It is in _Lord Jim_, his first major novel, that Conrad embarks on his major enquiries into the nature of man, the amazing range of his capabilities, and the endless inner and outer threats which he is condemned to confront. Jim is distinguished by a romantic imagination and an idealized opinion of himself. He is a man who pursues a glamorous dream, but he flees from the existential facts. He does not face reality. He has ideal aspirations but his whole actual conduct in a crisis, is ignoble.

Being a day-dreamer, he nourishes the great dream of altruistic achievements which isolates him both from his colleagues on the training ship and from himself. We understand that for Jim, "imagination, the enemy of men, the father of all terrors" does have two features; one, that which takes him away from 'reality' along with these feats of his own possible adventurous actions; two, in the moment of crisis, his imagination increases the horror beyond one's hold. These two features work together and deprive him of the motor responses required to deal with experiential reality. Ultimately, we see his failure both on the _Patna_ and later, in Patusan, as a result of his paralysis of will with which he is afflicted because of his high-strung imagination. Berthoud
rightly remarks, "since his commitment to the code is inspired by self-regarding emotion, it is not surprising that it should have a counter-productive effect".²

Whereas an ordinary sailor sees the ship as a means of earning his livelihood, Jim regards it as a vehicle to travel into the regions of his imagination and dreams, a land where he will be involved in venturesome exploits, so that he could reveal what he imagines to be his many-sided courage. Jim, the son of an English parson, chooses to become a sailor after having read books which stir his imagination. He eagerly waits for an opportunity to put his imagined heroism to the test. He is appointed first mate on the Patna, a rusty old ship carrying eight hundred Arab pilgrims. He and other four members of the crew on the ship stay away from the human cargo: "the five whites on board lived amidships, isolated from the human cargo",³ but Jim considers himself to be worthier than his white mates. The sea means to him glamour and romance. These fancies and dreams are more real to him than the actual monotony of an uneventful sea-journey. The romantic sense of bravado creates in him an exaggerated self-confidence. "When all men flinched, then - he felt sure - he alone would know how to deal with the spurious menace of wind and seas".⁴

In his dreams,

He saw himself saving people from sinking ships, cutting away masts in a hurricane, swimming through
a surf with a line; or as a lonely castaway, bare-footed and half-naked, walking on uncovered reefs in search of shellfish to stave off starvation. He confronted savages on tropical shores, quelled mutinies on the high seas, and in a small boat upon the ocean kept up the hearts of despairing men - always an example of devotion to duty, and as unflinching as a hero in a book.5

But a little later, the alienating and isolating impact of his imagination is revealed, when he fails to respond swiftly to an emergency in the ship. When a man had fallen overboard, Jim is a helpless spectator as if confounded and remains there motionless. "Jim looked up with the pain of conscious defeat in his eyes".6

Jim's imagination plays a treacherous part in his fall, because it gives him a bloated vision of heroism and fear. His confounded imagination generates a disturbed state of mind - the horrors of panic, the terror, screams and horrible incidents at sea of which he had never heard. Actually, what Jim has done is to exchange his real self for an ideal self, and at the same time evolved a mechanism to protect it. Jim argues that he has increased his knowledge far more than those who have done the work. And according to Marlow, this shadow of mistrust is "more chilling than the certitude of death - the doubt of sovereign power enthroned in a fixed standard of conduct. It is the hardest thing to stumble against; it is the thing that breeds yelling panics and good little quiet villainies; it's the true shadow of calamity".7
Another element which isolates Jim from his fellow beings is the habit of individualistic reverie: "His station was in the fore-top, and often from there he looked down, with the contempt of a man destined to shine in the midst of dangers". And, in fact, when he is put to a test, it is Jim who needs help. When a strong storm strikes and two men are in danger, Jim is struck motionless by "the brutal tumult of earth and sky". Jim is shamefully doomed to see that his so-called inferiors rescue the two half-drowned sailors from the sea. He suffers from an unnatural fear of elemental forces. He imagines they are inimically disposed toward him.

The concept of test has double and parallel functions in Conradian canon. The event which unfolds a crucial chapter in his life acts in two ways - one, for isolating him and the other, for setting him on the course of pilgrimage. The test means: putting the youthful self in a new situation demanding some decision and some action rather than imagining and building castles in the air. With the trial, the self would step into a new arena. The various forms of inner isolation originate after the test. The test is the central situation of Conrad's early stories. "Conrad wishes to explore that most important moment in an individual's life, the moment which reveals whether or not he is faithful to the community". Experience is regarded by Conrad as a test, and his characters' reactions to the test decide their position in his moral
hierarchy. And that is where the simple Conradian notions get more involved.

Jim is appointed as chief mate of the training ship, without ever having been tested:

- He was gentlemanly, steady, tractable, with a thorough knowledge of his duties; and in time, when yet very young, he became chief mate of a fine ship, without ever having been tested by those events of the sea that show in the light of day the inner worth of a man, the edge of his temper, and the fibre of his stuff; that reveal the quality of his resistance and the secret truth of his pretences, not only to others but also to himself.

The test at once reveals to 'the light of day' what is usually hidden in the darkness, showing self's 'inner worth' baring 'the fibre of his stuff', and exposing 'the secret truth' of his pretences. The essence of the test is that it is always unexpected, with the result that the man who fails to meet it has a defensive sense of having been 'taken unawares'. "Jim has such a sense the first time he is tested on the training-ship, feeling 'angry with the brutal tumult of earth and sky for taking him unawares and checking unfairly a generous readiness for narrow escapes'". He feels certain, he is the lone victim of the tumult.

Jim's behaviour and reaction, once on a training ship and, then as the "chief mate of a fine ship", pointedly fore-shadow the crucial Patna incident which triggers off his prolonged pilgrimage. On a winter evening, a ferocious storm makes a coaster crash into a schooner and puts his youthful
imaginative game of bravery and heroism into the first test. There was "a fierce purpose" in the gusts of the gale that "made him hold his breath in awe". The voice, "Man the Cutter!" jostled him, showed him that others are already engaged in the rescue operation, and caught him staggering, confused, undecided, and awed. He felt like acting but the captain's firm grip, "Too late, youngster", and sympathetic assurance: "Better luck next time. This will teach you to be smart", pinch him with pain of conscious defeat in his eyes. It shows, he is morbidly sensitive and he feels lonesome and wretched when he fails the test.

A month later, during the official inquiry, Jim told the court that the Patna must have hit something floating awash. The officials in the inquiry, "Wanted facts... as if facts could explain anything!" And this naturally exasperated Jim very much. But, by then, the captain, the second mate, and all others except - this "simple and sensitive character" had absconded. Jim decides to face the court or, for that matter, anything related to it. Therein begins the mythic way of his looking into the matter. He has stayed back with his personal and particular way of approaching the issue, with his personal world of judging and sentencing himself, with his personal standard of evaluating the incident, with his personal logic of interpreting the desertion, and with his personal way of measuring up to it. After the virtual desertion, the matter has been
reappearing before his imaginative, hypersensitive mind with renewed importance and newer implications making and shaping the world he 'honestly believes in'. His world, then, becomes the centre of housing all that crops up to the mind as the consequences of relinquishing the ship. That world built in his "own image", fated to remain "individual and a little mysterious".

Isolation in Jim is a matter of process, step by step, fruiting into its totality. His self-conceited motives persist through the initial trials until the hardest test appears before him, when he is on the ramshackle old Patna as the chief mate. When the ship runs into trouble, Jim deserts it. Ever after he experiences the process of longest alienation. "... his unexplained choice of the Patna is in more than one sense a choice of exile". Whatever linkage he bridged by joining the Patna after the initial failures is totally shattered, and he is no more in any connection with any one. Though he is repeatedly described as "one of us", in the sense that he possesses certain human weaknesses and strengths, certain blends of good and evil that exist in the worst and the noblest of mankind, he ceases to be one of any, and reaches the other extreme pole of being one of none. The acute sense of isolation that haunts and taunts the conscience of Jim cuts him "off from the rest of his kind", and from the rough and tumble of life.
Standing elevated in the witness box and taking the other European officers as reprobates, cowards, and drunkards, Jim's voice rings "startling in his own ears" and is "the only sound audible in the world", who "... for the terribly distinct questions that extorted his answers seemed to shape themselves in anguish and pain within his breast - came to him poignant and silent like the terrible questioning of one's conscience". So the audience seems composed of "staring shadows", their "attentive eyes" seem to stab him. Moreover, on the Patna he is, in a special sense a man alone, alone with a dream that is unsharable because he is among inferiors - "Those men did not belong to the world of heroic adventure... he rubbed shoulders with them, but they could not touch him; he shared the air they breathed, but he was different...." His sense of egoistic superiority isolates him from others whom he considers inferior.

The hopeless problem of incommunication enhances the facts of Jim's tragic isolation:

For days, for many days he had spoken to no one, but had held silent, incoherent, and endless converse with himself, like a prisoner alone in his cell or like a wayfarer lost in a wilderness ... he doubted whether he would ever again speak out as long as he lived. The sound of his own truthful statements confirmed his deliberate opinion that speech was of no use to him any longer.

Suffering from such a problem of incommunication for want of an adequate mode of expression arising out of the over-
whelming reality of entrapped feeling, Jim is doubly, fatally, and completely isolated. He is isolated because he cannot speak out the truth of his feelings; and, more importantly, he remains isolated because he cannot conceive the truths he needs to know, to survive in the world. Herein, comes the need of Marlow, the empiricist, to unlock the closed situation, to save Jim as well as to enlighten the readers; a point we shall soon come to.

The rational way of knowing guides Marlow, the matured sailor, in narrating Jim’s story from the court to his leaving for Patusan. He comments and feeds back on Jim’s past life but shows ignorance about his future life. This interim period of Jim’s life constitutes the phases of isolation and pilgrimage rewarding Jim with the knowledge of what there is inside his own self and how he has to look at others. And here, Marlow is of the opinion that Jim threatens community from the inside:

I tell you I ought to know the right kind of looks. I would have trusted the deck to that youngster on the strength of a single glance, and gone to sleep with both eyes - and, by Jove! it would not have been safe. There are depths of horror in that thought. He looked as genuine as a new sovereign, but there was some infernal alloy in his metal.

An egoist loner he (Jim) does not seem concerned about the well-being of others.

When the other men succeed in getting their boat clear, he moves away as far as he can from them, because, as Jim
says, "there was nothing in common between him and these men - who had the hammer. Nothing whatever". His feeling of superiority over others is because of his mission of heroism compels him to maintain the distance: "It is more than probable he thought himself cut off from them by a space that could not be traversed... by a chasm without bottom".

In "the brooding rancour of his mind", the eyes closed, "a flash of thought showed him that crowd of bodies, laid out for death, as plain as daylight". In the last minute on board, he lets "a tumult of events and sensations" beat around him "like the sea upon a rock" causing him, "Jump", and the next moment he finds himself among others on the boat. Marlow recognizes that a man left to himself never "understands quite his own artful dodges to escape from the grim shadow of self-knowledge".

Thus, Jim's powerful imagination arouses an overwhelming sense of hopelessness and resourcelessness which incapacitates him totally. He tells Marlow "that his first impulse was to shout and straight away make all those people leap out of sleep into terror; but such an overwhelming sense of his helplessness came over him that he was not able to produce a sound". In the emergency, the way Jim reacts, indicates his sense of dissociation and alienation from himself. "I had jumped..." "He checked himself, averted his gaze...." "It seems, he added". Jim's "loss of volition and sense of alienation from self dramatize the fact
that, at the crucial moment, he is not himself,

While communicating whatever he could, in words to Marlow and indexing whatever came out in his face providing Marlow the clues, imputing the cause of the 'Jump' to the sense of overwhelming helplessness and resourcelessness involving physical and spiritual paralysis Jim had been discovering the existence of the forces which were subjugating his mission of heroism. However, Jim gives the impression that he has "some conviction of innate blamelessness" that "had checked the truth writhing within him at every turn". While conversing with Marlow, he suggests that the 'Jump' was altogether beyond his conscious and free will, yet in course of the tragic sufferings of recollecting the moments so vividly and poignantly, he does not fail to understand "quite his own artful dodges to escape from the grim shadow of self-knowledge"; rather, he catches hold of the gloomy face of the darker side of the self. Marlow portrays the severest conflict that Jim's introspective mind detects within his own self: "He was not speaking to me, he was only speaking before me, in a dispute with an invisible personality, an antagonistic and inseparable partner of his existence - another possessor of his soul". Marlow visualizes the long-drawn-out war between the forces of both darkness and light inside Jim:
... a dispute impossible of decision if one had to be fair to all the phantoms in possession - to the reputable that had its claims and to the disreputable that had its exigencies. I can't explain to you who have not seen him and who hear his words only at second hand the mixed nature of my feelings. It seemed to me I was being made to comprehend the Inconceivable - and I know of nothing to compare with the discomfort of such a sensation. I was made to look at the convention that lurks in all truth and on the essential sincerity of falsehood. He appealed to all sides at once - to the side turned perpetually to the light of day, and to that side of us which, like the other hemisphere of the moon, exists stealthily in perpetual darkness, with only a fearful ashy light falling at times on the edge.

Jim clearly feels he was impelled to jump by some force outside himself: "I told you I jumped; but I tell you they (the white crew) were too much for any man. It was their doing as plainly as if they had reached up with a boat-hook and pulled me over". The crew thus symbolize the evil. In the same way, Jim sees in the physical universe itself an inherent malevolence undoing him at different occasions. Glimpses 'of the earnestness in the anger of the sea' and the dangers of adventures and gales convinces Jim that the physical nature is a formidable enemy. All his failures have been enhanced by the non-cooperation and concurrence of the materially existing things. Such manifestation of evil in nature and its other elements like storm, wave, cyclone, tornado, etc., have been amply demonstrated in The Nigger of the Narcissus and Typhoon. It is repeated in Lord Jim in the quantum necessary to evoke Jim's recognition of it. Jim comes to discover that an evil force of "the depths of a greater darkness", of a much more sinister and complex
nature, and of an indistinct and non-descript proportion has been all through existing in the innermost recesses of his self, along with his long cherished dreams of achieving something so remarkably uncommon.

Filled with the rage of failure and the knowledge of the mercurial evil, Jim finds himself absolutely lost and abandoned, "no better than a vagabond". He is as ostracized as anything morally, spiritually, physically, and socially. He is out and out an outcast, and as much an outcast as no one else in Conrad is. Even Kurtz has links with his adoreres, but Jim is alone in letter and spirit. Marlow's growing sympathy for his tormented soul manages jobs after jobs for him so that he can enter into a new condition of his life and raise it from the bottomless pit of inhuman suffering. He is very much liked for his faithfulness by his employers, for his devotion to works, but suddenly he will forsake the job, fly to some other port. He will not simply stick to a place or to a particular job. He continues flying with the fullest knowledge of the evil forces until he meets his golden opportunity in Patusan where he would make the best use of this hard-earned self-knowledge.

The intellectual simplicity and self-esteem which can otherwise be called the egoistic attitude of Jim, play an important role in his isolation from others. On the ground of intellectual simplicity, he tries to think of safe-existence and on his egoistic attitude, the notion of
personality differentiation crops up which leads him to believe that his power on the sea or his potentiality as a seaman is somehow better than that of others. This tendency in him developed owing to the opportunity he was provided on the Patna. These self-extolations could have not been possible, had he been in home service. "Conrad sees man as lonely and morally isolated, harried by egoistic longings for power and peace, stumbling along a perilous path, his only hope benumbing labor or in rare cases, a little self-knowledge". The egoism disables Conrad's vulnerable characters to the extent that they fail to realize or understand their own motives. Moreover, they are blind to the reality. Instead of accepting failure as a result of their own follies and misdeeds, they blame someone or something for their tragedy. And "on the square... there was nothing he could not meet". Marlow also observes that "he had preserved through it all a strange illusion of passiveness, as though he had not acted but had suffered himself to be handled by the infernal powers who had selected him for the victim of their practical joke".

His egoistic ideal makes him inefficient, and seduces him away from the habitual, separates him from the reassuring sights and sounds, and makes him forgetful of the watchful eyes of others. In the hospital under treatment, he finds no link with others lying beside him. He lives a detached life in the artificial paradise of his egoism and, instead
of making any conciliatory gesture, he wants the community of mankind conform to his ideals. "His early dream of heroism is tainted by the constant image of himself as being 'above' others, 'higher' than the rest. His favorite perch on a ship is atop the mainmast, and the quality of his ideal vision has the unpleasant egotism of an assumed superiority". 48

"Throughout Conrad's early period, his writing is haunted by the recurring nightmare image of a lone man, menaced and terrified by hostile surroundings". 49 This image in the novel can be seen in Jim's exit from stockade in Patusan, "he rose muddy from head to foot... with no help, no sympathy, no pity to expect from anyone, like a hunted animal.... He ... noticed the little children trying to run for life...."50 However, the isolation in Conrad's works is definitely more than a striking image. It is the test which lays down the conditions for Conrad's characters to see whether they are able to pass through that test or fail. As I have discussed earlier, Jim fails the test on the Patna mainly due to his moral isolation. On the ship he is with the captain and the other white officers, which indicates that he is not physically isolated. But "they are outside his moral sphere".51

Jim is a "staggler yearning inconsiderably for his humble place in the ranks".52 The commonality of these vulnerable heroes, these stagglers from the ranks, whose failure and
sense of egoism bring them physical isolation or moral isolation and in the end, disaster for them makes Marlow's point of view on universal isolation more appealing. It is in this context that there is an impelling need to comprehend a universe, a world in which the fundamental truth is not men's solidarity but human loneliness.

It is when we try to grapple with another man's intimate need that we perceive how incomprehensible, wavering, and mystery are the beings that share with us the sight of the stars and the warmth of the sun. It is as if loneliness were a hard and absolute condition of existence; the envelop of flesh and blood on which our eyes are fixed melts before the outstretched hand, and there remains only the capricious, unconsolable and elusive spirit that no eye can follow, no hand can grasp.

Cancellation of the certificate by the court, condemnation from the eyes of others, and prickings of inner conscience push Jim to look forward for "an opportunity" where he can do something adequately proving his full capabilities to realize his ideal, "... I knew the truth, and I would live it down - alone, with myself... the proper thing was to face it out - alone for myself - wait for another chance - find out..." Conrad develops the Patusan episode offering Jim the golden opportunity. Because of not realizing the causes that drove him from one job to another until he was sent to Patusan and of not seeing his death in connection with those causes, Jim's achievement has remained, more or less unappreciated, the inextricable connection between the former and the latter episodes has been misconstrued, and Jim's dealings with
Gentleman Brown which sets the death incident in motion has been misinterpreted.

Patusan is, "a remorse and isolated peninsula cut off from the larger sea world by a narrow, winding, jungle river". And Marlow compares it to a "distant heavenly body" and says that Stein had sent Jim "into a star of the fifth magnitude the change could not have been greater". It illustrates the fact that Patusan is out of everybody's way and beyond everybody's knowledge, and at the same time, it also underlines Jim's achievement; "He had regulated so many things in Patusan! Things that would have appeared as much beyond his control as the motions of the moon and the stars". There are two hills separated by "a deep fissure", and the moon rises exactly between these hills, floating "away above the summits, as if escaping from a yawning grave in gentle triumph". In Tony Tanner's words, "Patusan is cut off from the rest of the world by thirty miles of forest". And it is here in Patusan that Jim gets his golden chance, which might be the last one. And we have to see whether he is able to wipe out the memory of the Patna. He imagines he will be himself when alone - away from the (accusing) gaze of white men who judge you in terms of standard norms and values of the civilized West.

Jim is in flight from one place to another place, to escape his dark past. He abandons job after job, wanders from one obscure job to another one and even in this condition
and in every new situation he nurses the dream of heroism and wishes to have a chance for redeeming himself. Jim's behaviour puzzles Marlow; "I could never make up my mind ... whether his line of conduct amounted to shirking his ghost or to facing him out". Marlow tries to get him another start somewhere but Jim remains an outsider everywhere, unconnected with anyone, and having no communication in any case with the people with whom he is supposed to live. Jim's relationship with Marlow, the old friend, well-wisher of Jim who continuously listens to him and advises him, is purely egoistic.

Marlow in pursuit of his desire to help Jim out of the mess which he has imposed on himself, meets Stein, a German merchant, an entomologist and philosopher who is also interested in collecting butterflies, to arrange a job for Jim. Ultimately Jim is sent to Patusan to become an agent of Stein. It is noteworthy to note Stein's advice to Marlow;

"Yes! Very funny this terrible thing is. A man that is born falls into a dream like a man who falls into the sea. If he tries to climb out into the air as inexperienced people endeavour to do, he drowns—nicht wahr? ... No! I tell you! The way is to the destructive element submit yourself, and with the exertions of your hands and feet in the water make the deep, deep sea keep you up. So if you ask me—how to be?".

And before leaving for Patusan, Marlow comments:
It was impossible to be angry with him; I could not help a smile, and told him that in the old days people who went on like this were on the way of becoming hermits in a wilderness. "Hermits be hanged!" be commented with engaging impulsiveness. Of course he did not mind a wilderness...

In order to get rid of the obsession of his past and his disgrace which has crippled him, Jim chooses to follow the dream of heroic responsibility and submit himself to it wholeheartedly, rather than reject it, even if this may prove ominous for him. "For Stein as for Hamlet, the problem of life is the problem of consciousness". Human beings always try to improve the conditions of their living, and aim to be what they are not, a saint or a devil. This kind of aspiration for Stein is the mark of a romantic. When Stein hears from Marlow about Jim's misadventures, he remarks that, "He is romantic - romantic.... And that is very bad - very bad.... Very good, too!". The implication is that a romantic loner loves to live out his illusory dream of self-exaltation, so that he ends by becoming (in the words of Matthew Arnold) 'an ineffectual angel beating in the void his luminous wings in vain'.

Conrad works out Jim's victory in the device that Stein suggests. His advice forms the bridge between the allegedly disconnected Patna and the Patusan parts. Stein who advises as a psychologist and philosopher looking both at the psychic and harsh truths about Jim, is also a scientist, a man of affairs, a man of seeing the thing as it is, and is interested
in collecting butterflies and beetles in an attempt to synthesize romanticism with realism. Jim's problem of 'to be', to live up to the claims of his ego-ideal, is seen in terms of the butterfly trying 'to be'. Jim in Patusan, by dint of his abilities and activities, establishes himself firmly and achieves his romantic ideals:

He left his earthly failings behind him and that sort of reputation he had, and there was a totally new set of conditions for his imaginative faculty to work upon. Entirely new, entirely remarkable. And he got hold of them in a remarkable way. 65

Jim in Patusan, "appeared like a creature not only of another kind but of another essence". 66 Jim has moved out of the world of firm substance, bright light, and clear sound (the world in which he jumped from the Patna) into an unreal world where appearances are subservient to Jim's dreaming imagination. Patusan is cut off from the rest of the world by 'thirty miles of forest' and Jim feels he has regained the Edenic garden of his childhood days spent in the parsonage. To use Stein's terms, Jim assumes the shape and form of a butterfly and like the butterfly he still loves to float in air rather than touch the muddy earth. In dazzling white clothes he contrasts superbly with the dirty mud-stained natives. He is not one of them. He is fit to lord over them. Here he can turn his back on the other world, the baser world of the Patna episode, forget his failures and live out his dreams without interruptions, or so it would seem.
As Tony Tanner puts it, "Jim is delighted with the place because, once there, it will be as if he had never existed". It is "a clean slate" - that is he can make the most of his opportunity here. But in Conrad's world there is hardly any possibility of re-making oneself.

Although Jim receives adoration from the natives who look upon him as a god of light, because he is self-centred, he keeps himself aloof and does not intimately relate to the natives. He does not consider any one of them fit enough for his comradeship; he considers his own opinion superior to theirs. Self-adoring ideals are delusive and by breeding the feeling of self-importance drive a wedge between the dreamer and the people, so that he is isolated from the community.

"Jim might be 'ascending', but he is also deserting the harsh exacting world of endeavour and toil where most men have to flourish or fail." Jim in that distant region works out his fantasies of himself, and in these acts he crushes mutinies, enemies and invaders of the land. He receives the love and admiration of the natives. It is in Patusan that he meets his woman, called Jewel, daughter of Cornelius, his predecessor in the trading post. They love each other, "Romance had singled Jim out for his own". Every thing goes well, till Brown attacks Patusan, which works Jim's end. His achievement renders him "the certitude
of rehabilitation". Jim's leap in the previous world was a fall, a descent, but his second 'jump' is a victory, an ascent. Because he feels that in the world of his heroic imagination, all difficult and impossible obstacles could be overcome.

He was like a figure set up on a pedestal, to represent in his persistent youth the power, and perhaps the virtues, of races that never grow old.

Subduing, defeating, and controlling the warring and chaotic factions of the vandal Sherif Ali, Rajah Tunku Allang, and Doramin, he wins love, friendship, devotion, admiration, trust, faith, and confidence of people, and establishes his unquestionable and indisputable leadership over the men of the Bugis community. The natives honour him as Tuan Jim, that is Lord Jim, the name appropriately serving as title of the novel. The natives find him a mythical god with supernatural power, glory and courage. Meeting him after two years, Marlow finds Jim a completely changed and successful man effacing his past failures, building up a new citadel of success, looking on Patusan with 'an owner's eyes', boasting of being needed, trusted and responsible for the peace and prosperity of the land - a god among men.

And there I was with him, high in the sunshine on the top of that historic hill of his. He dominated the forest, the secular gloom, the old mankind. He was like a figure set up on a pedestal, to represent in his persistent youth the power, and perhaps the virtues, of races that never grow old, that have emerged from the gloom.
Marlow's last view of Jim points to "the opportunity by his side - still veiled". The veiled opportunity comes with the arrival of Gentleman Brown with fourteen armed followers. His dealings with this piratical ruffian attempting to plunder Patusan have been frequently interpreted in terms of an enduring sense of Jim's guilt, personified in Brown.

Therefore, in his decision between 'a clear road or else a clear fight', what plays the role is not, as Daleski has suggested, "The same kind of paralysing and devitalizing despair to which he succumbed on the Patna" and the moral disarmament 'by the consciousness of his own muddy past' and by the 'consequent feeling of defencelessness', but, as Ian Watt judiciously argues, the "Practical and moral terms" in the context of "both real politik and local customs" in Patusan. In practical terms, fighting would mean more deaths which Jim, as their leader, can not, under circumstances of possibly avoiding it, accept. Brown has already taken six lives. Jim is "responsible for every life in the land". So it is better to avoid fight. Certainly not from fear which he does not know as is evidenced by his going along to Brown's boat, which Brown regards as the act of "a fool" or of "a little child".

However, when viewed in the Conradian perspective, Jim's decision to disregard the advice of his native friend
Dain Waris and let Brown escape, is attributable to his own grandiose dream of a responsible governor of his kingdom. He romanticizes his humanistic attitude, little realizing that he is turning his back on ground-realities of the situation and thus betraying the natives who had reposed full trust in him. He allows a brigand and slaughter Dain Waris and his party and exposes the village to depredation and ravage. In the words of Dorothy van Ghent, "There is nothing to mediate, practically and concretely, between Jim's 'truth' and real social life, as a benefit to and confirmation of the social context. Jim is alone". This error of judgement and the consequent events result in moral isolation of Jim. Instead of saving Patusan, his action, metaphorically speaking, destroys the city. There is no positive moral relationship (as in the ancient classical dramas of Orestes and Oedipus) between the social destiny and the hero's destiny. In romanticizing his own self-importance in arriving at the fatal decision of letting Brown free, he has submitted himself in Stein's words, to the 'destructive element' within him.

Paul L. Wiley puts it most graphically, "the surprise encounter with Brown, whose mad and ferocious vanity is the counterpart of Jim's refined egotism, places him, therefore, in the position of the hermit assailed by the evil which he has tried to reject. Being likewise a social outcast and a leader, Brown bears a grotesque resemblance to Jim".
In primitive circumstances which obtain in Patusan, Conrad lays exceptional stress not only upon Jim’s isolated state and upon the fact that his word alone is ‘truth’, but also upon the ‘secular’ quality of his surroundings. The idea of Fall thus emerges strongly in the section of the novel and calls for comparison to Conrad’s earlier novel *An Outcast*. Jim’s defeat is, however, made to seem more ominous for mankind and larger than that of Lingard at Sambir for the reason, that Jim in addition to being ‘one of us’ exemplifies the fate in store for man in the event of a breakdown of the bond uniting a community, against chaos.

When the news that Brown has treacherously attacked Dain and his men, and that Dain, his closest friend as well as his lieutenant in quelling the disturbances in Patusan, has been killed, reaches him, the way out is sealed for him. It was not for Brown’s sake or his person’s sake that he let him the passage that he would now think of saving himself. It is not that Brown has broken any trust, because he does not go for trusting or distrusting him. He is dissatisfied not with Brown but with his own miscalculation about him. It was his fault that he took so much risk rather than shed blood, as he had taken risk earlier in sparing the three assassins and other accomplices, including Cornelius who once had tried to kill him. Marlow narrates: “then Jim understood. He had retreated from one world, for a small matter of an impulsive jump, and now the other, the work of his
own hands, had fallen in ruins upon his head". This suggests Jim's spiritual isolation from his fellows. By violating his ethical duty towards the Patusan community, he has isolated himself most profoundly; he has put himself on the rack. In the classical dramas of Aeschylus and Sophocles, the guilt and suffering of their heroes had a constructive social meaning; "they had acted for the positive welfare of the citizens; and that social version of their heroism, internal to the dramas in which they appear, is the immediate, literal basis of our (because it is the citizen-chorous's) appraisal of their heroism". But Jim, on the contrary, lays the city open to ravage. Jim's agony, in sharp contrast to the Greek heroes', is not a saving social measure. It only shows that Jim still remains wrapped up in his own illusions; he has not registered any tangible increase of consciousness leading to self-awareness.

Marlow believes that "in that very moment he had decided to defy the disaster in the only way it occurred to him such a disaster could be defied". "The dark powers should not rob him twice of his peace". Marlow says:

What thoughts passed through his head - what memories? who can tell? Everything was gone, and he who had been once unfaithful to his trust had lost again all men's confidence. It was then, I believe, he tried to write - to somebody - and gave it up. Loneliness was closing on him. People had trusted him with their lives - only for that; and yet they could never, as he had said, never be made to understand him. Those without did not hear him make a sound. Later
towards the evening, he came to the door and called for Tamt/ Itam. "Well"? he asked... we shall have to fight.85

Jim's attitude of not capturing the ruffian Brown and forgiving him has significant implications. Jim can not condemn Brown without first condemning himself at the same time. He left the pilgrims in the sinking ship, Patna, to save his own life, and later on he betrayed the natives who gave him support, love and everything he dreamt of. Brown is an alter ego of Jim, as Jim is the other self of Brierly. Lord Jim, like Under Western Eyes and The Secret Sharer, is a study of the split personality. When for the first time Brown meets Jim in Patusan, he realizes through Jim:

"I could see directly I set my eyes on him what sort of a fool he was", gasped the dying Brown. "He a man! Hell! He was a hollow sham. As if he could not have said straight out 'Hands off my plunder' blast him! that would have been like a man! Rot his superior soul! He had me there - but he had not devil enough in him to make an end of me..."86

From Marlow's remarks it is clear that he wants to convey to us that as soon as Brown meets Jim, he feels the smell of decay that emanates from his soft spot. The odour of a guilt-ridden conscience.

In the course of the Patna and Patusan episodes, through certain tests, Jim wished to identify himself with those people whom his illusory ideals impel him to shun or to despise: the skipper of the Patna, whom he meets in the...
life boat, therefore becoming an accomplice in the skipper's crime, and gentleman Brown, who attacks Jim's centre of power in Patusan and taunts him by using the very words and images to describe his own situation. For example: "I am sick to my infernal luck.... There are my men in the same boat - and, by God, I am not the sort to jump out of trouble and leave them in a d-d lurch,.... I am here because I was afraid once in my life.... I won't ask you what scared you into this infernal hole,...".

Jim becomes almost impotent with the Brown's final attack, because Brown says that Jim will realize that "when it came to saving one's life in the dark, one did not care who else went - three, thirty, three hundred people". Brown, at least, has a kind of honesty, a courage of his immoral convictions which Jim never had.

Brown is strong because he can admit to fear without letting it undermine his mainsprings of action; he is strong because his element is the dirt of the world; he is strong because he lives by action (he only fears the arresting walls of a prison), and being a man of action he would never do the one thing which has sourced Jim's life, leave his mates, abandon his ship. And Jim finally takes what is to Brown the easy way out and lets himself be shot.

For Brown, Jim stands as a symbol of repulsiveness, because he (Jim) tries to show that he is more than man, yet he in his hollow passivity reveals himself to be lacking all those ingredients which make a man manlike. "In an instant, the
protector of Patusan finds himself its destroyer. Once again, intention has been horribly contradicted by action; once again, dream and fact have fallen apart. 90

Jim finds himself close to the dream of rehabilitating himself in Patusan, till the encounter with the agents of 'civilized' world wipes out all his hopes. The "Second desperate leap of his life" 91 into Patusan, where he received recognition, love, admiration, trust and support, unfortunately proves to him that he could not get rid of himself. Jim suffers from lack of determination to tackle the menace of Brown and that is why, Jim is not after all, 'one of us' but rather 'one of them' - the traitors, the social outcasts. In fact, it is Jim who should capture and try Brown; but instead, he himself is tried by Brown. He is too simple and too vulnerable for the world of combat. But he is self-loving and self-forgiving, childish and passive. "Brown outwits him and outlives him, but only because he has the cunning and ferocity of a beast, and no ideal of conduct, no dream of the self inhibits or even mitigates his spectacular violence. Jim is both destroyed and redeemed by his dream, and he remains for us, as he does for Marlow, something of an enigma"... 92 "He is no earthly good for anything". 93

Despite his magnificent fidelity to the natives of Patusan (the converse of his betrayal of the pilgrims of the Patna), Jim remains an outsider - a 'romantic' drawing inspiration from himself, not from the community he loves with what Marlow calls 'a sort
of fierce egoism. It is appropriate that he should become known as 'Tuan' Jim, for that title, attached to his personal rather than his family name (we never learn what that is; he remains an essentially private individual to the last), reflects the individualism that inspires his conduct.

He is now, therefore, as isolated as he was during the course of his pilgrimage, and the only logic that works in him is his own. His reaction to Tamb's suggestion: "For our lives", appropriately is: "I have no life". Jewel's ineffectiveness in "wrestling with him for the possession of her happiness" recalls Ophelia vis-a-vis Hamlet to our mind. Ignoring all, he is lost in his own thoughts: "whether he had any hope - what he expected, what he imagined - it is impossible to say". But instantly it becomes clearer: "He was inflexible, and with the growing loneliness of his obstinacy his spirit seemed to rise above the ruins of his existence". From experience of being spiritually ruined, he recovers not to fight as his well-wishers plead for, because "there was nothing to fight for", but "to prove his power in another way and conquer the fatal destiny itself".

If we assume that Jim "mastered his fate", then we have to see that the authenticity of his attitude in the moment of accepting death as his responsibility is somewhat far from truth. When Jim tells his servant Tamb'itam that "nothing can touch me", he said in a last flicker of superb egoism; we have this notion that his death is only ambiguously redemptive. Jim leaves his servant and his girl, and walks to
Doramin's place to meet his final destiny with confidence and courage. "They say that the whiteman sent right and left at all those faces a proud and unflinching glance. Then with his hand over his lips he fell forward, dead". From the concluding lines of Marlow, it is obvious that he wants to convey to the readers that Jim has passed away in a form of redeeming action and self-sacrifice, and that he remains great egoist throughout the course:

And that's the end, He passes away under a cloud, inscrutable at heart, forgotten, unforgiven, and excessively romantic. Not in the wildest days of his boyish vision could he have seen the alluring shape of such an extraordinary success! For it may very well be that in the short moment of his last proud and unflinching glance, he had beheld the face of that opportunity which, like an Eastern bridge, had come veiled to his side. Even in his moment of death he remains isolated. Alone!

The physical settings in Patusan concretise the isolation of Jim. The image of fissured hill with the suspiciously ghost-like moon floating out of chasm is symbolic of relentless solitude of Jim's fate. Jim is not only an outcast from his kind but he is also an outcast from himself, cloven spiritually. Unable to recognize his own identity, separated from himself as the two halves of the hill are separated. The rebounding moon remains suggestive of the ego ideal, even that ideal of truth by which Marlow says:
Jim approached 'greatness as genuine as any man ever achieved'; it's illusionariness, and the solitude implied by illusion. At the end, after all—when the silver ring that is the token of moral community falls to the floor, and through Jim's 'truth' his best friend has been killed and the village under his protection betrayed—Jim is only what he has been; he is of the measure of his acts. To be only what one has been is the sentence of solitary confinement that is passed on everyman. It is in this sense, finally, that Jim is 'one of us'.
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