

THE IMAGE OF EMPIRE IN JOSEPH CONRAD'S LORD JIM

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THE IMAGE OF EMPIRE IN JOSEPH CONRAD'S *LORD JIM*

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Joseph Conrad (1857-1924) is no doubt a great pioneer on the subject of Imperialism and colonialism. Among his masterpieces, *Lord Jim* (1900) is regarded as his representative work for Imperialism. The novel predominantly evokes the adventure tale. This narrative form tells the stories of brave men and eager boys in the mysterious, unknown regions they discover. The attraction the form held for Joseph Conrad is revealed in myriad ways throughout his work. It acknowledges Conrad's nihilism and modernism.

Joseph Conrad uses sailor Marlow and Jim as his interpreters to express his own ambivalence and complicated emotions toward Empire. On one side, he criticizes the merciless and violent conduct of invaders, on the other side; he is a member of the British Empire so that to some extent he compromises to Empire. This paper analyses colonialism and the image of Empire in *Lord Jim* to contribute to Chinese literature criticism concerned with the subject and provide a good way for people to learn English in a literary way.

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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

Joseph Conrad is regarded as one English modern writer and plays a significant role in English and world literature. “His works are divided into 3 different categories: sea novels, jungle novels and political novels” (Zheng, 2005). He was born in Poland, later joined a merchant fleet of the British Empire and became a British citizen. Because of his extraordinary sailing life and complicated coming-of-age experiences, his works reflect profound social and historical intensions that arose related to imperialism and colonialism. There is no doubt that he was a great pioneer. His bold explorations and vivid descriptions about the invaders’ behavior of aggression make his novels recondite and classic.

In comparison with Conrad’s political novels, relatively more research of the other two categories (sea novels and jungle novels) has been done. Famous scholars in China such as Wang Guanglin and Yin Qiping have achieved extraordinary success on studying Conrad’s sea novels. As the political ones contain more full-length novels, which belong to the works of Conrad’s later stage, it is difficult to understand the language and context. However, there is a trend in studying his political works in recent years. Hu Qiang is the most well known researcher for “A Review of Western Studies of Conrad’s Political Trilogy.” *Lord Jim* (1900) is one of the representative works of his sea novels both in thought and artistic style. Having reviewed the excellent journals and other related periodicals; many researchers have become interested in the special feature of narration in *Lord Jim*. They discuss art, form, structure and function of narration in third person in this novel. Besides, the use of impressionism and the exploration of morality also attract many researchers’ attention.

These articles emphasize Conrad’s use of the way impressionism and the deep psychological meaning of Jim, the main character. However, fewer studies stress the theme of the images of loneliness, symbolism and so on.

Lord Jim develops and adds complexity, and it also presents the tension between the self-interest of individuals and the demands of the prevailing social organization. The invaders’ disgusting conduct and serious abuses are the inner information revealed in the text. Besides, in order to fulfill the Empire theory, the author analyses the invaders with context closely explore

anti-imperialism. What is more, the significance of observing and recording in Conrad's fiction is the transition from Imperialism to Empire which begins to take place at the turn of the twentieth century to supersede governmental authority in areas of development. Regarding the former research, this paper looks at the research work on *Lord Jim* through the lens of imperialism which has not been fully developed in Chinese literary criticism and many English literary works like *Lord Jim* can be a good learning tool for understanding western culture and history.

Statement of the Problem

What is the image of empire in Conrad's *Lord Jim*? How does Conrad express the idea of empire in *Lord Jim*? Jim is the main character in this novel and he has his own conflicts. Does Jim represent Conrad? How should *Lord Jim* be categorized?

Definition of Terms

Empire: There is no precise definition about the word “Empire.” In a broad sense, there are 9 different meanings consulted to *Webster’s Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary* according to the occasions and customs. The first one which is the exact meaning in this essay means “an aggregate of nations or peoples ruled over by an emperor or other powerful sovereign or government: usually a territory of greater extent than a kingdom, as the former British Empire, French Empire, Russian Empire, Byzantine Empire or Roman Empire” (p.468). In a narrow sense, Empire usually indicates those strong monarchy countries with a vast expanse of land, lots of colonies and persisted traditions. Generally, the countries can be titled as Empire is approved internationally. Throughout history, the mainly Empires like these are listed as Roman Empire, the Ottman Empire, the German Empire and so on.

And according to Oxford English Dictionary, Empire has two different concepts in old and modern English. The older concept refers to “Imperial rule or dignity” (p.187), which means “Supreme and extensive political dominion, esp. that exercised by an ‘emperor’ (in the earlier senses) or by a sovereign state over its dependencies.”(p.187)

The modern concept that is also Conrad being used in *Lord Jim* means, “That which is subject to imperial rule.”(p.187) including “ An extensive territory (esp. an aggregate of many separate states) under the sway of an emperor or supreme ruler; also, an aggregate of subject territories ruled over by a sovereign state.”(p.187) and “ the empire” (p.188). There are also four famous Empires to help with understanding, “before 1804 often spec the ‘Holy Roman’ or ‘Romano -- Germanic’ empire”, “Great Britain with its dominions, colonies, and dependencies; the British Empire; freg. The overseas dominions, etc. as opposed to Great Britain”, “the rule of Napoleon Bonaparte as Emperor of the French 1804-15, or the period of this” and “the rule of Napoleon III as Emperor of the French, 1852-70, or the period of this, usually as second Empire”(p.188).

CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter describes the image of the British Empire in *Lord Jim* through three aspects, which are: the expansion of the empire, the civilization of the empire and the individual of the empire. To begin the paper, it is necessary to illustrate the background empires, especially the British Empire, and about the era in this novel. Then it aims to analyze the specific cultural elements, such as, language, theory and colonial culture to express the suffering of colonial people vividly. At last, which is the core of the paper, it will elaborate the individual's view of the Empire through the leading character, Jim, which emphasizes contradictoriness and oppression when he faces the big environment, namely, the Empire.

Expansion of empire

The British Empire, which is regarded as a typical Empire from 19th to the beginning of 20th, possesses a great many colonies from east to west on the earth. In early 17th century, British Empire began to take shape and established many colonies in North America including today's United States, some parts in Canada and a few small islands, such as Jamaica, around the coastline of the Caribbean at that time.

According to *The Cambridge Illustrated History of British Empire*, "1757, the victory of Battle of Plassey made England's East India Company wins the right to rule Bengal in India.... Later Sri Lanka, Burma and Malaysia were brought into England's sphere of influence in Asia." (Marshall, 1998) Meanwhile, England was also interested in China. Since the 18th century, England has been a tea import country of China, but this led to a badly adverse balance of trade for England. Consequently, England hoped to balance its trade by exporting opium to China. There was no doubt that this behavior disobeyed China's prohibition and thus the war between two countries was unavoidable. At last, the government of China lost Hong Kong's sovereignty because of the defeat.

Africa is the most important colony to European countries. In *Heart of Darkness* (Conrad, 1899), a Belgian company retrieves an agent who is a product of "all Europe" (Conrad, 1995) from his position of dominance over a Russian sycophant and African subjects. In 1875,

only Algeria and Cape were the main colonies of European countries, but in 1914 except for Ethiopia and Liberia, all African countries became colonies. The transition from controlling colonies just by economical ways were been called “unofficial Empire” (Hardt & Negri, 2001) to administer directly was realized by the naked aggression of the British Empire and other European countries. As time went by, France, Belgium and Portugal’s deepen aggressions to the Congo River got in the way of British Empire’s activities in Africa. Hence the conflicts of interest among these European countries were obvious. Although the British Empire was the most positive advocator of free trade, it still is the largest foreign Empire and the biggest beneficial country by plundering in 1914.

By contrast, in *Lord Jim* Conrad breaks the Eurocentric bonds of *Heart of Darkness* to overwhelm the setting with a more diffuse international perspective, particularly in the Patna episode, “Owned by a Chinaman, chartered by an Arab, and commanded by a sort of renegade New Wales German” (Conrad, 1995) and “Patusan is a remote district of a native-ruled state, and the chief settlement bears the same name” (Conrad, 1995). As it is described Patusan is an essential location in *Lord Jim* that witnesses all kinds of things. Great Britain also develops some European colonies, for instance, Cyprus (independent in 1960), Gibraltar (member of United Kingdom), Malta (1964) and Ireland.

Civilization of empire

Language is the soul of a nation. It is not only a tool of expression but also a state of culture, a way of thinking and a connection between present and future. If a nation loses its language, it also loses the foundation to exist. Throughout history, cultural invasions always begin with language. Hardt and Negri detect that no matter where Alexandria, the Roman army or invaders from Spain, Portugal and France, wherever they have been, they propagate their own language by violence. The decline of that native language represents the interruption of civilization. “Culture Hegemony” (Hardt & Negri, 2001) comes after “Language Hegemony” (Hardt & Negri, 2001) closely. Colonialists from the British Empire take advantage of their powerful language, English, to fulfill their ambition to govern and conquer the whole world. They use language with strong political color and cultural feature to try to influence the feelings and valuable judgments of people under colonial rule irresistibly by ideology, values and life style. With the lapse of time, local people will accept the language and grow intimation to it,

then trust it. Meanwhile, the sense of national self-respect and pride loosen: it can be indicated that those invaders teach local people to learn English with an aim to control them easily. In *Lord Jim*, Rajah Allang, the leader of Patusan, and Doramin, one of the principal men, both can speak English fluently. People who want to become strong and powerful should be able to communicate in English. Or, they cannot live. Anyway, they must learn English if they want to survive.

Lord Jim reveals hegemon that exists in European invaders' cultural concept. They hold the opinion that European culture is superior to all of the other non-European cultures and they regard that the white race is the best race in the world. When Marlow met Rajah Allang for the first time, he said, "He was a dirty, little, used-up old man with eyes and a weak mouth, who swallowed an opium pill every two hours, and in defiance of common decency wore his hair uncovered and falling in wild stringy locks about his wizened grimy face" (Conrad, 1993). From Marlow's words, it can be seen that all nations in colonies are considered as low-grade nations. Aborigines are described as uncivilized images, as simple as children, or even as beasts. On the contrary, Jim is described as a noble man compared to those wild people.

I had never seen Jim look so grave, so self-possessed, in an impenetrable, impressive way. In the midst of these dark-faced men, his stalwart figure in white apparel, the gleaming clusters of his fair hair, seemed to catch all the sunshine that trickled through the cracks in the closed shutters of that dim hall, with its walls of mats and a roof of thatch. He appeared like a creature not only of another kind but of another essence. (Conrad, 1993, p.143)

Many obvious derogatory terms and expressions are used when Marlow talks about local people. In fact, even writers like Conrad who try to record everything objectively, it is quite common to find language superiority in Conrad's literary works. Stephen Ross thinks that this phenomenon has something to do with Conrad's personal experiences, "Conrad anticipates the twentieth century's violent transition to global capitalism, the aggressively totalitarian tactics of fascism...." (Conrad, 1993) In contrast, Conrad still acquires British nationality and writes in English to arouse attention around the world because English is considered to be the most authoritarian language.

In invaders' eyes, people who live in Africa, isolated islands or other places far away from western society are all monsters and devils. They know little about colonial civilization and they refuse to know it. According to E.W. Said, "In Conrad's novels, African people are describing as primitive men with spears and make out strange noises" (Said, 1993). In other words, black people are born as slaves since they are ignorant, greedy and cruel and only guns can be used to tame those wild people. In the invaders' eyes, customs, rites, food, clothes, weapons and the life styles of colonies' are all stupid. They want to control them with western civilization which is more respectful and wiser than that of the colonies'. Marlow impresses Patusan like this "The stream of civilization, as if divided on a headland a hundred miles north of Patusan, branches east and south-east, leaving its plains and valleys, its old trees and its old mankind, neglected and isolated" (Conrad, 1993). It is obvious that he feels sorry for Jim for sending him to such a poor and undeveloped island. Later, Jim is titled as "the lord of Patusan" and he can decide the life and death of dark colored local people. Writer Gail Fincham and Myrtle Hooper agree that Jim, who marries a beautiful local woman and gets what he has dreamed of a long time is admired by local people and is treated like a God. However, all these achievements just prove his ability and superiority. It cannot be denied that Jim takes the chance to realize his dream, but the dark colored local people are just part of it. From the bottom of Jim's heart, he desires to go back home. In addition, the same opinion has expressed, "it is Jim's ploy, his way of dealing with his own history. Patusan presents itself to him as an alternative to that world of duty in which he has failed" (Fincham & Hooper, 1996). Therefore, when pirate Brown intends to rob the sovereignty over Patusan, he chooses to give Brown a way to escape. Although Jim owns everything including honor that he has lost already, he still thinks Patusan cannot be compared to his country.

Patusan is a wonderful place with remarkable scenery. Uninterrupted by the outside world, it is absolutely a beautiful and charming island.

The coast of Patusan is straight and sombre, and faces a misty ocean. Red trails are seen like cataracts of rust streaming under the dark-green foliage of bushes and creepers clothing the low cliffs. Swampy plains open out at the mouth of rivers, with a view of jagged blue peaks beyond the vast forests. In the offing a chain of islands, dark, crumbling shapes, stand out in the everlasting sunlit haze like the remnants of a

wall breached by the sea. (Conrad, 1993, p.152)

However, life is not always so easy; the claws of imperialism stretch into this mysterious island and break this quietness. Facing the temptation caused by western modern civilization, original inhabitants lose themselves gradually. They cannot protect their own traditions, not even a part of them. Instead, their unique civilization has been changed more or less. What are worse, local leaders are also deprived of the right to create and sustain their own conventions. On the contrary, they live and do things according to the wishes of the Empire's. In *Lord Jim*, Jim builds a fort where all settings and rules satisfy his own will.

Individuals of empire

In the novel, Marlow repeats that Jim is a promising and excellent youth. When he first meets him, he says this, "This was my first view of Jim. He looked as unconcerned and unapproachable as only the young can look. There he stood, clean-limbed, clean-faced, firm on his feet, as promising a boy as the sun ever shone on;" (Conrad, 1993) Jim seems to be an honest, decent and kind person that would not abandon Patan for survival. "I couldn't clear out", "They all got out of it in one way or another, but it wouldn't do for me" (Conrad, 1993). All the time, Jim has the faith of being a great sailor and he should be responsible for his passengers, so he cannot escape.

Because of guilt, he travels far away from the places where he is familiar with, even his hometown. At the moment he knows that he will go to a completely strange island, he is very excited. As Gail Fincham and Myrtle Hooper comment, "Jim's confident senses that 'nothing can touch him', his indifference to Cornelius, the fact that he 'seemed to bear a charmed life'" (Fincham & Hooper, 1996). What is more, his childish kindness makes him believe that he will bring peace, stability and wealthy to the land, hence he will never leave. Later on, he combines with Doramin who is chief of the second power in Patusan to fight against Rajah Allang who colludes with outside invasion forces. He sincerely hopes all the tribes and villagers will be safe. Even though, his life has been threatened for several times, he still opens fire on Allang and wins at last ignoring his own safety. After the war Jim obtains a good reputation for himself, and is addressed as "*Lord Jim*" by local people.

Everything goes perfect if the pirate Brown would have never appeared. Brown notices

Patusan by chance and raises evil intention. Fincham and Hooper also read a deep meaning under Brown's words. Brown insists, in his mind, they can share Patusan because both of them are white men. However, Jim is not the kind of person he thinks of, he wants to deforce it. Cornelius, a mean white man, hates Jim taking all his belongings and Brown represents the image of the Empire, greedy, cruel and selfish. Jim promises his people that they can live a happy life, so he will not let the two invaders destroy it.

As the old saying goes, each person has his shortcomings. Jim is no exception. In his subconsciousness, he regards the white race superior to the colored race. Just like Douglas Kerr points out in his book "Jim seems born to the performance of leadership, with his powerful build, his loud voice, and not least the immaculate white in which he always dresses even in Patusan." (Douglas Kerr, 2008) With great expectation, Jim comes to Patusan to govern them as their master; he is definitely not resigned to be a normal one in Patusan. He enjoys Patusan's comfortable and honorable life and ease of personal worship. Perhaps he does not realize that he is a loyal citizen of British Empire with fanatical patriotism. Although he does not show it, he agrees that colored people should be lead by white people. And Douglas Kerr also admits that 'As Cornelius says, Jim succeeds by making people believe him'. (Douglas Kerr, 2008)

The pirate Brown in *Lord Jim* who has the features of invaders fails to share Patusan with Jim; he wonders why such a white person would like to live on this remote island. "You have been white once, for all your tall talk of this being your own people and you being one with them. Are you? And what the devil do you get for it; you don't want us to come down here perhaps-do you?" (Conrad, 1993) Brown's words stir up Jim's guilt that he keeps as a secret, but he does not tell it. Jim sees it as his greatest shame in his life; he should insist to the last moment, he should not jump to the small boat to escape. Indeed, Jim is hiding here. "You don't deserve a better fate. You that I find skulking here with your mouth full of your responsibility, of innocent lives, of your infernal duty?" (Conrad, 1993) For his own sake, partly because he is a white man too, partly because he has made mistakes in the past so he feels merciful for Brown, Jim compromises with Brown to let him live. To everyone's surprise, Jim's blindness makes him trust a liar who ruins everything of his. Jim is not fully aware of the disgusting essence of the Empire.

From childhood, Jim is attracted by the voyage legends and hero stories. He sets on his mind to be a sailor and that is it when he is very young. Later on, his dream comes true that he

becomes a trainee of a mercantile marine. His performances are excellent during training competitions, which make him proud of himself for being extraordinary. He believes that one day he will be a hero admired by others. Moore Gilbert evaluates Jim's dream, "This illusoriness is revealed as the nature of the signifying chain returns to haunt his procedure" (Gilbert, 2001). On account of this, when one of Jim's companies gains reputation because of rescuing a person who has been stranded in a small boat, his response is quite indifferent. "Jim thought it a pitiful display of vanity. The gale had ministered to heroism as spurious as its own pretence of terror. He felt angry with the brutal tumult of earth and sky for taking him unawares and checking unfairly a generous readiness for narrow escapes" (Conrad, 1993). A couple of years have past, finally, Jim's opportunity approaches. It is an old steamer, Patna, loaded with about eight hundred pilgrims. It is a peaceful night. All is still. Suddenly, wind and rain strike together with a peculiar impetuosity. Things go out of control; Jim should have determined to die with the rest of the people for responsibility. However, he jumps to the boat to run away. This is the "first jump" (Peters, 2008) in his life. His dream to be a hero with courage and wisdom fails, worse still, he falls down to become a sinner and be blamed by others.

The "second jump" (Peters, 2008) in Jim's life provides him a good opportunity to be accepted by Patusan's people. It is a delightful scene, but not for long. He is unworthy of the faith of local people: by not killing Brown, he jumps and compromises his past and his weakness. All of his wealth, glory, reputation and happiness, which he earns by running the risks of death are brought to naught. Jim makes his whole life as a bet for his only chance to rebirth, but his heroism style of dream is totally destroyed by a white man who is not worth trusting. In other words, his dream will never come true under Imperialism; he cannot deny that he is still one part of it. There is no alternative except committing suicide.

Taking a panoramic view of Jim's whole life, he lives miserably and bitterly, even his death is colored with tragedy. As a matter of fact, Jim is just a normal person with complicated and profound emotions. His short life tells a story about a hopeful young man chasing his heroin dream but losing sense of his morals during the period and at last he salvages himself. Just because of his idealism and heroism, he regards himself as an elite to others and requires himself to be perfect, he cannot forgive himself to make stupid mistakes. Therefore, he can never be a real "Lord". His death is as inevitable as his spiritual shackles that he makes for himself, which are heavier as time goes by. But Douglas Kerr thinks differently "even his death makes a

personal dramatic triumph out of Patusan's political disaster. The East is his theatre, the crowd his audience, and the critical Marlow gives his death scene a good notice, calling it 'an extraordinary success' (246)" (Douglas Kerr, 2008)

If Jim could overcome his weakness in character and morality, he still could not realize his dream. Reality is crueler than his imagination. At the age of that time, Imperialism is being spread everywhere. With his own power he cannot fight against such a strong opponent. If Brown is not his bad dream, it will be someone else. Patusan is unable to be his paradise where he escapes from outside under his protection. In addition, the background of that age is another critical reason for Jim's tragedy.

Apart from the reasons of his own character, it cannot be denied that Empire plays an important role in Jim's life. In his childhood, ideas about expansion and superiority are infiltrated into his mind through literatures and other forms. Stephen Ross criticizes "Moreover, Conrad actually sharpens his focus on the intimate bond between psychic and social so that we can trace *Lord Jim's* critique of the Empire by examining Jim's subjective experience of the novel's dominant ideological system, complete with its limits and points of failure" (Ross, 2004) Respect and success which Jim pursues in his whole life are accord with the conception of white invaders'. These firmly planted ideas influence him more or less, fortunately, he is a kind and decent person or he would be a member of white robbers. Due to his contradictory attitude towards Imperialism, death for him is inevitable.

CHAPTER III CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Influence of Expansion

Hundreds of years' expansion and governance have brought a great many benefits to the British Empire through the sacrifice of the blood and sweat of the people in colonies. Undisguised plundering publicly is one of the means by which white invaders gained fortune, particularly in the early period of expansion. Great Britain and other invaders robbed fortunes of gold and silver from India. Once invaders had conquered one place, they would carry out robberies many times. For example, the "East India Company robbed everything of Bengal's national treasury when it seized Bengal, total value amounts to 60 million pounds" (Chen 8). Brown, a white pirate in the novel, has the evil features of invaders and he covets the resources of Patusan. Just as it is written in *Lord Jim*, "In such converse and in gloating over the view of Patusan, which he had determined in his mind should become his prey, Brown whiled away most of the afternoon" (Conrad 231). Jim builds a fort to make Brown think that both of them are the same kind of person who wants to monopolize the wealth of Patusan, however, Jim wants him to go away. In general, invaders no matter if they are individuals or part of an army, all hanker after the wealth of colonies. Robert Clive, a head of England claimed proudly in front of the parliament during aggression, "The prosperous city is under my foot; the glorious country is in my hand; the fully loaded treasure-house is before my eyes. I only took 200 thousand pounds. At present, I still wonder why I was so merciful at that time" (Chen 9).

On account of the robbery of colonies, enormous wealth inflow accumulates a large amount of capital, which promotes the development of the British Empire's industry and the whole society. Furthermore, foreign colonies are also used as an optional choice for English people who could not find a job at home to reduce the social pressure. From Conrad's point of view, Jim, Cornelius, and Brown are abandoned by their motherland and are deemed "notorious" (Conrad 123), so they escape to Patusan to find their own way of living. Thousands of criminals are sent overseas to colonies, such as Australia. This kind of conduct offers a steady and superior internal environment to enrich the spiritual life and improve civilization. A large number of literature works and scientific inventions are introduced. To some extent, monopoly groups in Empires enhance the life of domestic people through ruthless exploitation and plundering.

It cannot be denied that aggression did speed up the development of the British Empire; however, colonies paid bitter prices for this and fell into the abyss of poverty. Vast colonies were the main sources of income and food, which were provided for the British Empire and all kinds of products and materials were sent to the British Empire consistently. Patusan is a place, which serves British Empire in this way. In *Lord Jim*, the author says that “There were very few places in the Archipelago he had not seen in the original dusk of their being, before light had been, carried into them for the sake of better morality and--well--the greater profit, too” (Conrad 137). Purchasing raw materials and food at low prices from colonies was the customary tactic for Empires who wanted to earn tremendous profit through it. Meanwhile, the British Empire also controlled colonies and force them to be supplying the market for industrial products. In India, “The bones of textile workers dye the entire India plain white” (Chen 10). Therefore, under the pressure of high-quality goods from aggressors, a lot of industries in the colonies went bankrupt, so that thousands of people lost their jobs and faced a hopeless situation.

Compared with physical enslavement, spiritual enslavement is more horrific. Malays of Patusan suffered because they lost themselves and had blind faith in Jim even when they knew that if Brown left there would be dangers. The story ends with Jim’s death, but in reality, the lives of Malays have to continue. What should they do? The critic Moser Thomas asks similar questions in his book “Who will stand for Jim? Who could take the responsibility for Patusan after Jim?” (156). Thomas agrees that Jim cannot fight the world on his own.

For quite a long time, the whole Patusan is immersed in a sad and painful atmosphere. They lose many elites such as Doramin’s son. How can they recover from such a big accident? Jim’s wife, Jade, cannot forgive Jim’s cheating and death. Jade says that “He has left me” and “you always leave us--for your own ends” Her face was set. All the heat of life seemed to withdraw within some inaccessible spot in her breast. ‘It would have been easy to die with him’” (Conrad 217). The shock of Jim’s death seems to have changed Jade and Tamb’ Itam’s natures. In the book, the author thinks “It had turned her passion into stone, and it made the surly taciturn Tamb’ Itam almost loquacious” (Conrad 220). For the rest of Jade’s life, she will be on her own. Death is one explanation for the mistake that Jim abandoned the passages on the ship and ran away, the wounds in the Malays’ hearts will never fade. In essence, there exist other countries that lose their lands, people, and treasures, which they cherish most. If Imperialists want to pay for these poor people one day, they are moved by conscience. They owe the colonial people too

much.

Theoretical Support for Building Empire

The British Empire possessed the largest colonies and its cruel behaviors were beyond comprehension, but it persists that it took great responsibility to help the local people and the world's civilization. Therefore, for the sake of Christian religion and in the name of God, they had the rights to do aggression as an unquestionable moral truth. To realize their wild ambition in an easier way, ruling class intended to use religion to mislead people in their case to support their career. Colonialists propagated Christian religion vigorously to cheat those poor people that they were coming to assist. Owing to colonies' poverty and undeveloped situation, white people who come from western civilization, which is more advanced than the colonies' civilization, can change the current situation. However, the truth was that quite a few people in colonies adored European invaders as God so that they lost themselves. For instance, Jim was God in many Malays' minds, even when they realized the dangers cause by pirate Brown's leaving. They still unrealistically believed in Jim's ability. However, in some eastern countries such as India, the way of using Christianity to appease public feeling did not work out, but it increased their counter investments. Nevertheless, preachers and the media of the British Empire think, "the reason of setback with religion is not because Christianity is too brilliant to Indian people, but they are too stupid to Christians" (Kiernan 68).

A couple of centuries ago, colonialists had been advocating the theory, "survival of the fittest" (Münkler 86) straight from Nietzsche's philosophy of Superman and Spencer's "social evolutionism" (Münkler 94). Marlow has written a letter to tell a listener who is interested in Jim. It reads, "giving your life up to them (mankind with skins brown, yellow, or black in color) was like selling your soul to a brute. that kind of thing was only endurable and enduring when based on a firm conviction in the truth of ideas racially our own, in whose name are established the order, the morality of an ethical progress" (Conrad 212). Many famous philosophers and sociologists' theories support those high-class nations to conquer low-grade nations. They behold that strongest is the best and white people are in an advantageous position. Hence, western colonialists consider themselves as masters, but others as slaves, even animals. The theory above provides basis for their abusive violence so they can feel at ease and justified when they perform

massacres or persecutions. The letter also reads “The point, however, is that of all mankind. Jim had no dealings but with himself, and the question is whether at the last he had not confessed to a faith mightier than the laws of order and progress” (212). It can be seen that Marlow doubts Jim’s sacrifice to the Patusan people. White people insist that they are the lords of human because they represent the highest level of productive forces and master advanced technical skills. As a matter of fact, they name themselves as merciful people to support native people.

With a basic background introduction of the British Empire in chapter 1, the next two chapters continue to explore civilization of colonies and the main character in *Lord Jim*. This novel is well known for its bold and undisguised description about emotion to the Empire. Conrad reveals the cruel behaviors of the Empire, specifically with Marlow's eyes and words. There is no doubt that Conrad is brave enough to write the ugly features of the Empire that others are not able to and he makes more people see the truth under lies and masks of the Imperialists.

Different readers understand *Lord Jim* differently. The test of time proves Conrad's works are relevant today. As for second language teaching, reading English novels is absolutely a good way to help learners with their studying English. It helps with understanding the language itself, and also the understanding of the culture and history of the Britain. There is no doubt that *Lord Jim* is a great novel, but it is a bit difficult to understand it deeply. If someone wants to know one classic novel quite well, he or she should get more information about that era and theme. Every English teacher will suggest their students read some selected books, which is worth them to spend a lot of time on because they learn English effectively. The vocabularies, expressions and sentences can help with their writing; indeed, they will have a clearer idea about geography, history and custom not explained in their classes.

Watts appreciates Conrad in *A Preface to Conrad* like this; *Lord Jim* is just a pure adventure novel if removing the big environment of Imperialism, and is not worth discussion and studying for so many years. The greatest point of masterpiece is that it will never out of date. Second language learners should read a few classic works with some significance in which they are interested. As for second language teaching, learning actively is much more important than any kind of teaching. As long as it raises the motivation of second language learners, teachers own more freedom and space to tap their potential. Reading more classical books is a beneficial way to learn no matter if its the beginning of teaching or for the further study of teaching.

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