# Narrative Being
# Vs. Narrating Being

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Edited by

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PART TWO: AFTER MODERNISM

# INTRODUCTION

ARMELA PANAJOTI AND MARIJA KRIVOKAPIĆ

This monographic collection of papers focuses on Anglo-American modernist fiction with the intention to inspire challenging perspectives that would move us towards considering modernism in the instances in which it transcends itself, moving, more broadly speaking, towards postmodernist self-irony. Therefore, the papers collected here regard issues such as being in creation, narrativizing being and creation, the relation between being and narrative, the situation of being in narrative time and space, the relation between authority and narrative, the possible authority over narrative and the authority of the narrative, the interaction between narrative and the other, authority of the other over and within the narrative, interreferentiality of text and author, and so on.

The book comprises two parts. In the first part, we observe the birth of modernism, the first embryonic narrative strategies that led to the structural break of realist writing. After this, we approach high modernism mostly through the authors' changed view of being and language, their search for metaphysical truth, the relation of author and text, discomfort within the media of language, and complex three-dimensional characterization. The second part concentrates on modernist heritage, i.e. the postmodernist attitudes to the questions stated above. This chronological angle gives us a chance to follow how the authors' relation to literature in general has changed with the changing world and the new perspectives on the nature of reality.

The collection opens with the paper titled "Being in Creation, Creation in Being in *Lord Jim*," in which Armela Panajoti focuses on narrative discourse and how it informs the character's being, Jim's in this case. Drawing on Schopenhauer's essay "On Education," Panajoti argues that Jim's condition results from a wrong correspondence between "the whole of his abstract ideas," to use Schopenhauer's words, and the reality he has created for himself. Jim's abstract ideas are informed by his reading of light literature and thus make him live as being in creation in the first part of the novel. His imaginative heroism is not made to match the reality

surrounding him. When in the second part of the novel he finally becomes the hero of his readings, thus a creation in being, and the Patusanian fairy landscape cherishes his deeds, he again misreads the narrative codes regulating his existence and fails. Jim's story is also framed by a web of narrative discourses and forms with many speech communities, as well as interventions and shifts in language, which question narrative reliability and reinforce the idea that Jim's failure is above all linguistic.

Marija Krivokapić's paper "D. H. Lawrence's Authorial Dilemmas: In Exile around the Great War" sees the Great War as a crucial moment for the author not only in terms of physical, political, and financial arduousness but more particularly, in ontological and authorial terms. Krivokapić recalls here facts like Lawrence's wife's German connections, which would not make his life easy afterwards, his frequent fits of cold and pneumonia, financial trials, the taking away of his passport, and, what is more, an almost complete rejection of his so far best works, the suppression of *The Rainbow* and rejection of *Women in Love* for publication. For Lawrence this meant a denial of his existence as a man of letters, which was the only existential form he could envisage his *self* in. For this purpose, the paper makes a close analysis of Lawrence's letters written immediately before and after the war. Yet, it is in the works written after the war, namely, in the novels *Aaron's Rod* and *Kangaroo*, as well as in a book of travel *Sea and Sardinia* that Krivokapić seeks to trace what she refers to as D. H. Lawrence's authorial dilemmas, his poignant attempts to understand his author-function while facing a choice to stop speaking. This choice is enforced upon him by both the outside world, i.e. the culture that is denying, and the author's own inner being to in turn deny the repressive culture.

One more paper on D. H. Lawrence draws on the novelist's concern with self, more precisely, his concept of the Self and his idea of the "conflict of wills," and uses the narrative-identity theory to capture a "character in creation." In his paper "The 'Idea' of the Self: Narrated Identities in D. H. Lawrence's (short) Fiction," Martin Štefl attempts to depict this "conflict of wills" as a conflict of individual "ideal-driven narratives" and discusses the role these narratives play in the process of creation, promotion, and preservation of "knowledge." The process of knowledge-creation, being closely connected with the individual's ability to "narrate reality," i.e. to "meaningfully" structure it to fit one's desires/ideas, becomes for Lawrence closely connected with the development of a complex set of competing "subjective epistemologies." Relying on a detailed reading of Lawrence's texts, such as "The Shades of Spring" and "England, My England!", the paper traces the way different

"narratives" emerge, evolve and become confronted by competing narratives/realities, and eventually perish when confronted with the other. Showing the process of narration as directly influencing one's cognitive faculties, the paper discusses the way Lawrence's (in this respect essentially modernist) texts explore the complex reciprocal relationship between the narrating subject, narrated objects, and narrative process.

The concern with authority continues with James Joyce. In "'How Can We Know the Dancer from the Dance?': Authorial Self-(Re)Production in Joyce's Narratives," Vanja Vukićević Garić argues about the ways in which Joyce, an autobiographical author in her view, defies the Barthean notion of authorial "death." Vukićević Garić does so by enumerating the ways that account for Joyce's textual presence and high intentionality. She draws on the view that life and art are united, that the text is inevitably interlinked with biography since the transformation of introspection and retrospection into fiction results in fiction itself becoming a part of life. By bringing several examples of Joyce's most important works, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, *Finnegans Wake*, *Ulysses*, *Dubliners*, she recognises in them the psychoanalytic, existential and ontological potential to explain how the interaction of Joyce's art with life resembles in many ways biological reproduction. Using *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* as a starting point for her arguments about the relation of the creator to his creation, more precisely Dedalus's aesthetic theory and classification of the aesthetic image into lyrical, epical, and dramatic form, a point of reference for Joycean critics as well, she explains the relation several of Joyce's works bear to Joyce himself. *A Portrait* is considered here an example of the lyrical novel, that is, in immediate relation to its creator. *Ulysses* is viewed as epical, that is, as both a personal and impersonal creation. *Finnegans Wake* is argued as dramatic, that is, as a textual embodiment of the dramatic image from which all traces of the author's personality are obliterated allowing the narration to move around other characters and their consciousness. As Stephen Dedalus's case demonstrates, Vukićević Garić recognises the "Doppelganger metaphysics" in Joyce's work. Evidence from people around Joyce and his essays and letters suggests the intricate relationship between the author and the text, between the narrating and narrated being. In this way, by identifying the potential life bears for art and drawing on Said's defence of literary criticism that relied on biographical approaches, the author explains how Joyce used his narratives to overcome his fears, obsessions, conflicts, and frustrations. On the whole, Joyce's narratives defy "the death of the author" and obey a somewhat reproductive cyclical pattern, which recalls life itself and encompasses life and death. The case of *Finnegans Wake*

illustrates that this pattern does not have a proper end, instead appears as an incessant, never-ending interaction of text and the author. Vukićević Garić also explains it in terms of the author's identity and the impossibility of pinning it down. She views writing and the author's identity as umbilically interrelated. If there is a chance for the first to be pinned down, that would bring the second to an end and hence the death of the author.

In "Joyce's Religious Being and His Narrative" Sandra Josipović focuses on another important aspect of Joyce's writing—his ambiguous attitude towards the Catholic Church. While he deemed Catholic philosophy as the most coherent attempt to establish intellectual and material stability, Joyce revolted against institutional Catholicism, as a defence mechanism to protect his personality from a system that cancelled character through its plea for obedience. To trace this attitude in Joyce's work, Josipović resorts to the six edicts presented by Andrew Bennett and Nicholas Royle[1]: "God is an anthropomorphism," "God is dead," "to acknowledge the idea that God is an anthropomorphism or that he is dead is not the same as getting rid of him," "religion is everywhere," "literature has an evil streak," and "literature is sacred." For each, Josipović draws on ideas and contexts, namely, Freud's suggestion that God is a fatherly projection of the human ego on the surrounding universe for the first edict, the impact developments after the theory of evolution in the nineteenth century had upon the credence of the Bible especially among intellectuals for the second, Barthes's idea of literature as antitheological and revolutionary activity for the third, the reflection that Western culture is theologically embedded, even with regard to how we structure time for the fourth, the belief that literature tends towards the demonic because it is about entrancement and possession for the fifth, and Jacques Derrida's claims that if there is something sacred about literature it is its untranslatability and singularity for the sixth. All of these are accounted for through examples from *Ulysses*, *Finnegans Wake*, *Dubliners*, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. In this way, Leopold in *Ulysses* becomes not only a Christlike figure, a spiritual father to Stephen, the prodigal son, but also a Lucifer, a demonic character, upon his renunciation of the Catholic Church and decision to serve Art as his ultimate deity; some characters in *Dubliners* turn their back on religious and moral values which they had respected before upon experiencing shattered dreams, failed lives, destroyed careers, unfulfilled ambitions, whereas Dublin comes to signify the hell around which they move in circles; the father's authority, that is,

[1] Andrew Bennett and Nicholas Royle, *Introduction to Literature, Criticism and Theory* (Harlow: Longman, 2004): 161.

the genre of Bildungsroman is undermined by the "son," that is the novel *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*; or *Finnegans Wake* defies any effort of it being translated owing to Joyce's creation of a language by using more than twelve languages to represent the state of mind of a man asleep. Through elaboration of *Finnegans Wake* Josipović argues that Joyce's intention as a writer is to challenge the reader by inviting him/her not only to interpret the text, but also to write and rewrite it, hence the structure of *Finnegans Wake*. Such an intention is again repetitive of a cyclical pattern, typical of Joyce's art.

Petar Penda contributes with "Network Theory Approach to *Mrs. Dalloway*." His paper applies and further elaborates Franco Moretti's fresh idea of introducing quantitative analysis in literary studies by designing a network graph based on characters' addressing one another in *Mrs. Dalloway*. The word "networks" is in literary criticism usually used in reference to the artistic, publishing, and social connections between writers. However, Moretti uses it to denote links between characters in a novel or a play realised through their speech acts or interactions. Nonetheless, Moretti's network graph does not go beyond the demonstration of the novel's structure and interconnectedness of the characters and leaves out the emotional charge and nuanced relation of the characters. Bearing this in mind, Penda proposes a graph, which combines Moretti's distant reading with close reading and thus leads to a better understanding of the novel in its entirety. The proposed approach takes into consideration more than just verbal interaction. In this way, considerable attention is given to unspoken thoughts, free indirect discourse, stream of consciousness, and emotions presented via descriptions, to mention but a few. This method leads to a more comprehensive understanding of the relations among the characters. Penda's analysis also ponders whether *Mrs. Dalloway* is a break with the literary past or constitutes a continuation of past traditions.

"Ernest Hemingway's (In)Articulate Silence and the Modernist Suspicion of Words" by Aleksandra Žeželj Kocić explores the possibility of genuine communication in the fiction of Ernest Hemingway, while primarily accentuating the author's dramatic dialogue and iceberg theory, both of which ultimately create nothing but a peculiar medium of verbal Modernist silence. Moreover, the fact that Hemingway's male and female protagonists either fully understand one another, or alternatively dwell in complete unawareness of themselves and others, gets elaborated through the prism of their real or imagined speech acts, articulation of pain, gendered deafness, talking and taciturnity. To comprehend Hemingway's fictional world of narrating and its simultaneous suspicion of narration, it

is essential that the essay touch upon the function of language in Modernism at large, Hemingway's so-called masculine, minimalist style, as well as the dialectics between verbal exposure and muteness.

Gordana Kustudić contributes with "Aldous Huxley's *Island*: A Study on a Resurrected Being." Aldous Huxley's *Island* is a result of a long-lasting process of research, maturation, spiritual, and intellectual growth. The novel possibly represents the only depiction of an ideal, fertile relationship between the whole and its living elements, the one founded on an equal share of giving and receiving. It is indeed a utopian vision, unlike Huxley's earlier dystopian novels, and it points out the writer's new insights, which are revolutionary to a great extent, especially concerning the matter that this paper is delving into, i.e., the growth of an individual into an integral, free, and self-conscious personality. The process is intently grasped through the narrative prism of Will Farnaby, an average worldly person, at the same time being more than convenient material for the metanoia he is about to experience on Pala (the titular island) where he found himself after a shipwreck. Kustudić pinpoints the way the insular community enables its each and every individual to be happy, this being the end to which they use all available means.

Another Huxley's novel discussed in the volume is *After Many a Summer Dies the Swan* from 1939. As Janko Andrijašević explains, although it belongs to Huxley's later novels, it has many similarities with the early ones—in form, style, and approach. It is a carnivalesque "multi-deckered literary sandwich" organised around a "house party" theme (based on the Hearst Castle in California this time). However, there are substantial differences, too. On the one hand, Huxley has more insight into philosophical and spiritual matters, and is not as existentially confused as he had been in his earlier writing phase. On the other hand, his literary technique is less successful now, and the characters in *After Many a Summer* are flatter than even in his cubist portraiture attempts. The "propagandist urge" is much more pronounced in this novel, which is frequently detrimental to the artistic weaving of a work of literature. Another significant difference is that now plot becomes a central concern, unlike in the past. The main theme running through the novel is death vs. eternity. The title is taken from Tennyson's poem "Tithonus," which describes the eponymous mythical character who asks the gods for immortality, but forgets to ask for eternal youth. The final chapters of the novel introduce a bizarre idea of devolution, i.e., a downward evolution that would ensue in case our physical bodies do not perish as they usually do. Another strong theme is the criticism of Californian lifestyle, and a

strong contrast between British and American mentality, in an age when these differences were much more prominent than they are today.

The second part of the book is devoted to modernist heritage and opens with "Briony's Polylogue" in which, drawing on Genette and Kristeva, Sonja Vitanova-Strezova looks into the narrative discourse in Ian McEwan's *Atonement* to discuss matters of narrative and the other, the question of being in narrative time and space and the interreferentiality of text and author. In the first three parts, the story starts in a modernist fashion that can be accounted for by Genette's concept of the limited point of view (focalization), then the narrative shifts to the first person singular in the postscript with zero focalization, which suggests that the narrative voice in the novel belongs to the aged novelist Briony, thus making Genette's distinction between narrative perspective and narrative voice insufficient to account for Briony's story. This postmodernist twist can be best accounted for by Kristeva's "polylogical discourse" since Briony's attempt at atonement for the true story instead of the wrong one told in childhood produces a different Briony in every new version of her story.

In "Unreliable Memoirist: The Tim O'Briens of *The Things They Carried*" Ginger Jones adopts a reader-response approach and discusses the interreferentiality of text and author in O'Brien's *The Things They Carried*, a collection of stories focusing on his Vietnam war experience, whose recollections are described not as memories but rather as realities. In *The Things They Carried*, the narrator and protagonist, is also named Tim O'Brien. Having in mind a reader disengaged either emotionally or intellectually with the history of the Vietnam War, and assuming a dismissive attitude on his/her part, Jones questions how this reader would classify *The Things They Carried*, given that the stories, moving between memoir and fiction, are narrated usually in the first-person perspective by a Tim O'Brien who, besides the name, shares the same age, profession, education, and military experience as its author. Among the issues the author problematizes here are also: how he/she, being caught up in this literary construction that feels like truth, differentiates between the two, and how the narrative forces the reader to make it part of his or her own experience. To read the instances of interreferentiality of text and author manifested in the collection, Jones also provides some background about the war, O'Brien's reports about how he got involved with it, about how he started writing vignettes and later moved up to writing *The Things They Carried*. While arguing about how the author plays with the distinction between truth and fiction, Jones concludes that O'Brien's intention is to help readers understand not simply by finding a way between truth and

fiction, but, most importantly, by moving beyond them thus becoming more intellectually and emotionally invested in the narrative. It is the latter that she views as O'Brien's main intention in doing so.

Aleksandra Izgarjan observes narrative strategies in the works of contemporary American women writers, which deconstruct categories of gender, race and class, as well as question political and social acts of reading, writing, and canon formation. The texts discussed in the paper share similar narrative strategies, which include autobiographical fiction, historiographic metafiction, magic realism, genre experimentation, multiple narration, fragmentation, and palimpsest. These strategies liberate the writers from the standards of truth and authenticity, allowing them to construct new, multicultural identities, and to engage with the political aspects of narrative, particularly exile and repression. Through disruption of the ordinary logic of cause and effect, as well as binary oppositions on which Western culture rests, magic realism juxtaposes different cultural patterns of the dominant and minority communities. Past and memory function as a semiotic space in which ethnic and gender identities are recreated. Empty spaces in history, which point to the lack of records about the lives of women, trigger narratives that are attempts not only to retrieve lost stories, but also to circumvent authority and the linearity of history as well as to create the writers' own versions of history. Thus, from the microcosmic level of individual stories, the focus shifts to the macrocosmic level of social history.

In "The Manipulation of the Narrative in the Hands of Toni Morrison" Mirjana Daničić argues that at first reading it is easily recognised that in Morrison's novels the narrative provides opportunities for the author to contemplate various restrictions, sufferings, rebellions of the black people in America, as well as to speculate on history, memory, knowledge of the African peoples. In time, it becomes obvious that the narrative engages in a discourse on historical, social, political, or universal values, in this way being used for the rewriting of history and construction of African-American identity. Daničić argues that Toni Morrison's text is a tool of manipulation: it provides irresistible narrative threads to the readers, while it simultaneously plays with endless meanings the author wants to explore. In this paper, the violation of traditional literary forms combined with the limitless exploitation of fragmented narrative is viewed as Morrison's attempt to revise the existing narrative forms, thus revising the values of conventional narrating. The aim is to illustrate Morrison's skillfulness in discarding the narrative conventions so that they become mere toys in her masterly hands.

In "*Disgrace*: J. M. Coetzee Turning Political Being into Body Narrative," Marina Ragachewskaya explores the ways J. M. Coetzee interweaves postcolonial existence, traumatic consciousness and the language of the body in his Booker Prize winning novel *Disgrace*. Faithful to his favoured themes—apartheid and tyranny, Coetzee provides a narrative for various aspects of life—race, history, sex, and communication. All these culminate in a disgrace of the body, which in its turn must find verbalisation too. Ragachewskaya shows how language turns impotent, even mutilated in an attempt to narrate the "non-narratable," how the concept of "poetic justice" goes lame, and how history takes revenge in an absolutely "ungraceful" way. Issues of interconnection between politics, psychology, human body and language badly need a reform where the Romantic ideals fail. How is one to heal a gaping wound of lost ties and troubling tensions among generations, sexes, and races is simultaneously an ontological problem and artistic challenge, and the novel resorts to different narratives to address it: political and bodily, verbalised and gapped, explicit and implied.

The book closes with "Life versus Fiction: Narration in Julian Barnes's *Flaubert's Parrot*" by Dijana Tica, who opens her thesis by pointing out that the problem of discovering the narrator's identity has become especially complex with the advent of the postmodern novel. Since a postmodern author often incorporates details of his/her life into the novel, the person telling the story is on many occasions mistaken for the one writing it. As a result, the narrator's opinions and attitudes are regularly attributed to those of the author. Furthermore, postmodern novels heavily rely on real life characters and historical events, so the line separating life from fiction becomes increasingly blurry. Here Tica proceeds to examine how life and fiction overlap in one of the most critically acclaimed postmodern novels, Julian Barnes's *Flaubert's Parrot*. Since the novel deals with the lives of a real person, the famous French novelist Gustave Flaubert, and of a fictitious one, Geoffrey Braithwaite, a retired doctor and amateur Flaubert scholar, the paper questions the reliability of facts and attempts to answer the question whether there is more truth in fiction than in reality. Furthermore, the paper focuses on Braithwaite as a postmodern narrator who often makes references to famous people and well-known events; constantly discusses the process of writing, sharing his opinions on literary devices, methods and characters more or less directly with the reader or narratee; and, at the same time, delays telling his life story.

The papers in this book are diverse and speak for themselves, yet we trust that we have met our primary aim and that this book will contribute to the ongoing discussion of the ambiguities inherent in the concepts of authorship, narrative, and being, and that, thus, we will provide scholars and students of literature with new challenging readings, as well as stimulate intellectual confrontation and circulation of ideas within the field.

# PART ONE:

# TOWARDS HIGH MODERNISM

# BEING IN CREATION, CREATION IN BEING IN *LORD JIM*

ARMELA PANAJOTI

Conrad's *Lord Jim* has all the chances of being considered an initiation story. At least its beginning is likely to develop into an initiation story, although the narrative structure of the novel thwarts the prospect of an initiation story. The narrator introduces Jim, more precisely, emphasises his outer appearance as promising of a trustworthy young man.

Despite the variety of definitions applying to initiation stories,[1] one can still easily recognise two elements commonly found in all initiation stories in Conrad's intention to introduce a young man who goes through an experience, a journey, and gains something, or loses something in Jim's case. Thus, so far this story appears to have the three-part structure of initiation shortly described by Müller "as the three stages of 'innocence'—'experience'—'maturity'."[2] Whether Jim matures, one cannot say as confirmed by Marlow's blurred epiphanic vision of Jim at the end of the story.[3]

In his attempt to define the initiation story, Marcus at one point suggests that "Education is always important in an initiation story, but it is usually a direct result of *experience* rather than of indoctrination."[4] This remark reminds me of Schopenhauer's essay "On Education," in which he

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[1] Mordecai Marcus, "What is an Initiation Story?" in *Short Story Theories*, ed. Charles May (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1976): 189-201, and Peter Freese, "Über die Schwierigkeiten des eranwachsens: Amerikanische stories of initiation von Nathaniel Hawthorne bis Joyce Carol Oates," in *Die Short Story im Englischunterricht der Sekundarstufe II*, eds. Peter Freese, Horst Groene and Liesel Hermes (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1979): 206-255.

[2] Kurt Müller, *Ernest Hemingway: der Mensch, der Schriftsteller, das Werk* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1999): 41.

[3] "He passes away under a cloud, inscrutable at heart, forgotten, unforgiven, and excessively romantic." Joseph Conrad, *Lord Jim*, ed. Thomas Moser (New York: W.W. Norton, 1996): 246.

[4] Mordecai Marcus, *op. cit*., 185; emphasis added.

emphasises the value of experience in the education[5] of the young, more particularly in the formation of those general ideas that guide our knowledge of the world. Schopenhauer distinguishes between what he calls *the natural method of education*, by which he, to put it briefly, means that experience or "particular observations," as he calls them, that precede the formation of general ideas, and *the artificial method*, the other way round, that is, ideas are already there before the observations come. According to Schopenhauer:

> This explains why it so frequently happens that, after a long course of learning and reading, we enter upon the world in our youth, partly with an artless ignorance of things, partly with wrong notions about them; so that our demeanor savors at one moment of a nervous anxiety, at another of a mistaken confidence. The reason of this is simply that our head is full of general ideas which we are now trying to turn to some use, but which we hardly ever apply rightly.[6]

In this paper, I do not intend to analyse *Lord Jim* as an initiation story, but to draw for my arguments on two premises: 1) the fact that the novel promises to be an initiation story and 2) Marcus's last remark about education in order to read Jim's case as an illustration of what Schopenhauer calls the artificial method of education, which will help me to embed Jim's case in a discussion that will involve the narrative structure and perspective of the novel. Obviously, in his essay Schopenhauer does not go in favour of the artificial method of education, for:

> the instruction is defective, and the ideas obtained are false; and finally, a distorted view of the world arises, peculiar to the individual himself—a view such as almost everyone entertains for some time, and most men for as long as they live.[7]

My intention is to show that Jim's failure results from the fact that his education follows the artificial method, to put it in Schopenhauer's words. For this purpose, Jim's narrative behaviour is traced in the two parts of the novel. It might be relevant to point out here that the omniscient narrator emphasises from the very beginning of the novel what type of education

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[5] By education Schopenhauer means the path that leads to maturity. In this respect, he distinguishes between knowledge received from schooling and knowledge of the world. It is the second type of knowledge that he is interested in.

[6] Arthur Schopenhauer, "On Education," *Studies in Pessimism*, trans. T. Bailey Saunders (New York: Cosimo, 2007): 54.

[7] *Ibid*., 55.

Jim has received. Apparently, he has received both types of education. In the first chapter, we learn two things—that Jim's vocation for the sea was a result of his aroused desire after reading light literature, and that he received some instruction in this respect[8]. The evidence provided here proves a typical Schopehauerian condition. Schopenhauer advises that

> no child under the age of fifteen should receive instruction in subjects which may possibly be the vehicle of serious error, such as philosophy, religion, or any other branch of knowledge where it is necessary to take large views; because wrong notions imbibed early can seldom be rooted out, and of all the intellectual faculties, judgment is the last to arrive at maturity.[9]

Jim's literary education has preceded practical sea training. In this way, Jim's knowledge of the world is "indoctrinated" by light literature. As a result, Jim, although he proves to be a good student in navigation, still fails to project a realistic image of himself. Instead of setting himself in a real-life sea context, he envisions himself as a character in a book, as a hero.[10] Later defined by Stein, his argued *alter ego*, as "romantic" and contrasted with a practical man like the French captain, who eventually rescues the Patna, Jim can be said to have failed to obtain "an exact correspondence […] between the whole of his abstract ideas and the things he has actually perceived for himself,"[11] which according to Schopenhauer leads to maturity of knowledge. His romanticism, or his inability to read the linguistic codes that guide his identity, fails him in his need. Schopenhauer examines the reasons for this condition:

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[8] "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.' He learned there a little trigonometry and how to cross top-gallant yards. He was generally liked. He had the third place in navigation and pulled stroke in the first cutter." Joseph Conrad, *op. cit.*, 8.

[9] Arthur Schopenhauer, *op. cit*., 58.

[10] "On the lower deck in the babel of two hundred voices he would forget himself, and beforehand live in his mind the sea-life of light literature. 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 stave off starvation. He confronted savages on tropical shores, quelled mutinies on the high seas, and in a small boat upon the ocean kept up the hearts of despairing men—always an example of devotion to duty, and as unflinching as a hero in a book." Joseph Conrad, *op. cit*., 9.

[11] Arthur Schopenhauer, *op. cit*., 59.

> For the practical man the most needful thing is to acquire an accurate and profound knowledge of *the ways of the world*. […] The study is difficult enough in itself; but the difficulty is doubled by novels, which represent a state of things in life and the world, such as, in fact, does not exist. Youth is credulous, and accepts these views of life, which then become part and parcel of the mind; so that, instead of a merely negative condition of ignorance, you have positive error—a whole tissue of false notions to start with; and at a later date these actually spoil the schooling of experience, and put a wrong construction on the lessons it teaches.[12]

In this sense, it follows that Jim is impractical, is young, and that his education or knowledge of the world stems from a narrative form—the novel, that is, from his readings of light literature. As such, he assumes real sea life to resemble light narrative for which reason he fails to act accordingly. He flatters himself with ideas of heroism, which cherish his imagination and distort the reality surrounding him. There is a wrong correspondence between how he projects himself and the world around him. When in his training days he is challenged by the forces of the universe, he finds himself unprepared and recognises "a fierce purpose in the gale, a furious earnestness in the screech of the wind, in the brutal tumult of earth and sky, that seemed directed at him, and made him hold his breath in awe."[13] The sea experience disappoints him, because he finds it "barren of adventure."[14] Having been imbued with ideas of imaginative heroism and without having been tried out as seaman, Jim becomes mate of the Patna. He lives his sea training and later his Patna experience as a creation in being, as a character in his fiction, a condition that makes him feel "he cared for nothing that could happen to him to the end of his days,"[15] but utterly numbs him when the Patna collapses.

In confronting alone the Patna episode, Jim is puzzled that "they wanted facts. Facts! They demanded facts from him, as if facts could explain anything!"[16] There is, in my view, a verbal contradiction in Jim's frustration or inability to narrate these facts. From a strictly narrative perspective, facts are events from people's life, which when related become stories, thus acquiring a narrative dimension. In Jim's case, this contradiction stems from the fact that he is caught up between two types of narratives—the narrative Jim imagines himself to be part of and the narrative of his life, that is, the actual accounts of his life. Jim lives in the

[12] Arthur Schopenhauer, *op. cit*., 60.
[13] Joseph Conrad, *op. cit*., 9.
[14] *Ibid*., 11.
[15] *Ibid*., 17.
[16] *Ibid*., 22.

narrative he has created as a world for himself and cannot recognise the world of facts, the practical side of life, because it is beyond his education. His narrative expectations do not meet real-life expectations as it can be demonstrated by his comparison with the practical-minded French captain. Seeing himself as part of the narrative inspired by his readings, Jim is unable to make part of the living narrative, that is, the real story of Patna, the court inquiry, etc. This second "narrative" is just as important, if not more important than the first one. It is not just any narrative, it is a way of being. Jim fails to perform what Alasdair MacIntyre defines as man's role as "a story-telling animal."[17] His verbal failure at voicing his experience stems from the fact that Jim prefers being and living as a narrative being rather than as a narrating being, or as a creation in being, as I would prefer to term it. He is unable to master his own narrative. In the novel, it is Marlow who tries to relate Jim's story and to master his narrative.

On the whole, *Lord Jim* is a novel inspired and marked by various forms of narrative discourse and structures. There is the main story, the story of Jim, told in two separate narratives, that of Patna, and that of Patusan. Both stories are wrapped up by several narrative forms or structures—the omniscient or impersonal narrator, the use of free indirect discourse, Marlow, his interlocutors, the letter to the privileged reader. Richard Ambrosini makes an interesting point regarding the use of the impersonal narrator and Marlow in *Lord Jim*. He points out that the impersonal narrator's knowledge of Jim is thorough, and that it is this narrator who remarks Jim's weaknesses in becoming a crafted seaman from the very beginning of the novel, a view which Marlow himself somewhat perceives and shares when he first catches a glimpse of Jim:

> The silent contest between impersonal narrator and Marlow takes place precisely on this ground: Conrad has the reader see Jim first of all through a damning judgment made in the name of the sea code from which Marlow himself departs in his quest. […] On a conceptual level, Marlow initially shares the impersonal narrator's negative judgment, which can also be that of the reader, but then a doubt emerges to lead him toward an unremitting self-scrutiny.[18]

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[17] "A central thesis then begins to emerge: man is in his actions and practice, as well as in his functions, essentially a story-telling animal. He is not essentially, but becomes through his history, a teller of stories that aspire to truth." Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981): 216.

[18] Richard Ambrosini, *Conrad's Fiction as Critical Discourse* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991): 119.

Marlow takes up Jim's narrative soon after the Patna court inquiry and immediately after the impersonal narrator confirms Jim's frustration with language or speech. From now on, Jim's story is entrusted to Marlow[19]:

> The sound of his own truthful statements confirmed his deliberate opinion that speech was of no use to him any longer. That man there [Marlow] seemed to be aware of his hopeless difficulty.[20]

By shifting from one type of narrative discourse to another—omniscient to Marlow's, Patna to Patusan—Conrad gives Jim the chance to master his own narrative. Because Jim lives in the first part of the story as a creation in being and fails to read the codes of his existence, the author grants him the second chance he has so much looked for, and deserved, by sending him to Patusan, a remote and fairy-like habitat suitable for his heroism to find its proper ground. This Patusan becomes the narrative setting of his ideals. The narrative intention here is to possibly let Jim live as he wishes, thus as being in creation.

In his relation of Jim's story, every now and then Marlow displays his frustration at not making sense of Jim's behaviour because he tries to measure him by the standards of their craft.[21] In identifying Jim as "one of us," a definition by which Marlow most likely has in mind the lot of seamen, of honest people, of professional people, he tries to read Jim's behaviour in terms of a sea code measured out by an ideal "standard of conduct,"[22] the fidelity, to which held together that community of men Marlow identified as "us." This standard of conduct could be achieved through training in the ships, hence the natural method of education. In this way, Marlow assumes that Jim's education has followed the natural path, but the contradiction is that Jim's education has already passed through the artificial method—light literature—and his mind has been imbued with romantic ideals and as a result there is a clash between these two methods of education.

In this respect, Marlow tries a different reading of Jim's case by resorting to a different perspective—youth.[23] This perspective takes us

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[19] "The central element of Marlow's characterization is that he will take over the burden of explaining Jim's character." Richard Ambrosini, *op. cit*., 122.
[20] Joseph Conrad, *op. cit*., 24.
[21] "I couldn't believe it. I tell you I wanted to see him squirm for the honour of the craft." *Ibid.*, 32.
[22] *Ibid.*, 34.
[23] "Was it for my own sake that I wished to find some shadow of an excuse for that young fellow whom I had never seen before, but whose appearance alone added a

back again to Schopenhauer's concern with the education of the young. In talking with the French lieutenant, Marlow realises that he too locates the matter in youth. Although he senses a commonality of viewpoints in the French lieutenant's remark about Jim: "Ah! The young, the young,"[24] Marlow is left even more confounded when he senses that the Frenchman, unlike him who takes defence of Jim in the name of youthful illusions, distinguishes between two things, courage and honour. While the French lieutenant recognises that "Man is born a coward,"[25] he acknowledges that it is "habit—habit—necessity […]—the eye of the others,"[26] by which he probably refers to good training that accounts for courage. As for honour,

> The honour […] that is real—that is! And what life may be worth when […] when the honour is gone—*ah ca! par exemple*—I can offer no opinion. I can offer no opinion—because—monsieur—I know nothing of it.[27]

"The standard ideal of conduct," as formulated by Marlow, and "honour," as emphasised by the French lieutenant, are things to be instilled through the natural method of education. Although they are praised in books, they cannot be learned through books. One cannot really say whether Jim lacks them, but one can truly say that Jim cherishes an idealistic view of them. Puzzled even more by Jim's case, Marlow seeks advice from Stein, once an adventurer, now a merchant in philosophical guise, but still with a "student's face,"[28] and whom Marlow considers "one of the most trustworthy men I [Marlow] had ever known."[29]

In judging Jim's case, Stein dismisses him as romantic. In response to Marlow's request for a remedy for Jim's case, Stein suggests that "the question is not how to get cured but how to live, how to be."[30] Defined in purely Hamletian terms, the question for Stein is "How to be! *Ach*! How to be."[31] The dream metaphor, which Stein uses to illustrate his point about

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touch of personal concern to the thoughts suggested by the knowledge of his weakness—made it a thing of mystery and terror—like a hint of a destructive fate ready for us all whose youth—in its day—had resembled his youth? I fear that such was the secret motive of my prying." Joseph Conrad, *op. cit*., 35.

[24] *Ibid*., 89.
[25] *Ibid*., 90.
[26] *Ibid.*
[27] *Ibid*., 91.
[28] *Ibid*., 122.
[29] *Ibid.*
[30] *Ibid.*, 128.
[31] *Ibid.*

the previous, alludes to another narrative form. Dreams, like fiction or tales are indeed other narratives, whose source is man's desires, ambitions, and ideals, that is, everything we construct in our unconscious. Stein's philosophical proposal, based on his personal experience, is living the dream or submitting oneself to the "destructive element," thus keeping to one's ideal.

> A man that is born falls into a dream like a man who falls into the sea. If he tries to climb out into the air as inexperienced people endeavour to do, he drowns—*nicht wahr*? […] No! I tell you! The way is to the destructive element submit yourself, and with the exertions of your hands and feet in the water make the deep, deep sea keep you up. So if you ask me—how to be?[32]

There is a pause following Stein's question at the end of this passage before he resumes speaking again and answering the question. In acknowledging Jim as romantic, Stein admits his pessimism about his proposal. Although he has managed to keep to his own romanticism and ideal, he recognises that this is probably not the right way, or the right method of education, to return to Schopenhauer.

> "And yet it is true—it is true. In the destructive element immerse." […] He spoke in a subdued tone, without looking at me, one hand on each side of his face. "That was the way. To follow the dream, and again to follow the dream—and so—*ewig—usque ad finem* […]" The whisper of his conviction seemed to open before me a vast and uncertain expanse, as of a crepuscular horizon on a plain at dawn—or was it, perchance, at the coming of the night?[33]

Anyway, by confirming that Jim is romantic, Stein also exerts his authority of the romantic who has successfully handled his romanticism in proposing this solution. About Stein's proposal, Ambrosini explains:

> Coming to life is equated with falling asleep, the sea is like a dream, and breathing—that is, emerging from the sea-dream or waking up—is like drowning or dying. […] however, the notion of the destructive element brings a certain balance to the spinning paradoxes: the notion is equivalent to self-forgetfulness, the condition which enables one to follow an ideal while gaining strength from the potential destructiveness of its content. […] Stein's authority is not based on his being a philosopher but on the

[32] Joseph Conrad, *op. cit*. 129.
[33] *Ibid*., 130.

> fact that he has been able to put his ideal into practice, to live out the paradox. This is the inheritance he will try to pass on to Jim.[34]

In inviting Marlow to find a practical solution to Jim's case, Stein recognises that the solution for Jim to retrieve his heroism is outside of life, thus in fiction. Since Jim envisions himself as a literary character, the best thing to do is to grant him the chance to live in a fictional setting. Therefore, the metaphorical burial Stein proposes, an enactment of Brierly's "let him creep twenty feet underground and stay there,"[35] is an encasement in Patusan. Outwardly, Jim seems to have entered a sort of underworld evoked in the gothic appeal of Patusan.[36]

Cast in the form of romance or heroic tale, the Patusan episode would finally make Jim live the heroism he had so much cherished in his ideals, but above all, return to him what he lost with the Patna, that is, belief:

> The conquest of love, honour, men's confidence—the pride of it, the power of it, are fit materials for a heroic tale; only our minds are struck by the externals of such a success, and to Jim's successes there were no externals.[37]

Jim now lives as being in creation. If to us, readers, audience or anyone else not cherishing the same ideals as Jim, "externals" are not essential, to Jim they make part of his new being. Above all, Patusan makes Jim acquire the power of words.

> Those people had trusted him implicitly. Him alone! His bare word.[38]

> they had got into the habit of taking his word for anything and everything.[39]

> His word decided everything—ever since the smashing of Sherif Ali.[40]

Despite the legendary status[41] he achieves through the glory and fame of his deeds, Jim still displays his inability to keep to his narrative

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[34] Richard Ambrosini, *op. cit*., 151-152.
[35] Joseph Conrad, *op. cit*., 44.
[36] "once before Patusan had been used as a grave for some sin, transgression, or misfortune." *Ibid*., 133.
[37] *Ibid*., 136.
[38] *Ibid*., 160.
[39] *Ibid*.
[40] *Ibid*., 161.

condition, the romance. Although Jim's Patusanian experience complies with most romance conventions, it fails to keep to one of the most important conventions, love. Unlike the typical romance hero who displays complete love and devotion to his lady, Jim forsakes Jewel for what she identifies as the "call." As Ambrosini puts it:

> The love story will eventually throw light on Jim's cruelty in his pursuit of "the call of his exalted egoism" to which he sacrifices Jewel. […] Marlow launches the theme of love, which completes his accounts of Jim's successes, by making it clear—as he has already with honor and "men's confidence"—that this is not a conventional story.[42]

The incompletion of the love convention also flaws the fictional quality of the Patusanian setting:

> Patusan had been unreal in Marlow's eyes as long as it was only a setting for Jim's opportunity. The impossible love story has changed the narrator's perspective: Jewel's knowledge of past suffering gives her the authority to foresee the outcome of Jim's illusions. Jim is caught in the middle. He cannot recover in Patusan the reality he has tried to leave outside, back in the real world.[43]

The "call" is enacted by the arrival of Gentleman Brown in Patusan. The bitter taste of the Patna episode returns in the words of Gentleman Brown— "[a]nd what did *you* come for? What did you ask for when you came here?"[44] —leaving Jim even more confused. By granting Gentleman Brown free passage in Patusan, he allows the Patusanian massacre to happen and eventually condemns himself to death. Indeed, death appears to be the solution to this middle position Jim finds himself to be. In Ambrosini's view,[45] only death can make Jim real:

> Jim's suspension between the world of reality and the world of his illusions has been resolved only with death. He has thus acquired reality; that is, he has fulfilled the vision underlying his self-image with the final opportunity of *keeping his word*.[46]

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[41] "Already the legend had gifted him with supernatural powers." Joseph Conrad, *op. cit*., 159.
[42] Richard Ambrosini, *op. cit*., 168.
[43] *Ibid*,. 176.
[44] Joseph Conrad, *op. cit*., 227.
[45] Richard Ambrosini, *op. cit*., 171.
[46] *Ibid.*, 191; emphasis added.

He still lives as Jim the character, with Marlow being the narrator. He remains a narrative being and never achieves the stature of a narrating being. The artificial method of education, to refer to Schopenhauer, dominates his existence and his manner of living and is responsible for his mistakes, if any.

Why does Jim fail then? Why is it that even when he finally becomes being in creation, he is unable to keep to it? It can be said that Jim's failure is verbal. In "The Verbal Failure of Lord Jim," Eben Bass argues that Jim's failure results from the several verbal and auditory errors he makes.[47] It can be claimed that Jim's first verbal error stems from his youthful readings. In this respect, Schopenhauer warns:

> Instead, therefore, of hastening to place *books*, and books alone, in their hands, let them be made acquainted, step by step, with *things*—with the actual circumstances of human life. […] It is incredible how much harm is done when the seeds of wrong notions are laid in the mind in those early years.[48]

Thus, Jim misunderstands the world of his readings for the world surrounding him. This misunderstanding is followed by others:

> Collectively, however, Jim's misunderstandings lead one to see them as symptomatic of a kind of inattention or failure on his part—almost, in a sense, as if language has come to mean something different to him from what it does to anyone else.[49]

Jim lacks the authority to master his own narrative. Because he is ineloquent, stuttering and stammering, it is Marlow, who takes over his narrative for the most part: "Marlow himself is highly articulate and persuasive […]. Significantly, however, most of the incidents Jim recounts are couched in Marlow's words."[50] According to Bass, even Jim's jump from the Patna is a result of his verbal anomaly.[51]

Jim's departure to Patusan is also a farewell to "the white man's world and his own failure in it, an index to which is his failure with its

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[47] Eben Bass, "The Verbal Failure of Lord Jim," *College English* 26, no. 6 (1965): 438-44.
[48] Arthur Schopenhauer, *op. cit.*, 57; emphasis in original.
[49] Eben Bass, *op. cit.*, 439.
[50] *Ibid.*, 439.
[51] We can recall here that the German skipper and the other members of the crew take him for George and urge him to jump. Thus, he jumps as George, not as Jim.

language."[52] Conrad grants him the chance to be the master of his own narrative in Patusan: "The language Jim uses in Patusan is his own, as well as that of the natives, but he has a fresh chance to speak authoritatively, in the words of idealised romance and heroism. Yet verbal error still dogs him."[53] Despite his few verbal successes in Patusan, which make him regain his lost courage and honour, it is again words that fail him. Gentleman Brown's questions activate Jim's "old speechlessness."[54]

These failures once more testify to Jim's wrong correspondence between narrative and being. His inadequacy to voice his experience results not simply from lack of eloquence, but mainly from his inability to read the linguistic codes governing his identity. Although Marlow takes over Jim's narrative, Marlow's vision is still a blurred vision. The presence of other narrative discourses and forms, often marking the various interventions and shifts in language and narrative and representing the different speech communities in the novel, does little to undo this fogginess, most notable in Marlow's frequent doubts and questions regarding his role as the narrator of the story.

What I can finally say is that Jim's failure is above all linguistic, or I dare say, narrative. It stems from his inability to live and tell his own story and as such he fails to find the equilibrium in the narrative being and narrating being continuum. Marlow's stepping in to tell Jim's story and his resulting authorial frustration, along with other narrative attempts made in the novel, question narrative reliability and reinforce Jim's awkwardness with authority.

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[52] Eben Bass, *op. cit.*, 442.
[53] *Ibid.*
[54] *Ibid.*, 443.

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