

Deluded Vision in Conrad's *Under Western Eyes*

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The ending of *Under Western Eyes* might seem, at first, epiloguish and distinctly old fashioned. Some two years after the main events of the novel, the narrator conveniently encounters Sophia Antonovna who tells him how both Natalia and Razumov live now that they have left Geneva and returned permanently to Russia. Not only are the main characters thus disposed of, the narrator, through this final conversation, also learns of what ultimately happened to less important characters such as Nikita and Peter Ivanovitch. Informed of the latter's marriage, the elderly professor of languages voices an "impious hope" that that erstwhile revolutionary might be beaten by his peasant wife, a sentiment which elicits the final sentence of the novel. With "a firm voice," Sophia Antonovna insists, "Peter Ivanovitch is an inspired man."¹

This claim, Jocelyn Baines suggests, must be seen as "superbly ironic."² Yet the full import of such irony has not been assessed. Essentially, Peter Ivanovitch is *not* an inspired man. Instead, "the great feminist" is, as the novel demonstrates, a self-serving sham. His treatment of Tekla belies his pretended solicitude for women and proves him a complete hypocrite. Supposedly a revolutionary leader, he has no real sympathy for those whose suffering might justify some social upheaval and, in semantic self-contradiction, insists that his revolution will keep the dregs of society at the bottom. Moreover, his marriage, an attempt to seek happiness in private life, indicates that Peter Ivanovitch finally abandons cause, comrades, and the public objectives of the revolution. "And all for the sake of a peasant girl" (p. 382). Yet Sophia Antonovna, although she is an intelligent and capable woman, still admires this personally ambitious bourgeois romantic. A real revolutionary radically misestimates the qualities of a supposed revolutionary. And therein lies one of Conrad's most effective ironies. Since the essential events of the novel derive from Haldin's illusions regarding Razumov, the book begins and ends with the same basic situation. But there is a difference between the first mistake and the final one. Haldin misjudges Razumov with tragic consequences for them both. When Sophia Antonovna misjudges Peter Ivanovitch neither suffers. Error is ever present; its consequences are arbitrary, capricious, even absurd.

Sophia Antonovna is not the only one deluded at the end of the novel. Told of Nikita's double treachery, the professor of languages responds, "I had a glimpse of that brute. . . . How any of you could have been deceived for half a day passes my comprehension!" (p. 380). The one here deceived is, however, the narrator. His statement implies that, with a single glance, he can fathom the nature of another man. But his own experience should have taught him otherwise. Throughout much of the novel he was mistaken about Razumov and only when he read the latter's letter to Natalia could he finally see how his own well-meant insistence that the "friend" of the brother should befriend the sister actually affected that intended second protector. Razumov wrote: "The old man you introduced me to insisted on walking with me. I don't know who he is. He talked of you, of your lonely, helpless state, and every word of that friend of yours was egging me on to the unpardonable sin of stealing a soul. Could he have been the devil himself in the shape of an old Englishman?" (pp. 359-60). Yet this same "old Englishman" can later

believe that Nikita's essential duplicity should be immediately obvious to any discerning observer—anyone such as himself. Complacently assured of his own perspicacity, he remains as mistaken about himself as Sophia Antonovna does about Peter Ivanovitch.

Illusion, in *Under Western Eyes*, seems ubiquitous, inescapable. It is not just one particular scene but the whole book which illustrates "the invincible nature of human error" and partly plumbs "the utmost depths of self-deception" (p. 282). The narrator, for example, voicing these sentiments in reference to Sophia Antonovna's inability to fathom the truth about Razumov during the course of a lengthy interview, implies that he would have been more discerning. Yet, as just noted, he fared no better, for he too seriously misjudged Razumov. Similarly, referring to the revolutionaries' failure to appreciate Tekla's "irresistible vocation" as "a good Samaritan," he later observes: "There is not much perspicacity in the world" (p. 374). But, because it was addressed to Natalia Haldin, he immediately "regretted that observation." Remembering that she has just discovered how mistaken she was about Razumov, supposedly her brother's closest friend, the professor realizes that he has spoken most tactlessly. He is, nevertheless, still quite right. There is, in the novel, "not much perspicacity." And he is, at the time, most imperceptive to say so.

The theme of illusion, however, finds its chief focus in the character of Razumov. This young Russian's name—significantly an *assumed* name—relates to a Russian and Polish verb, *razumet*, meaning, in both languages, "to reason." By occupation he is, ironically, a student of philosophy. Yet he is continually misjudged and misjudging. Briefly, Haldin and his fellow student revolutionaries see Razumov as a sternly dedicated foe of a reactionary government. That same government sees in him a confirmed patriot who, as a secret agent, will serve to support the status quo. Razumov, however, views himself as one who modestly aspires to be merely "a celebrated old professor, decorated, possibly a Privy Councillor, one of the glories of Russia—nothing more" (p. 13). Of course, all three views prove fallacious. Razumov is not a revolutionary, not a reactionary, nor is he, as he ambitiously dreams, a likely candidate for future fame. Yet these various illusions are all interrelated by Conrad's manipulating the events of the novel so that the manner in which others are deceived about Razumov finally forces him to see that he was also equally deceived about himself.

Such a process begins with Haldin's misjudgment. His intrusion into Razumov's life entails, for the latter, an impossible dilemma but one that still must be immediately resolved. "Considering the myopic zeal of both autocratic state and revolutionaries," he cannot, as Bruce Johnson notes, remain neutral, for "inaction will be interpreted as action, and neutrality will seem hostile to both sides."³ Furthermore, doing his "patriotic" duty by going at once to the police—and his desire to gain social status certainly aligns him with society and against the revolutionaries—might also jeopardize Razumov's intended career. Why must the authorities believe that Haldin's expectations were unfounded? There is, in short, no way in which those qualities that were to bring Razumov honor can serve him in this particular situation. In fact, the more he rationally assesses his predicament, the more he realizes that he cannot be true to both his own convictions and to Haldin's misplaced trust. He thus must, in some sense, despite his plan to win public honor, privately debase himself.

Conrad's irony soon becomes more complex. When Razumov solves his first quandary by siding with the authorities, his solution soon precipitates a far more perplexing problem than the one which it was intended to resolve.⁴ Informing on Haldin brings Razumov to the attention of his government. He is thereupon required to become what he planned to be, a public servant, but not in the sense he intended. The student who aspired to be part of the superstructure of the social edifice finds himself forced to serve as one of its most hidden underpinnings. Moreover, the more capably he served, the more he would dishonor himself in his own eyes by making others, like himself, victims of a misplaced trust.

He desired to achieve renown and believed he possessed the qualities—intelligence and dedication—necessary to do so. Yet Conrad shows that, even as Razumov attempts to cope with the difficult situations that are forced upon him, he must increasingly perceive the degree to which he is dishonoring himself. His rationality thus serves primarily to reveal the extent of his failure. Therefore, attempting to salvage some vestige of his self-asserted capability, Razumov apparently decides that if he must be a rogue, he will be a thinking rogue.⁵ He will prove that he is still superior to others by manipulating their roguery. They will be scoundrels too, but stupid scoundrels. Thus Razumov requires the impulsive Kostia to steal from his own father money that is then callously thrown away. Razumov did not need cash. Instead, he wished to prove—mainly to himself—that Kostia was in no way his moral superior but definitely was his intellectual inferior. Yet such reassurance must be singularly unsatisfying, for Razumov surely realizes that he has further demeaned himself even in his attempt to prove his relative superiority.

Razumov has, therefore, a certain justification when he claims, in his final letter to Natalia, "Victor Haldin had stolen the truth of my life from me, who had nothing else in the world, and he boasted of living on through you on this earth where I had no place to lay my head" (p. 359). Such a theft cannot be extenuated by arguing, as does Christopher Cooper, that Haldin is justified in involving an unwilling accomplice because "he is of the firm conviction that Razumov is a fellow conspirator, who would therefore be more than eager to help him."⁶ Haldin's "firm conviction," more accurately his gratuitous assumption, simply indicates the pervasiveness of misjudgment throughout the novel. As John Hagan rightly observes: "By a bitterly cruel irony, Razumov's aloofness from the revolutionary students is the very thing which wins him the fatal reputation of being worthy of their confidence."⁷

Haldin himself is also unconvincing when he attempts to defend his act. "It occurred to me that you—you have no one belonging to you—no ties, no one to suffer for it if this came out by some means" (p. 19). The assumptions implicit in such a statement are callously self-serving. As Razumov sees, the very fact that he has little, no family or position, ostensibly justifies Haldin who jeopardizes what little he has, his lonely independence and his hope for future fame. Not surprisingly, when he cannot immediately escape from the threat that Haldin represents, Razumov informs on him and so assures his capture and execution.

But Haldin, after his death, continues to haunt Razumov literally and figuratively, while Razumov continues to despise the man who has destroyed his plan of life and to plot further revenge against the destroyer. He can do so because, before his arrest, Haldin did suggest he would continue to survive through those who loved him. What at first seemed another turn of the screw—an unintended taunt that further emphasized the contrast between

Razumov who was totally alone and Haldin who was both a brother and a son—ironically serves to provide Razumov with a way of avenging himself on Haldin despite the latter's demise. When he meets Natalia and finds her, as her brother claimed, trusting and unsuspecting, he sees that the man he continues to hate need not live on in the person of the sister. Her life can be destroyed. Such a revenge, Razumov rationalizes, would be crudely just. He shall eradicate Haldin's dream just as Haldin eradicated his.

Yet Razumov's basic assumption—that another is mostly responsible for the chaos in his own life—is not ultimately tenable. He aspired to public renown and planned to achieve this end by becoming, first, a distinguished professor and, finally, a famous public servant. Conrad, however, makes it ironically evident that not all professors are distinguished, not all public servants famous. Councillor Mikulin, for example, is one embodiment of Razumov's aspirations.⁸ As such, he proves that a high-placed government official is not necessarily renowned. This councillor was distinguished only among "his intimates" and only as "an enlightened patron of the art of female dancing" (p. 305). His position brings him no real fame—only the infamy of a fall made more infamous by the fact that it was not deserved but bureaucratically imposed by the same bureaucracy he devotedly served. Mikulin, moreover, is not the only possible future personified in the novel. As Robert Secor observes, "the professor Razumov seeks to become is what the narrator already is."⁹ The presence in the book of this obtuse old man, one pathetically isolated from the world around him and consistently misjudging himself and his few associates, mocks Razumov's aspirations even more than does the career of Councillor Mikulin. Nevertheless, throughout most of the novel, Razumov blames his ruined hopes on Haldin's error instead of recognizing the foolishness of his own original ambitions.

He seeks revenge. By so doing, he also hopes to demonstrate his capabilities; he will show at least an aptitude for evil. Yet his second plan, like his first one, is subverted by an unexpected presence. Razumov, as he leaves Mrs. Haldin, after telling her of Ziemianitch's supposed remorse and suicide, unexpectedly encounters her daughter who had been futilely seeking him through the streets of Geneva. As they meet, Natalia's relief matches his dismay. "Her presence in the ante-room was as unforeseen as the apparition of her brother had been" (p. 341); as unforeseen as Haldin's presence in Razumov's room. After the perturbing meeting with the mother, Razumov immediately finds himself facing an incomparably more difficult interview. But even before this interview begins, he is undone by one seemingly insignificant act. To show how openly and honestly she will talk with him, Natalia removes her veil.

Razumov at once discovers that he cannot repeat to the daughter the fiction he has imposed upon the mother. That discovery does not derive solely from a growing love for his prospective victim. For some time his love and his basic plot have been at odds with each other. Razumov, however, has not recognized the significance of this internal conflict and thus has not seen that, in some way, he must be deceiving himself. Recognition comes with the removal of the veil. When he really sees Natalia, Razumov also begins to perceive how much he has misled himself, how little he understood his own desires, and how he is the one he "betrayed most basely" (p. 361).

As he later attests in his letter: "It was as if your pure brow bore a light which fell on me, searched my heart and saved me from ignominy, from ultimate undoing. And it saved you too" (p. 361).¹⁰ By looking at Natalia,

Razumov apparently achieved a double perspective on himself that led to a fuller understanding of the implications of his plot and a more general awareness of what adhering to it would indicate about his own confused nature. In other words, he recognized himself in her and Haldin in himself. Must she be, like him, a victim? And more to the point, must he be what he believes her brother to be—the despised undoer of another's life? He would be even worse than Haldin who merely assumed a trust; Razumov has cultivated a trust in order to betray it. Prompted by such considerations, Razumov begins to perceive that the last largest step in a progressive degeneration would be entirely of his own making. He therefore confesses, not to atone for informing on Haldin but “to purge himself of the guilt of contriving the destruction of Natalie.”¹¹

Razumov's confession to Natalia does not, however, presage any abatement of illusion. Conrad makes it quite clear that mistakes and misjudgments continue. Significantly, the whole confession scene is framed by the narrator's erroneous suppositions. The elderly professor first assumes that he knows what is about to transpire and even congratulates himself on his foresight. “I could not mistake the significance of this late visit . . . The true cause dawned upon me: he had discovered that he needed her—and she was moved by the same feeling” (p. 347). Such an assumption is, of course, doubly wrong. The narrator can “mistake the significance” of the visit and immediately discovers that he has done so. Anticipating a tender love scene that would eternally unite the young Russians, he witnesses instead the completely unexpected confession that forever severs them.

He is not chastened by this error. As the scene concludes, the narrator makes a second mistake which is merely an inversion of his previous one. He now imagines that he comprehends the significance of what has just occurred: “The meaning of what I had seen reached my mind with a staggering shock” (p. 356). He thereupon elucidates for Miss Haldin. “‘That miserable wretch has carried off your veil!’ I cried, in the scared, deadened voice of an awful discovery.” The narrator's obtuseness here reaches comic proportions. Blindly oblivious to the larger implications of Razumov's confession, his exaggerated horror derives from one insignificant act that he nevertheless views as an unforgivable breach of decorum. No gentleman should ever take any personal garment from a lady. Natalia, however, is obviously not concerned with the minor matter of a purloined veil when she answers him: “It is impossible to be more unhappy. . . . It is impossible. . . . I feel my heart becoming like ice” (p. 356).

The narrator, throughout the conclusion of the novel, also insists on maintaining a more general illusion, one that he lets waver only once. When Natalia removes her veil and thus encourages Razumov to see through a metaphoric veil behind which he has hitherto hidden, the old professor too feels a momentary impulse to discard one of his own pervasive pretenses. As “she raised her hands above her head to untie her veil,” that movement “displayed for an instant the seductive grace of her youthful figure” (p. 347). Shadowed by her hat rim, her eyes briefly “had an enticing lustre” (p. 348). Prompted by the romantic triumph he believes Razumov is about to achieve, the narrator momentarily sees Natalia as a seductively desirable woman. But the danger soon passes. The professor will not recognize that he vicariously participates in Razumov's ostensible romance to protect himself from the problem of having to attend to his own or that he pretends to a safe relationship with the young lady as a substitute for a very different relationship the possibility of which he must not let himself consider. Throughout most of the novel, he

seems, in fact, perversely determined to deprive Natalia of the female sexuality he here briefly perceives. Earlier, "her glance was as direct and trustful as that of a young man" (p. 102); her handshake expressed "a sort of exquisite virility" (p. 118); her voice was "fascinating with its masculine . . . quality" (p. 141). But even these claims suggest other feelings. The virility is exquisite; the masculine voice fascinates. The reader need not, therefore, unreservedly accept the professor's occasional proclamations that he is attached to Natalia only as a former teacher and safely ancient friend.

Perhaps because he earlier faltered, the narrator has, at the end of the novel, managed to make his pretence much more secure. He will be a disinterested friend, so disinterested that, as a friend, he can counsel perpetual separation. In his last encounter with Natalia—a visit that begins on a safely mundane level ("we exchanged a few words about her health, mine," p. 372)—she tells him that she has accepted his advice and will return permanently to Russia. The narrator notes: "It was all to be as I had wished it. And it was to be for life. We should never see each other again. Never!" And then, with crowning irony, Conrad has him add, "I gathered this success to my breast" (p. 373). He must be satisfied with such success, for he shall never embrace the girl. Intent on demonstrating that their relationship is completely respectable according to the sterile proprieties of Geneva, he shall never even see her again. Illusion, originally designed to make his association with Natalia comfortably proper, finally costs him that relationship. At the end of the novel, his one approximation of any real involvement with another has ended and he has "lost his place in the human community."¹²

The professor sustains still another illusion to the conclusion of the book. He continues to be most impressed by the supposed superior qualities of Miss Haldin. Even while she is telling him that her future course of action will be precisely as he "wished it," he "marvelled at" her "perfection of collected independence" (p. 373). He claims that her final words, "at last the anguish of hearts shall be extinguished in love," represent a deep "wisdom" and sees her leaving his life "wedded to an invincible belief in the advent of loving concord" (p. 377). But such an assessment only reflects Natalia's own view of herself, a view that her actions substantially compromise.

Natalia regularly advocates "loving concord." When Razumov asks her if she believes that revenge is a duty, she emphatically responds: "Listen, Kirylo Sidorovitch. I believe that the future will be merciful to us all. Revolutionist and reactionary, victim and executioner, betrayer and betrayed, they shall all be pitied together when the light breaks on our black sky at last. Pitied and forgotten; for without that there can be no union and no love" (p. 353). But she herself soon fails to be merciful and does not abide by her pronouncement when Razumov seems the "reactionary," the "executioner," and the "betrayer."

Razumov looked behind a veil to see what the extent of Natalia's suffering would be and what that suffering might mean as an index to his own nature. Natalia, however, cannot return the act. She does not see through the veil in which he wrapped his final message to perceive that the written confession, attempting to explain the nature and cause of his duplicity, is also a plea for compassion. When he suffers the full consequences of his confessions, confessions prompted by his love for her, she does not visit him in the hospital and even smiles complacently as she observes that Tekla disapproves of her for this lack of sympathy. Her rhetoric of forgiveness rings false. As Claire Rosenfield observes, "she 'loves suffering mankind' but not a suffering man," a man who suffers, in the final analysis, mostly for her sake.¹³

"The truth shining in you," Razumov wrote to Natalia, "drew the truth out of me" (p. 361). But Conrad ironically suggests that no truth shone in Natalia.¹⁴ Razumov, because of his love, confesses to free himself from duplicity. He will no longer be deluded or deluding. Yet the love that prompts his confession is itself founded largely on illusion. Moreover, if he anticipated any understanding and forgiveness—and his last letter suggests that he does—Razumov is necessarily mistaken. In this respect resembling the narrator, he accepted Natalia on her own terms and believed she was what she claimed to be. Only when it is too late to profit from such knowledge is he given the opportunity to discover he was wrong.

Conrad also demonstrates that Razumov continues to be the victim of other misjudgments. He, for example, terminates his confession to the revolutionaries by claiming he has rendered himself "free from falsehood, from remorse—independent of every single human being on this earth" (p. 368).

Immediately thereafter Nikita puts out his eardrums. Instead of being independent of all, he is further isolated from all. His deafness, in fact, soon makes him totally dependent on Tekla, who, after the accident with the tramcar, tends him because she sees in him both a hero of the revolution and a reembodyment of her dead "poor Andrei." Razumov, who dreamed of fame, is thus, at the end of the novel, reduced to a helpless substitute child, a crippled ersatz hero, and a dying replacement for an originally pathetic lover.

Yet Jackson W. Heimer can still conclude a recent article with the assertion that Razumov is finally fully redeemed. "By the novel's end, love has helped him move from almost Nietzschean aloofness, as it does Raskolnikov, into the world of men. He becomes *l'homme engagé*—the king wise in mind and heart."¹⁵ One must insist that he becomes nothing of the sort. A deaf man slowly dying, tended by a substitute mother who sees him as a pseudo-lover and labors under the illusion that he is a revolutionary hero, Razumov has not elevated himself above the common level of man and in no way achieves the greatness he originally desired. His final condition is described by Sophia Antonovna who tells of where and how he lives. When we visualize him in "a little two-roomed wooden house, in the suburb of some very small town, hiding within the high plank-fence of a yard overgrown with nettles" and "crippled, ill, getting weaker every day" (p. 379), we certainly do not see a man who has claimed some lofty position in life.

Heimer's comparison of Razumov and Raskolnikov is also dubious. There are, admittedly, definite similarities between the two novels, and Conrad certainly wrote *Under Western Eyes* with a conscious awareness of what Dostoyevsky had done in *Crime and Punishment*. But Razumov's final condition in no way resembles Raskolnikov's, and Conrad's conclusion does not parallel Dostoyevsky's. If anything, Conrad parodies the ending of the earlier novel. Raskolnikov, accepting a deserved punishment, is sent to Siberia. His eastward journey brings, finally, a recognition of the transcendent truth represented by Sonia—who fully forgives the murder of her friend to love and accompany the murderer—and a consequent regeneration and rebirth. Razumov, after a grotesque punishment, one which he does not really deserve and one inflicted by a man far more guilty than he, is abandoned by the woman he loves and goes eastward to stagnation and impending death. His Sonia is Tekla, not the embodiment of any higher truth but a disillusioned idealist idealistically serving her most recent illusions.

As several critics have noted, *Under Western Eyes* is essentially concerned with the nature of ideas, with problems of how men think and fail to think.¹⁶ Avron Fleishman, for example, maintains that "the maturity of the novel lies in its focus upon the intellectual in the modern world."¹⁷ Tony Tanner claims that the novel portrays "the tragedy of 'a man with a mind.'"¹⁸ Dostoyevsky, too, was aware of this tragedy. In *Crime and Punishment* he dramatized the sterility inherent in calculated rationality. Raskolnikov, freeing himself from all external limitations to follow the promptings of his own egotistical rationality, "acts out the terrifying consequence of being free."¹⁹ But Dostoyevsky envisions an escape from such burdensome freedom. He resolves the basic issue of his novel "by nudging Raskolnikov into God's camp."²⁰ A Christian who selflessly serves God and loves his fellow men escapes from the rationalist's error and illusion, the calculator's divisive concern for self.

Conrad provides no such solution. At the end of *Under Western Eyes*, Razumov, deaf and dying, is still mostly distinguished, as Sophia Antonovna observes, by his basic capabilities. "He is intelligent. He has ideas. . . . He talks well, too" (p. 379). These are the precise capabilities that he possessed earlier in the novel. And the novel attests to how little they served him. His intelligence can ultimately demonstrate only how disastrously he misapplied it in his past, how often he was wrong. Reason cannot, in Conrad's world, transcend its own limits to lead man to some more dependable method of governing his life. But reason, although most limited, is still not so limited as to overlook its own limitations. Conrad here is cruelly ironic; Razumov's tragedy derives from the paradoxical possibility that a man can see clearly enough to see that he is almost blind.

The novel, as Tanner observes, "is the compelling account of a man forced into wide-awakeness, a man unwillingly made intimate with the nightmare that hovers forever just under the complacencies of civilized existence."²¹ Dostoyevsky suggested that one could awaken from the nightmare, could discover a solution to the problem of human obtuseness and thus transcend the limitations of reason. For Conrad, one awakens to the nightmare, awakens to discover more fully the extent of human fallibility.

NOTES

¹Joseph Conrad, *Under Western Eyes*, XXII (New York: Doubleday and Page, 1924), p. 382. Hereafter references to this edition will be made parenthetically in the text.

²Jocelyn Baines, *Joseph Conrad: A Critical Biography* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1960), p. 363.

³Bruce Johnson, *Conrad's Models of Mind* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1971), p. 147.

⁴John Hagan documents the degree to which Razumov has been condemned by some critics as egotistically selfish and seen as meriting his subsequent fate. Such a reading, he argues, in "Conrad's *Under Western Eyes: The Question of Razumov's Guilt and Remorse*," *Studies in the Novel*, I (1969), 311, "does violence to Conrad's considerable moral subtlety, reducing the novel perilously close to popular adventure and romance." Johnson has also noted that Razumov is not confronted by any obvious moral choice, since "in aiding Haldin he would have betrayed himself fully as much as he has by reporting [Haldin] to the police" (p. 147).

⁵Placing undue emphasis on the virtues of reason, Razumov, at a moral and intellectual impasse, maintained, earlier in the novel, that if he was a reed, he was at least a "thinking reed" and thus superior to "the unthinking forces that are about to crush him out of existence" (p. 89). The consciousness of a supposed superiority can, in such circumstances, hardly be gratifying.

⁶Christopher Cooper, *Conrad and the Human Dilemma* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1970), p. 69.

⁷Hagan, p. 317.

⁸Ted E. Boyle, in *Symbol and Meaning in the Fiction of Joseph Conrad* (The Hague: Mouton, 1965), p. 208, observes that "Mikulin is obviously an older Razumov."

⁹Robert Secor, "The Function of the Narrator in *Under Western Eyes*," *Conradiana*, 3 (1971), 30.

¹⁰Conrad, however, almost comically undercuts the romantic element in Razumov's assertion by having him pay homage not only to Natalia's "pure forehead" but to her "low" forehead as well.

¹¹Hagan, p. 313.

¹²Secor, p. 36.

¹³Claire Rosenfield, *Paradise of Snakes: An Archetypal Analysis of Conrad's Political Novels* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1967), p. 159.

¹⁴Perhaps she later redeems herself by her "good service" in Russia (p. 378), but Natalia nevertheless fails both Razumov and the test of her convictions effected by his confession.

¹⁵Jackson W. Heimer, "The Betrayer as Intellectual: Conrad's *Under Western Eyes*," *Polish Review*, 12 (1967), p. 68.

¹⁶Conrad himself, in a letter to Edward Garnett reprinted in *Letters from Joseph Conrad, 1895-1924*, ed. Edward Garnett (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1928), pp. 232-33, asked: "Is it possible that you haven't seen that in this book I am concerned with nothing but ideas, to the exclusion of everything else?"

¹⁷Avron Fleishman, *Conrad's Politics* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1967), pp. 222-23.

¹⁸Tony Tanner, "Nightmare and Complacency: Razumov and the Western Eye," *The Critical Quarterly*, 4 (1962), 213.

¹⁹Edward Wasiolek, *Dostoyevsky: The Major Fiction* (Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1964), p. 67.

²⁰Wasiolek, p. 84.

²¹Tanner, p. 214.