" personality. Jim real-
ized his superiority chiefly when he found around him the inferior tribe common in a colonial situation. This superiority grows inwardly into the ego to create a fantasy of illusory greatness. Thus Jim has become a victim rather than a master of his ego. The 'split' in his personality is manifest in the Brown episode - his group loyalty triumphs over responsibility. As a result, his unflinching determination to lay down his life in expiation has not received universal appreciation. Mark Conroy points out that Jim's "willingness to die represents a reneging on his commitment to Jewel never to leave her ... and in that sense, his decision is, if anything, the opposite of altruism." So Jim's final act cannot reach the glory of self-sacrifice as he dishonoured his commitment to Jewel, and in fact never thought of her. It is an act of self-dramatization at the expense of his professed idealism to bring a hope of new life to Patusan.

In spite of this unmistakable reversal into selfhood and racial identity, Jim, otherwise, presents a welcome picture of the positive aspects of the colonialists' cultural mission. His sincere attempts to keep native political anarchy at bay (p. 191), to put some backbone into the natives (p. 216), his ability to get fanatical devotion as a "white lord" from Tamb' Itam, his servant (p. 198), his sincere attachment to Dain Waris (p. 192), his acceptance of Jewel on honourable terms
(p. 203); these explain why everyone in Patusan used to call him "Tuan Jim" with "a strange mixture of familiarity and awe". The villagers felt that they "were under that lord's special protection" (p. 178). Jim's painstaking efforts and strong determination to face dangers of all kinds to improve things at Patusan induced a tender sympathy even in Doramin's little, "motherly witch of a wife." She asked as to why he who was "so young had wandered from his home, coming so far, through so many dangers?" (p. 201).

He came out as an agent of colonialism, but at heart cherishing an altruistic mission. The colonial situation, as Avrom Fleishman observes, can bring the best out of man but there it breeds an ego which can have ambiguous impact on the man:

In the final analysis, colonization is a viable - the only viable - form of imperialism, not so much because it ameliorates the worst conditions of native life but because the commitment to social progress allows the individual to discover himself in the community formed and improved by his efforts. He can then egoistically surrender himself to the community, wearing, as Jim does, "a proud and unflinching glance."²¹

Colonialism offers opportunities galore for the young of the colonizing nations for heroic deeds and this has a benefi-
cial effect on the nations lucky enough to acquire an empire. But the benefit that it brings to the colonialist is not an unmixed one as it infects his ego permanently. Besides, the good that is done to the native is only a form of "sublimated idealized selfishness", as is apparent even to Jim who sought to overcome his past through heroic deeds in Patusan; and as soon as he was frightened by Brown that the past could be revealed again, he made a compromise owing to selfish needs which brought ruin to the land he sought to protect. Still, as a colonial ruler, Jim is different from others because he sacrificed his life to prove his honour. He was not a hypocrite. But even to make such a sacrifice he needed the Patusan experiences. He discovered himself here and his thirst for greatness was consummated here.

Yet despite his success and good intentions, Jim had to die because he could not transform the structure of the colonial society. A colonial society consists of two distinct races separated by master-servant relationship. In this framework harmony is not possible. Jim's trust of Brown was interpreted too easily as a racial gesture even by his best friends in Patusan because they never could forget that Jim was a white man, and his friendship with Brown was assumed to be deeper than his commitment to the people of Patusan. So this mistrust is inbuilt in the colonial lineaments. Brown dishonoured the
bond of trust but the natives also overdid their part in interpreting Jim as a white accomplice of Brown. Jim himself is genuine but he cannot prove it except through his death. Ideal human relation is not possible in a colonial society across the racial barrier. Conrad's representation of this episode offers a direct stricture on the colonial framework because it perverts human efforts towards solidarity.

Conrad has made his criticism more incisive by the use of irony. Jim, unaware of the fact that racial superiority and racial mistrust are the scaffoldings of colonialism exclaims:

"... don't you think I am pretty safe? It all depends upon me, and, by Jove! I have lots of confidence in myself" (p.239).

The irony is apparent as immediately Brown will appear on the scene with his disguised villainy. Almost immediately the colonial suspicion will be brought into play. Despite his moral uprightness Jim is identified as Brown’s ally and is killed in the name of a quick retribution. Conrad is not a partisan here. He is objectively describing how the colonial mind works. Nothing depends on the individual mind here in a colonial situation as the individual mortagages his position to the centre of power where only suspicion and fear rule.
Notwithstanding his racial pride, Jim lays down his life for the native people of Patusan in expiation for his original sin against the Mecca pilgrims (non-white natives). His life subsequent to that act was an effort at rehabilitation under the patronage of Marlow which affirms the loyalty that existed among the colonialists. In Patusan he boosts Stein's business which was running at a loss, he establishes law and order replacing chaos and anarchy and tries to enlighten the natives. The natives assembled in his fort "as if expecting to find wisdom and courage in the dwelling of the absent white man" (p. 266). But Jim fails to survive in the colonial cross-currents. As Ruth L. Nadelhaft has suggested, "the placement of Jim in Patusan may be interpreted as the sacrificial offering of the guilty son by the fathers in order to ensure the continued diversion of commerce and religion and the justification of Western expansion." Jim carries out the statutory functions of an ideal colonialist quite remarkably. But the colonial situation which has gone to seed in the colonial backwater immediately intervenes and misinterprets his actions. And hence Jim, the epitome of colonial idealism, perishes, physically by the mortal shots of Doramin, and, spiritually, by the mistrust and suspicion generated by the colonial situation.
NOTES AND REFERENCES
CHAPTER IV


