

Liminality: Gender Restrictions in Joseph Conrad's *Lord Jim*

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Abstract: This study investigates the concept of liminality in connection to gender restrictions in Joseph Conrad's *Lord Jim*, contending that the novel creates transitory spaces both physical and psychological that shake up fixed concepts of identity, notably masculinity. The study, which draws on liminality and gender performativity theories, investigates how Jim's repeated moral failures and narrative fragmentation leave him in a situation that is neither wholly heroic nor entirely condemned. Simultaneously, the erasure or silencing of female voices in the book parallels larger patriarchal patterns found in colonial literature. Using a critical gender lens, this study illustrates how *Lord Jim* problematizes stable gender categories and reflects the larger worries of identity creation within imperial and existential contexts. However, he encounters failure and loses everything; eventually, he sacrifices himself and chooses death to avenge his fallen men. Jim experiences several liminal and in-between-ness spaces throughout the novel as a dreamer, field-mate, lord, dishonoured, leader, husband, and self-sacrificing hero.

1. INTRODUCTION

Joseph Conrad the master of complex literary narrative and challenging characters, his novels are always classical adventure centred but they rarely stop in such manner. Challenging not only his readers but critics to analysis his vivid storylines and intricating characters, he tends to situate his characters in extreme environment to push their bounders and test them to not only to succeed but experience failure “Conrad's characters do not always survive that test, one of the most famous examples being Kurtz in *Heart of Darkness* (1902), who is found to be ‘hollow at the core and thus crumbles under intense pressure’” (Cedric, 1989:45).

Joseph Conrad's *Lord Jim* (1900) presented a modernist understanding of the notion gender identity and masculinity however same as his endings they all came with their challenges. The struggle between traditions, history, relationships, and modernist reality correlated to construct layers of identities within, such struggle resulted with fragment of liminal identity as Conrad's characters fight to be who they are and what they ought to be. *Lord Jim* (1900) deals with the consequences of limitations, as the characters undertake the heavy wright of gender expectation of manhood and womanhood. Conrad's modernist understanding of male masculinity and male identity allows Conrad to explore the post-modern gender panic and consider gender restrictions set within the modernist-traditional societies. Thus, *Lord Jim* (1900) by Joseph Conrad offers a fine literary example to fully grasp the meaning of modernist gender identity and its liminal fashion as his characters battle within for self-discovery and unlimited selfhood.

This paper will be divided into four key sections (the introduction, the literature review, the Textual analysis, and the conclusion). In Literature Review this study will provide a brief introduction into Joseph Conrad's Biography and critical understanding of his writing style also a short summary about the selected literary text and some of post-modern studies done about the text. Furthermore, this study will also provide detailed information about Liminality theory and gender identity.

Textually this study will be limited to Joseph Conrad's *Lord Jim* (1900); furthermore, theoretically this study will utilize the notion of Liminality from Liminality theory by Arnold van Gennep in (1902) and gender identity to explore gender limitation.

1.1 The Statement of Problem

Joseph Conrad's *Lord Jim* (1900) had many critical studies depicting the language, characterization, history, colonization, and heroic journey; although his main male characters Jim and Marlow representing different identities set during the modernist English era they are also have their own structural limitations. *Lord Jim* (1900) offers a fine example to liminal identity as the characters seems to be trapped in their own liminal existence. Hence, this study will highlight Conrad's modernist limitation for his male character and their attempt to break their limitation.

1.2 Objectives of the study

This paper will investigate the gender identity and gender limitation within the selected literary text, it will also examine the emotional repression and self-denial in the main male characters leading to self-liberation. Finally, this study will highlight the characters of Jim and Marlow and how they create their different liminal identities in modernist English setting.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 JOSEPH CONRAD BIOGRAPHY

“My task, which I am trying to achieve is, by the power of the written word, to make you hear, to make you feel. It is, before all, to make you see” (Joseph Conrad)

Jozef Teodor Konrad Korzeniowski also known as Joseph Conrad (1857-1924), born in Ukraine the Russian empire yet died in Kent, England. The polish descendant poet, novelist, critics and story stories writer, his most well-known works which include *Lord Jim* (1900), *The Secret Agent* (1907), *Heart of Darkness* (1902), and *Nostromo* (1904). Conrad was always admired for his rich narrative and prose as he lived a very existing life at sea and many exotic places, many of his stories masked with his fascination with individuality in the face of horror and uncertainty, he main focus was the inner struggles of faith between darkness and light as loneliness and tragedies came to set and men were forced to choose their path. He is one of the most prominent Modernist writer as he express drove to create his own voice and style of writing, he was both romantic and modernist in his writing as he searches for the hidden truths inside his characters and founded many mysterious elements, scene of corruption, faith, purpose, and lost Stape (1996) mentions that:

“Conrad is a romantic author in his search for inner truth, certainty and insight within a man, in his belief that the final count what we all rely on is what we carry with us, and in his fondness of mystery” (2)

Many of his writings were inspired by his own life, thus the landscapes and the exotic nature were always part of his romantic atmosphere, his time in sea created his moral dilemma of faith and individuality as someone who always struggles under harsh conditions to find himself which is very highlighted in his books *Lord Jim* (1900) and *Nostromo* (1904) as his main characters were tested in very moment. In his novel *The Secret Sharer* (1912) the main character is duty-bound to face reality and moral contradictions as Ford (1991) pointed out that:

“Conrad wrote at an exhausting pace stories, novels, personal reminiscences, essays, and yet as we know from his correspondence, writing caused him great anguish and he was rarely satisfied with what he wrote. His instinctive seriousness, his devotion to craft, along with a wavering faith in his own genius made Conrad's profession as a writer an almost daily struggle. His fame grew slowly but he was acknowledged as a writer of the first rank long before he became popular” (54)

Colonization and the cruel reality of post-colonization is yet another key theme in his novels such as *The Heart of Darkness* (1902) in the years to come with the great wars and British colonizing many lands it was understood why it was a cruel reality indeed for Conrad when the disgraceful tale of King Leopold colonization journey of the Congo a story of greediness, viciousness, deception, and enslavement it was in this story Conrad witness the reality of the colonizers and colonized which made his great short-story known until the present day.

Finally, Conrad was highly interested in symbolism and vivid photographic imagery, he always carry his native as a brush and paint to depict the clearest image possible to reality; many of his stories such as *Marlow in Youth* (1902), *Lord Jim* (1900), *The Heart for Darkness* (1902), and *Chance* (1914) the factual narrative and techniques used within made him truly one of the most talented modernist writer (Ali Albashir Mohammed Al-Haj, 2014: 213)

2.2 LORD JIM (1900)

“It is my belief no man ever understands quite his own artful dodges to escape from the grim shadow of self-knowledge” (*Lord Jim*, 1900)

Lord Jim (1900) by Joseph Conrad tells the story of a man named Marlow while he goes through the struggles to understand the journey of a man named Jim who is a promising young gentle man who goes on voyage in the sea in his youth. In the sea he grew up in ranks rapidly to become a chief-mate, he always find himself daydreaming about being a hero even if he has never faced any real danger or adventure when finally, his calls are being answered when he became in charge of a ship called Patna carrying Muslims on their way to Mecca when the ship strikes and starts leaking. Jim with many confusions chooses to abandon his ship with his mates, but Patna does not sink and in exchange Jim and his mates are subject to official investigation. Jim was stripped of his position and its where he meets Marlow, Marlow saw something in him inside Jim maybe his fears and that is why he became friends with Jim. Marlow keeps on finding jobs for Jim, but Jim always runs off and quit him jobs to escape any future humiliation as before. Jim then goes to Patusan Island where he becomes a leader of the natives and find his love, yet a Pirate under the name Gentleman Brown comes who tear the island apart. Jim makes some chooses which leads to the death of many, one more time Jim arrest himself when then dies after the father of a man under Jim unintentionally shoots him.

Ziaul Haque (2015) published a study titled “‘One of Us’ in Joseph Conrad’s Lord Jim: Fact or Myth?” where he highlighted the true reality if Jim and Marlow identities, Marlow had never revealed his true nature and honest intentions while calling Jim to be part of his life yet Jim on the other hand “shameful past like most others he deserves our sympathy and respect because he is trustworthy and a man of honour” (317). Haque focused on the possible interpretations of one of us, as Jim identity seems to be changeable and challenging its readers to be understood.

SAH Henretty (2013) published a thesis named “Masculinity, modernism and Joseph Conrad’s Nostromo and Lord Jim”, Henrettry focused on Conrad’s modernist masculinity. The socio-psychological and patriarchal heroic ideology seems to be part in Conrad narrative as it reveals “that masculinity within modernism is resplendent with manifest layers of tension, anxiety and consciousness” (3)

Song Zong wei (2017) study called “ An analysis of Lord Jim from the perspective of Salvation Motifs” which explored the notion of sin and atonement in the Lord Jim, although Jim character started normal daydreaming of being a hero who doesn’t fear anything and anyone, a hero who saves others and in the face of danger can be the savour as his outbring brought nothing but that promised future however when that daydream came to an end he lack maturity and experience to the real dangers “ the impulse of jumping makes Jim involved in his moral dilemma [...] this moral dilemma makes Jim uneasy and compunction for his chooses. By showing the human sins and Jim’s moral dilemma Conrad reveals his concern for the human nature and the fear of collapsing” (332).

Similarly, Yuyun Yosita (1999) wrote in thesis titled “Heroism and Cowardness In Conrad’s Lord Jim: An Analysis on The Central Character’s Nature”, this study also highlighted the psychological and the power of the mind to understand the human nature “Joseph Conrad is to be judged as being a

psychological novelist as he always sample the invisible life, he is also interested in picturing interior motives and psychological effects” (3)

Lord Jim (1900) was also being viewed from a feminist viewpoint, Sun Xin (2018) study named “Feminism interpretation of Joseph Conrad’s Works”, she highlighted Conrad’s modernist dislike for women resulting from the loss of his mother in his early years as thus came the embodiment of all female characters, she mentions that:

“All female characters in *The Heart of Darkness* as mysterious female embodiment with strong possessiveness and destructive powers. With the rise of feminist movement his literature became the focus of feminist activists and critics leading this movement Nina Pelikan Straus where she believed that Conrad female characters were expelled, forgotten, and materialized and they all being colonized by men” (p. 1054)

Finally, John P. Anderson (2005) thesis titled “Conrad’s *Lord Jim*: Psychology of the self” where he was mostly interested in “Conrad’s psychological freedom” the psychological evolution is only possible when the self is being developed and the actions will follow. In the case of *Lord Jim*, although Jim becomes “lord over the others, yet Jim is not lord of himself as he seek approval of others and he needs that approval to fuel his male pride” (7). Conrad plot of events of Jim early accomplishments and his later failure of performing his duty, same as Patna (the ship) his psychological faith, truth, self-worthy, and pride came crashing down.

2.3 LIMINALITY THEORY

Liminality by Arnold van Gennep is a theory which was created in (1960) where was applied in the ‘rites of the passage’, followed by Turner (1967) by applying the concept on symbolism in the ritual African tribes. They did not just give a meaning to this concept but along they explain the theory behind it. Liminality means in the second edition of Oxford dictionary is “pertaining to the threshold or initial stage of a process.” Both liminal and liminality are derived from the Latin “limen,” which means “threshold”—that is, the bottom part of a doorway that must be crossed when entering a building”.

Liminality view any indispensable category of change wither it is change in place, time, Social statue, change in age, grow of personality, mental shifting etc... Arnold believed that any process of changing and transforming from one statue to another go through certain stages ‘separation’ which the first level.

“Liminality is the in-between moments, the space between an inciting incident in a story and the protagonist’s resolution. It is often a period of discomfort, of waiting, and of transformation. Your characters’ old habits, beliefs, and even personal identity disintegrate. He or she has the chance to become someone completely new.” (Joe Bunting, p.1)

Liminality stands on the foundation that the entity must loss it places in which it would-hold. The next step is Liminality which means being limited to oneself, the final step which is the Union meaning rising to the next level and evolve to the next self. The focus is the second stage “liminal phase in which the individual acquires the experience of becoming completely obscure and detached from reality” (Irma Ratiani, 2008: 1).

The liminal person can’t be found in one place but s/he holds the passion of the betweenness, vanish from both the old place which s/he was holding and the next place that s/he hasn’t reach yet “A liminal phase in its essence and function is a Transitional, dynamic, intermediate condition, placed between hardened and transformed structures” (p.1).

From the beginning men is limited under the classification of an individual from a specific state, culture, or nationality. The state, as a rule, guarantees that its individuals are helped to remember such enrolment on a day by day basis. In this sense, national personality turns into the constrained having a place that infers strict confinements on individuals’ state of mind, their desires, and their dependability. This specific place only works as a kind of limitation for humans ‘putting them in one place’ and disregards the world.

“A liminal space is a blurry boundary zone between two established and clear spatial areas, and a liminal moment is a blurry boundary period between two segments of time. Most cultures have special rituals, customs, or markers to indicate the transitional nature of such liminal spaces or liminal times. Examples include boundary stones, rites of passage, high school graduations, births, deaths, marriages, carrying the bride over the threshold, etc.” (David Damrosch, 2004)

David Cross (2015) in his study “ The Liminality of liminality: A systematic review of organisationally liminal space”, he highlighted the notion of liminality as “the ambiguous condition of being in between, at the limits of existing social structures and where new structure are emerging” (Tempest & Starkey, 2004: 509) although liminality is space of “freedom and creativity” yet its also many “restrictions and boundaries within” (4).

Van Deventer (2017) applied this theory on literary religious text in his study “Aspects of Liminality in the Book of Daniel”, the literary criticism of the holy texts didn’t find the perfect representation of the context of OT Scholarship South Africa although there were many interpretations of the text yet none about the liminality if the book. The notion of “in-between-ness” (1997) is a very important concept in the literary understanding of character evolution limitation

“A term much used in anthropology, literary, and cultural theory to designate a space or state which is situated in between other, usually more clearly defined spaces, periods or identities” (John A. Cuddon, 2013: 398)

Furthermore, Malynda Strother Taylor (1998) thesis titled "Functions of Liminality in Literature: A Study of Georges Bataille's "Le Bleu Du Ciel", Julien Green's "L'Autre", and Assia Djebar's "L'Amour, La Fantasia" .” She examined the fluidity of the concept as it is a changeable agent because it can be “both initiates and becomes the process of change” (Langdon, 1991: 20) by initiating the change in individual loosening from the restrictions and routine structures; this notion becomes the path of change in permitting character development (15).

2.4 GENDER IDENTITY & GENDER LIMITATIONS

The concept of gender confliction is not something that considered as modern, from the romanticism which is the main movement in the eighteenth century had addressed the notion of identity and individuality in such ambivalence understanding. Thus, such gender stereotypes which were founded to limit the personalities as Masculine or feminine were precisely the main idea behind this paper. According to Laura E Berk in his book, Child Development gender stereotype is “widely held beliefs about characteristics deemed appropriate for males and females” (2003). She believes that gender roles are “the reflection of these stereotypes in everyday behaviour” (Berk, 2003). Berns (1994) approves on the notion of gender role as “a constellation of qualities an individual understands to characterise males and females in his or her culture.” (Block, 1973).

The specific gender role term has been reused in different social and psychological studies by Walter Lippmann in his book Public Opinion in (1922). He mentioned that stereotypes are a “pictures in our head”. Lippmann claims that “people create representative of reality in their minds, and thus they respond to those representatives and not to objective reality”(Vu, 2008). And the reason behind that is “the real environment is altogether too big, too complex, and too fleeting to direct acquaintance. To traverse the world men must have maps of the world” (Lippmann, 1922).

Some scholars have agreed with that statement like Stroebe & Insko (1989) considered stereotype as stable, simplified, or prejudiced attitude toward particular social groups. While others, proposed “A stereotype is the perception that most members of a category share some attribute.” (Brown,1995). According to Linda Brannon gender stereotype and gender role are extremely related.

“Consists of beliefs about the psychological traits and characteristics of, as well as the activities appropriate to, men or women. Gender roles are defined by behaviours, but gender stereotypes are beliefs and attitudes about masculinity and femininity” (2004)

Gender stereotypes are very dominant; they impact on the conceptualizations of females and males and create social classifications for gender. These classes depict “how people think, and even when

beliefs vary from reality, the beliefs can be very powerful forces in judgments of self and others" (Linda, 2004). Consequently, the history, construction, and purpose of stereotypes are significant topics in realisation the influence of gender in people's way of life.

The notion of masculine identity which recognizes the significance of the social and economic diminution in creating gender identity for both men/women, the difference of identities can be measured with the power location (Connell, 1995. P. 35). The Hegemonic masculinity, which is considered the popular term in every society, this image of "what a man should be or how he should look like" can be seen idealized by social media and even literature.

"If we look at the older culture, we see immense and focused efforts going into the raising of boys [...] rituals, teaching methods and processes which have only feeble equivalents in our culture. The Sioux hunters and the Zulu warriors' even gods and heroes lived glorious lives and cared for and protected their people and their world. Why should a modern man be any less of a man than his ancestors if he wasn't suited to the masculine list?" (Biddulph, 1994. P.12)

In many studies regarding the male and female identity, certain aspects which became popular statements others might define them as common sense understanding of what a man and woman should be.

3. TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

The first part of *Lord Jim* (1900), Jim is described as a very energetic young man who dreams about being a hero and save others, this is Jim's first liminal identity the young dreamer. He was liminal is a scene that he was chasing the ghost of his childhood dreams of being superhero and have his unreal fantastic adventure, and the other space of where adulthood calls out for him to be a man of the people. After a series of events Jim was unsuccessful in being superman and his own hero. Jim's first failure was before his sailing days, he was daydreaming during his ship-training when a coaster collided through a schooner at anchor although it was Jim's duty to mind the cutter as the others do in case of an emergency. His liminal daydreaming and childhood limitation stopped him from acting with wit instead his childhood fears of "gale and the tumbling rides" (*Lord Jim*, 48). Although Jim acted poorly because of his own mental limitation he thinks that he treated unfairly, and he deserves better acknowledgment for his achievements (*Lord Jim*, 49). After training he became Chief-mate of the sea, which is his second liminal identity, being a Chief mate comes with its own limitation of identity he is the person that every waits for their commands and he is the person that can think clearly under stressful situations.

"when yet very young, he became chief mate of a fine ship, without ever having been tested by those events of the sea that show in the light of day the inner worth of a man, the edge of his temper, and the fibre of his stuff; that reveal the quality of his resistance and the secret of his pretence, not only to others but also to himself" (*Lord Jim*, 22)

Jim became the chief-mate of Patna an old sea ship, the ships seems to be always colliding when he goes to inspect the damage he is imagining the passengers' panic and completely immobilized; he keeps his daydreaming about Patna possible sinking. This adult identity as a chief-mate Jim had failed miserably, he leaped to the lifeboat with his fellow sea men and leaving the eight hundred Muslim passengers behind. Although Patna failed to sink and arrived safely to the French harbour, Jim's abandonment of his mate duties is a disgraceful act for any seaman and the 'caption must always die with the ship' yet he didn't only abandon his ship but his passengers also. Jim disobeyed the sea code, from the daydreaming Jim and the Chief-mate Jim; he still believes he is different from anyone else and such though is what limit his potential to be a real hero rather than an imaginary hero. He again defends his heroic existence and his super-hero identity of himself in claiming that "he wasn't ready" (*Lord Jim*, 103).

Despite these mentioned disappointments Jim continues to limit his faith further, when Marlow offers a new job to Jim as Stein's agent in Patusan because he keeps on quitting from any jobs and responsibilities; Jim is a thrilled as "youngster on the eve of a long holiday with a prospect of delightful scrapes" (*Lord Jim*, 215). Even when Marlow offered this position to Jim to earn his

income, he also informed him of the dangers lies ahead, but Jim was only thinking about the unexpected adventures. Instead of preparing for the new job, Marlow found two copies of Shakespeare's works (218) which indicate Jim's daydreaming limited identity. Jim's desire of being a hero have not passed, even when Marlow asks him about Patna incident; Jim believes that he was tired and tried his best and how much unfair it was for him to loss his chance of being a hero (*Lord Jim*, 104).

Marlow tells the readers about Jim's new position of Patusan where he becomes more confident and very ambitious of his future, but his fantasy heroic dreams came crashing down after meeting Gentleman Brown. Although the tribes of Patusan were more than ready to fight against Brown and his men, Jim offers a clear passage for Brown and his men because "jumping off place", "both of us in the same boat", and "jump out of troubles" Jim keeps refereeing to the Patna and the jump of failure (*Lord Jim*, 326). Mr. Brown then strikes Dain Waris and his men at the rear which causes Dain's passing, even when Brown as his men were winning the war Jim comes unarmed and unprepared of the dangers ahead, Marlow tells the readers Jim's last moments like:

"They say that the while man sent right and left at all those faces a proud and unflinching glance. Then with his hand over his lips he fell forward, dead" (*Lord Jim*, 352)

Jim's obsession with his daydreams and his image of being a hero, is the main limitation in Jim's character and yet such limitation came from the ambitious background of the period. Jim's seems to be in consistent psychological and identity struggle in betweenness where he is neither this nor neither that. He desires nothing more than being his own hero and yet he is so limited to his modernist male identity which does not allow him to daydream and instead actually living that reality. Jim sacrifices his own existent and betray his beloved all in the pursuit of dreams, this puzzling and extraordinary persistence of fantasy one might considered it as a youthful limitations or adulthood determination.

Jim's background in the opening chapter provide its readers with a hint understanding of his heroic dreams, the unknown narrator tells the tale of Jim's background and the reason why he chooses to be a seaman:

"The living had belonged to the family for generations; but Jim was one of five sons, and when after a course of Light holiday literature his vocation for the sea had declared itself, he was sent at once to a 'training ship for officers of the mercantile marine'" (*Lord Jim*, 47)

Bring part of a large family with brothers, Jim wanted to prove himself for others and his family, as man this is one of the main gender limitation in modernist reality 'establishing your worth and yourself as a man'. As mentioned in the quote above the "light holiday literature" display the source of Jim's boyhood in reading books of 'men and the harsh sea', although the narrator didn't highlight the genre of the books yet Jim further reveals that:

"He saw himself saving people from sinking ships, cutting away masts in a hurricane, swimming through a surf with a line; or as a lonely castaway, barefooted and half naked, walking on uncovered reefs in search of shellfish to slave off starvation. He confronted savages on tropical shores, quelled mutinies on the high seas, and in a small boat upon the ocean kept up the hearts of despairing men – always an example of devotion to duty, and as unflinching as a hero in a book" (*Lord Jim*, 49)

Jim's vivid image of his liminal identity is the perfect image of the heroic seaman with so much courage, faith, duty, and respect. Although Jim's dream of becoming a seaman did became true yet his dreams grew bigger and was not limited to sea world or ships. Conrad's character Jim is ironic in its liminal identity, where the liminal reality and liminal fiction came in conflict; Jim holds himself as superior while living amid other seaman which best him in every aspect. Yet, when he finally understand that he can't maintain his duty, integrity, honour, and personality; he feels as he had lost part of his identity as a field-mate where was respected and admired by others. When he realized his situation to be, he develops a scene of isolation and loneliness where he is forced to confront the harsh reality of life. Jim's exist in his in-between-ness by his own creation where he is fighting for his childhood fantasies and struggling the pain of adulthood. Since he felt the pain of losing his efforts

later were directed to avoid such failure again facing his reality far from the idealist illusory of his non-realistic realm.

Jim travels around the world with his new male identity where he is forced to see the world for its reality, in this came the passage from one limitation into another as he tries to apprehend this new reality and forcing himself to hide his old heroic dreams; yet everything seems to go against him and his best wishes which makes him even more liminal in his existence. He is the man who faced so much in his life and finally in his death he is seeking redemption. Jim believes that in his death he can finally achieve the life that had always fascinated him, the stories of men and seas; such fascination and redemption idealism forces Jim to embody the traditional male identity ‘the hero who sacrifice himself for others’.

Conrad’s characterization of Jim and Marlow present the perfect manifestation of the male identity and its limitation. Both Jim and Marlow co-exist in their liminal realities, Jim as the young wanting to be hero persona seems to take over his character and controls his reality. Then when he was forced to grasp reality in all its harshness and expectancy he is transformed to a new male persona where is a leader and have to make chooses to save others. Yet, Jim failed in his missions and this failure cause him to question his identity ‘if not the hero, not the field mate, not the leader, not the husband, nor the father or the brother’ then what was his real identity.

Marlow on the other hand have his own personal limitation as he lives his life throw Jim’s life, Marlow sees himself in Jim; a mere broken man who is looking for another chance “Hang it to do a thing like that you must believe there is a chance one in a thousand, at least, some ghost of a chance; and you would not have believed. Nobody would have believed” (*Lord Jim*, 88)

4. CONCLUSION

Joseph Conrad had often been considered as the male authorial writer who depict man’s world by and for men, since he always wrote about harsh adventure, and the cruelty of reality. The transformation from childhood into adulthood, and male identity. Jim in *Lord Jim* (1900) is no different, even the title of the novel offers untraditional liminal identity as a ‘Lord’. Conrad himself had taken part of the same sea adventures and exotic lands which influenced his narrative, in his presentation of the masculine fiction Conrad, nonetheless; offers a fresh outlook to the notion of identity and male-masculinity in the midst of self-lost and self-doubt with constant failure and failed reality. The novel shows the sceptical modernist identity of what is expected from a man and the projected adventure-romantic masculine ideal embodiment, Jim’s daydreaming and continual failure are displayed as Conrad’s reflecting on the cultural identity and traditional expectation. Jim expresses many identity starting as a young hopeful man who keeps daydreams about being a hero and living heroic adventure, then he transformed to ashamed and dishonoured man as he face his first failure, afterwards he embody the persona of a leader and a husband to fitful the social expectation of a man. Yet, he also faces failure and losses everything; finally, he self-sacrifice and chooses death to revenge his falling men. All through the story Jim also experience different liminal and in-between-ess space as the dreamer, field-mate, lord, dishonoured, leader, husband, and self-sacrificed hero.

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