

# SILENCE VOICES AND CULTURIZED MYTHS: ORIENTALIST READINGS OF JOSEPH CONRAD'S *LORD JIM*

Wajiran Wajiran

Universitas Ahmad Dahlan, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

e-mail: [wajiran@enlitera.uad.ac.id](mailto:wajiran@enlitera.uad.ac.id)

Iman Sumarlan

Universitas Ahmad Dahlan, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

e-mail: [iman.sumarlan@comm.uad.ac.id](mailto:iman.sumarlan@comm.uad.ac.id)

Eka Anisa Sari

Universitas Ahmad Dahlan, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

e-mail: [eka.sari@comm.uad.ac.id](mailto:eka.sari@comm.uad.ac.id)

## Abstract

This study aims to critically examine Joseph Conrad's *Lord Jim* through the lens of Edward Said's theory of *Orientalism*, focusing on how the novel represents the East as subordinate to Western ideological and moral authority. Employing a qualitative literary analysis, this research explores narrative structure, characterization, and setting to reveal how the novel systematically marginalizes Eastern voices and constructs the East as a passive backdrop for the psychological and moral journey of the Western protagonist, Jim. Key findings show that the Indigenous characters in *Patusan* are denied subjectivity and interiority, their perspectives filtered entirely through the Western narrator, Marlow. The narrative elevates Jim to a position of moral superiority and leadership, reinforcing colonial myths of the "white savior" and the supposed dependency of Eastern societies on Western governance. The absence of Eastern perspectives in the novel underscores the epistemological dominance of the West, making *Lord Jim* not a true intercultural dialogue, but a monologue that serves Western self-definition. The study concludes that Conrad's novel, despite its literary complexity, perpetuates Orientalist discourse by silencing the East and reinforcing hierarchical binaries between the West and the non-West. Future research is encouraged to compare such colonial narratives with postcolonial works that reclaim indigenous voices.

**Keywords:** *Edward said, Inferiority, Hegemony, Joseph Conrad, Lord Jim, Orientalism*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Literature is not only a form of aesthetic expression or entertainment, but also a medium that is loaded with ideological content (Susilawati & Wajiran, 2024; Wajiran, 2022). In this context, literary works can reflect, propagate, and even question the dominant values prevailing in society. Through narratives, characters, and cultural representations, literature becomes a vehicle for ideology to work subtly but effectively (Wajiran,

2013). Literature can reinforce power or become a tool of resistance against oppressive hegemonic systems. Therefore, reading literature critically means understanding the content of the story and examining how the narrative conveys, hides, or contradicts certain ideologies.

The relationship between literature and cultural hegemony is meaningful in postcolonial studies and ideology criticism (Filimonov & Carpentier, 2023; Richardson, 2013; Wajiran &

Septiani, 2023). Colonial literature, for example, often represents Eastern nations or the non-Western world through the lens of Western domination, creating constructions of the "other" that are inferior, irrational, and exotic (Anand, 2019; Frątczak-dąbrowska, 2018; Rosen, 2013). Such representations work not only as fictional narratives but also as part of the mechanisms of cultural hegemony that support colonial power. On the other hand, literature also serves as a space for resistance, where writers from colonized or marginalized communities can reclaim narratives, voice their experiences, and deconstruct ideological myths built upon the domination of power. Thus, literature plays a strategic role in the dynamics of ideological discourse and cultural hegemony (Mendrofa, 2020; Wajiran, 2020).

Since its publication in 1900, Joseph Conrad's *Lord Jim* has held a prominent position in the British literary canon due to its psychological depth and stylistic complexity. However, in recent decades, postcolonial criticism has encouraged a reassessment of such texts, especially those set in colonial settings and depicting non-Western cultures. Among the most influential frameworks in postcolonial theory is Edward Said's classic work *Orientalism* (1978), which analyzes how Western discourse has historically constructed the East not as a place with its own voice and agents but as a passive and exotic "Other". This is because Western values, imaginations, and authority define the East. Said argued that Orientalist literature often serves to justify imperial domination by portraying the East as irrational, undeveloped, and needing Western guidance.

Applying Said's theory to *Lord Jim* reveals how deeply the Orientalist worldview is embedded in the narrative

structure and thematic content of the novel (Kerr, 2016; Mongia, 2016). Although the novel is often interpreted as a deep psychological study of guilt, heroism, and redemption. Such readings tend to focus exclusively on the inner world of the Western protagonist and ignore the colonial context in which his personal journey takes place. The contextualization of Southeast Asia in the narrative, specifically, the fictional land of *Patusan*, is not explored for its cultural or historical reality, but rather serves as a symbolic space for Jim's moral recovery. This instrumentalization of the East reflects Said's claim that the East in Western texts is rarely depicted for itself, but rather as a backdrop for Western self-definition.

One of the most dominating orientalist elements in *Lord Jim* is the portrayal of native characters as having no independent agency or moral authority. Local characters, such as Doramin, Jewel, and Dain Waris, are depicted through the eyes of Marlow, the European narrator, and their actions are meaningful only insofar as they affect Jim's fate. These characters are rarely allowed to express their thoughts or perspectives, and when they act, their choices are filtered through the lens of Western interpretation. This absence of Eastern voices reinforces a colonial hierarchy in which the West assumes the role of speaker, interpreter, and moral guide, while the East remains silent and subordinate.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Edward Said's concept of Orientalism first appeared in 1978 when he published his revolutionary book, *Orientalism*. Said, a Palestinian-American literary critic and scholar, was greatly influenced by postcolonial theory, Michel Foucault's discourse analysis, and Antonio Gramsci's theory

of cultural hegemony (Couto, 1994; Kleinhofa, 2020). Said's work marked a critical turning point in the humanities and social sciences, particularly in the fields of literary criticism, history, anthropology, and political science. He challenged the way the Western world, particularly Europe and America, historically represented the East (Asia, the Middle East, and North Africa) in a manner that served imperialist interests.

From a postcolonial perspective, Orientalism is a form of cultural domination and epistemic violence (Fåhraeus, 2020). This discourse not only reflects but also reinforces colonial power by defining non-Western societies as inferior, exotic, irrational, and incapable of self-governance. Said argues that colonialism manifests not only through military or economic means but also through the production of knowledge, in which Western scholars, writers, and policymakers systematically construct the East as “the Other” to reinforce Western superiority.

Edward Said's theory of *Orientalism* is widely popular among academics in the fields of social and political science, particularly about the issue of colonization in Asia. The following publications, which utilize theory in relation to Joseph Conrad's novel *Lord Jim*, are presented below. The first publication, by Mart et al. (2010), explains that the Orientalist perspective in *Lord Jim* simplifies the fictional land of *Patusan* into a mere backdrop for the moral journey of the Western protagonist. The narrative's focus on Jim's psychological struggles obscures Southeast Asian cultural and historical realities, in line with Edward Said's assertion that the East is often portrayed through the lens of Western superiority. This instrumentalization highlights how the East is constructed to serve Western

narratives, rather than to represent its reality authentically (Mart et al., 2010).

Alhaj (2014), in his publication titled "Joseph Conrad's *Lord Jim*: Reconsiderations," does not specifically address postcolonial criticism or Edward Said's "Orientalism." However, this paper highlights Joseph Conrad's exploration of moral dilemmas and the complexity of human nature in the novel *Lord Jim*, which is set against the backdrop of colonialism. Conrad's characters, including Jim, face crises that reveal their weaknesses, reflecting the tension between Western values and non-Western cultural realities. This suggests a subtle engagement with colonial themes, although not explicitly in line with a postcolonial framework (Alhaj, 2014).

Vogel's 2012 paper, "Joseph Conrad in the Light of Postcolonialism," discusses postcolonial studies and the critique of colonialism. Vogel highlights Joseph Conrad as one of the first postcolonial writers. While not specifically discussing *Lord Jim*, the paper emphasizes Conrad's critique of colonial expansion and the concept of "White Man's Burden." The paper notes the controversy surrounding Conrad's works, especially *Heart of Darkness*, which has been defended and criticized in the context of postcolonial theory, reflecting the complexity of Western representations of non-Western cultures (Vogel, 2012).

Kleinhofa (2020), entitled *Orientalism and Occidentalism: Evolution of Concepts and Divergence of Connotations*, discusses how critic Edward Said in his book 'Orientalism' (1978) redefined the term 'Orientalism' to describe the West's biased and condescending attitude towards the East, describing it as an essentialized 'Other'. This shift in meaning has influenced the understanding of colonial literature,

including works such as Joseph Conrad's *Lord Jim*. Kleinhofa encourages a reassessment of the way such texts depict non-Western cultures and the implications of their representation in terms of Western imperialism and authority (Kleinhofa, 2020).

Meanwhile, de Souza (2019), in his research titled "Undermining Exoticism," discusses how European identity and literature have been shaped by representations of the exotic, reflecting ideological positions influenced by colonialism. The paper examines Said's Orientalism, questioning how exoticism has developed in different historical contexts and conditions. The paper suggests that literature, including works such as Conrad's, plays a crucial role in constructing and deconstructing colonial power and exoticism, challenging established discourses, and exploring the complexities of cultural contact and identity in the context of globalization (de Souza, 2019).

Conrad's *Lord Jim* exemplifies Orientalism by portraying the East as an exotic and inferior "Other", reinforcing Western superiority. The Muslim pilgrims are portrayed in a condescending tone, accentuating their presumed inferiority, while Jim and the crew support a position of economic dependence on them. This contrast highlights the complexity of imperialism, as Conrad both criticizes and reflects on the ideologies of his time. His narrative challenges dominant cultural perceptions, exposing the contradictions inherent in depictions of race, nation, and identity (Said & Boutouchent, 2020).

This paper examines the implications of Said's Orientalism, focusing on how European literature, including works such as Conrad's *Lord Jim*, has both constructed and

deconstructed the concept of the "exotic" in relation to colonial power. The paper highlights the ideological and cultural dynamics that shape representations of "the Other" and critiques how these narratives reflect historical conditions. The paper encourages a reassessment of exoticism in the context of postcolonial theory, questioning its relevance amid globalization and changing cultural contexts (Crucifix, 2019).

Based on some of the publication descriptions above, the novelty of this paper lies in its approach, which specifically integrates narrative and ideological analysis to demonstrate that *Lord Jim* not only presents the East as an exotic setting but also actively silences Eastern voices and frames local communities as passive and powerless, lacking moral guidance from Western figures. This analysis strengthens and extends Said's critique by focusing on the textual mechanisms that shape relations of domination and subordination through the absence of Eastern voices and the reinforcement of the myth of "white civilizing power." This approach presents a new and more specific reading of the orientalist dimension of the novel *Lord Jim*, which has not been thoroughly explored in previous studies.

### 3. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research method with a literary criticism approach, particularly grounded in the framework of postcolonial theory, focusing on Edward Said's *Orientalism*. The qualitative approach enables a close reading and critical interpretation of the narrative, characters, and thematic elements within *Lord Jim*, highlighting the ways in which the text constructs the image of the East and reinforces Western ideological dominance. This method is most proper for exploring the subtleties

of representation, narrative strategy, and ideological function embedded in literary texts.

The primary data source of this study is the novel *Lord Jim* by Joseph Conrad. The data consists of selected narrative passages, character dialogues, descriptive imagery, and structural elements that reflect the representation of Eastern characters and cultures. These data are collected through textual analysis, with a particular focus on key scenes involving the protagonist Jim's interactions with the local community in *Patusan*, as well as the narrative voice of Marlow. Attention is given to how the novel constructs power relations between the West and the East and how Eastern characters are portrayed in relation to the Western protagonist.

The secondary data include scholarly articles, journals, and critical essays on *Orientalism*, postcolonial literary criticism, and Joseph Conrad's body of work. Key references include Edward Said's *Orientalism*, which serves as the primary theoretical lens, along with supporting studies by Mart et al. (2010), Kleinhofa (2020), and de Souza (2019), among others. These secondary sources provide theoretical and contextual support for interpreting the primary data and understanding the ideological underpinnings of the narrative.

The data analysis process is conducted using descriptive-interpretive techniques, guided by Edward Said's theory of *Orientalism*. The analysis involves identifying textual patterns that reflect orientalist tropes, such as portraying the East as inferior, exotic, voiceless, or dependent on Western authority. These patterns are then examined in relation to the narrative structure, especially the role of the Western narrator and protagonist. The analysis also considers the absence of

Eastern subjectivity and the implications of such narrative choices in constructing hegemonic discourse.

Finally, the study ensures validity and reliability through triangulation of sources and close textual evidence. Multiple passages are examined to support each claim, and the interpretation is cross-referenced with existing scholarly works. This methodical and theory-driven approach enables a comprehensive understanding of how *Lord Jim* participates in and perpetuates orientalist ideology, offering a literary reading and a cultural and political critique of the text within the broader discourse of imperialism and representation.

#### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As a classic novel, most modern readers have likely never read it. Therefore, before going ahead with the discussion, we present a summary of the story in *Lord Jim*.

*Lord Jim* tells the story of a young Englishman named Jim, who initially works as a young officer on a merchant ship called Patna. The boat was carrying hundreds of Muslim pilgrims from Asia to Mecca. One night, the boat broke down and the officers, including Jim, abandoned the ship and the passengers who knew nothing of the danger. Although the boat eventually did not sink and the passengers were rescued, the cowardly act scared Jim for life, costing him honor and social punishment.

After the incident, Jim wandered from place to place, filled with shame and a desire to make amends. He walked and eventually arrived in a remote and fictitious area called *Patusan*. A place found in Southeast Asia. This is where most of the story takes place. In the *Patusan* community, Jim quickly gains the trust of the locals. He is nicknamed "Old Jim" and is considered a leader who

brings order and honor to the region. He became a sort of "little king," respected for his calm and fair personality.

In terms of characterization, Jim is portrayed as an idealistic Western figure, moral, deep-thinking, and heroic, who tries to redeem his past through real action. Meanwhile, local characters such as Doramin (a prominent elder in *Patusan*), Dain Waris (Doramin's son), and Jewel (a local woman who becomes Jim's partner) are portrayed as loyal, emotional, yet lacking autonomy or their own political views. They are almost never portrayed as thinking critically about their situation or making major decisions without Jim's intervention.

The settings in the novel, such as the Patna ship and the *Patusan* area, are depicted as the dark, wild, and disorganized world of the East. *Patusan* is a "remote" region that the local power system cannot effectively control. Therefore, Jim's presence in *Patusan* is seen as the bearer of civilization and justice. Jim is seen as a figure who can unite the community, resolve conflicts, and bring stability, as if the local people cannot govern themselves without Western guidance.

The major themes in the novel are honor, redemption, and identity. However, these themes are only focused on Western characters. The Easterners, in this case the people of *Patusan*, are not given the space to develop as active subjects. They are not given a voice to tell their own stories; their role is limited to supporting Jim's redemption drama. This illustrates how Eastern inferiority is represented in the text. They are positioned as passive, irrational, and need moral leadership from the West to survive.

Thus, through storyline, characterization, and setting, *Lord Jim* shows a narrative pattern that reinforces orientalist thinking. The East is not

portrayed for its own sake, but as an arena for growth and the search for meaning in Western characters. The novel reinforces the impression that Eastern societies will remain underdeveloped and chaotic without moral guidance and leadership from the West.

#### 4.1. Inferiority of Eastern Culture

Joseph Conrad's novel *Lord Jim* (1900) presents an interesting site for analysis through the lens of Edward Said's theory of Orientalism, particularly in its depiction of the East not as an independent cultural and political reality, but as a backdrop constructed to serve the moral and psychological journey of the Western protagonist. In Said's terms, the East is rarely represented for its own sake; instead, it is often reduced to a symbolic space where the West projects its values, fears, and crises. *Lord Jim* is exemplary in this context as the Southeast Asian setting serves primarily as a canvas for Jim's personal redemption rather than as a complex cultural environment.

The fictional land of *Patusan*, where Jim seeks redemption for his past moral failures, is depicted as remote, exotic, and culturally stagnant. It is precisely the "timeless" and "mysterious" Eastern culture constructed by Orientalist discourse. This narrative offers little exploration of *Patusan* political or social systems. People are generally portrayed as homogeneous, obedient and loyal to a foreign hero. Jim, a disgraced British sailor, is welcomed and eventually honored by the locals. People even give him the title "Mr. Jim", elevating him to an almost mythical status of moral authority. However, this respect reflects less local agency and more of a narrative device that positions Jim as a figure of redemptive colonial masculinity.

In addition, the Indigenous characters in *Lord Jim* lack narrative depth and interiority. Characters like Doramin, Dain Waris, and other Malay villagers are not defined by their own voices or perspectives, but by how they respond to Jim. Their loyalty, admiration or betrayal becomes meaningful only to the extent that it contributes to the Western protagonist's self-understanding. This narrative asymmetry reinforces Said's contention that in Orientalist literature, the East does not function as an autonomous subject, but as an object through which the West passes. The Eastern setting and its people are incorporated into the emotional and moral economy of the European protagonist's storyline.

Moreover, the novel's narrative structure, mediated almost entirely by a Western narrator, Marlow-ensures that all interpretations of Eastern space and culture are filtered through a European gaze. Marlow does not simply narrate events; he philosophizes, judges, and interprets, often positioning the East as a region full of moral ambiguity and unknowable strangeness. This narrative framing leaves the Eastern world with no independent epistemological authority. In this sense, *Lord Jim* does not present a true intercultural encounter, but rather a monologue in which the West speaks for and about the East, reinforcing imperial hierarchies of voice and knowledge.

In conclusion, *Lord Jim* reflects the Orientalist tendency to instrumentalize the East in the service of Western self-definition. Conrad's complex and often ambivalent prose may suggest a critique of colonial hubris, but the structure and content of the novel largely conform to the Orientalist paradigm. The East is not explored as a stand-alone subject, but rather to support the redemptive narrative of a flawed yet heroic European

man. This reinforces Said's main argument: that representations of the East in Western literature often serve to justify and naturalize Western domination, even under the guise of introspection or moral complexity.

#### 4.2. East's Dependence on The West

Analyzing *Lord Jim* through the specific lens of Said's criticism can illustrate that Eastern subjects are often constructed as needing Western guidance and lacking freedom. It also provides valuable and focused insight into the novel's underlying ideological structure. Throughout *Lord Jim*, the native characters are portrayed as passive, submissive, or dependent on the actions and decisions of Jim, the Western protagonist. Instead of being portrayed as complex individuals with their own histories, motivations, and voices, they serve to reinforce Jim's authority and moral purpose. This dynamic reflects what Said identifies as a central tenet of Orientalist discourse: the assumption that the East is incapable of self-organization or moral clarity without Western intervention.

For example, the *Patusan* people were quick to elevate Jim to a position of leadership, referring to him as "Mr. Jim" and entrusting him with the welfare of the community. While this admiration may appear respectful on the surface, it disenfranchises the local people and reinforces a colonial hierarchy that ascribes leadership and rationality to the West. The people's dependence on Jim not only centers the narrative on his redemptive arc but also implies that their stability and progress are entirely dependent on the white foreigner. In this way, the Indigenous people become supporting actors in a Western drama.

In addition, the lack of interiority given to Eastern characters contributes to their dehumanization. Characters like

Doramin and Dain Waris are not given psychological depth or narrative perspective. Their actions and emotions are interpreted solely through the lens of Marlow, a European narrator who speaks for them and frames their significance in relation to Jim. This narrative strategy, as Said puts it, gives the Oriental subject voiceless and objectified in the Western imagination. Even acts of loyalty or betrayal by the locals are ultimately only significant in terms of how they affect Jim's fate, rather than reflecting meaningful choices made by autonomous individuals.

In essence, *Lord Jim* reproduces the Orientalist trope of the East as dependent and subordinate, thereby denying the full subjectivity of the *Patusan* people. While Conrad's prose can hint at psychological and moral complexity, it is almost exclusively reserved for Western characters. This supports Said's broader critique of Western literature: that sympathetic or critical depictions of the East often do not escape the structural biases of Orientalism, where power, agency, and voice are reserved for the West.

#### **4.3.The West is seen as the savior.**

The idea that "only the West can bring civilization or justice" is a central critique in Edward Said's theory of Orientalism and is deeply embedded in the ideological fabric of colonial literature such as *Lord Jim*. This idea assumes that non-Western societies are fundamentally incapable of organizing themselves, supporting social order, or upholding moral values without the intervention of typically white Western figures. In *Lord Jim*, this belief is reflected in how Jim is positioned as a civilizing force in *Patusan*. Upon arriving in the region, he quickly becomes the central authority figure,

mediating disputes, ensuring peace, and earning the respect of the locals. The narrative reinforces the colonial myth that Indigenous societies are in a state of moral and political chaos, and that salvation can only be obtained through Western leadership.

Conrad depicts *Patusan* as a place with no structure or governance prior to Jim's arrival. While this may enhance Jim's personal transformation, it simultaneously reduces the local community to a dependent and powerless group. The villagers are not portrayed as capable of governing themselves; instead, their stability is depicted as dependent on Jim's presence and decisions. This reflects a broader colonial logic that justifies imperialism as a "civilizing mission", a narrative in which colonized peoples are seen as children in need of Western paternalism. The moral authority of the white protagonist is used to legitimize his power, even in the absence of formal colonial administration, thus reproducing the asymmetry of colonial power under the guise of personal redemption.

Furthermore, the collapse of order in *Patusan* after Jim's fall shows that without moral guidance from whites, Indigenous people are destined to fail. The death of Dain Waris and the community's subsequent fall into confusion after Jim's passive response underscore the fragility of the social structure when it is no longer supported by Western virtues. This framing implies that Eastern societies cannot sustain justice or coherence on their own. Instead of highlighting the agency of local characters or their potential to resist or rebuild, the narrative centers on the tragedy of the Western hero, reinforcing the belief that his absence marks the unraveling of civilization.

In this way, *Lord Jim* perpetuates a very orientalist worldview: perpetuating the Western character as the bearer of justice and moral order while trivializing or marginalizing the natives. Although Conrad's prose often criticizes the failures and hypocrisies of imperialism, the novel's structure upholds the colonial fiction that non-Western societies would be incomplete without the West. This reaffirms Said's argument that even sympathetic colonial literature often does not escape the binary between the rational and morally upright West and the passive and morally deficient East.

#### 4.4. Absence of eastern perspective

One of the most striking features of *Lord Jim*, when viewed through the lens of Edward Said's *Orientalism*, is the absence of Eastern voices and perspectives. Although the novel is largely set in Southeast Asia and involves many Indigenous characters, their interiority, their thoughts, emotions, motivations, and worldview are never fully explored. Instead, the narrative is dominated by the voice of Marlow, the European narrator, and centers entirely on the moral development and psychological turmoil of Jim, the Western protagonist. This narrative structure effectively silences the locals, making them passive participants in their own land and reducing their existence to how they relate to or influence the Western characters.

This absence is significant because it reflects a broader pattern in Orientalist literature, where the colonized are discussed but rarely allowed to speak for themselves. Characters like Doramin, Jewel, and Dain Waris are important in the story, but are never given the freedom to speak. Their actions are interpreted and narrated by Marlow, who serves as a filter between the Eastern

world and the reader. As a result, the reader never hears directly from the Indigenous characters or gains access to their internal perspectives. Their reality is constructed entirely from the outside, reinforcing Said's critique that Eastern subjects lack the status of autonomous individuals.

Even when Eastern characters act heroically or prove moral strength, such as Dain Waris' loyalty or Jewel's emotional depth, the narrative frames these qualities in relation to Jim. They are only meaningful insofar as they validate or challenge Jim's sense of honor and redemption. The tragedy of Dain Waris' death, for example, is poignant primarily because it leads to Jim's final act of self-sacrifice, not because of its impact on the local community.

This neglect of voices from the East also has epistemological consequences: it presents the East as unknowable, mysterious or opaque. A common trope in Orientalist discourse. Because Eastern characters do not narrate, interpret, or reflect, they appear as part of a world that refuses to be understood, except through the interpretive lens of a Western narrator. Marlow often philosophizes about the nature of the East, projecting his own perceptions onto a culture that remains voiceless. Instead of serving as a place of dialog or mutual recognition, the East becomes the backdrop for Western self-exploration and moral theory.

In short, the absence of Eastern voices in *Lord Jim* reinforces the orientalist framework that positions the West as the sole interpreter and moral arbiter of non-Western reality. By not including Indigenous perspectives in the narrative, Conrad's novel is in line with the colonial tradition of epistemic domination, where knowledge, meaning, and voice are controlled by the West.

This absence is not just a narrative choice; it is a political choice, reflecting and perpetuating the power imbalance between colonizer and colonized, speaker and speaker, subject and object.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of Joseph Conrad's *Lord Jim* through the lens of Edward Said's Orientalism theory, it can be concluded that the representation of the East in this work does not stand as an independent entity, but rather as a setting formed to serve the interests of Western narratives. Jim's life story, filled with shame and the desire to make amends, becomes the center of the story, while Eastern society, especially in the fictional region of *Patusan*, only serves as an extension of the protagonist's moral journey. This is in line with Said's criticism of how the East in colonial literature is often reduced to a passive and inferior "other".

The absence of Eastern characters' voices in the narrative structure is a distinctive form of colonial discourse domination. Local characters such as Doramin, Dain Waris and Jewel are not given space to voice their perspectives or influence the direction of the narrative independently. All interpretations of their actions and feelings are mediated by Western characters, especially the narrator, Marlow. Thus, *Lord Jim* not only tells the story of a Western individual trying to redeem his honor but also reproduces the symbolic power structure in which the East is silenced and controlled through language, narrative, and representation.

In addition, the novel reinforces the myth of the "white savior" by presenting Jim as the only character capable of bringing order and justice to an Eastern society that is portrayed as unstable and powerless. When Jim finally fails and leaves his position, *Patusan* society

returns to tension and chaos. The implicit message offered is that the West is needed to maintain social order in the East. This reinforces the colonial logic that regards the West as the center of morality and civilization.

This research opens the door for further, broader studies on how narrative strategies in colonial literature shape ideological understandings of the East. Future research could explore comparisons between *Lord Jim* and contemporary postcolonial literature written from an Eastern perspective to see how previously silenced voices begin to appear. This cross-work and cross-cultural study is important to dismantle colonial legacies in literature and encourage more equal, diverse and representative narratives of non-Western identities.

## REFERENCES

- Alhaj, A. A. M. (2014). Joseph Conrad's *Lord Jim*: Reconsiderations. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies*, 5(6), 212–215. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1128316.pdf>
- Anand, V. (2019). Human Rights Exploitation: Unending Circle of "Beloved" in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*. *International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences*, 4(2), 291–294. <https://doi.org/10.22161/ijels.4.2.17>
- Couto, R. A. (1994). An American Challenge: A Report on Economic Trends and Social Issues in Appalachia. In *Kendall*. Hunt Publishing Co.
- Crucifix, E. (2019). An Orientalist Masquerade. *MHRA Working Papers in the Humanities*. <https://doi.org/10.59860/wph.a0569e8>
- de Souza, R. (2019). Undermining Exoticism. *Deleted Journal*, 14, 38–

47.  
<https://doi.org/10.59860/wph.a165dcb>
- Fåhraeus, A. (2020). Cultural materialism in the production and distribution of exploitative lesbian film: A historical case study of children of loneliness (1935). *NJES Nordic Journal of English Studies*, 19(5), 121–154.  
<https://doi.org/10.35360/njes.618>
- Filimonov, K., & Carpentier, N. (2023). Beyond the state as the ‘cold monster’: the importance of Russian alternative media in reconfiguring the hegemonic state discourse. *Critical Discourse Studies*, 20(2), 166–182.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/17405904.2021.1999283>
- Frątczak-dąbrowska, M. (2018). *From Racial Difference to Racial Indifference: The Neo- Liberal Narrative and Its Colonial Legacy Through the Example of Washington Black ( 2018 ) by Esi Edugyan*. 20, 62–80.
- Kerr, D. (2016). *Crowds, colonialism, and lord jim*.
- Kleinhofa, I. (2020). *Orientalisms and Occidentalisms: Evolution of Concepts and Divergence of Connotations* (pp. 30–45). LU Akadēmiskais apgāds.  
<https://doi.org/10.22364/LURAKS.TI.OS.819.02>
- Mart, Ç. T., Toker, A., & Esen, M. F. (2010). *Criticism on Edward Said’s Orientalism*.  
[https://eprints.ibu.edu.ba/720/1/ISSD2010Socialscience\\_p367-p373.pdf](https://eprints.ibu.edu.ba/720/1/ISSD2010Socialscience_p367-p373.pdf)
- Mendrofa, M. P. (2020). Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis To the Language Use and Display in Whitening Cosmetic Product Advertisements. *SAGA: Journal of English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics*, 1(2), 119–126.  
<https://doi.org/10.21460/saga.2020.12.45>
- Mongia, P. (2016). *Narrative strategy and imperialism in conrad’s “lord jim.”*
- Richardson, E. (2013). Developing Critical Hip Hop Feminist Literacies: Centrality and Subversion of Sexuality in the Lives of Black Girls. *Equity and Excellence in Education*, 46(3), 327–341.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10665684.2013.808095>
- Rosen, J. M. (2013). Minor characters have their day: The imaginary and actual politics of a contemporary genre. *Contemporary Literature*, 54(1), 139–174.  
<https://doi.org/10.1353/cli.2013.0003>
- Said, F. F. S., & Boutouchent. (2020). *The Ideological Construction of Otherness in Joseph Conrad’s Lord Jim*. 11(02), 89–106.  
<http://revue.ummto.dz/index.php/pla/article/download/2611/1733>
- Susilawati, A., & Wajiran, W. (2024). a Representation of Zainichi As Subalterns in Min Jin Lee’S Pachinko: Postcolonial Studies. *Lire Journal (Journal of Linguistics and Literature)*, 8(2), 245–257.  
<https://doi.org/10.33019/lire.v8i2.319>
- Vogel, D. (2012). *Joseph Conrad in the light of postcolonialism*. 7, 97–112.  
<https://doi.org/10.4467/20843941YC.12.005.0694>
- Wajiran, W. (2013). The Domination of Ideas and Intellectuality in Gaining the Power and Hegemony in Man And Superman by George Bernard Shaw. *Jurnal Humaniora UGM*, 25(2), 143–150.  
<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.22146/jh.2357>

- Wajiran, W. (2020). *Images of Muslim women in contemporary Indonesian literature*. University of Tasmania.
- Wajiran, W. (2022). *Pengantar Pengkajian Sastra Karya Sastra dan Dinamika Sosial Politik* (B. Asyhari & R. Pruwandari (eds.)). UAD Press.
- Wajiran, W., & Septiani, N. A. (2023). The subordination of black people in the United States Toni Morrison's novel, *Beloved*. *NOTION: Journal of Linguistics, Literature, and Culture*, 5(1), 69–81. <https://doi.org/10.12928/notion.v5i1.7064>

