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Under Western Eyes as an Illustration of the Consequences of Loneliness

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Abstract

The protagonist in Joseph Conrad's novel *Under Western Eyes*, Razumov is a man who suffers from loneliness. Although, at first, he was a man who possessed the advantages of youth, education and health to make his life fruitful and enjoyable, he could not escape from being a victim of his own wrong doings that can be said to have happened due to his lacking in sharpness and decisiveness. When he ceases his agonizing fear to confront himself and his own wrong doings, he realizes that he is a shameful person. Together with shame, there comes punishment, which is justified by Razumov himself. Being aware of the fact that he can become neither Ziemianitch nor Haldin, he finally internalizes the idea of being "no one" as pointed out by Miss Haldin at the end of the novel. As suggested by Miss Haldin, all humans will be pitied, in the end, no matter which ideology they come from. In this sense, being "no one" serves as a good enough categorization for Razumov who looked for a place for himself in life; at the beginning of the novel, through material success and, in the second half of the novel, through feelings. Razumov is the representation of an ordinary man who is in search of a place for himself and who has his own agitations driven from past experiences. In a world that is described through the binaries of the good and bad, he is the representation of the man who stands alone without a strong adherence to a point of view in life and will end up being categorized as "no one".

Keywords: Joseph Conrad, *Under Western Eyes*, Loneliness, Novel.

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The Polish-British author Joseph Conrad is renowned for his novels like *Heart of Darkness*, *The Secret Agent*, *Lord Jim* and *Under Western Eyes*, which address profound themes of human existence and nature. And, Conrad's much acclaimed novel *Under Western Eyes* depicts the political turmoil of nineteenth-century Russia. The protagonist of the novel, Razumov, is a young university student in St. Petersburg, Russia. Although he is a much admired, young, and healthy man, as a result of his unsound decisions and deluded vision, he experiences unfortunate events which follow up each other; and, Razumov finds himself entrapped in an unfortunate structure from which he is unable to escape. In my essay, I will seek to identify the elements of loneliness experienced by Razumov which eventually lead to the destructive finale of Razumov's story.

In *Under Western Eyes*, the character Razumov is a lonely man. He lives in a state of alienation from his own country and his own people. He does not have an interest in the welfare of the state or the society he lives in. As it is pictured in the novel: "Razumov was one of those men who, living in a period of mental and political unrest, keep an instinctive hold on normal, practical, everyday life. He was aware of the emotional tension of his time; he even responded to it in an indefinite way. But his main concern was with his work, his studies, and with his own future" (Conrad, 2015, p. 9). Thus, it can be claimed that he can be characterized as a selfish man unattached from the community he lives in.

In his search for honor and virtue, Razumov drifts away from the righteous path. Razumov is after fallacious ideals. While he seeks the ways of being called a good and an honorable man, what he is really after is an important place for himself in the society and making a name for himself through getting the silver medal. As a man who was seeking a place in the society and trying to make a name for himself through getting the silver medal, he seeks for the ways to be called as the good and the honorable one. In the novel, this is openly stated:

He hankered after the silver medal. The prize was offered by the Ministry of Education; the names of the competitors would be submitted to the Minister himself. The mere fact of trying would be considered meritorious in the higher quarters; and the possessor of the prize would have a claim to an administrative appointment of the better sort after he had taken his degree. The student Razumov in an access of elation forgot the dangers menacing the stability of the institutions which give rewards and appointments. (Conrad, 2015, p. 9)

His desire of arranging a name and a place for himself in the society is also apparent in this statement of his:

But a celebrated professor was a somebody. Distinction would convert the label Razumov into an honoured name. There was nothing strange in the student Razumov's wish for distinction. A man's real life is that accorded to him in the thoughts of other men by reason of respect or natural love. Returning home on the day of the attempt on Mr. de P——'s life Razumov resolved to have a good try for the silver medal. (Conrad, 2015, p. 11)

As a lonely person, he is unattached from what goes around him in the country. Also, his mistake of spying on the Russian revolutionists is in line with his desire for fame or, in other words, a place for himself in the society. However, he does not find redemption in his attempt either as “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” (Davidson, 1977, p. 26).

In his journey of inviting Haldin into his house, then, of giving him in and then of spying and, finally, of his epic confession; Razumov seems to be completely unable to decide which action will bring him good; or, putting it more straight, what is good for himself. As Michel states:

According to his conservative principles he delivers up the assassin Haldin. But he finds he has betrayed himself as well when he followed these dictates. He is conscious of his mistake almost immediately. But society condones it, for the Prince who is his natural father and the General to whom he reports Haldin's whereabouts agree on the moral soundness of Razumov's action. (Michel, 1961, p. 132)

Right after the moment when he realizes that he has done something wrong, he, this time, attempts to do something else to fix the former problem. However, the outcome does not change and every step he takes leads to destruction.

Through love and trust Razumov attains self-knowledge and realizes that in betraying Haldin he has betrayed himself. His contempt for others a sense of scorn which now extends even to himself has become a viper in his soul which can only be exorcised by confession. After Razumov recognizes this point and a bases himself before Miss Haldin, everything else is explanatory and not dramatic necessity. When Conrad failed to develop this change in Razumov as the sole climax of the plot, as the psychological inevitability of Razumov's story then he committed many grievous errors esthetically the worst of which is the ending. (Karl, 1959, p. 325-326)

The reason why Razumov fails to produce an action that will be in his welfare as well as others' is because his actions are not in the service of pure goodness. And, this is what brings Razumov to his downfall. The assassinated Mr. de P.'s statement about sin and stability is quite interesting in this sense:

In the preamble of a certain famous State paper he had declared once that "the thought of liberty has never existed in the Act of the Creator. From the multitude of men's counsel nothing could come but revolt and disorder; and revolt and disorder in a world created for obedience and stability is sin. It was not Reason but Authority which expressed the Divine Intention. God was the Autocrat of the Universe...." It may be that the man who made this declaration believed that heaven itself was bound to protect him in his remorseless defence of Autocracy on this earth. (Conrad, 2015, p. 7)

In Mr. de P's perspective, action is nothing but sin in this world that is created for stability. This stability requires the person to do nothing in an attempt to find goodness. In other words, he should sit and wait under the autocracy of others and let them decide what is right for him. In Razumov's case, Razumov "has discovered, for example, that the consequences of his decisions are more complex and problematic than he had initially anticipated" (Cousineau, 1986, p. 29). At this point, a question arrives: Did Razumov choose to act or not when he gave away Haldin? From my perspective, Razumov chose to act but his motivations were wrong and this drove him further and further away from getting the chance of attaining good. Thus, it can be claimed that "Razumov redeems himself 'by acknowledging the demonic self as his own and giving himself over to the course of action that it suggests'" (Cousineau, 1986, p. 28-29). And, like a boomerang in his attempt to achieve action, he is bound to return to his starting point of inaction in his each and every attempt. The idea of stability turns into his curse from which he is unable to run away. "Razumov thought: 'I am being crushed—and I can't even run away.' Other men had somewhere a corner of the earth—some little house in the provinces where they had a right to take their troubles. A material refuge. He had nothing. He had not even a moral refuge—the refuge of confidence. To whom could he go with this tale—in all this great, great land?" (Conrad, 2015, p. 24).

Razumov's giving in Haldin is an action done not for the sake of goodness but with other agenda; and this can also be defined as an outcome of panic and fear which may fail to be qualified as a truly good reaction. Thus, "His betrayal, suffused by his anguish and attacked by his reason, becomes the more sordid because he stands by it. He sees even the very moment of his becoming safe (by virtue of the suicide of someone assumed to be the

betrayal) as being absurd” (Michel, 1961, p. 132). His denial of the fact that he has done something wrong makes his diverting from the true path much more likely. He says:

Betray. A great word. What is betrayal? They talk of a man betraying his country, his friends, his sweetheart. There must be a moral bond first. All a man can betray is his conscience. And how is my conscience engaged here; by what bond of common faith, of common conviction, am I obliged to let that fanatical idiot drag me down with him? On the contrary—every obligation of true courage is the other way. (Conrad, 2015, p. 28)

The fact that Razumov lacks in a moral direction is the reason behind the fatal maneuvers he makes. “In murdering Haldin, he has also murdered time, and the slain dimension cuts him off from the world of light as much as the slain man” (Gurko, 1960, p. 446). Lost in space and time, thus pathless and timeless, Razumov is aware that he is a solitary man with a lack of a path which leads him to a direct circumstance. Gurko comments on this lack of directive in his life in this way:

Though a student for some years, he has made no friends, his air of forbidding aloofness discouraging contact. Paradoxically, this very air is taken as a mark of intellectual profundity and moral purity, as the sign of "an unstained, lofty and solitary existence." Unknown to himself, Razumov has acquired a reputation as a man in whom one could have confidence. His isolation, and the unintended respect and admiration which it accidentally breeds, are to be the very elements that plunge him into tragedy. (Gurko, 1960, p. 445)

His loneliness comes with birth as he lives without any bond to any mother or father or any relative;

Officially and in fact without a family (for the daughter of the Archpriest had long been dead), no home influences had shaped his opinions or his feelings. He was as lonely in the world as a man swimming in the deep sea. The word Razumov was the mere label of a solitary individuality. There were no Razumovs belonging to him anywhere. His closest parentage was defined in the statement that he was a Russian. Whatever good he expected from life would be given to or withheld from his hopes by that connexion alone. This immense parentage suffered from the throes of internal dissensions, and he shrank mentally from the fray as a good-natured man may shrink from taking definite sides in a violent family quarrel. (Conrad, 2015, p. 9)

And, he acquires his loneliness as an incurable illness. That’s why he sees that his every attempt is nothing but a mere trial in vain. The memoir of the previous year’s prize winner

serves as a proof of Razumov's hypothesis that everything he achieves is bound to be nothing but a volatile attempt.

He was a quiet, unassuming young man: "Forgive me," he had said with a faint apologetic smile and taking up his cap, "I am going out to order up some wine. But I must first send a telegram to my folk at home. I say! Won't the old people make it a festive time for the neighbours for twenty miles around our place." Razumov thought there was nothing of that sort for him in the world. His success would matter to no one. (Conrad, 2015, p. 9)

As Davidson claims, Razumov thinks that "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" (Davidson, 1977, p. 25). In the depth of the immensity of his suffering Razumov cries out:

"You are a son, a brother, a nephew, a cousin—I don't know what—to no end of people. I am just a man. Here I stand before you. A man with a mind. Did it ever occur to you how a man who had never heard a word of warm affection or praise in his life would think on matters on which you would think first with or against your class, your domestic tradition—your fireside prejudices?... Did you ever consider how a man like that would feel? I have no domestic tradition. I have nothing to think against. My tradition is historical. What have I to look back to but that national past from which you gentlemen want to wrench away your future? Am I to let my intelligence, my aspirations towards a better lot, be robbed of the only thing it has to go upon at the will of violent enthusiasts? You come from your province, but all this land is mine—or I have nothing. No doubt you shall be looked upon as a martyr some day—a sort of hero—a political saint. But I beg to be excused. I am content in fitting myself to be a worker. And what can you people do by scattering a few drops of blood on the snow? On this Immensity. On this unhappy Immensity! I tell you," he cried, in a vibrating, subdued voice, and advancing one step nearer the bed, "that what it needs is not a lot of haunting phantoms that I could walk through—but a man!" (Conrad, 2015, p. 46)

However, Razumov is not completely blind to the very fact that he is also dishonoring himself through his actions. When he was on duty in favor of the autocracy, he also knew that this was his finale:

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. (Davidson, 1977, p. 25)

In this perspective, it can be claimed that the journey to the ultimate goodness should be within the person's soul rather than on an external ground. Thus, if the person wants to be good then he should first acknowledge that he should be directed by his soul. Haldin puts a finger on how important soul is in one's life and warns Razumov:

Men like me leave no posterity, but their souls are not lost. No man's soul is ever lost. It works for itself—or else where would be the sense of self-sacrifice, of martyrdom, of conviction, of faith—the labours of the soul? What will become of my soul when I die in the way I must die—soon—very soon perhaps? It shall not perish. Don't make a mistake, Razumov. (Conrad, 2015, p. 16)

Haldin's such belief in the eternity of the human soul represents the idea that the labors done by the person will not evaporate the minute he dies. The labors and the ultimate effects of them will perish even after the body is rotten. Haldin says: "The Russian soul that lives in all of us. It has a future. It has a mission, I tell you, or else why should I have been moved to do this—reckless—like a butcher—in the middle of all these innocent people—scattering death—I! I!... I wouldn't hurt a fly!" (Conrad, 2015, p. 16). In this perspective, all the sacrifices done by all these killings are done for a greater purpose: for the future welfare of the state. Haldin states that this is the responsibility of every citizen and calls Razumov to act and help the revolutionists in their aim. Thus, the sins that are committed may be redeemed in the eyes of a great power and all the wrong doings can be forgiven for they were leading people to a greater and virtuous purpose. That is the reason why Haldin is ready to die when the moment comes; he is not after living a long life as he thinks that the dimension he will go right after he dies, carries much more importance than the material world he lives in right now. Haldin consoles Razumov by saying: "Why be anxious for me? They can kill my body, but they cannot exile my soul from this world. I tell you what—I believe in this world so much that I cannot conceive eternity otherwise than as a very long life. That is perhaps the reason I am so ready to die" (Conrad, 2015, p. 44). This is why he does not even care enough to hate the people who torture him on earth. He says: "Haunt it! Truly, the oppressors of

thought which quickens the world, the destroyers of souls which aspire to perfection of human dignity, they shall be haunted. As to the destroyers of my mere body, I have forgiven them beforehand” (Conrad, 2015, p. 45).

Could Razumov have been saved from his troubles if he followed those instructions given by Haldin? As a devoted man to his discourse in order to create a better future for the citizens of his country and risking all that he has got, he shows courage which is an important element in this foretold journey. While Haldin can be associated with strong feelings and irrationality, Razumov is just the opposite of him. Razumov “has been a faithful believer in the intellectual life and has always tried to regulate his activities in accordance with a strict logic of profit and loss” (Karl, 1959, p. 316). However, as each of them plays the role that is predestined for the other one, they shift places. “As Razumov later points out to Haldin the latter has family connection to fall back upon, while he, Razumov, has no one; he is just ‘a man with a mind’ (Karl, 1959, p. 315). Razumov says: “I have no domestic tradition. I have nothing to think against. My traditional is historical. You [Haldin] come from your province but all this land is mine-or I have nothing again identifies himself with the now equal” (Conrad, 2015, p. 47). Thus, in this shift, there is a tie of brotherhood between them because “after Haldin leaves to fall into the police trap, Razumov again identifies himself with the now equally isolated revolutionary and in their common rootlessness they become spiritual brother” (Karl, 1959, p. 315). In this context, logic does not bring salvation; a strong belief, a strict discourse and devotion are the only ways of salvation of the human being. However late it is, Razumov, in the end, understands this. As Karl states: “Once Razumov recognizes that a pact with logic is a pact with the devil, he becomes spiritually cleansed, and his confessions first to Miss Haldin and then to the revolutionaries, are the fruits of his conversion” (Karl, 1959, p. 317).

As a result of his ultimate belief in eternity of the soul, Haldin thinks that his life should have a meaning and utility – and in his attempt to make Razumov’s life inherit a meaning, such a conversation occurs between the two:

“Kirylo Sidorovitch,” said the other, flinging off his cap, ‘we are not perhaps in exactly the same camp. Your judgment is more philosophical. You are a man of few words, but I haven't met anybody who dared to doubt the generosity of your sentiments. There is a solidity about your character which cannot exist without courage.’”

“That is what I was saying to myself,” he continued, “as I dodged in the woodyard down by the river-side. “He has a strong character this young man,” I said to myself. “He does not throw his soul to the winds.” (Conrad, 2015, p. 12)

However, Razumov does not seem to be very hopeful in this respect. Razumov questions how his life can be defined. “What was his life? Insignificant; no good to anyone; a mere festivity. It would end some fine day in his getting his skull split with a champagne bottle in a drunken brawl. At such times, too, when men were sacrificing themselves to ideas. But he could never get any ideas into his head. His head wasn't worth anything better than to be split by a champagne bottle” (Conrad, 2015, p. 60). When he is asked for help by Haldin, the first image comes to his mind regarding his future is far off from being described as desirable: “He saw his youth pass away from him in misery and half starvation—his strength give way, his mind become an abject thing. He saw himself creeping, broken down and shabby, about the streets—dying unattended in some filthy hole of a room, or on the sordid bed of a Government hospital” (Conrad, 2015, p. 16).

Quite interestingly Razumov who at the beginning disregarded his spiritual side, experiences his sufferings first in this spiritual side of his. As Madran claims: “His spiritual collapse begins with his moral conflicts. His tragedy begins in his soul, and the external action only serves to reveal his psychological alienation and loneliness. Razumov must pass through an excruciatingly painful split in his soul in order to arrive at an understanding of himself” (Madran, 2006, p. 239). Thus, the hallucinating and mentally imbalanced Razumov is a result of this painful split in his soul: “Conrad makes the reader analyze Razumov’s conflicts by his inner voices. The dilemma he has is triggered with the hallucinations he sees” (Yağlıdere, 2013, p. 98). An example to his hallucinations can be the one in which he saw Haldin:

This hallucination had such a solidity of aspect that the first movement of Razumov was to reach for his pocket to assure himself that the key of his rooms were there. But he checked the impulse with a disdainful curve of his lips. He understood. His thought, concentrated intensely on the figure left lying on his bed, had culminated in this extraordinary illusion of the sight. Razumov tackled the phenomenon calmly. With a stern face, without a check, and gazing far beyond the vision, he walked on, experiencing nothing but a slight tightening of the chest. After passing he turned his head for a glance, and saw only the unbroken track of his footsteps over the place where the breast of the phantom had been lying. (Conrad, 2015, p. 27)

Here, what Razumov tries to do is, as Madran puts it, is “to exorcise the ghost by walking over its chest. Razumov’s reaction to the hallucination dramatizes with extraordinary force the full ambiguity of his predicament. It is the product of his obsessive concentration on his uninvited quest” (Madran, 2006, p. 238). The phantom is responded by Razumov “by treating it as a clinical symptom of a diseased, guilt-ridden psyche” (Madran, 2006, p. 238). However, all the pains that he suffers is essential for him to arrive to a clear understanding of who he is and where he stands: “The burden gets heavier than before. For Razumov, the life is unbearable, and it impossible to turn back to his early life. This agony in his soul is namely essential for him to arrive at an understanding of himself” (Yağlıdere, 2013, p. 99). Just as the agony of his soul was necessary, it was also necessary that his body gets in line with this agony of his soul. The tragedy that was initiated in the soul then moves to his body with the inescapable outcome of his confessions. He is beaten to death and deafened by Nikita. When he confesses, he states that he is “free from falsehood, from remorse—independent of every single human being on this earth” (Conrad, 2015, p. 267). Although at the start of the novel Razumov was a man who was dreaming of fame, he is, “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” (Davidson, 1977, p. 29). As a man who is incapable of doing any physical activity, Razumov has blockaded another path that leads to goodness. The relation between the body and soul is particularly important in that Razumov, as a character who only believed in the earthly good and success, comes to the understanding that the soul and feelings might be more important now that he has fallen in love with Miss Haldin. However, as a punishment given by the revolutionaries, his bodily wellbeing is taken away from him and this leaves him with an unassembled unity in the path that leads to good. “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” (Davidson, 1977, p. 29). However, for Sophia Antonovna, Razumov, although he is deaf and dying, is still a distinguished figure. She says: “He is intelligent. He has ideas. . . . He talks well, too” (Conrad, 2015, p. 276). At the beginning of the novel, Haldin has made a similar description of Razumov: “A man of ideas—and a man of action too. But you are very deep, Kirylo. There's no getting to the bottom of your mind. Not for fellows like me. But we all agreed that you must be preserved for our country” (Conrad, 2015, p. 61).

At this point, this question should come to mind: Then, what prevented Razumov from acting in the direction of the good? What did lead him to his loneliness? Why did he become a victim of despotism? Panichas claims that fear is the ultimate answer to those questions:

A man may destroy everything within himself. But he cannot destroy fear. Indeed, from the moment of his encounter with Haldin it is fear that possesses and drives Razumov in all of his actions his moods, feelings, and decisions that would permanently, even fatally, affect him and also the lives of those who come into any contact with him. Increasingly the external world presses against Razumov's world of solitude and the sense of order that it seems to provide him. His isolation defines and strengthens his control over his life. (Panichas, 1998, p. 361)

This orderly life of his is shattered by the appearance of Haldin. "In a sense Haldin is the destroyer of Razumov's ordered, if not innocent, world. Extremism, in a word, now invades Razumov's private world; and he feels overpowered by its antagonist spirit; indeed, this can even be termed the spectre of ideology casting a dark shadow over human existence" (Davidson, 1977, p. 361). After Haldin was arrested by the authorities, Razumov is depicted in a situation where he does not seek for order in his life anymore. This can be observed from the way he behaves in his apartments:

Razumov turned away brusquely and entered his rooms. All his books had been shaken and thrown on the floor. His landlady followed him, and stooping painfully began to pick them up into her apron. His papers and notes which were kept always neatly sorted (they all related to his studies) had been shuffled up and heaped together into a ragged pile in the middle of the table. This disorder affected him profoundly, unreasonably. He sat down and stared. He had a distinct sensation of his very existence being undermined in some mysterious manner, of his moral supports falling away from him one by one. He even experienced a slight physical giddiness and made a movement as if to reach for something to steady himself with. He did not attempt to put his papers in order, either that evening or the next day—which he spent at home in a state of peculiar irresolution. This irresolution bore upon the question whether he should continue to live—neither more nor less. (Conrad, 2015, p. 58)

From that point on, his life is invaded with extremisms such as the extremism of his feelings and affections. When he went to Geneva and made friends with the revolutionaries, his life started to change uncontrollably. Although Razumov did not carry such an intention in the novel so as to build good relations with other people, he, accidentally, or by force, is made to create a bond of friendship with the circle of the revolutionaries.

Caught up in these extremes of Russian conduct, Razumov's dream of pursuing his private life has been shattered. Driven into the role of a government spy, he now finds himself thrown into the most intimate contact with others. Yet each relationship is poisoned by duplicity. Befriended by the students in St. Petersburg, he uses them shamefully as pawns to help his sham escape. Accepted by the revolutionary circle in Geneva, he betrays them in long reports on their activities to their enemies at home. (Gurko, 1960, p. 447)

Now that he has found friendship, his extreme lack of affection in the past blinds him and he is now in the hands of a fatal mistake. Although he was previously forced to make fake relations, when he encounters love, things change for Razumov:

Love is one of the sentiments in Conrad which releases men from the suffocation of narcissism and the emptiness of non-involvement. It is by no means the only one: friendship, duty, honor, patriotism, even a diffusely warmhearted generosity, feelings intricately dissected in the other novels, have a similar cathartic effect.... It forces Razumov to examine himself as he is, free from the bondage of vanity and the desperation of loneliness. (Gurko, 1960, p. 451)

In the circle of the revolutionaries, especially his feminine surrounding has this shocking effect upon Razumov:

In Geneva, Razumov encountered that feminine presence which had been excluded from his life in St. Petersburg. This meeting coincided with his discovery of utopian aspirations that made his earlier ambitions seem banal by comparison. Psychologically, he experienced the dissolution of the barrier which prevents access to infantile memories and recovered the dream of a lost paradise concealed within them. (Cousineau, 1986, p. 38)

And, when he starts to acknowledge and even respect the bond that is created between himself and those women, and among them especially Miss Haldin, for whom Razumov feels deep affections; everything starts to become disjointed and center-less. "Only Razumov makes in *Under Western Eyes* a significant redemptive choice by respecting the bond of love he has come to feel for Natalie Haldin. His severest temptation is to trick her, to betray her trust in him as he betrayed her brother's" (Michel, 1961, p. 135). His feelings urge him to take action but this action is not done by a reasonable and sound Razumov, indeed this Razumov who is urged to take action is a deluded and an unstable one. He has lost control due to the strange and extreme feelings of his.

By occupation he is, ironically, a student of philosophy. Yet he is continually misjudged and misjudging.... 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. (Davidson, 1977, p. 24)

The wrongness in his direction has started with his first wrong action and it is giving Haldin in:

He believes that he is self-sufficient and self-contained, that he is capable of acting solely according to the dictates of reason. However, Razumov forgets that reason does not create as much as it discovers the conditions of human happiness. In the interest of self-protection and self-delusion, he goes in search of the peasant sledge driver, Ziemianitch, but he cannot wake him from his drunken sleep. He beats him unmercifully. It is Razumov's anger at the failure of a man on whom Haldin depended and on whom Razumov also now depends to extricate himself from the position he is in. (Madran, 2006, p. 237-238)

And, his unjust actions continue to occur with his beating Ziemianitch which is nothing but an action done through rage. "Razumov turns Haldin over to the police but before doing so betrays his own avowed convictions by trying to help Haldin escape; when he finds the carriage driver Ziemianitch Razumov flies into a rage which leads him in the end to the police" (Gurko, 1960, p. 449).

In this respect, it would not be wrong to claim that both Ziemianitch and Haldin correspond to the fact that Razumov feels disclosed in an entrapment as both of them signify the wrong doings he has committed. As Panichas claims: "Between the two he was done for. Between the drunkenness of the peasant incapable of action and the dream-intoxication of the idealist incapable of perceiving the reason of things, and the true character of men" (Panichas, 1998, p. 362). And, at this position, he immediately realizes that he is neither of those two men. He cannot be a peasant who is deprived of action like Ziemianitch nor he can be a dreamy idealist like Haldin. With his identity being crushed among those two very different profiles, he asks himself to which direction he should divert himself:

Now, since his position had been made more secure by their own folly at the cost of Ziemianitch, he felt the need of perfect safety, with its freedom from direct lying, with its power of moving amongst them silent, unquestioning, listening, impenetrable, like

the very fate of their crimes and their folly. Was this advantage his already? Or not yet? Or never would be? (Conrad, 2015, p. 207)

This problem constitutes Razumov's biggest challenge in life, which is to be a person who lacks in a strong acclaim in direction.

Things and men have always a certain sense, a certain side by which they must be got hold of if one wants to obtain a solid grasp and a perfect command. The power of Councillor Mikulin consisted in the ability to seize upon that sense, that side in the men he used. It did not matter to him what it was—vanity, despair, love, hate, greed, intelligent pride or stupid conceit, it was all one to him as long as the man could be made to serve. The obscure, unrelated young student Razumov, in the moment of great moral loneliness, was allowed to feel that he was an object of interest to a small group of people of high position. (Conrad, 2015, p. 225)

Razumov is under a big burden as he needs to fulfill the requirement of finding a place of direction for him though this is not an easy task. His choice of side should be a good one that will enable him to be praised by the others. With his unfortunate position, Razumov stands on an unstable ground.

And there was some pressure, too, besides the persuasiveness. Mr. Razumov was always being made to feel that he had committed himself. There was no getting away from that feeling, from that soft, unanswerable, "Where to?" of Councillor Mikulin. But no susceptibilities were ever hurt. It was to be a dangerous mission to Geneva for obtaining, at a critical moment, absolutely reliable information from a very inaccessible quarter of the inner revolutionary circle. There were indications that a very serious plot was being matured.... The repose indispensable to a great country was at stake.... A great scheme of orderly reforms would be endangered.... The highest personages in the land were patriotically uneasy, and so on. In short, Councillor Mikulin knew what to say. This skill is to be inferred clearly from the mental and psychological self-confession, self-analysis of Mr. Razumov's written journal—the pitiful resource of a young man who had near him no trusted intimacy, no natural affection to turn to. (Conrad, 2015, p. 226)

At the threshold of making an important decision, Razumov faces the problem of making a choice. But, unfortunately, as he has made the worst choice of all, he moves further away from being a good man. Apparently, Razumov is not conducted by reason anymore and he is only directed with a false sense of what should be good for himself and himself only; but, still, he cannot escape from harms himself, too. Thus, it can be said that the exaggeration of

certain mediums in his life affects him in a negative way that brings him to his sad finale. In his blinded situation which was directed first by excessive usage of reason and then by the excessive usage of feelings, he, eventually, inclines towards the wrong direction. He is also aware of this: “It was the world—those officers, dignitaries, men of fashion, officials, members of the Yacht Club. The event of the morning affected them all. What would they say if they knew what this student in a cloak was going to do? Not one of them is capable of feeling and thinking as deeply as I can. How many of them could accomplish an act of conscience?” (Conrad, 2015, p. 29).

The question that should be asked at this point should be this: Was Razumov acting according to his desires or did he start to pretend as if he desired what he has committed after he had done the action? Razumov might have done the latter one as

he was the puppet of his past, because at the very stroke of midnight he jumped up and ran swiftly downstairs as if confident that, by the power of destiny, the house door would fly open before the absolute necessity of his errand. And as a matter of fact, just as he got to the bottom of the stairs, it was opened for him by some people of the house coming home late—two men and a woman. He slipped out through them into the street, swept then by a fitful gust of wind. (Conrad, 2015, p. 263)

The history demands to be defended. Thus, being devoted to one’s own past action is also a necessity for Razumov as he is in a position where he cannot even react to his own past actions although he is aware of their deficiencies:

Of course he was far from being a moss-grown reactionary. Everything was not for the best. Despotic bureaucracy... abuses... corruption... and so on. Capable men were wanted. Enlightened intelligences. Devoted hearts. But absolute power should be preserved—the tool ready for the man—for the great autocrat of the future. Razumov believed in him. The logic of history made him unavoidable. The state of the people demanded him, “What else?” he asked himself ardently, “could move all that mass in one direction? Nothing could. Nothing but a single will.” (Conrad, 2015, p. 26-27)

And, he is also aware that his past will not be advocated by the others, even after his death. “It passed through his mind that there was no one in the world who cared what sort of memory he left behind him. He exclaimed to himself instantly, ‘Perish vainly for a falsehood!... What a miserable fate!’” (Conrad, 2015, p. 27).

His fatal mistake lies in this bipolar nature of his. His reason symbolizes the autocratic views and his feelings symbolize the revolutionary point of view. “We are made aware of Razumov’s moral predicament, no less than his moral isolation, condemned as he is by both

‘the lawlessness of autocracy’ and ‘the lawlessness of revolution’” (Panichas, 1998, p. 364) and when he acts according to any of those, he acts in the most excessive way. As Cousineau puts it:

The narrator's reservations about revolutionary activities notwithstanding, we are led to feel that Razumov has come to a recognition of his past errors and, hence, to a deepening of his moral consciousness. Razumov's psychological development, however, seems to proceed in the opposite direction. Briefly, and with some simplification, we may say that the Razumov whom we meet in the first part of the novel has been initiated into the world of adult reality, as evidenced by his willingness to adapt himself to the desires of others. (Cousineau, 1986, p. 29)

Razumov says: "Did it ever occur to you how a man who had never heard a word of warm affection or praise in his life would think on matters on which you would think first with or against your class, your domestic tradition-your fireside prejudices? . . . Did you ever consider how a man like that would feel? I have no domestic tradition" (Conrad, 2015, p. 46). Thus, his former commitment to the autocratic authorities was a secure point and a comfort zone for him: "His joining the secret police at the invitation of Mikulin and with the encouragement of the prince is the logical outcome of his struggle to guarantee his position in the world by submitting himself to the representatives of paternal authority" (Cousineau, 1986, p. 30). When he pretended to be a man protecting autocracy, he subsided his feelings and in the circle of the revolutionaries he started to act as if he was an actual revolutionary. When the realization of this stroke him, he started talking to himself in the empty room in this fashion:

He imagined himself accosting the red-nosed student and suddenly shaking his fist in his face. "From that one, though," he reflected, "there's nothing to be got, because he has no mind of his own. He's living in a red democratic trance. Ah! You want to smash your way into universal happiness, my boy. I will give you universal happiness, you silly, hypnotized ghoul, you! And what about my own happiness, eh? Haven't I got any right to it, just because I can think for myself?" (Conrad, 2015, p. 222)

However, this realization was what he needed the most:

Conrad's conception of the individual is, ironically a, person who, once thrown out of society must recognize the terms of his existence and then try to re-enter or else be overcome by a hostile world. His way of re-entrance in so far as he has a choice, can be through conquest or renunciation. Razumov makes the latter choice and paradoxically his renunciation leads to both is destruction and acceptance in each case by the same people. (Karl, 1959, p. 313-314)

When he learns to disregard his fears concerning lack of appraisal from the society, he takes the responsibility of his actions; but, this does not suggest that his wrong actions will be forgiven. The current position of Razumov is explained by Karl in such manner:

He becomes a helpless man exposed upon a craft which is at everyone's mercy and because of his realization of guilt, a man unable to function for himself. The everyday world is left behind food, clothes marriage the nice ties of societal intercourse even the leisurely and relaxed moments a person intermittently allows himself-all these necessities of sane living are pushed in to the background. (Karl, 1959, p. 315)

Razumov evaluates and then regrets his past action after falling in love with Miss Haldin. And, he experiences the feeling of shame. Razumov is also aware that shame won't bring salvation, thus he gives his own punishment by making the decision of confessing his guilt to Miss Haldin and by acting on his decision.

As Razumov's resolution to confess becomes stronger the rain increases in intensity as the storm cleanses him physically so, his confession is to cleanse him spiritually as; he nears Laspara's house where the revolutionaries are meeting a, single clap of thunder heralds his arrival; and after he is deafened by Nikita and thrown in to the street the violence of the outer world can no longer touch him-his confession has truly led to serenity of mind and spirit. (Karl, 1959, p. 326)

What led him to confession is his ability to sympathize with Miss Haldin. "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?" (Davidson, 1977, p. 27). Miss Haldin is the one who brings out the shameful Razumov who finally finds the courage to confront himself. "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" (Davidson, 1977, p. 28). Natalia functions as the trigger of this predestined confession. "Ultimately, Nathalie is the force that wrenches from Razumov the truth of his fateful involvement in Haldin's life. She insists on hearing the full "story" of his involvement, even as Razumov has been agonizing to relate it to her, fitfully, fatefully. His final words to her have far-reaching consequences" (Panichas, 1998, p. 369). Those far-reaching consequences are far away from bringing salvation as mentioned above. They function as the required and desired punishment for Razumov. Madran states that,

Razumov is doomed to his archetypal sin and suffers the terrible consequence. The end of *UWE* is in line with the classical tradition going back to ancient Greek tragedy and its concept of guilt and atonement. Razumov has to take the ultimate responsibility of his sinful act. Justice is achieved through retribution. His unconscious repeatedly tries to betray him into exposing his own guilt. Since his only hope lies in confession and punishment, Razumov accepts his guilt: As his personality splits, he is disgusted with the situation. His self-mastery and being in control are quite important for him. He sees that he is about to lose contact with self-mastery. Although he is safe and sound, he decides to confess his guilt. The only person who could implicate him, Ziemianitch commits suicide. He cannot bear to live under such strain. Razumov confesses to both Miss Haldin and the revolutionists. (Madran, 2006, p. 241)

When he was about to confess the truth to Miss Haldin, he talks about himself in this way: “But suppose that the real betrayer of your brother—Ziemianitch had a part in it too, but insignificant and quite involuntary—suppose that he was a young man, educated, an intellectual worker, thoughtful, a man your brother might have trusted lightly, perhaps, but still—suppose.... But there's a whole story there” (Conrad, 2015, p. 256-257). As he had described himself, too, his life had all the features of a good fortune except for the fact that he lacked a family; he was young healthy and well educated and he had a financial supporter. Still, he lacked in sharpness and decisiveness as shown in his description at the beginning of the novel: “In discussion he was easily swayed by argument and authority. With his younger compatriots he took the attitude of an inscrutable listener, a listener of the kind that hears you out intelligently and then—just changes the subject” (Conrad, 2015, p. 5). As it is clear in this description, he lacks in the determinacy of a good person who acts in the right direction no matter what hardships he has to confront. Razumov is a character that yields to pressure and; thus, all his former vigor, at the end of the novel, turns into pity which is the inescapable end for all humans according to Natalie Haldin. She says: “Listen, Kirylo Sidorovitch. I believe that the future shall 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” (Conrad, 2015, p. 256). This is what Razumov desired in the least. He wanted to be remembered and honored, to be materialized, to be spoken of, to be respected. For Miss Haldin, though, no such thing is possible as all social boundaries are to be boiled down to nothing. Thus, this does not serve as a consolation that Razumov was seeking. What Miss Haldin says to Razumov above serves as a foreshadowing of Razumov’s end as Karl states:

Razumov, who likewise is incapable of an audios decision, believes that Russia must decide between basic types: the Ziemianitches, drunken and unable to perform their duties, and the Haldins, who have the dream-intoxication of the idealist and are unable, in Razumov's view, to perceive the true character of either men or the worlds. Razumov, ironically, flatters himself that he falls into neither category. But there is a third category which Razumov cannot, fails to, or does not want to see – that is, his own fluctuating and indeterminate position. In his way similar to all three – a failure like Ziemianitch, a homeless and nameless chipper like Tekla, and idealist like Haldin- Razumov finds his dilemma to be that he fits neatly into no category and as a result must forfeit any hope for personal status. In the eyes of society, a Haldin, a Ziemianitch, even Tekla, have statuses of a sort, no matter how low; but Razumov is nonentity because he is unidentifiable. His confessions to Miss Haldin and to the revolutionaries, when he finds peace is unobtainable in other ways, are then, a way of identifying himself with Haldin and with the drunken sled driver as victims. For in this world, as the ex-student realizes, even the victims are a class of status. To attain this is, for Razumov, a way of success. (Karl, 1959, p. 319)

Thus, even being a pitiable person is an accomplishment for Razumov as this pitiable situation provides the man – who is without a place – a place to stand on; and, this was what he presumed for his future. Realizing that he won't be capable of attaining happiness, he thinks in this fashion:

What was happiness? He yawned and went on shuffling about and about between the walls of his room. Looking forward was happiness—that's all—nothing more. To look forward to the gratification of some desire, to the gratification of some passion, love, ambition, hate—hate too indubitably. Love and hate. And to escape the dangers of existence, to live without fear, was also happiness. There was nothing else. Absence of fear—looking forward. (Conrad, 2015, p. 52-53)

He arrives at the understanding that he won't be able to attain happiness, the path of his life can only be directed to success.

When he comes to suspect that Haldin, in his attitudes and way of life, was happy, he reaches across to him as to his double. Razumov's logical program of History not Theory, Patriotism not Internationalism, Evolution not Revolution, Direction not Destruction, Unity not Disruption" fulfills only the public an not the private man. From Razumov's initial meeting with Haldin until his confessions in Geneva, he acts always in the shadow of Haldin. His betrayal of his fellow student destroys himself

rather than the revolutionary, for Razumov's existence is never his on henceforth. He exists only because of Haldin's memory, only because Haldin exists for the people of Geneva. Rather than gaining self, Razumov has completely lost whatever personality he once had. He still has no life of his own. (Karl, 1959, p. 318)

Razumov's existence corresponds to nothingness. For this reason, he fails to function as the solution to the men's everlasting quest for peace. "In particular, his frequent comments about the all too human need for a consoling vision of the world seem to have an obvious bearing on Razumov's situation. The narrator prefaces the story of Razumov by confiding to us his belief that 'what all men are really after is some form or perhaps formula of peace'" (Cousineau, 1986, p. 35).

Thus, in conclusion, it is possible to consider that Razumov is a man who is the victim of loneliness. Although, at first, he was a man who possessed the advantages of youth, education and health to make his life fruitful and enjoyable, he could not escape from being a victim of his own wrong doings that can be said to have happened due to his lack in sharpness and decisiveness. When he ceases his agonizing fear to confront himself and his own wrong doings, he realizes that he is a shameful person. Together with shame, there comes punishment which is justified by Razumov himself. Being aware of the fact that he can become neither Ziemianitch nor Haldin, he accepts to be identified as "no one" as it is pointed out by Miss Haldin at the end of the novel. As suggested by Miss Haldin, all humans will be pitied in the end no matter which ideology they come from. In this sense, being "no one" serves as a good enough categorization for Razumov who looked for a place for himself in life; at the beginning of the novel, through material success and, in the second half of the novel, through feelings. In a world that is described upon the binaries of the good and bad, Razumov is the representation of men who stand alone without a strong adherence to a point of view in life and will end up being categorized as "no one".

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