I. Introduction

Joseph Conrad: A Skeptical Traditionalist

On the basis of *Lord Jim and The Secret Sharer*, Polish-born English novelist Joseph Conrad gains a reputation as a master stylist of the English language. The question of imperialism and racism, however, has raised controversy about his works. Some authors, such as Nigerian novelist and poet Chinua Achebe, have accused Conrad of racist views toward Africans in Conrad's novels and allege that he portrayed Africa as a continent devoid of civilization. Others contend that these *works* show Conrad's objections to European colonial practices in Africa. In these sea narratives, Marlow, the narrator, describes most of the scenes at a European trading post at the mouth of the Congo River. This research is an integral part of an ongoing study of nineteenth-century sea narrative as a laboratory for the imaginings and discourses of modernity. This study engages with the concept of literary colonization that creates special type of space that simultaneously represents, contests, and invests all other spaces in culture, and that the ship has been the symbol par excellence of western civilization. Conrad's novels, especially *Lord Jim* and *The Secret Sharer,* constitute, in fact, the crucial sites for the reproduction of those desires to colonize native African people and places.

Conrad produced thirteen novels, two volumes of memoirs, and twenty-eight short stories, although writing was not easy or painless for him.

Conrad's favorite themes include the impact of isolation on an individual, the codes of morality that people design for themselves, the moral ambiguities of human existence, and the attempt to be loyal to an idea or an ideal-for example, an ideal of masculine heroism, a political philosophy, or a belief in the righteousness of one's work. In most of his novels Conrad portrayed European men in situations far removed from their

usual society and customs. Thus isolated, his characters are brought into conflict with nature and with the forces of good and evil within themselves.

Conrad's life at sea and in ports abroad furnished the background for much of his writing, giving rise to the impression that he was primarily committed to foreign concerns. In reality, however, his major interest as a writer was the human condition. As in *Almaye's Folly* his narrator is often a retired master mariner and obviously Conrad's alter ego, so that some of his novels can be seen as at least partly autobiographical.

Conrad's early novels suffered from literary inexperience, although they were considerable achievements from one who had not begun to master English, the language he wrote in, until he was 20. In *The Nigger of the Narcissus* (1897), a triumph of poetic realism, he portrays the disintegrating effect on the crew of the antics of James Wait, who uses his fatal disease to blackmail his shipmates.

One of Conrad's best-known novels is *Lord Jim* (1900), a study of the acute consciousness of lost honor. Eager to lead a life of adventure, Jim, the son of a rural clergyman, chooses the sea. On the training ship for officers, he performs the routine tasks well but lives mostly in his imagination. He sees himself a hero rescuing people from sinking ships, facing savages on distant shores, and quelling mutinies. But when confronted with an actual emergency, he deserts an apparently doomed ship and thus fails to live up to the conventional code of honor. Disgraced, he spends the remainder of his life atoning for his cowardice and redeeming his honor.

Since the mid-1900s critics and readers have found much of interest in Conrad's politics. In the 1970s Nigerian novelist Chinua Achebe wrote an essay entitled "An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*." In it, Achebe claimed that Conrad was "a thoroughgoing racist" because of the way that he

portrayed Africans in the story. A tumultuous scholarly debate broke out after the publication of Achebe's essay. Some scholars argued that Conrad was a visionary who recognized the wrongs of imperialism at a time when most Europeans either tacitly accepted or enthusiastically endorsed efforts to colonize Africa. Others argued that Conrad believed British imperialism was far superior to the Belgian imperialism he depicts in the novella. Some praised Conrad for attempting to depict Africans sympathetically; others argued that Conrad's depictions of Africans were shaped by racial stereotypes but noted that Conrad's views and blind spots were typical of the time in which he lived. While the majority of Conrad critics today concur that Conrad is literal anti-imperialist, debates on Conrad's presentation of imperialism and of African characters continue to culminate in literary criticisms.

The ambiguity of the end of Jim in the novel culminates in Marlow's final question, a question that puts Marlow's own interpretation of Jim into question and, more significantly, invites the reader to engage in the process of interpreting Jim again. This narrative is therefore inconclusive, since he admits that he cannot declare the truth about Jim, which Jim remains an enigma to him, that him being one of those remains in a peculiar way indistinguishable from his compelling but enigmatic power over subject people.

During his sea-going life Joseph Conrad spent only a very short time in the geographical area he himself defines as the region of the Indian Ocean. So peculiar is the region's character that it gradually was to become a metaphor for a set of values with which Conrad endows to his characters. "(199-210), Marialuisa Bignami contends in the most prompting essay "Joseph Conrad, The Malay Archipelago, and the Decadent," in *The Review of English Studies* that "Conrad never really stated his attitude to the British enterprise and all we know about it must be inferred by

contrasting it with his attitude to Belgian imperialism or, in more subtle, the forms of imperialism" (199). He writes:

> His views do not give sufficient weight to the subject and the insight into the world of moral values which was his consistent concern and which had little to do either with political ideas in general or with the specific politics governing one vast-community. Conrad's novels are nevertheless enacted with this history of colonial expansion. Conrad's first contact with the east was his disastrous voyage, on the Palestine. But his decision to take a berth in a local service after being dismissed from hospital in Singapore is the really significant episode. (qtd. in Bignami 200)

After taking a taste of east-a bitter one-in 1882, life moves at length, serving as second mate on the Vidar. In the intervening years he had had glimpses of the world that lay beyond and around Singapore, had certainly heard much about it in sailors' yarns and must have felt attracted by territories in which even man seemed to care for himself. "Although not an area the Malay Archipelago lay outside years of Conrad's traveling throw light around it," Marialuisa Bignami holds, "yet each successive effort at colonization had left behind some of its own mean and customs--Portuguese, Arab, Dutch--had intermingled with local populations, themselves migrating and, in turn, overpowering each other" (201).

He further reiterates:

> On the eve of Conrad's first encounter with sea and African land, the Dutch and the English had worked out an agreement about its commercial exploitation and its general policing, and the labors of this

> agreement can clearly be seen in the event depicted in *Lord Jim* and *The Secret Sharer.*
>
> This arrangement is much in line with one of the traditional tenets of the colonial attitude of the British, their peculiar attitude to relationships with overseas territories. It was not until the final decades of the nineteenth century that Britain was reconciled to the Idea of actually ruling over vast territories such as India and African Colors. (202)

Britain had, however, taken care to establish a network of key part through which a profitable commerce of buying raw materials and selling manufactured products could be conducted. This sort of procedure did not burden the mother- country with a costly and troublesome administration, nor did it interfere with the local population's traditions in government, language and religion as J. D. O'Hara holds in *College English:*

> Conrad had had a chequered and stimulating education and youth, had of his own choice disciplined himself in his early maturity by serving faithfully and professionally in the British merchant navy, but had never grasped and never was to grasp-a faith and a certainty his personal background as to the cultural and artistic context in which he was to work as he turned from sailor to writer. (456)

Conrad makes use of this location in order to give vent to "his disgust and suffering at the sight of cruel colonial exploitation" but it "will never serve the purpose of a subtle moral and psychological analysis" (457), and that "it will never turn into the mirror image of detected western man" (457).

Marlow's attraction to Jim reveals itself, for what it is on several occasions most often as a sublimated undercurrent in a confusing passage does in the obliquities of Marlow's narrative. Aithal Krishnamurty takes Conrad's works "that have come at the critical minds of eulogists and thus have promoted the positive Elizabethan gentleman character" (*Explicator* 38.1, 3) and "qualities of Conrad's life and art, qualities which actually never existed . . . eulogizing the didactic layer of heroic idealism in them . . . proves to be barely skin deep" (3):

> Classified by critics usually as a 19th century skeptical traditionalist, Conrad is not radically separated from our contemporaries, who, like him in this central respect, find the burden of consciousness too great because it is unqualified not so much by a sufficiently retinal frame of reference as by a centrally emotional adhesion to the earth they live in to the flesh they should unite with the interior world of empathy and passion which is the only abided vehicle of our identity, our assurance. (4)

Conrad emphasizes the standards by which we must judge the narrator and the narrator's ideal conception of himself. Conrad is working less profoundly and more cheerfully in his stories. These stories seem to have interested Conrad primarily as a technical exercise, a stylistic experiment in communicating through an unsympathetic point of view. And unsympathetic the narrator certainly is, from his strangely irresponsible actions at the beginning of the story to his complacent assurance at the end.

From the details that come from Conrad's biography it can be inferred that Conrad has come out the other end of the identity crisis by accepting the necessity crisis of losing a part of himself, his fantasy of guilty omnipotence. The narrators in

both novels seem to have reinsurance both the potency and the terror of infantile omnipotence, and to be ready to recognize that control of this fate is not his own. Rather, his fate is someone henceforth tied to the course of a floating signifier. With Conrad comes the controversial society closed over shadows in many of its literary qualities. Far beyond the problematic issues of race lie crucial questions about the consequences of imperialism and empire building. “This approach to the text involves a critical reading of Conrad's narrative in relation to Said and Achebe' criticism,” Vernon Young outlines in *The Hudson Review*, “its significance as a racist text is imperialist endeavors to think along the lines of Said and Achebe’s criticism of it imperial discourse in the novel and to research its historical background for evidence” (18).

The discourse of imperialism, with its proclamations of cultural and social superiority, its eroticizing of colonial others, and its celebration of European expansion as a civilizing mission is most dramatically deployed in the novel. The narrator's psychological sense of isolation in his role as captain is intensified by his impressions as he stands physically alone on the deck of the ship. The narrator's conflict is essentially a psychological struggle within himself. Edward Said reads Conrad’s *Nostromo* to insist that post-colonial nation states more often than not become rabid versions of their enemies. Conrad’s moral and philosophical dilemma is not just projected but exhibited by Joseph Conrad’s novels *Lord Jim* and *The Secret Sharer* but imbedded within their narrative and structure. Conrad can be sharply criticized for endorsing racially biased and pessimistic vision of Latin American history which was expounding by the Creole oligarchies and then allies. Else where in Conrad there are seemingly first judgments of historical events and perseveringly contemporary issues and yet when we try to unpack them, they do not rest on any

correspondingly firm moral or ideological sanction. On the contrary, narration and structural ironic produce a classic of opposed or discrepant perspective. The loss of honor is perhaps the 19th century theme and Conrad uses it in his narrative and assigns the above mentioned denouement to his principle white characters.

Conrad's narratives in *Lord Jim* and *The Secret Sharer* alternately presuppose a hierarchy and an absolute gulf that separates European from native consciousness. Even the least sympathetic or thoughtful Europeans, such as German captain or the second engineer of the Patna possess the capacity to evaluate and judge. Marlow underscores the essential poverty of both Malays with this surreal image of the ship after it had been abandoned by its European officers and crew, Native is described as an animal in the context of a western modernity whose representatives take technological superiority and material domination as justification of their belief as an essential difference between white and non-white; despite the ambiguity of a world, the sequence and things he sees is not simply material but existential or ontological. Conrad's texts reinforce the identical crisis in *Lord Jim* and *The Secret Sharer* that the inferiority of native African people is ontological and irreparable.

Details of Conrad's picturesque life are intriguing. Conrad's statement on life--that "two veiled figures, doubt, and melancholy, are pacing endlessly in the sunshine of the world" (Conrad "Introduction" XI)--can be taken as Conrad's complacencies on behalf of the Empire [sunshine] rather than desecration against the colonial expedition. Conrad, indeed, gives the impression of ambiguity by presenting his characters chiefly through the eyes and words of enigmatic Marlow who is both sympathetic and critical. Conrad's portrait of his characters, sympathetic but partly ironic, of a fallible but also noble, a romantic youth who is personal enough to be in some sense Conrad and universal enough to be in some sense all of us. *Lord Jim* is

Conrad's modernist romance in that the incidents throughout the novel inevitably invoice the isolation of consciousness and philosophical skepticism. Conrad is trembling with idealism and skepticism locked in familiar tension; skepticism eroded possibilities for absolute truth and certain knowledge. Conrad’s fascination with self-idealizing and the shock of recognizing an embodied "other" self appears repeatedly in *Lord Jim* and *The Secret Sharer*. The excessive inward romantic gaze, the transformative imagination outweighed by realistic perception and the self-aggrandizing model of achievement together keep Conrad’s novels locked in a European Motto "devotion to duty". To read Conrad as a voice of modern passivism is to reveal the uncertainties and thrills of conquest that European seamen experience in his novels. Conrad looks in humanity- in- the- mass, and with unrelieved gloom. “He finds no hope in movements,” Majorie Garber contends in *Psychoanalysis and Pedagogy*, “Conrad 'invented' and capitalized 'ability' and scattered some portions [not all] of it while illumining the characters in his novel” (35). Conrad’s narratives suggest the extent to which Conrad’s efforts to control illusions about himself and his race becomes in his fiction a voice struggling to censure sympathetic dreams: “Conrad casts an insipid and meticulous objective glance over his own European sailors and the natives of Africa which is almost lifeless and agile” (qtd. in Garber 38). Conrad’s narratives in *Lord Jim* and *The Secret Sharer* carry a thought on behalf of colonial expansion and commercial burglar. Marlow--the narrator and mouthpiece of Conrad himself in *Lord Jim* and *The Secret Sharer*--anticipates the principal requirements of imperialism that distinguish himself from other characters and the natives as well.

II. Critical Discourses Against Literary Imperialism

Literary Criticism, especially the one focusing on literary imperialism, entangles in discussion of literature, including description, analysis, interpretation, and evaluation of literary works by Colonial writers. Postcolonial critic's task has come up to challenge definitions of 'Other' identity as is created by White-male-elites that seem too general, too narrow, or unworkable for any other reason. Whatever it is, literary criticisms against literary imperialism deal with different dimensions of literature as a collection of texts through which authors of colonial period evoke more or less fictitious worlds for the imagination of readers.

Post(-)colonial literary criticism look at any work of literature by paying special attention to the representation of African and other colonized territories in terms of the colonial writer's depiction of language and structure; intended purpose; the information and worldview they convey, and their effect on an audience. Along with studying a text's formal characteristics, for example, critics usually recognize the variability of performances of fictional works and the variability of readers' mental interpretations of texts. In studying an author's purpose, critics acknowledge the forces beyond a writer's conscious intentions that can affect what the writer actually communicates. In studying what a literary work is about, critics often explore the complex relationship between truth and fiction in various types of storytelling. In studying literature's impact on its audience, critics have been increasingly aware of how cultural expectations shape experience.

Because works of literature can be studied long after their first publication, postcolonial critics hold that awareness of historical context contributes to our understanding, appreciation, and enjoyment of them. Postcolonial criticism relates a work to the life and times of its author. Attention to the nature, functions, and

categories of literature provide a theoretical framework joining a past text to the experience of present readers. The tradition of postcolonial literary criticism surveyed here combines observations by creative writers, philosophers, and, more recently, trained specialists in literary, historical, and cultural studies.

Like feminist, Marxist, and some Freudian critics, nonwhite Western critics, and critics emerging in countries newly freed from colonial rule have challenged many aspects of European (and American) culture as socially and psychologically oppressive. Those critics are united in their opposition to Western--particularly European exploitation of native Africans in the heydays of imperialism-domination. They take many different positions on particular issues of race, class, gender, language, and national or ethnic identity.

Edward Said

Said wants to challenge certain basic notions about the western tradition that most westerners take for granted. He hopes to discredit western heritage and its powerful institutions by exposing, or “demystifying,” the repressed origins and oppressive applications of that power. In *Orientalism* (2001) Said writes:

> [. . .] for although many learned disciplines imply a position taken towards, say, human material, there is no real analogy for taking a fixed, more or less total geographical position towards a wide variety of social, linguistic, political, and historical realities. A classicist, a Romance specialist, even an Americanist focuses on a full half of it. But Orientalism discusses the attitude of Western intellectuals toward the East, and in particular toward the Middle East field with considerable geographical ambition. (50)

Said's best-known book *Orientalism* discusses the attitude of Western intellectuals toward the East, and in particular toward the Middle East, "almost from earliest times in Europe the orient was some thing more than what was empirically known about it" (51). Said furthers his critique of European ignorance of lands other than Europe and America, "At least until the early eighteenth century, as R.W. Southern has so elegantly shown, European understanding of one kind of oriental culture, the Islamic, was ignorant but complex" (51). Said argued that Westerners have a limited, oversimplified concept of the Middle East and its history: "For certain associations with the east- not quite ignorant, not quite informed- always seem to have gathered around the notion of an orient" (51). His primary concern is on the European missionaries' effort in drawing lines in between East and West. He contends:

> Consider first the demarcation between orient and west. It already seems bold by the time of the Iliad. Imaginative geography, from the vivid portraits to be found in the 'Inferno' to the prosaic niches of d' Herb lot's 'Bibliotheque orientale', legitimates a vocabulary a universe of representative discourse peculiar to the discussion and understanding of Islam and of the orient. What this discourse considers to be a fact-that Mohammed is an imposter, for example- is a component of the discourse, a statement the discourse compels one to make whenever the name Mohammed occurs. (71)

Said points out how the invasion of westerners hinders the language of east; they translate everything into their language including religion and culture in that "underlying all the different units of orientalist discourse" by which he means simply the "vocabulary employed whenever the orient is spoken or written about-is a set of representative figures, or tropes" (71).

On the political front, Said was a powerful voice expressing the plight of the Palestinians as a people dispossessed of their homeland. Although critical of Israel and Israeli policy in the occupied territories, he recognized Israel's right to exist. Edward Said's critique shows how the marginalized nations and their culture that lay at the other side of the flip are turned cultural morons from the influence of Western culture:

> Every European traveler or resident in the orient has had to himself from its unsettling influences. Someone like lane ultimately rescheduled and resituated the orient when he came to write about it. The eccentricities of oriental life, with its odd calendars, strange languages, its seemingly perverse morality, were reduced considerably when they appeared as a series of detailed items presented in normative European prose style. (166- 67)

Western writers who practiced travelogue, sea narrative, fiction, and other genres of expression about their safari to exotic and mysterious native African, Middle East and India never failed to codify oriental norms and values in western weighing scale. Those literary colonizers represented little of truth and more of imagination.

Said does not spare his words softly in great philosophers and thinkers of France and Britain: even "Friedrich Schlegel, who learned his Sanskrit in Paris, illustrates these traits together" (98). Said further writes:

> Although by the time he published his "Illberdie sporache und. weisheit der Indier" in 1808 Schlegel had practically renounced his orientalism . . . when he said in 1800, "It is in the orient that we must search for the highest Romanticism," he meant the orient of the Sakuntala, the zend-Avesta, and the Upanishads. (98)

There are evidences that the great literary figures' tilting towards Eastern cultural heritage are found guilty of imitation or distortion of the place they visited or heard of. That was not the reality but merely a wild fantasy, in the sense the distortion of native culture and landscape to their own benefit. For a scholar and poet orient became the place for exotic refugee where he can sublimate his desires and project them as per his wish. Said reiterates:

> All that matters to him is that his travels in the oriental reveal to him, how the orient is "la terre des cultes, des prodigies," and that he is its appointed poet in the west . . . Rising above the merely geographical orient, he is transformed into a latter-day chateauterriand, surveying the east as if it were a personal province ready to be disposed of by European real time and space, lamartine has become a transpersonal ego identifying itself in power and consciousness with the whole of Europe. (178-79)

Orientalism is not only a positive doctrine about the orient that exists at any one time in the west; it is also an influential academic tradition as well as an area of concern defined by travelers, commercial enterprises, governments, military expeditions, readers of novels and accounts of exotic adventure, natural historians, and pilgrims to whom the orient is a specific kind of knowledge about specific places, peoples, and idioms took firm hold in European discourses.

Beneath the representation "there was layer of doctrine about the orient" (180). Empire invests its evil interests through not a single agent: the exploitation comes in multiple facets. Said contends:

> Orientalism is not a mere political subject mater or field that is reflected passively by culture, scholarship, or institutions; nor is it a

> large and diffuse collection of texts about the orient; nor is it a representative and expressive of some notorious “western” imperialist plot to hold down “the oriental world.” It is rather a distribution of geopolitical awareness into aesthetic scholarship, economic, sociological, historical, and philological texts it is an elaboration not only of a basic geographical distinction but also of a whole series of "interests". (12)

“Maps are always instruments of conquest, once projected they are then implemented,” Edward W. Said (1935 - 2003)--a Palestinian-born U.S. writer and educator-- in *The Politics of Dispossession* is quoted to say, “geography is therefore the art of war” (29). Said views the relationship in between occident and orient as:

> The relationship between the occident and orient is a relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of a complex hegemony, and is quite accurately indicated in the title of K.M. Panikkar's *Classic Asia and Western Dominance*. The orient was orientalized not only because it was discovered to be oriental in all those ways considered commonplace by an average nineteenth- century European, but also because it could be-that is, submitted to being, made oriental. (5-6)

The history of colonialism reveals the most pathetic state of colonized nations where every faces of native culture remains painted in western eyes. Western artists painted the face of orient as discovered lands whose self identity is blurred and concealed when narrated: “Orientalism is not a mere political subject mater” (12). But instead, for Said, that is a field that has been illuminated in western imperial eyes.

Orientalism is not only a positive doctrine about the orient that exists at any one time in the west; “it is also an influential academic tradition” as well as an “area

of concern defined by travelers, commercial enterprises, governments, military expeditions" (203). Readers of novels and accounts of exotic adventure, natural historians, and pilgrims to whom the orient is a specific kind of knowledge about specific places, peoples, and idioms took firm hold in European discourses. Beneath the ideas there was layer of doctrine about the orient.

This doctrine was fashioned out of the experiences of many Europeans, all of them "converging upon such essential aspects of the orient as the oriental character, oriental despotism, oriental sensuality, and the like" (203). "The actual color of their skin set them off dramatically and reassuringly from the sea of natives but for the British who circulated amongst Indian Africans, or Arab there was also the certain knowledge that he belonged to," Said holds to highlight the cause behind colonizer's easy entrance to Africa and inferiorization of natives, "and could draw upon the empirical and spiritual serves of, a long tradition of executive responsibility towards the colored races" (203). He further writes:

> It was of this tradition, its glory and difficulties, that Kipling wrote when he celebrated the "road" taken by white men in the colonies . . . yet in split of the strength of these arguments one feels the necessity to deal with some basic issues raised by a certain specious criticism which flourishes in African literature today and which derives from the same basic attitude and assumptions as colonialism itself and so means the name colonialist. (204)

Although critical of Israel and Israeli policy in the occupied territories, he recognized Israel's right to exist. Elected in 1977 to the Palestine National Council (PNC), the parliament of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), Said supported a Palestinian state and helped pave the way for secret peace negotiations between Israel

and the PLO in Oslo, Norway. However, he became deeply critical of the Oslo Accords, a declaration he felt was heavily biased in Israel's favor.

In *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) Said drew similar perceptions from works of Western literature- perceptions of the East as the other, of peoples barbaric and limited, of oriental despots, and of cultures both exotic and degenerate. Said argued that these perceptions remain influential today and have an impact on politics, particularly on policies toward the Middle East and on views of Arabs. Said's ideas influenced a rising generation of educators in former colonies and formed the main foundation for the new field of postcolonial studies. His other books include *Covering Islam* (1981), *The Politics of Dispossession* (1994), a memoir of his early years called *Out of Place* (1999), and a collection of essays entitled *Reflections on Exile* (2001). His final critical work, *On Late Style*, was published posthumously in 2006.

Chinua Achebe

The frontal attack, initiated by Achebe, on any use of literature as an instrument of mystification and domination, has its most unwavering advocates today in scholars who practice the interpretive technique known as post-colonialism. Following Edward Said and Chinua Achebe postcolonial critics assume that attributing even the most formal and structural meaning to a text violates the boundless signifying potential of language in a world where there are no facts but only assigned political meanings and irresolvable conflicts of interpretation. Proponents of postcolonial interpretation elaborate on psychological ambiguities and paradoxes that most colonial writers and interpreters (including Joseph Conrad) attempted to resolve. For these critical voices, special difficulties in the interpretation of complex literary works forcefully suggest the general resistance of all texts to definitive meanings.

These critical works of Achebe explore the impact of European culture on African society. Achebe's unsentimental, often ironic books vividly convey the traditions and speech of the Igbo people partly in response to what he saw as inaccurate characterizations of Africa and Africans by British authors. The book describes the effects on Igbo society of the arrival of European colonizers and missionaries in the late 1800s. Achebe's subsequent novels *No Longer at Ease* (1960), *Arrow of God* (1964), *A Man of the People* (1966), and *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987) are set in Africa and describe the struggles of the African people to free themselves from European political influences. During colonized nation states' tumultuous political period of the late 1960s and early 1970s, postcolonial criticism became active. Twentieth-century Nigerian writer Chinua Achebe considered the impact of the modern world on traditional African culture. Achebe earned international recognition for his first book, *Things Fall Apart* (1958), a novel set in eastern Nigeria during the time of British colonialism in the late 1800s. In the book, an exiled tribal leader returns to his village after seven years, only to find that colonial laws and Christianity have sapped the identity of the tribe. For Achebe "certain specious criticism which flourishes in African literature today and which derives from the same basic attitude and assumptions as colonialism itself and so mentions the name colonialist" (qtd. in Adams 1193). Achebe's attack on colonizer and their agencies continues in "Colonialist Criticism", an essay taken from *Critical Theory Since Plato*, edited by Hazard Adams:

> This attitude and assumption was crystallized in Albert Schweitzer's immortal dictum in the heyday of colonialism: "The African is indeed my brother, but my junior brother." The latter-day colonialist critic, equally given to big-brother arrogances, sees critic, equally given to

> big-brother arrogances, sees the African writer as a somewhat unfinished European who with patient guidance's will group up one day and write like ever other European, but meanwhile must be mumble like every other European, but meanwhile must be mumble like every other European. (1193)

These big brothers always cast their annoyance towards native writers and the attitude is purely hegemonic, "but meanwhile must be humble like every other European" (1194). Achebe asserts: "to the colonialist minds it was always to the utmost importance to be able to say, "I know my natives," a claim which implies two things at once:(a) that the native was really quite simple and (b) that understanding him and controlling him went hand in hand-understanding being a precondition for control and control constituting adequate proof of understanding" (1192). They "created the man of two worlds theory to prove that no matter how much the native was exposed to European influences he could never truly absorb them" (1192) and thus separated native from native. That is why Achebe would like to see universalism banned from African literature. He further reiterates:

> It would never occur to them to doubt the universality of their own literature. In the nature of things the work of European writer is automatically informed by universality. It is only others who must strain to achieve it. So and so's work is universal; he has truly arrived! As though universality is some distant bent in the road in which you may take if you travel out far enough in the direction of Europe or America, if you put adequate distance between yourself and your home . . . this is self serving parochialism of Europe until their horizon extends to include the entire world. (1193-94)

Achebe's criticism of colonialism penetrates into the hegemonic nature of Universalism as the project is a so called standard to create and manufacture literary pieces as European wish. "The colonialist critic unwilling to accept the validity of sensibilities other than his own," Achebe holds, "has made particular point of dismissing the African novel" (1193). He has written lengthy articles to prove its non-existence largely on the grounds that the novel is a peculiarly western, genre; a fact which would interest us if our ambition was to write western "novels" (1193). Achebe questions, "but, in any case did not the black people in America deprive of their own musical instruments take the trumpet and the trombone and blow them as they had never been blown before, as indeed they were not designed to be blown?" (1193).

Recent Critics

Recent postcolonial criticism does not represent a complete break with a critical tradition that has always proven hospitable to challenges to principles of colonialism. In fact, so-called western criticism has already begun absorbing the insights of its best contemporary challengers. Undergoing transformation once again, it prepares to encounter the diverse but intertwined literatures of the world. Homi K. Bhabha contends in *Redrawing The Boundaries: The Transformation Of English And American Studies:*

> Jameson's justly famous reading of Conrad's *"Lord Jim"* in "*The Political Unconscious"* provides a suitable example of a kind of reading against the grain that a post-colonial inter predation demands, when faced with a red in that attempts to sulfate the specific "interruption", or the interstices, through which the colonial text lettersets interrogations its contrapuntal critique. Reading Conrad's narrative and ideological contradictions as a canceled realism . . . like a

> Hegelian *Aufhebung,* Jameson represents fundamental ambivalences of the ethical and the aesthetic on the allegorical restitution of the socially concrete sub of late nineteenth century rationalism. (440)

Bhabha's comparison of Hegelian art with the proponent of rationalism and Jameson's stand on European rational art precisely comes against the projection of the empires vested interests. His contemporary postcolonial critic Aijaz Ahmad contends:

> In Spivak's formulations, postcoloniality itself equals the 'heritage of imperialism' which the post colonial critic inhabits deconstructive or, as Bhabha would say, ambivalently. The virtue of the passage, at any rate, is that spiral does tell us directly what she means by post-coloniality. The word heritage, in this context is striking, as if imperialisms were matter of the past. Equally striking is the phrase rest of the globe, which suggest that postcoloniality is a condition found outside the United States, Britain and France. (278)

Frederick Cooper contends in *Reading Subaltern Studies*:

> The heroic narrative fell victim not only to wise elders and young scholars with new questions but also to continuing crises in Africa itself. African novelists were the first intellectuals to bring before a wide public inside and outside the African continent profound questions about the corruption within post-colonial governments and the extent to which external domination persisted. (264)

Cooper's assessment of Chinua Achebe promulgates the fundamental concerns of post-colonial identity. Another critic Helen Tiffin in *The Post-colonial Studies Reader* argues:"Post-colonial cultures are inevitably hybridized, involving a dialectical

relationship between European ontology and epistomology and the impulse to create or recreate independent local identity" (49). Tiffin et. al. further contend:

> Decolonization is a process, not arrival; it invokes an ongoing dialectic between hegemonic centrists systems and peripheral subversion of them; between European or British discourses and their post-colonial dis/mantling. Since it is not possible to create or recreate national or regional formations wholly independent of their historical implication in the European colonial enterprise. (49)

Leela Gandhi writes, in *Postcolonial Theory: A Critical Introduction,* on the colonial aftermath which "is marked by the range of ambivalent cultural; moods and formations which accompany periods of transition": "It is, in the first place, a celebrated moment of arrival-charged with rhetoric of independence and the creative euphoria of self-invention" (5).Gandhi's observation further reads, "this is the spirit with which Saleem Sinai, the protagonist of Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*, initially describes the almost mythical sense of incarnation"(5). She further writes:

> Soothsayers had prophesied me; newspapers celebrated my arrival, politics ratified my authenticity and predictably. And as Rushdie's Indian Everyman, Saleem Sinai, ultimately recognizes, the Colonial aftermath is also fraught by the anxieties and fears of failure which attend the need to satisfy the historical burden of expectation. To a large extent, Saleem Sinai's obsessive 'creativity' and semantic profusion is fuelled by his apprehension that the inheritors of the colonial aftermath must in some sense instantiate a totally new world. Saleem Sinsai's tumble into trouble. (6)

“Independent India is, after all, framed by the crippling optimism of Nehru’s legendary narration of postcoloniality,” Gandhi and her contemporary theorists believe in translating the spirit of postcolonialism while rejecting the mainstream elite definition, “a moment comes, which comes but rarely in history, when we step out from the old to the new; when an age ends; and when the soul of a nation long suppressed finds utterance” (6).

III. Conrad's Imperial Eyes in *The Secret Sharer* and *Lord Jim*

In both novels Joseph Conrad has been caught into the plentitudes and multiple beliefs, narcissistic and aggressive identification, and moments of alienation which stands outwardly as a threat to white Europeans expedition to African so called black lands. Joseph Conrad in *The Secret Sharer* and *Lord Jim* has furnished his agony to sympathize the subject peoples that resonates with the same old stories of Negro's animality and white European's humanity which contributes in either way to enlarge the preconstituted poles of colonizer and colonized. Joseph Conrad's favorite themes in *Lord Jim* and *The Secret Sharer* include the impact of isolation on an individual, the codes of morality that people design for themselves, the moral ambiguities of human existence, and the attempt to be loyal to an idea or an ideal of Empire. In these novels, Conrad portrays European men in situations far removed from their usual society and customs. Thus isolated, his characters are brought into conflict with nature and with the forces of good and evil within themselves.

In spite of the critical attention that it has received, Conrad's *The Secret Sharer* continues to present mysteries that usually affect our understanding of the story's climax in which Leggatt, the murderer and fugitive, is given his chance to escape while the ship hovers on the edge of disaster. Clearly enough, in its broadest aspects, the story is framed by a question and its answer. The narrative opens by presenting an uninitiated Captain, stranger to his ship and to himself, wondering how far he "should turn out faithful to that ideal conception of one's own personality every man sets up for himself secretly" (142). It closes with the answer that through self-knowledge and self-mastery the captain has achieved "the perfect communion of seaman with his first command" (143). But between these two points, knowledge and

self-mastery are won only after the disconcerting ordeal of protecting Leggatt and the strange exposure of the ship near destruction, for the dangers from which the captain is allowed extricate himself seem unnecessary ones of his own making:

> I wondered what my double do there in the sail locker through this commotion. He was able to hear everything and perhaps he was able to understand why, on my conscience, it had to be thus close-no less. My first order "Hard alee!" re-echoed ominously under the towering shadow of Koh-ring as if I had shouted in a mountain gorge. And then I watched the land entirely. In that smooth water and light wind, it was impossible to feel the ship coming-to. No! I could not feel her. And my second self was making now ready to ship out and lower himself overboard. Perhaps he was gone already. (90)

In turning towards the rocks of Koh-ring, he has done what he "certainly should not have done . . . if it had been only a question of getting out of that sleepy gulf as quickly as possible" (132-33). Moreover, in shaving the land as closer than necessary if it had been only a question of testing his ship until he would answer his question about being "close enough" with words, "already she was, I won't say in the shadow of the land, but in the very blackness of it, already swallowed up as it were, gone too close to be recalled, gone from me altogether" (140). Even after swinging the main yard, while the fate of the ship "hung in the balance," the Captain could do nothing but wait "helplessly" (142). Obviously Leggatt could have made his escape long before this; "half a mile" would have been easy for this powerful swimmer (135). Why, then, was the ship about to enter "the gates of everlasting night?" And why was Leggatt being given so much more than the reasonable distance that he had asked for? Unquestionable this was beyond an absolute limit for any responsible mariner, even

though it involved an act of compassion. The compassion Leggatt receives from the narrator is merely prejudice, a colonial and imperial effort to wash the sins of European.

It is true that without a supreme test of his authority, the Captain might never have experienced that "perfect communion" with his first command, but this reward came afterwards, almost by accident. What we are actually told at the moment of rashness is something quite different: "it was now a matter of conscience to save the land as close as possible-for now he must go overboard whenever the ship was put in stays" (139). Ostensibly, this means that beyond the kindness of giving Leggatt the opportunity to escape, the Captain had created a situation which gave Leggatt no other rational choice but to go. But Leggatt already knew this and had earlier convinced the captain of this very fact (131-32). Something new was obviously disturbing the Captain's mind when he expressed the hope that "perhaps he was able why, on my conscience, it had to be thus close- no ruthless" (141). This is more than an effort to embarrass a guest into leaving by providing a suitable opportunity-all this had been agreed upon the guest stood ready, hat upon head. There is here a new matter of conscience that Leggatt would "perhaps" be able to fathom. Was he to understand that the captain needed to face his supreme test alone with his first command, in which "nothing, no one in the world should stand now between us, throwing a shadow on the way of silent knowledge of affection" (143). Obviously this assertion of independence is crucial, but there is also something more that involves the character of Leggatt:

> As he hung by the ladder, like a resting swimmer, the sea lightning played about his limbs at every stir; and he appeared in it ghastly, silvery, fishlike. He remained as mute as a fish, too. He made no motion to get out of the water, either. It was inconceivable that he

> should not attempt to come on board, and strangely troubling to suspect that perhaps he did not want. And my first word was promoted by just that troubled incertitude. (69)

In evaluating Leggatt, there is always the danger of representing him as nothing more than some dangerous but potentially useful manifestation of the Captain's suppressed alter ego. Leggatt is the other half of European captain himself. Whatever he does simply escapes the eyes of narrator. This partial and shrewd sympathy towards Leggatt reveals Conrad's latent belief toward European sailor. In this role he is seen as the mysterious source of the Captain's strength and courage. Conrad often describes him as a "strong soul" (99), appearing always "perfectly self-controlled, more than calm-almost invulnerable" (127). But Leggatt is also a human being in his own right, fully aware of the danger he faces as an outlaw and suffering from terrible loneliness and the need "to talk to somebody" before going on (111). Even as the Captain's other self, he represents this weakness as well as strength, and depends upon the Captain to provide the same kind of moral support that the Captain found in him:

> He appealed to me as if our experiences had been as identical as our clothes. And I knew well enough that pestiferous danger of such a character where there are no means of legal repression. And I knew well enough also that my double there was no homicidal ruffian. I did not think of asking him for details, and he told me the story roughly in brusque, disconnected sentences. I needed no more. I saw it all going on as though I were myself inside that other sleeping suit. (71)

In their roles as doubles or as separate individuals, "the two become interchangeable, and the success of one depends upon the success of the other" (71). Outward events as

well as inner psychology have brought them together to share strength and weakness, and nowhere is this sharing more essential than at the moment of parting.

It is near the climax of the story that we learn most clearly that just as the Captain received strength from his double, so Leggatt found in the Captain what he needed most, someone who had "understood thoroughly" and who had declined to make a judgment about his guilt (132). It was precisely this understanding that had given Leggatt the courage to accept exile and to persuade reluctant Captain to recognize the truth of his warning, "You must maroon me" (131). The captain's treatment of Leggatt as his double binds him to forget even his professional responsibilities.

The first clue comes early-"my name's Leggatt" (8). Despite the spelling Conrad could count on his readers' pronouncing, Leg-it: this revealing while seeming to hide is characteristic of the entire technique, for both words of course are slang (if not standard English) for the sexual organ and act. Sexual intensity and masculinity has been attributed to Europeans and white crew members. This is obviously to inferiorize the native Africans and superiorize Conrad's own people.

Beginning with this clue, all falls into place. Indeed, the very first word uttered by Leggatt is the monosyllable, "Cramp" -easily misheard at sea as Camp (7). And as if not to let us miss the point of Leggatt's name, Conrad re-emphasizes it a few pages later as the narrator helps Leggatt into his bedplace (which significantly has drawers underneath it): Leggatt needed the lift "I gave him his leg." This is surely an unnecessary operation for a man who "tumbled in" the bed, as one cannot "tumble into" a high bedstead, and Conrad is much too fine an artist to use words loosely.

Noticeable also is the subtle technique whereby Conrad drives home the significance of the physical contact of the men (a scene which is to be echoed later in

the “wrestling” in the sail-locker). Immediately after the incident, the Captain “was extremely tired, in a peculiarly intimate way . . .” (16). But homosexuality has been dealt indifferently though it is apparent. The act of purgation and redeeming sins is mischief on the part of Conrad for he does not elaborate obscenity.

One is astounded by the ineptness of the narrator’s interpretation of the character, for Conrad is explicit on the next page in discussing the attitude of the Steward and crew toward the Captain. “I don’t know whether the Steward had told them that I was ‘queer’ only, or . . . (17). And again there are the curious repetitions (like the repetition of leg) in subsequent pages. The Captain had a “queer sense of whispering to” himself (18): “but the queerest part . . .” (23).

Another noteworthy element is the mechanics in the famous L-shaped cabin. This Captain, though he had “no one to say nay to [him] within the whole circle of the horizon” (17) goes through a long-drawn-out farce of hiding Leggatt from the crew even after Captain Archbold of the *Sephora* has left. These always take a similar pattern, “getting into that bed . . . We took up our position . . . leaning over my bedplace” (24). “I would smuggle him into my bedplace” (26), he keeps on observing, “He stepped back and leaned against my bed” (32).

All of this is surely revealing enough, although Conrad may have been unconscious of its revelation and asked the Edwardian reader to believe that the purpose is only to “whisper together” -in a spacious cabin, in the middle of the night, when the two could sit on the couch in comfort behind a closed (and even locked) door! There can be no purpose, on the level of a maritime story of adventure, for repair to the bed to whisper; hence this reiterated detail, observable to any close reader of the text, must have some further significance. If the force of these passages has any purpose at all, that significance is clear:

> At midnight I went on deck, and to my mate's great surprise put the ship round on the other tack. His terrible whiskers flitted round me in silent criticism. I certainly should not have done it. If it had been only a question of getting out of that sleepy gulf as quickly as possible. I believe he told the second mate, who relieved him, that it was a great want of judgment. The other only yearned that intolerable cub shuffled about so sleepily and lolled against the rails in such a slack, improper fashion that I came down on him sharply. (85)

In this apparently new context, a re-reading of the story is especially revealing. In the very opening line the phallic symbol is introduced: “On my right hand there were lines of fishing-stakes . . .” Many other details assume a new meaning, deepening the texture of the story. Why, for example, does Leggatt strip off *all* his clothes of swim? This is surely unusual for the educated Englishman, the Conway Boy.

Or, consider the Captain’s first glimpse of him-“a headless corpse!” Mr. Albert Guerard is certainly right in viewing Leggatt, thus imaged, as the Captain’s unconscious self; it is clear (without going into psychological jargon) what aspect of the Captain is being emphasized in Leggatt. Coming mindless from the sea (and the meaning of water Freudian symbology need not here be elaborated), Leggatt a specific aspect of the unconscious life: the sexual principle: in this case, the homoerotic.

If we turn from the images and diction of the story to the characters, we see that an analysis of their development both supports the thesis that the “secret” of the story- the shared thing- homosexuality, and that this analysis also leads to a fuller interpretation of the work within the archetype. Aside from Leggatt and the Captain, the only personages given fictional development are Archbold, the Steward, and the

Chief Mate. All of these people are seen ridiculous at best, threatening or viciously uncomprehending at worst.

The Chief Mate is virtually a figure of gun. But why? He is earnest, a good seaman: virtues which the mariner Conrad should have approved of. An examination of the devices through which he is made ridiculous is revealing. The terms are reiterated, if anything, too much. The Mate has “frightful whiskers” (5). The Captain trifles with “terrific character of his whiskers” (18). The Mate with the “terrific whiskers” (28), his “terrific whiskers” (29), “The concerned” (30) and “the moral [!] Support of his whiskers” (34).

In short, it is entirely by emphasis upon this secondary masculine sexual characteristic that the mate is ridiculed. His very obvious bluff and hearty masculinity is his “fictional crime” which in Burkean terms makes him eligible for our contempt. There are only thee major hindrances to navigation in *The Secret Sharer*- the narrator, Leggatt, and Captain Archbold of the Sephora- but scarcely a critic has avoided coming to grief on one of them. Leggatt was once the major hazard. His actions have now warned most readers, however, in that it is entirely wrong to suppose that Conrad unequivocally approves the captain’s decision to harbor Leggatt. “We must regard Leggatt as a criminal,” Guerard points out, “even through the narrator sympathizes with him” (66). In skirting this Scylla of sentimentality, however, Professor Guerard is sucked in by Charybdis when he concludes that the story’s narrator experiences “the profound human experience . . . of the introspective night journey” (68). Conrad and the narrator differ widely. For clear sailing, we must always remember this disagreement. When the story is read with skepticism (surely the proper attitude when the narrator’s values differ from the author’s) we will discover that Leggatt is indeed a criminal and that Captain Archbold is the moral center of the story. More significantly

still, we find that the narrator, at the end as at the beginning, is neither remarkably admirable nor remarkably bright.

Archbold is crazy, not cowardly, as Leggatt first tells the tale; and Leggatt doesn't claim to have originated the idea of rigging the reefed foresail. He only says, "It was I that managed to set it" (12). Even the modest claim is unconvincing. The fight broke out before the sail had been completely set– the insolent sailor was "at the sheet" (10)–and Leggatt obviously did nothing admirable after the fight. It would seem more reasonable to say that the sail was set despite the homicidal madness of the office in charge. When Archbold comes aboard, looking for Leggatt, the reader recognizes that Archbold's story of the storm contradicts with that of Leggatt's. The narrative recognizes it top; he tells us that "it is not worth while to record that version. It was just over two months since all this had happened, and he had thought so much about it that he seemed completely muddled as to its bearings . . . " (19).

Conrad's *The Secret Sharer* seems an ideal– indeed, almost too ideal– text on which to base an introduction to the varieties of psychoanalytic criticism. The story is told in the voice of a young sea captain uneasy with his first command. His self-doubt is reinforced by suspicion of the ship's two officers, a heavily whiskered first mate and a silent young second mate, both of whom are more familiar with the ship than their captain is. The story opens with the sighting of a second ship, the *Sephora*, a man named Leggatt, swims to the narrator's ship and tells the young captain of having killed a man during a maneuver designed to save the ship in a storm. The narrator conceals Leggatt in his own stateroom until he can bring his ship close to shore (against the better judgment of his officers) so fugitive can swim safely always. There are thus two ships, two stories, two "scenes." In the first, a man is murdered; in the second, a man escapes.

The Secret Sharer has long been a staple of the classroom– what can be called the New Critic's delight. Every rift is loaded with *or*– with the omnipresent figure of the double. Yet the double can hardly be the secret of the text, since it is mentioned on virtually every page: "my double," "my secret self," "my second self," "a double captain," says the young narrator again and again. A more overdetermined figure has seldom appeared in literature. The reader is awestricken for noticing its presence– we are not being any cleverer to think of it than the young narrator, for whom the mysterious stranger is clearly a symbol of something. Indeed, the narrator puts forth a version of just about every interpretive hypothesis: Leggatt is his double, his opposite; his projection, his fantasy, his unconscious; his shadow self, his ego ideal. "I wondered how far I should turn out faithful to that ideal conception of one's own personality every man sets up for himself secretly" (21), he ruminates just before Leggatt swims into view, and he could be quoting from Freud's essay "On Narcissism," "That which he projects ahead of him as his ideal is merely his substitute for the lost narcissism of his childhood –the time when he was his own ideal" (74).

When we turn to *"The Secret Sharer"* with this set of paradigms in mind, we come up with a series of interesting questions. It may be helpful to look at them one by one, without regard for the degree to which they are congruent, bearing in mind that the narrator tells us that he and his shipmates are "on the first preparatory stage of our homeward journey" (19), among things at once, turning backward and inward toward the self.

According to this reading, and even if we do not go outside *The Secret Sharer*, he holds, Leggatt is a rather dubious hero. With those actions the narrator should not really sympathize once he considers the full weight of his obligations as captain. That Leggatt should be "the hero," says Guerard, "was clearly not Conrad's meaning, nor

the meaning which holds after further readings" (10). The psychological reading, then, musters evidence in order to make statements about an author's conscious attitudes and beliefs, which are implicitly posited as being unambiguous and consistent.

The two versions of the murder story of the narrator here, one from Leggatt, the other from Archbold are both his fantasies. In one, Leggatt's story, the ship is in danger, the captain impotent and ineffectual, unable to fight the order to reef the foresail, the other man is obstructive; he, Leggatt, acts heroically in the face of the father's failure, eliminates the obstruction, and saves the ship. In the other story, told by the skipper of the *Sephora*, it is the young chief mate, the rebellious son, who must be punished and disowned:

> "You see, he wasn't exactly the sort for the chief mate of a ship like the *Sephora*." I had become so connected in thoughts impressions with *The Secret Sharer* of my cabin that I felt as if I, personally, were being given to understand that I, too, was not the sort that would have done for the chief mate of a ship like the *Sephora*. (41-42)

In the first section of the book *Lord Jim,* in the narrative relating to the Patna incident, Jim is a victim:

> A water-Clark need not pass an examination in anything under the sun, but he must have ability in the abstract and demonstrate it practically. His work consists in racing under sail, steam, or oars against other water-Clarks, offer for any ship about to anchor, greeting her captain cheerily, forcing upon him a card the business card of the ship-chandler- and his first visit on shore piloting him firmly but without ostentation to a vast, cavern- like shop which is full of things that are

> eaten and drunk on board ship; where you can bet everything to make her sea-worthy and beautiful, from a set of chain-hooks for her cable to a book of gold-leaf for the carvings of her stern; and where her commander is received like a brother by a ship-chandler he has never seen before. There is a cool parlor, easy-chairs, bottles, warmth of welcome that melts the salt of a three months' passage out of a seaman's heart. (3)

He is portrayed there as being “trapped,” “cornered,” and “imprisoned.” “I was angry,” he describes his feeling on the sinking ship to Marlow, “as though I had been trapped. I was trapped!” On the sinking ship again, he is reported to have darted desperate looks “like a concerned man” (103). Jim’s last minute on the ship is described as being crowded with a “tumult of events and sensations which beat about him like the sea upon a rock” (108). Marlow adds that he uses this simile advisedly because from the manner of Jim’s narration of the event he is forced to believe that Jim has preserved through it all “strange illusion of passiveness, as though he had not acted but had suffered himself to be handled by the internal powers who had selected him for the victim of their practical joke” (108). Jim is said to have been torn out of his immobility from the *Patna*, but “the cause that tore him out of his immobility, he knew no more than the uprooted tree knows of the wind that laid it low” (109). At the trial his mind flees “round and round the serried circle of facts that had surged up all about him to cut him off from the rest of his kind: it was like a creature that, finding itself imprisoned within an enclosure of high stakes, dashes round and round, distracted in the night, trying to find a weak spot, a crevice, a place to scale, some opening through which it may squeeze itself and escape” (31). During the days of the trial, he feels himself “like a prisoner alone in his cell or like a wayfarer or lost in a

wilderness" (33). Marlow sees him as "a dry leaf imprisoned in an eddy of wind" (185).

In Patusan Jim is, however, a helpless victim. He masters his destiny there, in a way. But this mastery is far from being absolute. As surely as he masters it, he becomes its victim. The readers are reminded of Jim as a victim almost every time there is a mention of his having become a master. Marlow observes that all of Jim's conquests in Patusan "that made him master had made him a captive, too" (247). Again he observes that "Jim the leader was a captive in every sense" (262). When Jim makes earnest denials of the power which the people of Patusan attribute to him, Marlow sees that "It was a part of his captivity" (266). He observes that Jim is "imprisoned within the very freedom of his power, and she [Jewel], though ready to make a footstool of her head for his feet, guarded her conquest inflexibly– as though he were hard to keep" (283). Even there'Itam puts on air of guardianship, "like a surly devoted jailor ready to lay down his life for his captive" (284).

One of Conrad's best-known novels is *Lord Jim* (1900), a study of "the acute consciousness of lost honor" (302):

> Hues had fallen upon the town after the outburst of waling and lamentation that had swept over the river, like a gust of wind from the opened abode of sorrow. But remorse flew in whispers, filing the hearts with consternation and horrible doubts. The robbers were coming back, brining many other with them, in a great ship, and there would be not refuge in the land for any one. A sense of utter insecurity as during an earthquake pervaded the minds of men, who whispered their suspicions, looking at each other as if in the presence of some awful portent. (302)

Eager to lead a life of adventure, Jim, the son of a rural clergyman, chooses the sea. On the training ship for officers, he performs the routine tasks well but lives mostly in his imagination. He sees himself a hero rescuing people from sinking ships, facing savages on distant shores, and quelling mutinies. But when confronted with an actual emergency, he deserts an apparently doomed ship and thus fails to live up to the conventional code of honor. Disgraced, he spends the remainder of his life atoning for his cowardice and redeeming his honor.

A bizarre thing happens early on in Joseph Conrad's *Lord Jim*. A leak is discovered in the Patna, and the ship seems certain to sink at any moment, carrying to their deaths the eight hundred Malaya-Muslim pilgrims sleeping on board. On deck, the suspense is heightened by the contrasting reactions of the other European officers, who unhesitatingly prepare their own escape, and the chief mate Jim, who is overcome by panic and concern for the sleeping pilgrims. While the reader's attention is directed to the unfolding dramas, something inexplicable takes place at the margin of this tableau: two Malays remain motionless at the helm of the ship. As the Europeans struggle with quiet frenzy to prepare a lifeboat for escape, the two Malays stare blankly:

> [Jim] stood on the starboard side of the bridge, as far as he could get from the struggle of the boat, which went on with the agitation of madness and the stealthiness of conspiracy. The Malays had meantime remained holding to the wheel. Just picture to yourselves the actors in that, that God! unique episode of the sea, four beside themselves with fierce and secret exertions, and three looking on in complete immobility, above the awning covering the profound ignorance of hundreds of human beings, with their weariness, with their dreams,

> with their hopes, arrested, help by an invisible hand on the brink of annihilation . . . . These beggars by the boat had to go distracted with funk. Frankly, had I been there I would not have given as much as a counterfeit farthing for the ship's chance to keep above water to the end of each successive second. (60)

Given the historical setting of the native world in *Lord Jim,* one cannot help noting the affinity of such a strategy of representation with that of British officials, in late nineteenth-century colonial Malaya. Although Marlow asserts that Jim's fate in Patusan was ignored by the European powers in Southern Asia because the region was "not judged for ripe for interference" (142), it is perhaps more accurate to say that *Lord Jim* is set in the 1880s, a decade marked by the intensification of the British "forward movement" in Malaya as a reaction to growing German, Dutch, and French interest in the lucrative commodities in the peninsula and Boreno (168). Marlow is in no obvious sense an advocate of British expansion in the Malay world, but his view that the natives lack full access to reason strikes a chord with prevalent official that, in the words of a British Governor in Singapore, "Asiatic will [n]ever learn to govern themselves; it is contrary to the genius of their race, of their history, of their religious system, that they should" (149).

There is a definite connection here between the two situations, which must have their origins in the Otago's voyage from Bangkok to Singapore. Conrad is grafting on to that journey the idea of the captain taking on board a seaman as passenger. In *Lord Jim*, Jim, feeling his disgrace, takes no interest in the ship and "skulked down below as though he had been a stowaway". In the same way, Leggatt remains out of sight and is a kind of official stowaway. It is easy to see the

development of the initial minor incident in *Lord Jim* to the major situation in *The Secret Sharer*. Conrad quotes Marlow's remarks toward Jim:

> 'This made me pause. What did he mean?' The unsteady phantom of terror behind his glassy eyes seemed to stand still and look into mine wistfully. "They turned me out of my bunk in the middle watch too look at her sinking," he pursued in a reflective tone, his voice sounded alarmingly strong all at coif of a nursing sister to be seen flitting in the perspective of the ward; but away in the middle of long or of empty iron bedsteads an accident case from some ship in the roads sat up brown and gaunt with white bandage set rakishly on the forehead. Suddenly my interesting invalid shot out an arm thin like a tentacle and clawed my shoulder.
>
> "I believe he would have kissed my hands" said Jim, savagely," and next moment, he starts foaming and whispering in my face, 'if I had the time I would like to crack your skull for you.' I pushed him away. Suddenly he caught hold of me round the neck. Damn him! I hit out without looking. 'Won't you save your own life-you infernal Ha! He! He called me-ha! Ha! Ha! (38)

There are other similarities between Jim and Leggatt which show that Conrad is again making use of Williams as a source. Jim, we know, originally came from a parsonage, but when '. . .'His vocation for the sea had declared itself it was sent at once to a training ship for officers of the mercantile marine. During the court of enquiry into the desertion of the Patna Jim tells Marlow about his father, "I can never face the poor old chap . . . I could never explain, he would not understand" (96). Conrad probably had in mind the actual situation between Williams and his father here. Williams like Jim,

was from a parsonage. His father was vicar of Porthleven, Cornwell. But Conrad is returning to the same situation in *The Secret Sharer:*

> “A pretty thing to have to own up to for a Cornway boy,” murmured my double, distinctly.
>
> “You’re a cornway boy?”
>
> “I am,” he said, as if startled. Then slowly . . . perhaps you too’-
>
> It was so: but being a couple of years older I had left before he joint. After a quick interchange of dates a silence fell . . . my double gave me an inkling of his thoughts by saying: “my father’s a parson in Norfolk. Do you see me before a judge and jury on that charge?” (101)

As in *Lord Jim*, we have here a sailor confessing his transgression against the code to sailor, and concerned about the effect his action will have upon his father who is a parson. In *Lord Jim*, Marlow is an older man than Jim, of course, and Jim’s father lives in Essex. Here the parson is in Norfolk. In the case of Williams it was at Porthleven in Cornwall. The difference includes as if of no importance. In both cases there is the sense of to live up to an accepted standard:

> My gig had dropped in the wake of the brigantine, and I saw him aft detached upon the light of the weltering sun, raising his cap high above his head. I heard an indistinct shout, "You-shall- hear- of- me." Of me, or from me, i don't know which. I think it must have been of me. My eyes were too dazzled by the glitter of the sea below his feet to see him clearly; I am fated never to see him clearly; but I can assure you no man could have appeared less “in the similitude of a corpse," as that half-caste co croaker had put it. I could see the inlet wrench's face, the shape and color of a ripe pumpkin, poked out somewhere under Jim's

> elbow. He, tool, too, raised his arm as if for a down ward thrust. *Abets omen.* (177)

In *Lord Jim* there is briery "that fellows a gentleman", and here "a pretty thing to have to own up to for a cornway boy" (178). Conrad was not himself a cornway boy, but he did later send his son to the only other training ship, a part from the cornway, in existence at that time, HMS Worcester.

Conrad does not fail to espouse stereotypes of "oriental" woman in *Lord Jim.* His narrator contends:

> I watched them. Her grown trailed on the path, her black hair fell loss. She walked upright and light by the side of the tall ma, whose long shapeless coated hung in perpendicular folds from the stopping shoulders, whose feet moved slowly. They disappeared beyond that spinney (you may remember) where sixteen different tined of bamboo grow together, all distinguishable to the learned eye. For my part, I was fashionable by the exquisite grace and beauty of that fluted grower, crowed with pointed leaves and feathery hoards, the lightness, the vigor, the charm as distinct as a voice of the undersexed luxuriating life. I remember staying to look at it for a long time, as one would linger within reach of a consoling wisher. The sky was pearly grey. It was one of those overcast days so rare in the tropics in which memories crowd upon one, memories of other shores, of other faces. (258)

Marlow, the narrator is fascinated "by the exquisite grace and beauty of that fluted grower" and memories other shores, of other faces "crowd upon one" (258) is the testimony of imperial eyes in *Lord Jim.*

In the nutshell, Conrad spouses recurrent reading of landscapes, peoples and places in nineteenth century travel narratives about Africa and Asia in that his criticism implicitly solicits the civilizing mission as inevitable. After all Conrad has been the vocal advocate of greater empire in his belief and attitudes in *The Secret Sharer* and *Lord Jim.*

IV. Conclusion

Joseph Conrad attempts to depict Africans and Indians sympathetically in *Lord Jim* and *The Secret Sharer* respectively and that Conrad's depictions of Africans are shaped by racial stereotypes. It is noteworthy that Conrad's views and blind spots were typical of the time in which he lived. Majority of Conrad's depiction of African and Indian land and people in *Lord Jim* and *The Secret Sharer* create space to concur that Conrad is literal anti-imperialist. Nevertheless, Conrad's presentation of imperialism and of African characters continues to culminate as a symbol of western enterprise in the subsequent fictions.

His views do not give sufficient weight to the subject and the insight into the world of moral values which was his consistent concern and which had little to do either with political ideas in general or with the specific politics governing one vast-community. Conrad's novels are nevertheless enacted with this history of colonial expansion.

The discourse of imperialism, with its proclamations of cultural and social superiority, its eroticizing of colonial others, and its celebration of European expansion as a civilizing mission, is most dramatically deployed. The narrator's [Marlow's] psychological sense of isolation in his role as captain is intensified by his impressions as he stands physically alone on the deck of the ship, the narrator's conflict is essentially a psychological struggle within himself. Conrad's narratives in *Lord Jim* and *The Secret Sharer* alternately presuppose a hierarchy and an absolute gulf that separates European from native consciousness. It can be argued that westerners have a limited, oversimplified concept of the Africa and its history while analyzing the remnants of imperialism in *Lord Jim* and *The Secret Sharer*: For certain

associations with Africa and the East- not quite ignorant, not quite informed-always seem to have gathered around the notion of an orient.

Western writers, like Joseph Conrad, who practiced travelogue, sea narrative, fiction, and other genres of expression about their safari to exotic and mysterious native Africa, Middle East and India never failed codify oriental norms and values in western weighing scale. The same is prominent in *Lord Jim* and *The Secret Sharer.* Conrad is among those literary colonizers who represent little of truth and more of imagination.

There are evidences in both novels that the great literary figures in Conrad tilting towards African and Eastern cultural heritage are found guilty of imitation or distortion of the place he visited or heard of. That was not the reality but merely a wild fantasy, in the sense he has distorted native culture and landscape for his own benefit. For him orient (including Africa) became the place for exotic refugee where he can sublimate his desires and project them as per his wish.

Marlow has become a transpersonal ego identifying himself in power and consciousness with the whole of Europe. Beneath the representation there is layer of doctrine about the Orient and Africa. Conrad's narratives are vivid examples of how Empire invests its evil interests through not a single agent: the exploitation comes in multiple facets. The Africa is orientalized not only because it was discovered to be oriental in all those ways considered commonplace by an average nineteenth - century European , but also because it could be- that is submitted to being made oriental. Conrad's works portray perceptions of the East as the "Other," of peoples barbaric and limited, of oriental despots, and of cultures both exotic and degenerate. It can be argued that these perceptions remain influential today and have an impact on politics, particularly on policies toward the Africa, Middle East and on views of Arabs. On use

of literature as an instrument of mystification and domination, have its most unwavering advocates today in scholars like Conrad. Through Conrad comes a belief that literature is the proponent of imperialism and European expansionism whose loiters on psychological ambiguities and paradoxes that most colonial writers and interpreters (including the Joseph Conrad) attempted to resolve. Conrad acts as big brother who always cast his annoyance towards native writers and the attitude in purely hegemonic terms: but meanwhile must be humble like every other European. Conrad, the colonialist unwilling to accept the validity of sensibilities other than his own, has made particular point of dismissing cultures other than White-European. He has written lengthy descriptions of African landscapes to prove its non-existence largely on the grounds that the novel is a peculiarly western, genre, a fact which would interest if our ambition was to write western novels. To evacuate imperial interests in Conrad's narratives is to notice also the subtle technique whereby Conrad drives home the significance of the physical contact of the men. The psychological reading, then, musters evidence in order to make statements about an author's conscious attitudes and beliefs, which are implicitly posited as being unambiguous and consistent.

In short, it is entirely by emphasis upon this European-elite characteristic that Joseph Conrad establishes imperial hegemony over Africa and India in *Lord Jim* and *The Secret Sharer*. His very obvious bluff against people other than himself and hearty European masculinity is his fictional crime which has come under contempt in this research.

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