

**A STRANGER AT HOME, AT HOME AMONG STRANGERS:  
JOSEPH CONRAD AS AN EXPATRIATE WRITER**

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## ABSTRACT

Conrad lies outside of any of the nineteenth century English traditions. Indeed, he is famous for being a very unusual, strange, or even eccentric English writer. However, in spite of Conrad's difference, which to a great extent is predicated on his expatriacy, English criticism has interpreted his fiction from the perspective of the English culture alone. In turn, Polish criticism sees him as a Pole who happened to write in English. However, by virtue of his expatriate background, Conrad is neither an exclusively English nor an exclusively Polish writer. Nor can his works be interpreted as a mechanical mixture of two cultures either. Conrad's fiction incorporates all essential features of expatriate writing, a form that is distinctly different from any writing done within a single culture. It is essential, therefore, that Conrad's unique contribution to English sensibility and his ability to incorporate the complexity of the exilic condition be addressed. The present dissertation establishes Conrad's expatriation archetypes and examines them as they manifest themselves not only in a realistic, but, more importantly, in a symbolic mode.

Chapter One establishes the exilic paradigm and suggests the methodology of approaching Conrad's writing as an expatriate text. This chapter describes the complex and ambivalent impact of expatriation on the human psyche which is the result of incompatibility with one's own culture. Expatriacy, therefore, puts the writer in the web of very complex relationships not only with the parent, but also with the adopted culture into which he/she never fully assimilates.

Chapters Two and Three, considering the narrative structure of Conrad's novels *Lord Jim* and *Under Western Eyes*, examine his fiction as a critical discourse in the context of expatriation. *Lord Jim* dramatizes the relationship between the expatriate

writer and the reader from the parent culture, whereas *Under Western Eyes* mirrors the relationship between the expatriate writer and the reader from the adopted culture.

Chapter Four explores Conrad's expatrial thematic choices and symbolic patterns in *Nostromo*. This novel, dramatizing the expatriate writer's homecoming, is demonstrative of Conrad's treatment of the relationships between the expatriate writer and the parent culture in both realistic and symbolic modes.

Chapter Five, researching some formal aspects of Conrad's narrative in the novelistic doubles *The Secret Sharer* and *Under Western Eyes*, analyzes duplicity as the major structural pattern of his fiction. It delineates the idea that Conrad's doubles, representing the clash of cultures, mirror the social conflicts.

This dissertation reveals the existence of at least twelve expatriation archetypes in Conrad's major novels, which can be successfully traced in his other works. The existence of these obvious patterns in Conrad's fiction demands a reassessment of current critical debate concerning the place of the author in his/her own narrative and presents a significant reinterpretation of Conrad. The major post-structuralist premise that the text belongs to the language and not the author is challenged by the existence of expatriation archetypes in Conrad's narrative. The text of the writer who uses English as a second language (in Conrad's case his third) is informed to a great extent by the primary culture with its distinct concepts, codes, myths, and forms of linguistic expression. The examination of Conrad's expatrial discourse, therefore, showing the powerful impact of the cultural forces which contribute to the formation of the author and then, in turn, transmutate into the literary patterns, calls for reviving the author, returning him to the critical frame of reference, and redefining him as a cultural construct.



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... he rubbed shoulders with them,  
but they could not touch him;  
he shared the air they breathed,  
but he was different. ...

Joseph Conrad. *Lord Jim*

## INTRODUCTION

... the heights of modern English literature have been dominated by foreigners and emigres: Conrad, James, Eliot, Pound, Yeats, Joyce.

Terry Eagleton

Trying to analyze the reasons behind the fact that in the beginning of the twentieth century English culture was unable, "of its own impetus, to produce great literary art" and that "the outstanding art which it achieved has been, on the whole, the product of the exile and the alien" (10), Terry Eagleton suggests that only an outsider, free from the most immediate pressures of the society, is able to "grasp that society as a totality" (10). Eagleton argues that since the novelist writes "out of a relationship of intricately detailed intimacy" (10) with his/her society, exiles and emigres, whose relationship with the society is that of cultural schism, have a different landscape in mind predicated on a different palette of colors. An expatriate "inhabits one place and remembers or projects the reality of another" (Siedel ix). As a metaphysical condition, exile has a profound impact on the human psyche. The emigre author, according to the Russian expatriate poet Joseph Brodsky, has a distinct sensibility; he is "by and large a retrospective and retroactive being. In other words, retrospection plays an excessive role -- compared with other people's lives -- in his existence, overshadowing his reality and dimming the future into something thicker than its usual pea soup. Like the false prophets in Dante's *Inferno*, his head is forever turned backward and his tears, or saliva, are running down between his shoulder blades" (Brodsky, "Condition We Call Exile" 16). This fixation on the past, which is one of several essential features of the expatriate

sensibility, is the result of the expatriate's strong unresolved connection with the parent culture.

Conrad's profound implicit connection with his Polish heritage has been discussed at length in criticism. Gustav Morf's suggestion that Conrad's fiction is dominated by guilt which the critic attributes to Conrad's deserting Poland (Morf *The Polish Shades of Joseph Conrad* 150) initiated a new stage in Conradian studies which addressed how Conrad's guilt symbolically transmutes into literary patterns. Even though Morf's approach had a profound influence on the frame of reference of Conrad criticism, contemporary Polish critics maintain that we "need no more interpretations under the shadow of the stereotypes of betrayal, and the Polish cause" (Krajka 48). However, one cannot deny the great tension between Conrad's English persona and his Polish heritage; interpreting his works by denying the connection would produce an incomplete picture of his expatriate literary landscape. One can analyze what Morf identifies as Conrad's guilt and betrayal without either judging Conrad's choice of his literary career or denying the problem altogether **only** if one attempts to read Conrad in the context of his expatriation.

Conrad lies outside of any of the nineteenth century English traditions. On the contrary, he is famous for being a very unusual, strange, or even eccentric English writer. Virginia Woolf, for example, contemplating the continuity between the traditional and modern novel, does not establish Conrad as one of the writers who could serve as an example of how to write an English novel. She maintains that one of the reasons why men and women who began to write in England around 1910 faced a great difficulty was that "there was no English novelist living from whom they could learn their business. Mr. Conrad is a Pole; which sets him apart, and makes him, however admirable, not very helpful" (Woolf 219). But, in spite of Conrad's difference, English criticism has interpreted him from the perspective of the English culture alone. In turn,

Polish criticism sees him as a Pole who happened to write in English. However, Conrad, for whom English was not his first, nor even his second language, by virtue of his expatriate background, is neither an exclusively English nor an exclusively Polish writer. Nor can his works be interpreted as the result of the mechanical mixture of two cultures. Conrad's fiction incorporates all essential features of expatriate writing, a form that is distinctly different from any writing done within a single culture.

Conrad's biographers, who have worked to establish the facts of Conrad's life and their relevance to his personality and, consequently, to his works, have made significant contribution to Conradian criticism. Extensive biographical studies by Jerry Allen, John Batchelor, Geoffrey Galt Harpham, B.Meyer, Jeffrey Meyers, Zdislaw Najder, and Cedric Watts have researched details of Conrad's personal and family biography. Polish critics have concentrated their efforts on examining the relationship between Conrad's fiction and the culture of his homeland. The research of Conrad's connection with Poland has developed in two main directions. Polish critics of Conrad have established the influence of essential characteristics of the national mentality, ethos, and cultural tradition on Conrad's fiction, on the one hand, and studied the impact of Polish literature on his works. The poetry of Polish Romantics (Mickiewicz, Slowacki, Krasinski, Malczewski, and others) has received particular attention, as well as positivists Prus and Sienkiewicz (Krajka 42).

Conrad studies in Poland have gone through several periods. During the first three decades there was a great interest in the writer's biography which placed Conrad in the context of the Polish literary and cultural scene. At that time, Conrad was interpreted as a Polish Romantic, an author of the sea fiction and exotic adventures. In the period between the wars, the scholars established the importance of philosophical, ideological, and ethical issues in Conrad. Between 1950 and 1955 works by or about Conrad were not published, since Conrad was banned as a Westernizer and admirer of capitalism by

the Stalinist hardliners. The repercussions of Stalinist repression of Conrad spread with the declaration of Martial Law in Poland in 1981. The political thawing in 1956, however, marked a renaissance in Conrad studies in Poland which brought qualitative change to the scholarship. Conrad criticism was no longer dominated by research into his life and character but, along with the endeavors to continue research into philosophical and moral problems, attempted to study formal elements of his fiction. Thus, formalism, structuralism, and semiotics were engaged in interpreting Conrad from their respective positions (Krajka 46-47).

The Western studies of Conrad for a long time have been dominated by psychoanalysis. Conrad's expatriacy is to a great extent responsible for his texts' attractiveness for the psychoanalytic approach. The expatriate's psychological split between the adopted persona and the suppressed native cultural legacy translates into very obvious fictional material for the study of the unconscious. However, the psychoanalytical analysis made from the perspective of one culture which studies the formal expression of the energy of the expatrial schism, fails to recognize the content of the expatriate's unconscious, which is always the codes and conventions of the parent culture. One cannot but agree with Robert Hampton who believes that the application of the psychoanalytic method which developed in relation to personality disorders and psychological malfunctioning to literature "can very easily replace an artist with a neurotic" (3). It is due to the limitations of the psychoanalytical approach that the critics face difficulties in interpreting Conrad's symbolism. Studied from the perspective of one culture, Conrad's symbolism raises more questions than critics have been able to answer psychoanalytically. Albert Guerard, whose Jungian interpretation has influenced Conradians for several decades, acknowledges himself defeated by the hat episode in *The Secret Sharer*:

"The Secret Sharer" is at once so closeknit in texture and so large in suggestion as to discourage interpretation. We know that in Jungian psychology a hat, in dreams, represents the personality, which can be transferred symbolically to another. But what are we to make of this hat floating on the night sea -- that a wished transference of personality has luckily failed? In psychological terms the positive end of the introspective experience is incorporation not separation and split. But such an end would have required Leggatt to remain on board indefinitely, an absurdity in dramatic if not psychological terms. The truer significance of the ending would seem to lie in a desperate hope that both sides of the self might live on and go free, neither one destroyed. In Jungian terms, again, integration of personality cannot occur until the unconscious has been known, trafficked with, and in some sense liberated. And we do not feel this to be the general burden of the story, whatever the logic or illogic of the ending. The outlaw has had its innings, yet the captain has emerged a stronger man (Guerard *Conrad the Novelist* 25-26).

Interpreting the process of the captain's integration outside the author's expatriacy. Guerard fails to account for the lack of logic and the general burden of the story written by the expatriate author for whom integration into the adopted culture is an ideal never to be achieved. The psychoanalytical approach may also lead to highly debatable interpretations of the unconscious in expatriate writing, as in case of Guerard's view of the doubles in *The Secret Sharer*. Reading *The Secret Sharer* as the double story, Guerard interprets the Captain's strong and immediate identification with Leggatt as indication of the protagonist's unconscious criminal tendencies. "The captain hides and protects Leggatt," Guerard maintains, "because he vaguely realizes -- for the first time in his life -- that he too might have stumbled into such a crime" (Guerard Introduction 11). Recognizing the personality split, a division of self in the protagonist, the psychoanalytic approach made from one culture fails to see Conrad's expatriate symbolism and therefore simplifies or misleads the interpretation.

Critics have studied moral (Steve Ressler, O. Andreas), philosophical (Otto Bohlmann, Daphna Erdinast-Vulcan, P.J.Whiteley), political (Avrom Fleishman, Eloise Knapp Hay) issues in Conrad, as well as the structure of Conrad's novels and his rhetoric (S.K.Land, Donald Yelton, Anthony Winner, Jeffrey Berman) and Conrad's narrative technique (Ian Watt, Jeremy Hawthorn, Jakob Lothe). Conrad's fiction has

been studied in the context of various aspects of the development of the English novel (Charles Schug) and interpreted as the critical discourse (Richard Ambrosini).

However, without denying the importance and the relevance of the critics' contribution into the twentieth-century understanding of Conrad, one has ample reason to insist that reading his texts from one culture is not sufficient for fuller understanding of his work. Thus, Daphna Erdinast-Vulcan, interpreting Conrad's duplicity within the framework of the English culture, writes:

The optimistic positivism of the Enlightenment, the belief in man's ability to set up secular ethical systems, was gradually superseded by an awareness of moral and social disorientation, an awareness which is still very much with us towards the close of the twentieth century. The demolition of the metaphysical-religious foundations of ethics by skepticism, empiricism, and relativism had left a vacuum of moral authority. Man-made, secular ethics (as advocated by the utilitarians, or by the pragmatists, for example) had proven to be inadequate. Morality in this deaf-mute world was perceived as yet another man-made system, as ephemeral and fragile as any other human construct. Conrad and his fellow disinherited moralists were all too aware of this. (13).

However, an expatriate writer needs neither the failure of the optimistic positivism of the Enlightenment, nor the demolition of the metaphysical-religious foundation of ethics by skepticism, empiricism, and relativism to experience the vacuum of moral authority. A jump from one culture to the other is sufficient to destroy all authority in the expatriate's psyche, moral or otherwise, and lead to the understanding of cultural codes as man-made systems.

Robert Hampson, observing that "Conrad's concern with betrayal is evident right from the start of his writing career" (11), interprets the instances of betrayal in Conrad's novels within the framework of being and identity. The research on this aspect of Conrad's fiction, no doubt is essential, since identity is its major frame of reference. However, approaching Conrad's fiction from the perspective of one culture, Hampson's insightful analysis appears to be incomplete, since an expatriate's identity search for a



pattern of experience and being by which a person is recognized by himself and/or others in his relation to others is taking place between two cultures.

Conrad has made himself a canonical writer not only for psychoanalytical criticism, but for post-colonial critics (Chinua Achebe, Michael Echeruo, Susan Blake, C.Ponnuthurai Sarvan, Wilson Harris, Edward Said, Jean Franco, Peter Nazareth and others). Paradoxically, post-colonial criticism dealing with the writers whose fiction explicitly encompasses several cultures has missed Conrad's expatriate complexity and reads him as an exclusively English writer. At the same time, the post-colonial writers of complex cultural background engaging in critical discourse have identified with Conrad on the basis of the shared expatriation experience. V.S.Naipaul, for example, feels that Conrad reaches him by expatriate idiom:

To be a colonial was to know a kind of security; it was to inhabit a fixed world. And I suppose that in my fantasy I had seen myself coming to England as to some pure literary region, where, untrammelled by the accidents of history or background, I could make a romantic career for myself as a writer. But in the new world I felt the ground move below me. The new politics, the curious reliance of men on institutions they were yet working to undermine, the simplicity of beliefs and the hideous simplicity of actions, the corruption of causes, half-made societies that seemed doomed to remain half-made: these were the things that began to preoccupy me. They were not things from which I could detach myself. And I found that Conrad -- sixty years before me, in the time of a great peace -- had been everywhere before me (194).

Contemporary Conrad criticism, which has established new methods of analyzing texts and reinvigorated the debate about how we read literature (Ian Watt, N.P.Straus, P.Brooks, C.L.Miller, F.Jameson, J.Reilly, D.Erdinast-Vulcan, A.Fogel, R.Stott) does not take into account Conrad's complex cultural background and does not interpret his texts in the context of expatriation.

Conrad's dual heritage has been specifically studied by Robert Hodges, who puts his fiction in the context of Polish history and the Korzeniowski family. In the context of exile, Conrad has been interpreted by Michael Siedel in *Exile and the Narrative*

*Imagination* (1986) and Terry Eagleton in *Exiles and Emigres. Studies in Modern Literature* (1970). However, when Siedel writes about Conrad as an emigre writer, he interprets his symbolism out of one culture. Jim's jump, for example, is for him the result of the tension between ideology and reality. "Crisis for Conrad's characters occurs in that worldly gap between a self-aggrandizing ideology and the riot of communal activity," Siedel maintains. "In *Lord Jim*, it is the young sailor's misfortune to fall directly into this gap or, to make matters worse, jump directly into it" (50). This testifies to the difficulties of reading expatriate authors from the perspective of one culture. In such cases the reader misses an essential exilic paradigm.

However, since these critics, who made important contributions to understanding Conrad's duplicity and established a new frame of reference for interpreting his texts, simultaneously deal with other emigre writers, many important aspects of Conrad's expatrial duality and patterns of its transmutation into his fictional landscape remain to be studied. It is essential, therefore, that Conrad's unique contribution to English sensibility and his ability to incorporate the complexity of the exilic condition be addressed. The present dissertation will establish Conrad's expatriation archetypes and examine them as they manifest themselves not only in a realistic, but, more importantly, in a symbolic mode. Exilic paradigm will be established in Chapter One, which will also suggest the methodology of approaching Conrad's writing as an expatriate text. Analysis of Conrad's exilic archetypes will start from examination of the narrative structure of *Lord Jim* and *Under Western Eyes*. Conrad's fiction will be viewed as a critical discourse in the context of expatriation in Chapters Two and Three. Conrad's expatrial thematic and symbolic patterns, as manifested in *Nostramo*, the further point of departure, is addressed in Chapter Four. Finally, the research on some formal aspects of Conrad's narrative, his use of doubles in particular, which convey the author's exilic

condition, the subject of Chapter Five, will enable one to appreciate duplicity as the major structural pattern of his fiction.

## CHAPTER I

### READING CONRAD IN THE CONTEXT OF EXPATRIATION

And it is in the appearance of something or somebody unpredictable within a space well used to its contents that creates the sense of occasion.

Joseph Brodsky.  
The Nobel Prize  
Acceptance Speech.

A contemporary Everyman is the citizen of the world, a person who is not culturally and emotionally integrated into the ethos of the country he/she lives in. Expatriation, the result of the nomadic character of the twentieth-century life, can take different forms, from physically leaving the country, establishing a home in the foreign culture and adopting the language, to adopting a foreign language without leaving the country, or becoming an inner emigre without changing language or country. The reasons behind the expatriation can also be different, but most often it is difficulty in identifying oneself with the dominant political structures or a feeling of non-acceptance by the society. Intellectuals, particularly sensitive to the hostility of the political environment to individual values and therefore viewed as particularly dangerous, are the first to be banished, forced, or encouraged to emigrate. Self-imposed exile and banishment have become the most frequent patterns of expatriation.

The twentieth-century deconstruction of the cultural, social, and psychological centrality of a nation group/national character/national identity has resulted in the mobility of the creative focus of literary culture between the center and the margins and has made the multicultural situation not only a subject matter but a mode of perception. Increased migration has forced a recognition of a distinct expatriate sensibility with cultural displacement, angst, loneliness, existential rootlessness as its core components. The movement from societies where bonds with family, community, religion, folklore, and art are intact, into the individualistic cultures results in the collapse of shared background of values. Psychologically, such a shift from a familiar ethos is reflected in heightened nostalgia, intense restlessness, extraordinary unease, confusion, ambivalence, and alienation. For men, the experience is more painful than for women, since men, unlike women, are not used to second-class status (Shu-mei Shih 65).

Accordingly, the sensibility of a writer who has changed one culture for another and adopted its language or chosen to stay within his mother tongue undergoes essential changes which are reflected in his/her literary work and ultimately become the form-creating factor. Expatriate sensibility has stimulated new forms of art and techniques, as well as profoundly influenced the thematic choices. In fact, exile becomes the focus of the expatriate creativity. Petrarch, for example, one of the most virtuosic exiles of the last thousand years, "explored chasms of alienation previously unfathomed" (Wojciehowski 11). His "whole existence, his sense of himself, would be determined by his obsession with origin and exile; by his conviction that he was displaced and marginal" (Wojciehowski 11). The present work establishes the connection between Conrad's fiction and his expatriate sensibility and attempts to study the impact of expatriation on Conrad's literary form and thematic patterns.

The impact of expatriation on the individual's psyche is complex and ambivalent. Expatriation is not only "a physical or geographical journey out of one's land to another

where the migrant believes he will find greater satisfaction, but it means, rather, a severing of the immigrant's spiritual and symbolic ties with his mother country. And unless the expatriate has decided to leave his country out of some inner distaste or contempt for his land," Kirpal maintains, "every evidence points to the fact that the act of expatriation is a very painful one" (45). In fact, the decision to expatriate is in most cases based on the feeling of incompatibility with one's culture, and inner distaste or contempt for one's land makes the experience much more painful, since expatriation is contrary to the natural aspiration of humans to possess a space to which one can relate emotionally.

Motherland, or *patria*, exerts a powerful and inexorable influence, and expatriacy as a condition is overpowered by this inexorable force (Subbarayudu 18). In communal cultures, *patria* is primary *vis-a-vis* the individual, and expatriation, both linguistically and psychologically, is determined in relation to it. Viewing expatriacy as the metaphor for human struggle, G. K. Subbarayudu contemplates the relationship between the expatriation and the notion of the parent culture trying to analyze it in terms of allegory:

Expatriacy flows from an original, changeless *patria*, and seems inevitably to lead back to *patria* as the sole determinant of perception and value. Therefore the value of expatriacy lies in its strategic significance as opposed to the deterministic significance of *patria*. Thus, expatriacy is an allegory of the condition of *patria*, and enables the expatriate to grasp the *patria* through the allegorization. An expatriate willy-nilly employs expatriacy as a strategy for recovering the *patria*; so, like all strategies, expatriacy is temporary by nature i.e. role-specific and without value outside the functional scope (Subbarayudu 17-18).

*Patria* becomes the desideratum, and irrespective of the expatriate's new state, he/she "is never in a harmonious state till recovery of the *patria* takes place either in real terms or in notional-historical terms" (Subbarayudu 18). The essential poignancy of the expatriation is the result of a chimerical, illusionary prospect combined with negative retrospect and loss of identity associated with the loss of *patria*.

Expatriation involves a transition from a familiar frame of reference and relationships to a foreign, and therefore alien, set of references and relationships. It results in a total break from the traditional environment familiar from birth and the need for a re-orientation of an entire social being. Expatriation requires the development of new relationships and the search for a new meaning of life. The complex social patterns that guided the expatriate in the parent country have to be substituted for a knowledge of the new institutions, values and norms communicated in a new language. This fundamental shift has a profound effect on the individual's psyche.

The individual's experience in the new land is another factor which contributes to what constitutes the expatriate sensibility. "It is almost universally true now that the newcomer to the rich, developed and sparsely populated lands will be met with hostility -- ostensibly because he is different, but actually because he is coming to share the national resources, opportunities, advantages of the host country" (Kirpal 47). The adopted country's hostility creates the feeling of mistrust and acquiescence which in turn gives rise to diffidence and resentment in the expatriate. On the one hand, the host country is reluctant to accept the newcomer, but expects him/her to conform to its norms and values, on the other. This rejection interferes with the internal adjustment and prevents the emigre from wanting to surrender one's ethnic identity, to merge with the cultural mainstream of the adopted country (Kirpal 48). As a mechanism of defense against the loss of identity, the expatriate experiences the need to cling to his or her own heritage.

The expatriate's relationships with his/her parent country are very complex. They vary from indifference (T.S.Eliot) to an inability to breathe the air of the natural environment. Stephan Zweig, an Austrian writer of Jewish parentage, was driven into exile by the Nazis in 1934 and immigrated to England and later to the USA and Brazil. In 1942, finding only loneliness and disillusionment in his new surroundings, having

found out that the Nazis had begun to purge intellectuals in Germany, he and his second wife committed suicide. In the expatriate's psyche, rejection of essential aspects of political and spiritual reality can coexist with loyalty to the language and its themes (James Joyce, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Thomas Mann, Bertold Brecht), or can result in complete explicit detachment from the culture and the language, as in the case of Joseph Conrad.

In return, the parent culture punishes the expatriates by making strong judgments intended to evoke the sense of guilt, and expresses explicit and implicit disapproval. E. Orzeszkowa, a leading Polish novelist of the time, in her personal letter to Conrad and in her article in 1899 accused Conrad of betraying Poland. At the turn of the century, according to Polish morals, it was perfectly acceptable to leave the country and even to write in a foreign language, as long as everybody knew that the author was a Pole and "as long as he tried to work, albeit indirectly, for the sake of Poland" (Morf 86). In fact, Orzeszkowa's attitude towards expatriation reflects the position of the so-called Warsaw Positivism.

The attitude to emigration in Poland changed several times throughout the century. In the nineteenth century the country, divided between Russia, Prussia, and Austria, was facing the possibility of annihilation. These Great Powers had a secret agreement to abolish everything that might suggest the existence of a Polish kingdom in order to eliminate it as a political body. In the area annexed by Russia, the failure of Poles to obtain concessions led to the bloody Polish uprising of 1830, which was put down after a nine-month struggle. After the fall of Warsaw in 1831, writers of Poland went into exile. Many of them took part in the rising, others felt that their political opinions might put them in jeopardy. This exodus is known as Great Emigration. Paris became the alternative center of Polish culture which was forbidden on the territory of Poland. Paradoxically, Polish romantic literature was written outside Poland, since it



was forbidden in the country where it belonged. The works of Mickiewicz, Krasinski and Slowacki, banned by Russian censorship, were smuggled through the border, read in secret and burnt, since those who were reading or hiding them were imprisoned or sent to Siberia.

After the death of Nickolas, the Polish students of Kyiv formed a Polish society called Trinity. Its most active participant was Apollo Korzeniowski, the father of Joseph Conrad. In the beginning the objective of the society was purely spiritual and cultural: it attempted to support the feelings of the Polish identity and keep alive the spirit of Polish nationhood. It also encouraged resistance to the idea that the future salvation of Polish nation could be achieved through political cooperation with the Russian monarchy. The second nationalist uprising in the Russian-administered Poland occurred in 1863 and was defeated.

In the second part of the century, when Poland suffered the appalling consequences of industrialization, Polish intellectuals turned to Positivism. Reading August Comte since 1844, young people assuming the spiritual leadership of the nation sought to expound the laws of social evolution, to learn about the organization of all branches of human knowledge, and to establish the true science of the society on the basis of planning and regeneration. Comte's statement that reason and intelligence determine the direction of progress led the young people of Warsaw to believe that their predecessors in the fight for the Polish cause allowed emotions to transcend reason. They demanded that their fatherland be built anew on the new principles of the nobility of work and the necessity of women's emancipation. The literature of this period found inspiration in the themes of Poland's past. Stressing Polish heroism, the historical novels of Henryk Sienkiewicz describe Poland's struggles against Cossacks, Tatars, Swedes, and Turks. A shift from the romantic to the realistic approach to Polish identity changed the attitude towards the expatriation. After 1864 young Positivists thought emigration a

cowardly thing to do. They felt they had to stay, endure and build their country from the bottom up, create a new Polish school and, most importantly, be done with the insurrections.<sup>1</sup>

Orzeszkowa's attack on Conrad's choice of the country and the language for writing has been so strong that it severely distorted Conradian studies in Poland. Today critics feel that Orzeszkowa "channeled them in a false direction and made the dispute over the question of betrayal highly emotional" (Krajka 42). The twentieth-century post-colonial writers experience the same kind of pressure from the critics of their countries who deny the author the liberty to choose the country to live in, the language to write in, and the themes to explore. Thus, some critics, emphasizing the mimetic nature of art and highly privileging it, insist that since the emigre writers have lost "the firsthand knowledge of economic, political, and social changes, of current jargon, of dialect, even of such geographic elements as landscape, climate and vegetation" (Parameswaran 43), they are in the danger of becoming bad writers. Admitting that the difference "is not that between a native writer and expatriate but between poor writer and a good one" (Parameswaran 43), Uma Parameswaran, for example, argues that expatriation becomes a test of real worth. She feels that

Novelists are more hard hit than any other writers by expatriation. For the novel, more than any other genre, demands authenticity in the portrayal of society and sensibility. As Northrop Frye says, the chief interest of the novel "is in human character as it manifests itself in the society," and a novelist who is estranged from the day-to-day living conditions of his characters and from the deeper consciousness of a society is automatically handicapped if he continues to set his stories in that society. How heavy the handicap is depends on several factors, the most important being the author's artistic integrity (43).

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<sup>1</sup> Facts of history of nineteenth century Poland are outlined according to The Cambridge History of Poland. Ed. Reddway, W.F., Panson, J.H., Halecki, O., Dyborski R. London, N.Y., Toronto: Cambridge University Press, 1941.

"The serious writer," holds Saros Cowasjee, "whether he lives at home or abroad, writes for his people" (53).

Using such criteria for assessment of the artistic value of fiction, one would have to dismiss V. Nabokov entirely as a Russian writer, and condemn V. Voynovich for his *Moscow 2042* for, as a dystopian vision of Russia, it does not mirror the Russian landscape photographically. This approach encourages one to distrust the Polish part of Conrad's identity, as well as his English one, since as the expatriate writer, he is out of touch with both realities. Expatriates obviously never fully assimilate in the adopted cultures and simultaneously get disconnected from their legacy. Therefore, as a writer who has never written for his people, Conrad by such judgment deserves no attention.

The writer's expatriacy, no doubt, puts him/her into the center of a very complicated web of relationships with the parent culture. One of the aspects of this complexity is that even complete superficial detachment from the culture because of the choice of the language and withdrawal from its themes does not mean complete disconnection from one's legacy. On the one hand, there is a need to hold to one's legacy to resist total facelessness; on the other hand, there grows the realization that one becomes different and distant from one's people and traditions. The return home after several years only accentuates the feeling of rootlessness. On his first visit to Ukraine in 1890, Conrad did not eagerly mix with the Poles, felt embarrassed when he was reminded of his acquaintances known for their patriotism, and praised the British sea chronometers (Morf 85). From the memoirs of Jan Perłowski, one of Tadeusz Bobowski's numerous wards who met Conrad during that visit to Ukraine, it is obvious that expatriation causes the tension between the emigre and his compatriots:

Before, whenever he needed the Polish equivalent of an English expression, I had offered him the right word. Now, he approached me, keeping his hands deep in his pockets in the English fashion and called in that cheerful tone which the English adopt among themselves in such circumstances [in English]: "*A breezy day! Very*

*fine, isn't it?"* I was considerably younger than Conrad, but he did not impress me at all. None of us yet knew about his extraordinary talent. Only once Mr. Tadeusz had mentioned casually to me that his nephew was writing something in English. I answered him, smilingly but not very politely: "Couldn't it be Polish?" He lifted his head, frowned and turned his face away (Morf Shades 85).

The expatriate relationship with one's legacy, very often subconscious, reveals itself both explicitly and through implicit archetypal symbolic patterns.

The expatriate's relationships with the adopted culture are none the less complex and ambivalent. On the one hand, with the exception of banishment, the expatriate's presence in the new country is the matter of personal choice based on preference. On the other hand, the attitude to one's adopted land grows belligerent. By unwittingly questioning and challenging the adopted culture's myths, the expatriates threaten the political and spiritual stability of the society and evoke the feeling of insecurity. This aspect of the expatriate presence in the culture well used to its content is dramatized in E.M.Forster's *Howards End* through the Schlegel sisters, Helen and Margaret. Daughters of a German emigre, a dreamy idealist educated on Hegel and Kant, they are neither "English to the backbone" nor "German to the backbone" (Forster 29). Educated on values different from the English ones, they produce more disturbance than the English establishment can handle destroying the Wilcox family completely. Helen's son, the grandson of an emigre, is to inherit Howards End which belonged to the Wilcoxes. E.M.Forster, who was widely exposed to different cultures of Europe, welcomes the foreign presence in the English culture, but his attitude is not characteristic of the common pattern.

By requiring assimilation as a tool of soliciting the rational expatriate's "allegiance to the obviously superior, civilized, achievement-oriented Western culture" (Kirpal 50), the new land repudiates the emigre who responds by hostility, withdrawing, expressing one's difference and divorce from the adopted country's values and morals. The most frequent pattern of the expatriate's experience in the adopted country is the change from

eagerness for assimilation to disillusionment and resolve to rediscover one's national identity.

Encompassing two or even three different and very often conflicting cultural codes, an expatriate finds it difficult to reconcile them. Coming from the communal Oriental or Slavic world to the highly individualistic West, the expatriate finds a paradigm of dramatically different relationships between the society and the individual. On the one hand, the emigre is freed from the dominating grip of the community; on the other hand, he/she remains highly sensitive to the comfort of the positive presence of the community. The individualistic achievement-oriented societies strike the expatriate as cerebrally indifferent and competitively hostile. The Russian novelist Vasilii Aksenov, describing how the image of Western life and literature is deromanticized in the eyes of the emigre from Eastern Europe, says that having come from a country with a strict state censorship the writer is delighted to find out that the government in the West does not set any obstacles for literature and does not have the slightest influence on it. After a short while, however, "he notices that literature is entirely divided between literary agencies, and realizes that he too needs to find himself a kind of Dutch uncle as quickly as possible" (Aksenov 46). The emigre is shocked to find that

Ideologically free literature is commercially well organized. The names of authors and the titles of books roll silently through the world literary computer like wheat, beef and other commodities through the Chicago stock exchange. It all vibrates in synchronized harmony: if less copies of your last novel were sold, you will receive a smaller advance on your next book. Cover the advance and earn a little more -- what do you know, your value is increased. All is fair, all is natural; the market, ladies and gentlemen. The market knows exactly what size of advertisement should be allotted to your book and where it should be placed -- in the middle of a weekly or nearer the periphery; whether to display your book in the shop-window; whether to turn the front cover to face shoppers or to slip it in sideways among countless other spines" (Aksenov 46).

In the context of Aksenov's disappointment in the West, Conrad's words "He was romantic, but none the less true. Who could tell what forms, what visions, what faces,

what forgiveness he could see in the glow of the west!" (*Lord Jim* 252) reads like the expression of the author's apprehension of an encounter with the culture so different from his own.

In the Russian communal autocratic culture, the writer has always had the status of a prophet, a teacher, and an oracle; in the absence of any developed political infrastructure, he/she has performed the function of political and spiritual opposition. Encounter with the Western reality where writers are assessed by the volume of their sales produces the shock which results from the clash of two opposing cultural patterns. In nineteenth-century Poland, a writer had the same status of a teacher and a prophet, and Polish Romantics, Conrad's precursors, contributed into the creation and supported the Polish identity. Conrad's father, Apollo Korzeniowski, a poet, a translator and a playwright, saw a poet as a man who gets inspiration from above, and then returns to people as "an agent of social change, a harbinger of new ideas which should transform the nation" (Morf 7). This prophetic role is a sharp contrast to the role of the western writer.

Expatriate literature mirrors the landscape of the expatriate sensibility. Comparative criticism has studied essential aspects of the expatriate sensibility's transmutation into various literary forms. Expatriation becomes either a recurrent explicit thematic motif of the emigre fiction, or shows in the hidden symbolic mode creating complex fictional patterns. Twentieth-century Caribbean expatriate writing, for example, reflects the "writers' struggle to cope with the demands of expatriate existence," and all its ramifications (Vijayasree 100). Escape, the jump from one culture to another, the central event of the emigre life, "remains his alone, but is none the less a tremendously serious possession, his orgy of freedom, after which everything seems to him rather insipid" (Aksenov 47). Russian emigre writers who left the country after 1917 and settled in Berlin and Paris (Dmitrii Merezhkovskii, Zinaida Hippus, Marina

Tsvetaeva, Andrei Belyi, Vladislav Khodasevich, Georgij Ivanov, among others), did not respond to their specific environment. Their works reflect their "reaction to the exile experience itself -- an experience in which the theme of separation from the homeland as well as alienation from the new environment plays a significant role" (Dietz 44). V.S. Naipaul, an Indian Brahmin uprooted from the land of his ancestors, West Indian by birth and growth, who lives as an expatriate in London because of his self-imposed exile, admits that his "magnificent obsession is India" (Patel 120). At the same time, his way of thinking is British. His "strange sensibility" which affects his judgments and viewpoints is attributed to his expatriate background, and, therefore, critics feel, his writing "can be understood only in terms of his expatriate sensibility and his triple identity" (Patel 120).

In many respects Naipaul is one of the best examples of the writer who has a multiple identity. He never cared for the land of his birth, Trinidad, or its people. He even admits it was a mistake to be born there, and he always wished to forget it, as Trinidad for him has been a destitute society, without history and achievement (Patel 121-122). At the same time, his depiction of India, the culture he identifies with, is ambivalent and controversial. He is torn between the desire for spiritual security stemming from belonging to a country and having a home and attacking India with a Western bias, on the basis of Western categories (Patel 122-123). Naipaul approaches Indian life and culture from two perspectives at the same time: with the Hindu norms of karma, dharma and moksha and the Western norms of individuality and freedom. His "Indian self accepts things with faith whereas the Western self challenges or examines from the individual point of view" (Patel 120-121). Hinduism, the religion of faith in gods, has no room for individual freedom or reason. Basic virtues in Hinduism are faith and devotion. Hindus accept religious matters, as well as what they get, as the result of karma. Religious preaching is accepted as Dharma, against which nothing is said or

done. Foundations of Hindu sensibility are profoundly challenged and shaken by Western reason and logic. Naipaul's split sensibility contributes to the complexity and ambivalence of his approach. He is "alternatively both, an Indian in India and a Westerner in India and his dual position causes all the problems. Naipaul's joy, exhilaration, exaltation, scintillation come from his Brahmin self, his anger and negativity from his inherent Western self" (Patel 123). Naipaul, like Conrad's Jim, and Conrad himself, is in search of his identity.

Thus, the major aspects of the expatriate sensibility refer to one's relationships with the parent and the adopted cultures. The expatriate's association with the new culture is often represented through the metaphors of marriage and divorce (Kirpal 72). Jim's relationship with Jewel in Conrad's *Lord Jim* dramatizes the problems of assimilation of an expatriate in the new culture. Relationships with the old culture are conveyed through love relationships which do not end in marriage. It is not difficult to see that in *Nostramo* Antonia Avellanos symbolically represents Costaguana, and Decoud's love for her stands for the expatriate's emotional connection with his culture which he is unable to control with his reason. In *Under Western Eyes*, Razumov's love for Natalia Haldin dramatizes his emotional connection with Russia. Both love relationships which remain unresolved reflect Conrad's hidden emotional connection with his Polish legacy. This unresolved association with one's country complicates the expatriate psychological patterns and, translating into explicit or symbolic thematic patterns, complicates the fictional landscape. By writing about Dublin, James Joyce did not resolve his relationship with Ireland, and through his depiction of America, Henry James conveyed his homelessness. Vladimir Voynovich's *Moscow 2024*, his dystopian vision of Russian political identity, is an attempt to come to terms with the motherland that banished him. Withdrawing from the Polish themes on the surface, Conrad has succeeded neither in evading them nor in resolving his relationships with his culture.



Emigre writers' explicit exploration of their parent countries' themes is connected to the choice of language. For an expatriate, existence back home is more genuine because "in his mind there exists a suspicion of a pendulum-like dependency, or ratio" (Brodsky "Condition We Call Exile" 18) between the irritants of his mother culture and his mother tongue. Because of familiar instinctual associations, therefore, writing in a mother tongue calls forth the native reality. Adopting a foreign language for one's creative writing, through the shift in the nature of the writer's associative relationships with the language, causes the thematic shift to imaginary (as in Conrad's *Nostramo* and *Lord Jim*) or exotic landscapes (as in *Lord Jim*, *The Secret Sharer*, *Heart of Darkness*).

Expatriate novelists who continue to live away from their countries develop a growing recognition of their state as isolates and exiles. The pressure of the need to write self-consciously, with the idealization of nostalgia, becomes very strong. At the same time, the need to transform immediate reality into a creative art form becomes less urgent. The particular in characters, customs, traditions becomes a frozen mythical ideal. That is why expatriate writing often assumes symbolic, allegorical, at times even abstract modes. Expatriate writers resort to allegories more often than the writers who work within one culture. The Third World expatriate writers' allegories explore the themes of expatriation: Awonoor's novel *This Earth, My Brother* is the story of post-independence Ghana; Rao's *The Serpent and the Rope* depicts the endless journey of the protagonist to find a home in a metaphysical sense; Rushdie's *Shame* traces through the lives of different families the political history of Pakistan; West Indian John Hearne's *Voices Under the Window* is a historical allegory; Camara Laye's *The Radiance of the King* is both religious and political allegory. The symbolism of Conrad's novels borders on allegories: *Lord Jim* is an expatriation allegory; *Nostramo* - a historical allegory where one can easily see the connection between Costaguana and Poland, *The Secret Agent* and *The Secret Sharer* are allegories of assimilation. In expatriate fiction, such as

Conrad's major novels, allegory or symbol becomes a structural principle, as opposed to fiction showing allegorical tendencies.

The complexity of the emigre writer's relationships with the adopted culture is conveyed through displacement, alienation, bitterness, and loneliness. A vivid example of the emigre writer's ambivalent relationships with the adopted culture is the Russian-born poet Joseph Brodsky, exiled from the Soviet Union in 1972. Brodsky became an established author in the United States: he was a poet-in-residence and visiting professor at several universities, and he served as poet-laureate of the United States in 1991-92. Brodsky was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1987 for his lyric and elegiac poems. While in Russia, he had a reputation as a Westernizer who always had a desire to leave the country and live in the West. As a poet, he introduced into his Russian verse a profoundly Western poetic coming from European Baroque and English Modernism. However, even though he deeply loved Western culture and was recognized by it, the overwhelming majority of Brodsky's poems which reflect his experience in the West are "imbued with a sense of longing, despair, or, at best, resignation" (Loseff 29). Moreover, a negative, "tragic, alienated perception of Western reality appears in literally the first things he wrote outside of Russia" (Loseff 29). Apparently, the Westernizer Brodsky, whose western life was a success in every way, was not happy in the West.

Vasilii Aksionov, one of Russia's most popular writers, who was forced to emigrate in 1980 after participating in the editing of the unofficial almanac *Metropole*, a writer-in-residence at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia, is conscious of his strong bond with the culture that banished him:

For a long time Russia served me as a source of literary material. The living link grew weaker and weaker. All these years I've had a sense of rapid disengagement from current Russian life. Strangely enough, at the same time there was a rapprochement with her culture which became more and more precious to me. But now that we are engulfed by an onslaught of Soviet visitors -- friends and enemies, and just ordinary people,-- I am considering dividing my time in equal parts between America and

Russia. I find myself drawn closer and closer to Russia, and I dwell in her problems (conversations 82).

"America is my home, but I have never felt myself to be an American and never will," Aksionov says (Conversations 83). At the same time, he does not get any writing done when he is in Russia; "you can't write there," he complains (Conversations 83).

Since the journey from one culture to another becomes the central event of the expatriate experience, the journey motif predominates in the expatriate novel. However, this journey is not the inner journey from the state of innocence to the state of experience, as it is in the non-emigre literature: "expatriate fiction constitutes the feeling of not quite having arrived. There is an all-pervasive sense of restlessness and nervous energy that fills the works" (Kirpal 71). The quest for disconnection from the life of tradition, custom, and religion, which inspires expatriation, results in angst and loneliness. The expatriate's dilemma consists in an inability to return home to its cultural certainties and an inability to find home in the adopted land. Therefore, the expatriate journey has no end. It accounts for the countless journeys in the emigre literature and the impression of perpetual movement, anxiety, and restlessness they create. A consuming nostalgia for the motherland and the realization of the eternal character of one's outsider status is the predominant mood of the expatriate novel. Therefore the most famous fictional journeys are the journeys home (Odysseus, Stephen Dedalus in Joyce's *Ulysses*).

Conrad's fiction is famous for its journeys. All the novels considered in this study have the journey as the central motif of the plot. Trying to escape his own past, Jim changes towns and countries in search of his existential present (*Lord Jim*); trapped by political turmoil of Costaguana, Martin Decoud sails to the Isabels to save the silver of his country (*Nostramo*); involved with the revolutionaries against his will and therefore forced to leave his country, Razumov settles in Geneva and consequently returns to Russia (*Under Western Eyes*); the Captain in *The Secret Sharer* just goes home.

Conrad's journeys, however, are very frequently the journeys of exiles. Gustav Morf points out that exile becomes the recurrent theme in Conrad's novels: exile as "a last resort, exile as a desperate cure, exile as suffering without end, exile with its lure of success and its illusions, followed by bitter disappointments, exile with the impossibility of returning home" (157). However, Morf's interpretation of Conrad's thematic patterns and his expatriate symbolism within the framework of betrayal, guilt, and forgiveness suggests the critic's entrapment by the tyranny of some paradigm which dominated Conrad.

The problems of assimilation also translate into various fictional patterns. Whereas the expatriate's native traditions "exist as unobvious signposts in one's consciousness acquired like fossils over the generations" (Kirpal 79) and become social instincts, the patterns of the adopted culture are emotionally disconnected from the expatriate, and the attempts to bridge the gap intellectually fail to create the missing emotional connection. At the turn of the century, England was

neither tolerant nor generous to foreigners. Stranded on the quay of Lowestoft, Conrad was a nobody. Not knowing the language and trying to supplement his failing speech with violent gestures, he did not appear as a count, but as a Dago. When he told his good Polish name to somebody, they would not say: "*Enchente de faire votre connaissance*," but: "What's that?" In Marseilles, Conrad had letters of introduction to at least two well-known people; in England, he knew nobody. As a matter of fact, he had so little to recommend him that in our more enlightened age of immigration laws he most certainly would have been turned away" (Morf 235-236).

Conrad's biographers, who have very well researched his first years in England, write that during his long stays ashore, Conrad, for a number of years, made no friends. "He probably was never invited to an English home until 1885 (seven years after his arrival to Lowestoft) and this home, typically enough, was the home of a Pole living in Cardiff. He made two more visits there, in 1889 and 1895. In the course of years, he also acquired some English friends: Mr. Kreiger and Captain Hope, who put him on the

track of the gold mining speculation. It was only after he had had *Almayer's Folly* accepted, and when he was married and could practice Polish hospitality, that the number of his friends grew," writes Gustav Morf (237).

England, no doubt, was a great shock to Conrad after France where he felt profoundly at home, was accepted by everyone, was very popular, in spite of, and to a great extent because of, his eccentricity. It is no wonder, therefore, that Conrad's protagonist in *The Secret Agent* symbolically represents the expatriate's assimilation problems. Through Verloc's double identity of the spy, Conrad conveys the emigre's inability to assimilate fully in the adopted culture as he contains two sets of different cultural codes and conventions. Since those codes in some essential aspects contradict each other, the ones that belong to the parent culture inevitably get suppressed.

The inability to assimilate fully in the new culture, to give up one's legacy and win acceptance, and the feeling of rootlessness are aggravated by the return to one's country and results in the dark view of the expatriate's parent country. Conrad told Galsworthy about his homecoming before he left for Poland in 1914: "As to this Polish journey. I depart on it with mixed feelings. In 1874 I got into a train in Crakow (Vienna Express) on my way to the sea, as a man might get into a dream. And here is the dream going on still. Only now it is peopled mostly by ghosts and the moment of awakening draws near" (Morf 96). In Conrad's fiction, the expatriate's vision of his home country can be most explicitly traced in *Under Western Eyes* in the depiction of Russia, since Russia, even though Conrad identified himself with Poland, always remained part of his legacy.

In fact, Conrad's legacy, as well as his relationships with Russia, is very complex. The little city of Berdychiv, in the center of Ukraine, at the time of Conrad's birth was part of the Russian Empire. Conrad's father, Apollo Korzeniowski, was exiled to Vologda, in the middle of European Russia, and he took his family with him. Shortly after the family returned to Poland, Conrad's mother died. His father did not live long

after. It is no wonder that Conrad's attitude to Russia was neither neutral nor indifferent; in fact, his unresolved past accounts for the intensity of his notorious hatred for this country. Polish history of the last several centuries has been tragically interwoven with the history of Russia. Therefore, Conrad's exploration of Russia's socio-political reality and its impact on the individual conveys his dark view of the country which by the force of political circumstances was the country of his birth. *Under Western Eyes* with its dark depiction of the Russian political reality is for Conrad, who never wrote anything on Polish themes, a fictional homecoming. Conrad very rarely spoke about Poland, but once he said in his interview with the Polish journalist Marian Dabrowski: "When I think of the present political situation, *c'est affreux!* I am unable to think often of Poland, for this is bitter, painful, bad. I could not live!" (Morf 96). For the most of the time, with sad resignation, Conrad had to suppress his feelings of despair and pessimism about Poland, "but they pervaded his whole work and gave them that specifically Conradian haunting quality" (Morf 96). Conrad's fiction, in fact, originates from a major metaphor where the scene is set by the projection of activity in a mimetic and illusionistic space. As Michael Siedel points out, "the exilic mind, no matter where it projects, no matter how unknown its arts, emanates from familiar or local territory. Imaginative powers begin at the boundaries of accumulative experience" (2).

In *Nostromo*, a fictional symbolic recreation of the major patterns of Polish colonial reality, Conrad concentrates much effort on describing Costaguana/Poland in the darkest shades. Colonialism is not a common theme for the British-born authors, and in choosing the colonial reality, even of imaginary character, Conrad betrays his expatriate schism. Numerous detailed accounts of corruption, lawlessness, violence, and hopeless instability dominate the mood of the novel:

No doubt the initial action of Charles Gould had been helped at the beginning by a period of comparative peace which occurred just about that time; and also by the general softening of manners as compared with the epoch of civil wars whence had

emerged the iron tyranny of Guzman Bento of fearful memory. In the contests that broke out at the end of his rule (which had kept peace in the country for a whole fifteen years) there was more fatuous imbecility, plenty of cruelty and suffering still, but much less of the old-time fierce and blind ferocious political fanaticism. It was all more vile, more base, more contemptible, and infinitely more manageable in the very outspoken cynicism of motives. It was more clearly a brazen-faced scramble for a constantly diminishing quantity of booty, since all enterprises had been stupidly killed in the land. Thus it came to pass that the province of Sulaco, one of the field of cruel party vengeance, had become in a way one of the considerable prizes of political career. The great of the earth (in Sta Marta) reserved the posts in the old Occidental state to those nearest and dearest to them: nephews, brothers, , husbands of favorite sisters, bosom friends, trusty supporters -- or prominent supporters of whom perhaps they were afraid (Nostromo 95-96).

Conrad's pessimistic vision of the outcome of colonialism is voiced through Martin Decoud, the expatriate writer who returns home to Costaguana:

Now the whole land is like a treasure-house, and all these people are breaking into it, while we are cutting each other's throats. The only thing that keeps them out is mutual jealousy. But they'll come to an agreement some day -- and by the time we've settled our quarrels and become decent and honorable, there'll be nothing left for us. It has always been the same. We are a wonderful people, but it has always been our fate to be" -- he did not say "robbed," but added, after a pause, -- "exploited!" (Nostromo 144).

According to Michael Siedel, in the exilic fable the home place is often destroyed, rendered illegitimate, contaminated, or taken over by conquerors or rival claimants (8).

As the expatriate grows despondent and dismayed at the future of his country, he becomes niggardly in the depiction of the adopted land. Rejection or repudiation varies from mild to the outright aggressive (Kirpal 85). In *Under Western Eyes*, describing Razumov's arrival to Geneva, Conrad conveys the protagonist's barely disguised unaccounted for hostility to the land of Switzerland, which will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3.

The expatriate writers develop a distinct perspective on the phenomenon of colonization. The Third World expatriate novelists who have colonization as a theme in their novels have it as a foreground and describe it in distilled, substantial, quintessential terms (Kirpal 91). Conrad's *Nostromo* and *Heart of Darkness* explore

colonization as the theme in a fashion very uncommon in native British writing. No doubt, Conrad's perspective would be different from the perspective of the Third World expatriate writers, but the writer's attempt to approach this theme in his major works is not a common practice among the British writers either. Post-colonial criticism, which actively analyzes Conrad's racist tendencies, does not take into consideration the complexity of his approach. It fails to see that as an expatriate, Conrad cannot and does not mechanically identify with the culture he has adopted. From his personal remarks, one can deduce that Conrad disliked some traits of the English culture: snobbery of any kind, including the feeling of national superiority, intolerance toward the "different, a deplorable lack of imagination, the pompous role played by trade and commerce on the English scene and the gullibility of the people, sentimentalism, imperialism and colonialism (Morf 238). Coming from a colony himself, Conrad condemns colonization as much as can be done from the perspective of a colonizer. Ironically, Conrad's non-British identification with the colonized makes him the target of criticism by scholars representing the cultures he sympathized with.

The prolonged exile affects the language in particular ways. Insubstantiality, abstractness, even strangeness modify the language of the expatriate novelist. Nostalgia, allegory, self-consciousness, abstractness imprint on his language. Language translates the native sensibility into the adopted language and displays the effects of deregionalization and exile. The language of the expatriate's earlier fiction is marked by realism, concreteness, materiality and the solidity of the earth -- symbolic of rootedness. The language of later works is stamped by insubstantiality, absence, convolutedness, and a shadowy, dream-like existence.

Conrad's fiction shares the major characteristics of expatriate writing: nostalgia, idealization and inwardness, self-consciousness, intellectualism, symbolic, allegorical, at times even abstract modes, pervasive dark vision which often manifests itself in



ironic and satiric writing. However, interpretation of Conrad's fiction from the perspective of one culture fails to see the complexity of its author's highly controversial expatriate sensibility which consists in its duplicity and ultimately transmutes into the artistic patterns. Conrad, who tried hard to create his English persona and wanted to live as a British citizen, at the same time kept the habits of a domineering Polish land squire. He was "arbitrary, unpredictable, suffered no contradiction from wife or children" (Morf 294). Conrad chose to live in England, but was highly critical of the British politics. He was convinced that its parliamentary system was artificial, and he "despaired of Western civilization which accommodated itself with the fact that the noble Polish nation was kept captive and divided for almost a century and a half, and which had no answer to poverty, social divisions, national and racial prejudices, imperialism, and war" (Morf 294). The reflection of Conrad's personal schism has been noticed by Gustav Morf, who maintains that in Conrad's works, "we find many reflections of his English shock. Curiously enough, this aspect of his writings has never received much attention" (Morf 238).

## CHAPTER 2

### RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE EXPATRIATE WRITER AND THE READER FROM THE PARENTHOLD CULTURE IN *LORD JIM*

I saw his form pass by - appealing - significant - under a cloud - perfectly silent. Which is as it should be. It was for me, with all the sympathy of which I was capable, to seek fit words for his meaning. He was 'one of us'.

Joseph Conrad. *Lord Jim*.

In *Lord Jim*, the plot is focused on Marlow listening to Jim's life story, interviewing the people involved, researching the attendant circumstances, and shaping the final version of the story. Essentially, *Lord Jim* is a critical discourse about how one lives, tells, writes, and reads an emigre story.<sup>1</sup> Jim, the expatriate, the source of the story

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<sup>1</sup>. *Lord Jim* is based on a real event that happened on a ship named *Jeddah*. Conrad made significant changes to the original story, but there is no doubt that the first mate of *Jeddah*, Augustine Podmore Williams served as the model for Conrad's third mate of *Patna*, Jim. Gustav Morf describes the episode in detail, as well as the parallels between the prototype and Conrad's Jim. Like Jim, Williams was the son of an English clergyman who was reprimanded by the judge for leaving the sinking vessel, and who never went back to sea even though his certificate was not canceled. The story of desertion was talked about in Eastern ports for more than a decade. Williams became a Chandler's clerk, married a sixteen-year-old Eurasian girl who gave him sixteen children and became a successful businessman. Those who remembered the dark episode of his life did not discriminate against him (Morf 145). The episode with *Jeddah* and an encounter with the story of the person trying to run away from his past, a story which archetypally mirrors the act of expatriation, no doubt, resonated with Conrad's exilic condition, which accounts for the intensity of his identification with the hero of the original story.

and the hidden narrator charged with charismatic power, serves as the driving force for the dynamics of the novel. Marlow, his narrative double, with his inexplicable undying interest in Jim's life story, is not only the main narrator, but also the crucial component for the development of the novel's narrative structure. Through the relationship between Jim and Marlow, Conrad dramatizes his ideas of writing and reading the novel about the life of the expatriate, and, most importantly, he comments on the experience of writing out of a culture other than one's own.<sup>2</sup>

Conrad uses the device of multiple versions of a single incident, the jump, to illustrate the dependency of the content of the story on the identity of the reader and the writer. The versions of the jump, the court story based on facts and the Marlow story based on emotions, are Jim's duality. The first parallels Conrad's relationship with the dictatorial reader from his culture who requires unconditional devotion to the themes of the parent culture; the second parallels Conrad's relationships with the understanding and generous reader from the parent culture who does not exercise the tyranny of romantic nationalism over the writer.

Marlow, the reader of a life he does not understand and the writer of the story he never fully comprehends, is the metaphoric double of Conrad, the writer. Jim, telling the story of his experience of expatriation but unable to convey its essential meaning to the listener, is the metaphoric double of Conrad, the man. Connected by incomprehensible invisible bonds and outsiders in the social and literary milieu, these two personae represent the anxiety of the expatriate who ventures into the world of creative writing in a foreign country without the necessary cultural and linguistic background. The Jim-

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<sup>2</sup>. Richard Ambrosini, who approaches Conrad's fiction, *Lord Jim* as a critical discourse, analyzes it outside Conrad's expatriation experience. Discussing the narrator as the interpreter in *Lord Jim*, he approaches the two major themes of Marlow's interpretation of Jim's case within a framework of reality/illusion opposition and the issue of the protagonist's existence (Ambrosini 118).

Marlow relationship can be examined as the focus of Conrad's critical discourse within the writer/reader paradigm in the context of the author's complex cultural situation as an emigre writer.

Jim is an archetypal folkloric narrator. He is, effectively, the writer of the real story of his life. Like any expatriate, he is doomed to tell his life story over and over again in a constant attempt to contextualize his origins, his rationale, and his understanding. At a certain point of his life, he even makes an unsuccessful attempt to write. The narrator comments that Jim's "attempt to deliver himself ... failed, as you may perceive if you look at the sheet of greyish foolscap enclosed here" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 256). Jim's written work, headed "The Fort, Patusan," is essentially the plan intended to make his house "the place of defense", or, in other words, the plan to separate himself from the world. There was nothing wrong with the content of writing; "it was an excellent plan", which "showed his judicious foresight, his faith in the future" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 256). His effort can be interpreted only on the metaphoric level as an attempt to isolate the writer from the world, i.e. the reality of the adopted culture, allowing him to withdraw into an ivory tower of his own imagination:

He was overwhelmed by the inexplicable; he was overwhelmed by his own personality - the gift of that destiny which he had done his best to master (Conrad *Lord Jim* 256).

Isolation from reality is one of the traps the emigre writer is doomed to fall into, since he/she functions in a foreign, and in many ways hostile, world. Just like Jim, the emigre writer does not have a specific reader in mind; he/she writes into a vacuum hoping to get a response but not expecting it:

It is also impossible to say whom he had in his mind when he seized the pen: Stein - myself - the world at large - or was it only the aimless startled cry of a solitary man confronted by his fate? (Conrad *Lord Jim* 256).

Jim's writing gets in the hands of an ordinary nameless reader without a personality, who labels Jim's hand as "commonplace" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 256). The privileged man who opens the packet understands, though, that the main reason for Jim's failure as the writer is that he is not able to reach him, the ordinary reader: "he [Jim] had seen a broad gulf that neither eye nor voice could span" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 256), except the expatriate who exists in two cultures. Expatriate writing, representing a different sensibility and different social milieu, cannot reach an average reader, who does not share the same cultural history as the writer. Essentially, the average reader would have to make an effort to move towards the writer who comes from a different social and political reality, thus surpassing the limitations of an average reader.

According to Conrad, Jim is not much more successful as a storyteller than as a writer. One of the reasons for his failure as a storyteller is that he cannot express the true meaning of his life story.<sup>3</sup> Conrad dramatizes Jim's inability to impose meaning by having him tell two versions of the jump episode at the same time: one is told in the court room, the other (by bits and pieces) to Marlow. Both narratives deal with the same event, but due to the shift of accents resulting from the expectations of the reader this single event becomes different stories. The court version of the jump episode is the narrative autocratically guided by the context of the telling: Jim is asked questions

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<sup>3</sup>Robert Hampson interprets the *Patna* episode in terms of identity crisis: "... the *Patna* episode becomes the crucial action that colors and influences the whole life. It leaves Jim with a public fact that conflicts with his private image of himself, and the first half of the novel depicts Jim's consciousness of the lesion between identity-for-self and identity-for-the-other, or, rather, Jim's struggle 'to save from the fire his idea of what his moral identity should be.' This personal drama, however, is intermeshed with Jim's betrayal of the ideal code of the sea, and it is only by disentangling the two that the drama of the self-ideal can be appreciated" (117).

which he is expected to answer. The court, the dictatorial reader, is perceived by Jim as a very hostile environment:

Outside the court the sun blazed -- within was the wind of great punkahs that made your shiver, the shame that made you burn, the attentive eyes whose glance stabbed. The face of the presiding magistrate, clean shaven and impassable, looked at him deadly pale between the red faces of the two nautical assessors (Conrad *Lord Jim* 27).

The question-answer arrangement does not allow Jim to tell the story the way he feels it should be told, because

... the terribly distinct questions that extorted his answers seemed to shape themselves in anguish and pain within his breast -- came to him poignant and silent like the terrible questioning of one's conscience (Conrad *Lord Jim* 27).

Caught by the power of the dictatorial reader, Jim cannot tell the story he needs to tell. Jim's relationships with the court, the dictatorial reader who represents the establishment of the country Jim left behind, mirrors the expatriate's relationships with the reader from the parent culture who has rigid expectations of the emigre writer's thematic choices. The court version of the story of Jim's jump mirrors Conrad's apprehension of the Polish reader's judgement of his work from the political perspective. Biographically, he had sufficient reasons for such anxiety: he received the notorious letter from Orzeszkowa accusing him of treason when he was beginning to work on *Lord Jim*.

Essentially, the reason why the court version of the jump episode fails to convey what Jim considers to be essential to the story is that the court's questions aim at facts. "They wanted facts," says Marlow, "Facts! They demanded facts from him, as if facts could explain anything!" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 27). Facts, according to Jim, do not tell the story, since they fail to explain the truth, even though they seem to be a truthful representation of reality. There is another reality, no less important than the reality of facts: the reality of emotions, which is completely lost in the narrative relying on facts:

The facts those men were eager to know had been visible, tangible, open to the senses, occupying their place in space and time, requiring for their existence a fourteen-hundred-ton steamer and twenty-seven minutes by the watch; they made a whole that had features, shades of expression, a complicated aspect that could be remembered by the eye, and something else besides, something invisible, a directing spirit of perdition that dwelt within, like a malevolent soul in a detestable body. He was anxious to make this clear (Conrad *Lord Jim* 29).

There exists a different official version of the jump episode told by the skipper and others who jumped off the sinking ship. To Jim, however, their side of the story is not the true representation of what happened:

It was not a lie -- but it wasn't truth all the same. It was something. ... One knows a downright lie. There was not the thickness of a sheet of paper between the right and wrong of this affair (Conrad *Lord Jim* 102).

But to Marlow, all the versions have the right to exist:

As a matter of fact nobody lied; not even the chief engineer with his story of the masthead light dropping like a match you throw down (Conrad *Lord Jim* 106).

Feeling that facts themselves do not account for what he needs to explain, which are the reasons behind his jump, Jim finds himself unable to establish the connection with the reader through a factual narrative. Moreover, he faces the major predicament as a writer: on the one hand, he is forced to relate the facts of the jump; on the other, he feels that the facts themselves are unable to tell his true story:

He wanted to go on talking for the truth's sake, perhaps for his own sake also; and while his utterance was deliberate, his mind positively flew round and round the serried circle of facts that had surged up all about him to cut him off from the rest of his kind: it was like a creature that, finding itself imprisoned within an enclosure of high stakes, dashes round and round, distracted in the night, trying to find a weak spot, a crevice, a place to scale, some opening through which it may squeeze itself and escape (Conrad *Lord Jim* 29).

Imprisonment by facts completely isolates Jim from the outside world.

An emigre story cannot be conveyed by means of facts; each emigre story is essentially an archetype of escape from one country to another. What distinguishes them

is the hidden reality of feelings, emotions, and relations. All emigre stories are essentially stories of expatriation describing the jump from one culture to another and therefore embracing the basic archetypes of expatriate sensibility. They differ from each other only as much as one narrator differs from another. According to Conrad, the personality of the narrator is crucial for the shaping of the story, which does not allow one to discard the author's perspective in interpreting the emigre narrative.

Like any expatriate, Jim has two stories: one official, which does not tell the truth, and one real, which tells the truth. The difference between the two is that the official version of the story is focused on the procedure of expatriation, whereas the real story is focused on the reasons for expatriation:

The examination of the only man able and willing to face it was beating futilely round the well known fact, and the play of questions upon it was as instructive as the tapping with a hammer on an iron box, were the object to find out what's inside. However, an official inquiry could not be any other thing. Its object was not the fundamental why, but the superficial how, of this affair (*Conrad Lord Jim* 48).

Marlow complains that the questions put to Jim necessarily led him away from telling what for Marlow was "the only truth worth knowing" (*Conrad Lord Jim* 48). Thus, if the form and content of the story are shaped by the expectations of the reader, as Jim's official story is to a great extent written by the court, it fails to convey the storyteller's vision of reality. Marlow comments that "you can't expect the constituted authorities to inquire into the state of a man's soul" (*Conrad Lord Jim* 48). According to Conrad, narratives which have political considerations as their major purpose address a limited body of readers sharing the same political views, whereas Marlow, the independent reader who is not involved in the politics of the trial and therefore not interested in the official version of the story, is lost by such narratives. The loss turns out to be considerable, since it is due to Marlow's efforts as the reader and interpreter of Jim's life that the world gets to know Jim's side of the story.



Brierly, one of the assessors who is expected by virtue of his position to be the content reader of the official narrative, is irritated by the process. Not only was he caught for it, but his attitude to the trial is highly negative; he questions the purpose and validity of the inquiry: "What's the use of it? It is the stupidest set out you can imagine" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 55). Brierly feels out of place there, "like a fool" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 55), as he says in his last conversation with Marlow. As opposed to the rest of the team, he is the only one who sees that the narrative shaped in the courtroom does not represent the truth of why Jim jumped off the ship. He sees it only as a cover-up for the developments of which he does not approve. To Brierly's questions "Can't he [Jim] see that wretched skipper of his has cleared out? What does he expect to happen? Nothing can save him. He's done for", Marlow responds that "the skipper of the *Patna* was known to have feathered his nest pretty well, and could procure almost everywhere the means of getting away" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 55). The official politically correct narrative, therefore, has a hidden subplot taking place outside the courtroom, which meets Brierly's disapproval. Brierly, Jim's double, expected to condemn Jim, identifies with him:

I [Marlow] wondered greatly at the direction of his thoughts, but now I strongly suspect it was strictly in character: at bottom poor Brierly must have been thinking of himself (Conrad *Lord Jim* 55).

Trapped between his professional and personal politics, or between the official politically correct version of the story and his own reading, Brierly commits suicide. It is to make up for the failures of the official narrative that Jim starts telling his side of the story to Marlow, thereby expressing the truth of emotions evading the factual narrative. Marlow remarks: "... he was telling me these things he could not tell the court" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 70).

Jim is a charismatic narrator who captures the attention of anyone he addresses. The audience in the courtroom is "spellbound", as if all the people sitting in orderly

rows upon narrow benches were "enslaved by the fascination of his voice" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 27). So too is Marlow; during their first meeting Jim looks to him "generally fit to demolish the wall" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 59). But all his charisma does not help him to communicate to whoever happens to be the listener/the reader, since the meaning of his story escapes the storyteller.

Jim, the narrator telling the story of his expatriation, like any emigre writer, is caught in the pattern of self-justification, which becomes a crucial force shaping his narrative.<sup>4</sup> The trial, representing the country Jim left behind, stands as a metaphor of the guilt trap one inevitably gets caught by after changing the communal culture for the individualistic culture which proved to be more viable in twentieth century Europe. The trial is set to decide whether Jim is guilty or not, and so Jim is forced to justify himself, unable to break the pattern:

I don't want to excuse myself; but I would like to explain -- I would like somebody to understand -- somebody -- one person at least! You! Why not you? (Conrad *Lord Jim* 66).

In the foreign environment understanding becomes a very rare and, therefore, a particularly precious quality of any relationship. Jim recognizes the exclusiveness and importance of being able to express himself to Marlow:

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<sup>4</sup> Robert Hampson interprets Jim's relationship with his past in terms of identity crisis. He writes: "It is not surprising that Jim's past constantly rises up before him to confront him. The problem, however, is not so much that others reject him because of his past, but that Jim himself is unable to live with the idea that others know 'his secret'. His repeated flights emphasize the lesion between his identity-for-self and his identity-for-the-other: Jim's identity-for-the-other includes the fact of his failure on board the *Patna*, while his identity-for-self denies that fact. Jim has not come to terms with his past actions. He cannot reconcile those actions with his self-image, and he is trying to 'bury the conflict rather than resolve it" (128). However, his interpretation does not explain the reasons behind Jim's identity crisis; one cannot reveal them without resorting to the exilic paradigm.

You don't know what it is for a fellow in my position to be believed -- make a clean breast of it to an elder man. It is so difficult -- so awfully unfair -- so hard to understand (Conrad *Lord Jim* 100-101).

Search for understanding becomes the counterpoint of Jim's relationships with Marlow. At times Jim becomes desperate to be understood about the most essential issue in his narrative: he needs Marlow to realize that it was not cowardice that made him jump off the sinking ship. The impetus for the first conversation between Jim and Marlow was the remark "Look at that wretched cur" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 58), uttered by a stranger, which Jim mistakenly attributed to Marlow. Jim takes it as a statement of his cowardice and is ready to fistfight with Marlow:

"I will show you I am not," he said, in a tone suggestive of crisis. "I declare I don't know," I protested earnestly at the same time. He tried to crush me by the scorn of his glance. "Now that you see I am not afraid you try to crawl out of it," he said. "Who's a cur now -- hey? Then, at last, I understood (Conrad *Lord Jim* 60).

Like any emigre, Jim needs somebody to hear his reasons for expatriation.

There is always a difference between the reasons for expatriation as they are represented by official mythology and as they are represented by an individual. The official version, as a rule, is undignified and humiliating for the individual; it represents an expatriate as a coward, a traitor, or a person who was not able to carry out the noble task of serving his/her motherland. Shock from humiliation is an impetus for Jim to tell his narrative.<sup>5</sup> During their first meeting in court Marlow finds Jim profoundly humiliated by accusations of cowardice and shocked by the whole setup; following this meeting Jim begins to tell his story. Marlow recollects:

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<sup>5</sup> Michael Siedel, who interprets Jim's jump as a symbolic representation of expatriation, pointing to "exilic trauma of the leap or the moral weightlessness that attends it," admits its importance in the initiation and the content of a narrative. He maintains that "the space of the exilic leap, what Conrad calls in *Lord Jim* that "everlasting deep hole", is a powerful, even constitutive, metaphor for the genesis and disposition of the narrative itself." (1).

I perceived he was incapable of pronouncing a word from the excess of his humiliation. From disappointment too -- who knows? Perhaps he looked forward to that hammering he was going to give me for rehabilitation, for appeasement? Who can tell what relief he expected from this chance of a row? He was naive enough to expect anything; but he had driven himself away for nothing in this case. He had been frank with himself -- let alone with me -- in the wild hope of arriving in that way at some effective refutation, and the stars had been ironically unpropitious. He made an inarticulate noise in his throat like a man imperfectly stunned by a blow on the head. It was pitiful (Conrad *Lord Jim* 61-62).

As a rule, emigre writing begins as a result of deep shock; an emigre begins to write in the state of profound humiliation, strong enough to lose one's voice. Another moving force behind Jim's narrative is a desire for self-justification *vis-a-vis* existing moral standards. According to the marine code of honor, having jumped from the sinking ship, Jim fell as low as anyone could possibly fall. Driven by guilt, he wants to restore his image in his own eyes, as well as in the eyes of the people around him. Marlow's reaction to Jim's self-justification is the reaction of an average listener to the narrative of entrapment by moral standards:

It was solemn, a little ridiculous, too, as they always are, those struggles of an individual trying to save from the fire his idea of what his moral identity should be, this precious notion of a convention, only one of the rules of the game, nothing more, but all the same so terribly effective by its assumption of unlimited power over natural instincts, by the awful penalties of its failure. He began his story quietly enough (Conrad *Lord Jim* 66).

As a reader, Marlow does not accept the paradigm of guilt and justification Jim is forced into as a writer.

According to moral standards of communal cultures, like Polish, Russian, or Ukrainian, one is supposed to demonstrate loyalty to the community by staying within its values throughout one's life. Any deviation from its values is punished by ostracism; abandoning the communal culture is punished by the sense of guilt. An expatriate from a communal culture is doomed to live his or her life abroad with the sense of guilt for deserting the community. An expatriate writer from a communal culture, like Jim, is

driven by the same guilt. He/she attempts to use writing to justify himself or herself and explain the reasons for leaving the country.

The purpose of Jim's telling Marlow about the jump episode is to prove to Marlow that fear was not the real reason for his jump. Jim gets particularly excited when he approaches this part of the narrative:

"Do you think I was afraid of death?" he asked in a voice very fierce and low. He brought down his open hand with a bang that made the coffee-cups dance. "I am ready to swear I was not.... By God -- no!" He hitched himself upright and crossed his arms; his chin fell on his breast... "No, really -- do you think I've been done to that extent?" he inquired very earnest and deliberate. (Conrad *Lord Jim* 70-71).

Jim's emotional intensity at this stage of telling the story testifies to the importance the issue has for the author.

Jim's version of the jump episode is about the limits of the human psyche in coping with high tension emergency situations. When he describes the events which preceded the jump in detail, he is essentially saying that it was impossible to remain sane under the circumstances. One such detail is the encounter with the pilgrim who asked for water for the child. This Jim mistook for panic caused by the possible rumor that there is water in the ship:

"The beggar clung to me like a drowning man," he said, impressively. "Water, water! What water did he mean? What did he know? As calmly as I could I ordered him to let go. He was stopping me, time was pressing, other men began to stir: I wanted time - time to cut the boats adrift. He got hold of my hand now, and I felt that he would begin to shout. it flashed upon me it was enough to start a panic, and I hauled off with my free arm and slung the lamp in his face. The glass jingled, the light went out, but the blow made him let go, and I ran off -- I wanted to get at the boats. He leaped after me from behind. I turned on him. He would not keep quiet; he tried to shout; I had half throttled him before I made out what he wanted. He wanted some water -- water to drink; they were on strict allowance, you know, and he had with him a young boy I had noticed several times. His child was sick -- and thirsty. He had caught sight of me as I passed by, and was begging for a little water. That's all (Conrad *Lord Jim* 73).

In addition to the emergency, the reason for misunderstanding is the language difference between Jim and the beggar, for this added to the insanity of the situation by complicating the communication process. Thus, the language barrier becomes an essential component adding to the turmoil in the emergency situation. Misunderstanding between Jim and the pilgrims about water on the sinking ship mirrors the tension of an emigre life, where any complication resulting from minor miscommunications, linguistic or otherwise, can be the reason for disaster, since an exilic condition is a permanent state of emergency. As an emigre writer, Conrad is particularly sensitive to complications in the human condition resulting from language differences.

Since linguistic and cultural differences become major obstacles for an emigre writer's establishing relationships with his/her readers, a sympathetic understanding for somebody writing out of the culture other than one's own becomes a particularly valued and desired component in the reader's response. It is not by chance, therefore, that Jim desperately seeks understanding while telling his story to Marlow. In fact, the need for understanding becomes the main reason why he starts telling the story. During one of his first conversations with Marlow, his words " I would like somebody to understand -- somebody -- one person at least! You! Why not you!" initiate a major theme in the Jim-Marlow relationship, which becomes a counterpoint of Jim's narrative. Trying to explain that he was pushed to jump off the ship by his assistants' breaking the rules, Jim appeals to Marlow:

"I leave it to you. You can understand. Can't you? You see it -- don't you? No harm! Good God! What more could they have done? Oh, yes, I know very well -- I jumped! I told you I jumped; but I tell you they were too much for any man. It was their doing as plainly as if they had reached up with a boat-hook and pulled me over. Can't you see it? you must see it? Come. Speak -- straight out."

" His uneasy eyes fastened upon mine, questioned, begged, challenged, entreated. For the life of me I couldn't help murmuring, "You've been tried." "More than is fair," he caught up, swiftly. "I wasn't given half a chance -- with a gang like that" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 98).

The search for understanding, therefore, is for Jim, like for any expatriate, both the reason for telling the story and the main framework of his relationship with Marlow, the reader who shares the same cultural background, but has no experience of expatriation.

Telling the expatriation story to somebody who has not gone through the experience of changing one culture for another is a very difficult undertaking. At times it seems futile to Jim, the narrator, to try to convey his point to Marlow, who openly admits that he is totally unable to imagine what advantage Jim "can expect from this licking of the dregs" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 119), or participating in the court procedure. Marlow suggests that Jim should clear out; Jim feels enraged. A suggestion of this kind tells Jim that Marlow does not understand the essence of his story. Jim's intense emotional response to the suggestion to run away is the response of the narrator who does not get understanding he needs:

"I've been trying to tell you all there is in it," he [Jim] went on slowly, as if meditating something unanswerable. "But after all, it is *my* trouble." I [Marlow] opened my mouth to retort, and discovered suddenly that I'd lost all confidence in myself; and it was as if he, too had given me up, for he mumbled like a man thinking half aloud. ... He gazed as though he had been haunted. His unconscious face reflected the passing expressions of scorn, of despair, of resolution, -- reflected them in turn, as a magic mirror would reflect the gliding passage of unearthly shapes. He lived surrounded by deceitful ghosts, by austere shades. "Oh, nonsense, my dear fellow," I began. He had a movement of impatience. "You don't seem to understand," he said, incisively; then looking at me without a wink, "I may have jumped, but I don't run away" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 119).

Telling about the experience of expatriation, the writer inevitably faces his own inability to convey the essential part of his narrative to the reader who does not share his cultural history. Jim's frustration at this point is the frustration of an emigré writer who loses the reader from the parent culture by virtue of essential background differences related to self-exile.

Understanding is the only thing Jim is looking for, and this is the only thing he never gets: "He passes away under a cloud, inscrutable at heart, forgotten, unforgiven,

and excessively romantic" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 313). As a benevolent dictator of Patusan, he knew extraordinary success, fame, devotion of a loving woman, but in spite of that for everybody he "remains under a cloud" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 311). As an expatriate, he lives the life nobody understands; as an emigre writer telling about his life, he loses the reader from his parent culture.

The way Jim tells the story does not help the reader/listener understand it.

Marlow complains:

He has confided so much in me that at times it seems as though he must come in presently and tell the story in his own words, in his careless yet feeling voice, with his own offhand manner, a little puzzled, a little bothered, a little hurt, but now and then by a word or a phrase giving one of these glimpses of his very own self that were never any good for the purposes of orientation" (Conrad 258).

The story Jim is telling is so unlike any stories Marlow would have encountered within his culture that Jim has to work hard to find ways of describing his experiences. Jim has no analogies, metaphors or images to utilize; he has no means to relate his experience to that of Marlow.

The construction of Jim's narrative is intended to give Marlow time and space to make up for what Jim cannot convey and so Jim's narrative has considerable gaps. One of the most unexpected gaps is the outcome of the court: about sixty per cent of the novel is focused on the court hearings and related events, but since, according to Jim, facts fail to convey the truth, the decision of the court is omitted. Gaps, on the one hand, do not seem to help the reader understand the story, but they give him the chance to find his one's own way through a narrative by virtue of cultural differences to which he cannot fully relate. Again, Marlow complains about the way Jim tells the story:

I don't pretend I understood him. The views he let me have of himself were like those glimpses through the shifting rents in a thick fog -- bits of vivid and vanishing detail, giving no connected idea of the general aspect of a country. They fed one's curiosity without satisfying it; they were no good for purposes of orientation. Upon the whole he was misleading (Conrad *Lord Jim* 63).



Marlow recognizes that he would be little fitted for the reception of Jim's confidences were he not "able at times to understand the pauses between the words" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 84). Marlow also confesses that he is not able to fill in another essential gap in Jim's narrative: Jim's response to the outcome of the sea tragedy after he found out that the ship had not sunk. Marlow says:

As to what sensations he experienced when he got ashore and heard the unforeseen conclusion of the tale in which he had take such a pitiful part, he told me nothing of them, and it is difficult to imagine. I wonder whether he felt the ground cut from under his feet? I wonder? (Conrad *Lord Jim* 67).

Marlow openly admits that he cannot fill in the gap in Jim's story when the storyteller fails to describe his emotions in detail. Marlow's failure to reconstruct Jim's emotional state after the jump is Conrad's metaphor for inability of a person who did not make the jump from one culture to another to understand the inner state of the expatriate. Jim's narrative is doomed to have impressionistic gaps, since he tells the story to the reader who himself has essential gaps in understanding coming from differences in personal cultural history.

The contradictory broken character of Jim's story reflects the personality split of the narrator which is the major characteristic of an expatriate. The two or more cultures an expatriate simultaneously belongs to subconsciously construct very complex, predominantly conflicting, social and psychological patterns. Therefore, though to Marlow Jim, the narrator, does not seem to be any different from himself, his manner of speaking betrays profound fight of incomprehensible opposing psychological forces:

He was of the right sort; he was one of us. He talked soberly, with a sort of composed unreserve, and with a quiet bearing that might have been the outcome of manly self-control, of impudence, of callousness, of a colossal unconsciousness, of a gigantic deception. Who can tell! (Conrad *Lord Jim* 64).

The combination of self-control and unconsciousness, on the one hand, and impudence, callousness, and deception, on the other, is the portrait of an expatriate from the perspective of an outsider.

The result of this incomprehensible inner conflict is the inability to convey the essentially contradictory message of the narrative. This personality split of the narrator hampers Marlow's understanding of Jim's story, and his frustration is that of the reader who is attracted to the narrative he cannot fully comprehend. Marlow says:

I listened with concentrated attention, not daring to stir in my chair; I wanted to know -- and to this day I don't know, I can only guess. He would be confident and depressed all in the same breath, as if some conviction of innate blamelessness had checked the truth writhing within him at every turn (*Conrad Lord Jim* 64).

The image of truth writhing within the narrator is the metaphor of the narrator's struggle with escaping meaning, which struggles to find the way out, but remains unexpressed. In the context of the overall jump theme of Jim's narrative, the meaning which escapes the narrator is the reason for the jump. Taken to the metaphorical level of jump-expatriation, the essential meaning of the narrative cannot be conveyed, since no emigre can successfully explain the reasons for expatriation to anyone who has not gone through the experience.

If the reader and the writer belong to the same culture, essential cultural codes do not need to be explained, and there exists considerable understanding by virtue of similar cultural background. Jim's frustration as he tells the jump story to Marlow is that of the writer who has to face the reader unable to understand him. As he sees Marlow's response to his narrative, he breaks down, since he fails to force Marlow into understanding his story: "You doubt me? ... How do you know how I felt? ... What right have you to doubt? ... I very nearly did it as it was -- do you understand?" (*Conrad Lord Jim* 105). An emigre writer, who does not share the same personal history with the reader from the parent culture and, therefore, operates in the reality of cultural codes

incomprehensible for the reader, is permanently anxious that his/her writing will be misinterpreted, or misunderstood, which in both cases is a threat of losing one's self in creativity.

The emigre writer's relationship with reality is very complex and ambivalent. Under the influence of the cultural shock, the general movement of the emigre writer's perception of reality is geared towards fearful exaggeration. Jim "must have had an unconscious conviction that the reality could not be half as bad, not half as anguishing, appalling, and vengeful as the created terror of his imagination" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 90), but he cannot help his anxiety resulting from the encounter with reality. Jim's extraordinary unease is an exilic condition of encountering the reality he does not know. Like everything unknown, the foreign reality seems hostile, evil, and intimidating, and it translates into heightened sensitivity to the most ordinary, even trivial, situations.

Jim's unease is beyond linguistic expression. Marlow, who ends up shaping Jim's life story by participating in his life, recognizes Jim's limitations in expressing himself in language as he watches Jim's response to his suggestion to leave this part of the world for California or the West Coast. Jim refuses to go anywhere, suggesting that it would not make any difference, and Marlow realizes that "it was not relief he wanted:" "what he wanted, what he was, as it were, waiting for, was something not easy to define -- something in the nature of opportunity" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 154). What Jim really yearns for is the ability to speak heart to heart. The medium of language is rather a barrier than a link. This linguistic impasse is characteristic for an emigre writer, who by virtue of functioning in the foreign language environment finds that certain issues which flow freely in one's mother tongue, cannot be expressed within the adopted language, since the foreign language is not shaped to be able to express the concepts and nuances of his/her native culture. The mother tongue, on the other hand, is not shaped for expressing the foreign cultural categories. Functioning in the unexplored space between

two languages and two cultures, a writing expatriate is doomed to struggle with ways of expression, unless, tired of fruitless struggle, one loses one's voice.

Loss of voice is a very common apprehension among emigre writers, since losing the native culture, and particularly language, they lose the essential source of their creative energy. After the jump, Jim the storyteller loses his voice not only because of spiritual isolation, but due to the breakup of his established relationship with the reader he knows:

For days, for many days, he had spoken to no one, but had held silent, incoherent, and endless converse with himself, like a prisoner alone in his cell or like a wayfarer lost in a wilderness. At present he was answering questions that did not matter though they had a purpose, but he doubted whether he would ever again speak as long as he lived. The sound of his own truthful statements confirmed his deliberate opinion that speech was of no use to him any longer (*Conrad Lord Jim* 30-31).

The historical evidence of this is overwhelming, especially in Eastern Europe in light of the imperialism of both the czars and the Soviets. Russian emigre writers N. Bunin, Marina Tsvetaeva and Alexey Gorki, all contemporaries of Conrad, describe the suffocating atmosphere of self-exile in Western Europe. Exiled to Russia, Ukrainian poet Taras Shevchenko conveys a profound sense of despair due to losing contact with his land and people. The thread of nostalgia in early twentieth-century Russian emigre writers is legendary. They present in their poetry, fiction, and memoirs written abroad the essential anxiety of a writer who faces the loss of one's voice due to loss of contact with one's native culture. As opposed to early Russian expatriate writers, who never gave up their language and did everything in their power to return home, in most cases to face fatal ends, Conrad adopted English as the language of creative writing. Throughout Conrad's writing, though barely visible to his English reader, is the longing and the apprehension of the emigre. However, Conrad recognizes that he freely abandoned his land, culture and countrymen and so has no right to regret his loss. The

reader is both attracted to the exotic and cautious of the distinctions that mark the foreigner.

The image of Jim endlessly talking to himself symbolically mirrors the expatriates' claustrophobic relationships with their memories. They live solitary lives in an adopted culture, even if their writing is accepted by the reader. Amitav Ghosh, an Indian-born novelist, who decided to leave his native land and expand the horizons, recalls, "The sense of isolation was tremendous. I remember crouching over the radio and longing for the sound of a familiar language, any language" (Allemand 11). Alone in an alien culture, he began keeping a diary that trained him to observe the foreign reality and shape his ideas about life between the cultures. Amitav's diary can be seen as his way of self-expression within the familiar cultural framework. Conrad uses this technique in *Under Western Eyes*, where the diary of Razumov becomes a similar form of emotional connection with the parent culture.

Even if one is able to make the transition to function adequately, even exceptionally, in the daily life of commerce and society, when one attempts to communicate through literature, the chasm of language is apparent. Cultural isolation is not an issue in her daily life for Nancy Huston, Canadian novelist, who for twenty three years, more than half her life, has lived in France. But in her working life she feels excluded from the inbred French literary culture, and while she thus avoids the self-conscious mannerisms that come from being heir to the traditions of Rimbaud and Baudelaire, she also misses out on reviews in Le Monde. "They can't stand my person or my work," she says (Allemand 11). Cultural isolation, therefore, is the most painful issue for any emigre writer.

Because of cultural isolation, deciding for whom one is writing and finding a sympathetic reader becomes one of the greatest challenges facing the expatriate writer. Science-fiction novelist William Gibson, who came to Canada from the United States to

avoid the draft, never addressed a Canadian audience (Allemang A11). Each of these writers, Ghosh, Huston, and Gibson, is further evidence for the isolation of the expatriate writer. Conrad, however, made a definite choice of reader by adopting English as the language of his writing; he chose the English reader as definitely as Jim chose Marlow as the person to whom he wanted to tell his story.<sup>6</sup>

Though Marlow is very interested in what Jim has to say, he recognizes that Jim has a different sensibility. Jim's sensibility is the that of the romantic, who does not see the reality the way Marlow and people like Marlow perceive it. This difference is particularly evident in Marlow's description of Jim during in the beginning of their acquaintance:

Ah, he was an imaginative beggar! He would give himself away; he would give himself up. I could see in his glance darted into the night all his inner being carried on, projected headlong into the fanciful realm of recklessly heroic aspirations. He had no leisure to regret what he had lost, he was so wholly and naturally concerned for what he had failed to obtain. He was far away from me who watched him across three feet of space. With every instant he was penetrating deeper into the impossible world of romantic achievements. He got to the heart of it at last. A strange look of beatitude overspread his features, his eyes sparkled in the light of the candle burning between us; he positively smiled! He had penetrated to the very heart -- to the very heart. It was an ecstatic smile that your faces -- or mine either -- will never wear, my dear boys (Conrad *Lord Jim* 68).

This recognition of profound difference between the romantic author/storyteller and the rational reader/listener becomes stronger as Marlow's narrative continues:

He turned upon me, his eyes suddenly amazed and full of pain, with a bewildered, startled, suffering face, as though he had stumbled down from the star. Neither you nor I will ever look like this on any man (Conrad *Lord Jim* 68).

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<sup>6</sup>. Richard Ambrosini, interpreting the narrative aspect of the relationships between Marlow and Jim, maintains that "the narrator becomes an ideal reader whose reality has been touched by the truth of Jim's illusion" (Ambrosini 158).

To Marlow, Jim is an alien who fell down from the star and brought a whole bundle of emotions difficult to comprehend. This difference is metaphorically attributed to different personal histories: Jim as an expatriate has learned to function in a foreign culture though he paid the price of loneliness and lives misunderstood. Marlow, on the other hand, remains part of his parent culture, and though he accepts fully the logic of his culture, he is attracted to Jim.

According to the plot, Jim and Marlow have the same cultural background: they are both Englishmen. However, the language Marlow uses to describe his response to Jim's narrative suggests that their difference is much greater than the difference between two people from the same culture can be because of their personal histories. Marlow does not trust Jim as he tells his story:

He [Jim] wanted an ally, a helper, an accomplice. I felt the risk of being circumvented, blinded, decoyed, bullied, perhaps, into taking a definite part in a dispute impossible of decision if one had to be fair to all the phantoms in possession -- to the reputable that had its claims and to the disreputable that had its exigencies. I can't explain to you who haven't seen him and who hear his words only at second hand the mixed nature of my feelings. It seemed to me I was being made to comprehend the Inconceivable -- and I know of nothing to compare with the discomfort of such a sensation. I was made to look at the convention that lurks in all truth and on the essential sincerity of falsehood. He appealed to all sides at once -- to the side turned perpetually to the light of day, and to that side of us which, like the other hemisphere of the moon, exists stealthily in perpetual darkness, with only a fearful ashy light falling at times on the edge. He swayed me. I own to it, I own up. The occasion was obscure, insignificant -- what you will: a lost youngster, one in a million -- but then he was one of us; an incident as completely devoid of importance as the flooding of an ant-heap... (Conrad *Lord Jim* 75).

The intensity of Marlow's distrust is equal only to the intensity of his attraction. Such is the response to a different culture: a complex mixture of interest, curiosity, admiration, on the one hand, and fear of the unknown, uncertainty, unreliability, expectation of deception on the other. The imagery Conrad uses to convey Marlow's response to Jim as a storyteller suggests duplicity (the side turned to the light of day and

the side of us which exists in perpetual darkness), impossibility of adequate understanding (perpetual darkness), and sudden complete destruction (flooding of an ant-heap). Conrad's power of embedding the words with a wealth of nuances shows through the multiplicity of meaning of his symbolic language. His semantic choice of vocabulary focused on concepts of fear, discomfort, inconceivable, obscurity, and mystery, together with the imagery, conveys the turmoil of a cultural shock, which makes one see particularly poignantly that truth is conventional and what seems falsehood can be sincerity of different cultural codes.

Marlow has a more reasonable pragmatic sensibility, as opposed to Jim's romantic vision of reality. This difference, strongly implied throughout the novel, is explicitly dramatized in their conversation after Stein proposes to help Jim move to Patusan. Jim accepted Stein's proposal with extreme enthusiasm, and Jim's elation after the conversation with Stein profoundly disturbs Marlow:

He impressed, almost frightened, me with his elated rattle. He was voluble like a youngster on the eve of a long holiday with a prospect of delightful scrapes, and such an attitude of mind in a grown man and this connection had in it something phenomenal, a little mad, dangerous, unsafe. I was on the point of entreating him to take things seriously ... (Conrad *Lord Jim* 178).

The reason why Jim responds so powerfully to Stein's proposal is that Stein precisely identifies the reason for his misfortunes. "He is a romantic," he says, "and this is very bad" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 165). Stein's identifying Jim as a romantic suggests his ability to face, read, and understand emotions; it also means recognizing that Jim's emotional self, the cause of his restlessness, is acceptable. Stein, unlike Marlow, does not think that Jim needs to be cured of the disease of romanticism; he believes that the most difficult issue for a romantic is finding one's way in the pragmatic world and retaining one's identity and values. Stein sees that Jim must retain his identity and values to



survive: "Strictly speaking, the question is not how to get cured, but how to live," he says (Conrad *Lord Jim* 162).

It is Stein's own romanticism that helps him understand Jim's story adequately. Stein's life began in sacrifice, "in enthusiasm for generous ideas" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 164), and he has found the way to incorporate his romanticism into the reality: "he had traveled very far, on various ways, on strange paths, and whatever he followed it had been without faltering, and therefore without shame and without regret" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 164). To Stein, strangling one's emotions is equivalent to the loss of identity. He believes that if one finds remedy against romanticism, it "can us from being ourselves cure" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 162). Marlow does not even understand what romantic sensibility is, to say nothing of the ways of incorporating the great depth of emotion into the utilitarian sensibility. At one point of the narrative he openly distances himself from romanticism: "I suppose you think that I, too, am romantic, but it is a mistake," he says (Conrad *Lord Jim* 214). Meanwhile, discussing Jim's story with Stein, he complains that he cannot understand Stein's response to Jim's story: "The case which he [Stein] had made to look so simple before became if possible still simpler -- and altogether hopeless" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 162). According to Stein, the greatest problem for a romantic is realizing that "you cannot make your dream come true, for the reason that you not strong enough are, or not clever enough," and the remedy is, according to Stein, to "keep your eyes shut" when "there comes the real trouble -- the heart pain -- the world pain" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 163). Stein, another double of Jim, represents a romantic temperament successfully incorporated into the sensibility of dominating reason. He is an older Jim, one who accepted his own strengths and weaknesses and is thus able to survive true to himself.

There exists a different deeper level of understanding between Jim and Stein: they identify due to their exilic condition. Stein's plan that Jim could move to Patusan is

a double of Brierly's offer of help for Jim to escape the trial. Paradoxically, Jim refuses Brierly's proposal to flee from the trial but does accept Stein's offer to move to Patusan. Jim's response to Brierly's offer suggests lack of understanding between the two. Brierly, who is not an expatriate, represents unconditional loyalty to the social rules and codes of behavior, which essentially do not leave room for individualism. For Brierly, dignity consists in following the established norms: "all you fellows have no sense of dignity; you do not think enough of what you are supposed to be," he says (*Conrad Lord Jim* 56). By refusing Brierly's proposal, Jim establishes the right to have his own understanding of dignity based on respect for the individual as opposed to rules set up by the society. Brierly incarnates everything Jim aspired for and had to leave; he is Jim's double who associates Jim with his parent culture. And, since Jim's connection with his legacy is severed, the double who pulls him into the sphere he no longer belongs to has no more fictional function to perform. This explains Brierly's suicide, which resists logical interpretation.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Robert Hampson explains Brierly's suicide by Jim's failure which raises the possibility of weakness in himself. "Brierly is a crack skipper," writes Hampson, "who has done the kind of things Jim dreams of doing: 'He had saved lives at sea, had rescued ships in distress'. His identity-for-the-other recalls the earlier description of identity-for-self. He is successful and 'acutely aware of his merits': he had 'never made a mistake, never had an accident, never a mishap, never a check in his steady rise', and he seemed to be 'one of those lucky fellows who know nothing of indecision, much less of self-mistrust'. But that word 'self-mistrust' reverberates through the account of his suicide, which takes place a week after the trial. Brierly, like Marlow, experiences Jim's failure both as a threat to the 'brotherhood of the sea' and as a threat to his own self-confidence.

Jim's failure allows self-doubt to enter his unreflective self-confidence: Jim forces Brierly to face, for the first time, the possibility of inadequacy" (125).

However, interpretation of Brierly's suicide, one of the biggest enigmas of *Lord Jim*, within the paradigm of self and identity out of one culture is not very convincing. It is hard to agree that Conrad would have a very successful captain and a strong personality commit suicide as the result of his realization of the possibility of self-inadequacy. To be able to analyze it, one would have to consider Conrad's tendency towards symbolism and place it in the paradigm of expatriation. Brierly's suicide is a

Stein's offer of escape and Jim's response to it suggest profound understanding between the two people, which is more striking since at this time they do not know each other and communicate through Marlow. Jim's response to Stein's proposal, "Slam the door! he shouted. "I've been waiting for that. I'll show yet ... I'll ... I'm ready for any confounded thing. ... I've been dreaming of it ... Jove! Get out of this. Jove! This is luck at last. ... You wait. I'll ..." (Conrad *Lord Jim* 179), suggests that understanding between these two people is founded on something more immediate and profound than reasonable constructs of verbal communication. Their ability to communicate successfully without having met each other is based on their experience of expatriation. It takes the emigre who found his place in the adopted culture to understand the origin of Jim's anxiety.

Jim suffers from his inability to subdue his romantic temperament to the logic and controlling reason of the court. Because of his emotional and apparently unreasonable character, he seems to Marlow an unreliable friend who cannot be trusted, "like a fickle companion that today guiding you on the true path, with the same eyes, the same step, the same impulse, tomorrow will lead you hopelessly astray" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 179). During their discussion of Stein's proposal, for the first and last time during their friendly relationship Marlow perceives himself "unexpectedly to be thoroughly sick of him" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 179) because of Jim's romantic attitude. "Why these vapourings?" he asks. Marlow's response to Jim's emotional complexity is the response of the person who can neither read emotions nor face them. Marlow's inability is the

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response to the realization of relativity of cultural conventions. Brierly, Jim's compatriot, connects him to his cultural legacy at its best. However, since Jim, having jumped off the ship, severs his ties with his parent culture, the fictional function of Brierly, Jim's double, is completed. Brierly's death is Jim's symbolic disconnection from his parent culture.

legacy of the culture that suppresses emotions as the way of dealing with them.

Marlow's principal failure in his relationship with Jim is his inability to understand emotions<sup>8</sup>. The primary content of Jim's narrative is emotional: his attempt to prove that he is not a coward. Marlow, operating on a rational logical level is simply unable to comprehend Jim's dilemma.

Marlow is strongly attracted to Jim's narrative, even though its hidden meaning escapes him. He cannot rationalize the reason for his attraction to Jim's story, admitting that it belongs to the sphere of subconscious. Marlow is at pains to explain this attraction to Jim and Jim's narrative:

Why I longed to go grubbing into the deplorable details of an occurrence which, after all, concerned me no more than as a member of an obscure body of men held together by a community of inglorious toil and by fidelity to a certain standard of conduct, I can't explain. You may call it an unhealthy curiosity if you like; but I have a distinct notion I wished to find something. Perhaps, unconsciously, I hoped I would find that something, some profound and redeeming cause, some merciful explanation, some convincing shadow of an excuse (Conrad *Lord Jim* 43-44).

Marlow, who tries to distance himself from Jim's romantic emotionality, is apparently caught in the trap of his own emotional response to the enigma of Jim's story. Through identification, Marlow forms a strong emotional bond with Jim, the narrator, before he actually meets him. Jim brings forth Marlow's essential hidden properties. This is how Marlow contemplates the hidden motive of his inquiry into the *Patna* story:

Did I believe in miracle? and why did I desire it so ardently? 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 touch of personal

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<sup>8</sup>Ambrosini addresses the emotional aspect of Marlow as the reader as he interprets the narrative tension in *Lord Jim* through Marlow's emotional involvement and his attempt to make illusions become reality as reflecting the end of a corresponding illusion on the author's part. This is an illusion that "he could create his intended effect by conflating the narrative-frame technique and a poetic use of fictional language" (185).

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 resembled his youth? (Conrad *Lord Jim* 44)

His passion for Jim's story, Marlow explains, is grounded in the immaturity of youth looking for a miracle. Later, as an older and a more reasonable person, however, he condemns his passion as "imbecility" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 44). Thus, Marlow gets involved in Jim's story to find the way to understand and express his own emotions. Marlow's emotional predicament is inability to understand his own emotional responses to the difference in moral and spiritual standards between Jim, the narrator, and himself, the reader.<sup>9</sup> Marlow hopes that Jim's story will help him to balance or explain the permanently changing reality of moral standards:

I see well enough that I hoped for the impossible -- for the laying of what is the most obstinate ghost of man's creation, of the uneasy doubt uprising like a mist, secret and gnawing like a worm, and more chilling than the certitude of death -- the doubt of the sovereign power enthroned in a fixed standard of conduct. It is the hardest thing to stumble against; it is the thing that breeds yelling panics and good little quiet villainies; it's the true shadow of calamity (Conrad *Lord Jim* 44).

Thus, Marlow's identification with Jim and his interest in Jim's story results in a feeling of extraordinary unease caused by sudden profound social and cultural changes. An essential part of any expatriation story is the individual's response to the rapid and profound change of standards of behavior and moral norms. Marlow subconsciously identifies with Jim's exilic condition when the moral standards guiding human behavior are lost. Panic and apathy resulting from the temporary or permanent loss of past moral

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<sup>9</sup>. Analyzing Conrad's fiction as a critical discourse, Richard Ambrosini points out the connection between Conrad's symbolism and the need of emotional expression. Conrad's narrative and linguistic choices, he says, "were designed to reach the source of an emotional response the existence of which was, for him, a moral postulate. This approach is reflected in the form he adopted to discuss his literary purpose: a synthesis of the moral and aesthetic aspects of his view of fiction through a metaphorical mode of expression" (Ambrosini 10).

standards and potential alienation, which are central themes in *Lord Jim*, become essential components of the twentieth-century cosmopolitan sensibility.

In spite of strong identification with Jim, Marlow recognizes that Jim is very different. This serves as further reason for his attraction to him:

the mystery of his [Jim's] attitude got hold of me as though he had been an individual in the forefront of his kind, as if the obscure truth involved were momentous enough to affect mankind's conception of itself (Conrad *Lord Jim* 75).

The enigma of Jim's expatriate personality is reflected in his narrative. The power of Jim's illusion makes Marlow listen to Jim's story "as if to a tale of black magic at work upon a corpse" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 87). Like black magic, for Marlow Jim's story is as attractive as it is incomprehensible. And even though Jim, according to Marlow, is "a finished artist," "a gifted poor devil with the faculty of swift and forestalling vision," Marlow fails as the reader of Jim's narrative, for he is never able to fully understand its essential message. On the one hand, he feels that if he were in Jim's place during the catastrophe with the *Patna*, he "would not have given as much as a counterfeit farthing for the ship's chance to keep above water to the end of each successive second" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 78). On the other hand, believing Jim's story, he thinks that Jim has not done everything he could have done, since "he preserved through it all the strange illusion of passiveness, as though he had not acted but had suffered himself to be handled by the infernal powers who had selected him for the victim of their practical joke" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 86). Marlow cannot relate to the individual's response to the situation he never experienced himself: the jump off the sinking ship, or the jump from one culture to another.

In order to understand an emigre story, the reader has to be able to surpass his/her own limitations as the reader and be prepared to enter the world of a different sensibility and cultural conventions. The unprepared reader, like Marlow, can be disappointed and feel that his/her expectations have not been answered adequately.

Moreover, emigre stories shake the reader's cultural and moral foundations. Having listened to the jump episode, Marlow is "aggrieved" against Jim as though he had cheated him "of a splendid opportunity" of his beginnings, "as though he had robbed our common life the last spark of its glamour" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 103). Reading or listening to emigre stories is taxing intellectually and emotionally, since those are stories which break into the comfort of the reader's conventions leaving him/her exhausted and profoundly dissatisfied with life, disillusioned and disappointed. This is how Jim finishes the jump episode, describing his state of mind, which can be easily applied to any expatriate immediately after the jump from one culture to another:

But I knew the truth, and I would live it down -- alone, with myself. I wasn't going to give in to such a beastly unfair thing. What did it prove after all? I was confoundedly cut up. Sick of life -- to tell you the truth; but what would have been the good to shirk it -- in -- in -- that way? That was not the way. I believe -- I believe it would have -- it would have ended -- nothing" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 103).

After the episode is finished Marlow is exhausted:

A pause ensued, and suddenly I felt myself overcome by a profound and hopeless fatigue, as though his voice had startled me out of a dream and wandering through empty faces whose immensity had harassed my soul and exhausted my body (Conrad *Lord Jim* 103).

Marlow's irresistible interest followed by exhaustion and fatigue is a common reader's response to an emigre narrative. Reading an emigre story is a very difficult emotional undertaking, since the reader has to identify and sympathize with characters from a totally different world of which he/she has no cultural memory and so must be constructed by attention every nuance and fact. In a way, the process of reading a foreign culture is similar to reading *Lord Jim's* broken narrative where the reader has to make his/her own connections trying to put together the plot, guess the meaning of dialogues which say nothing or have no ending and share the writer's frustration of attempting to read the culture which is unreadable for a foreigner. Indeed, the reader of

an expatriate story has to go through experiences totally unrecognizable and, therefore, difficult to identify with on the surface level of the text. The identification takes place on the deep emotional level, for it takes an ability more beyond sympathy to empathy to relate to new moods and concepts. Addressing the reader's emotional sensibility, Conrad's much discussed impressionistic narrative is, in fact, his attempt to reach past the superficial differences in surface developments of the story. By resorting to exotic settings Conrad invites the reader to exchange the superficial for the essential.

Marlow's failure to sympathize with Jim through complete identification, metaphorically conveyed by Marlow's inability to understand Jim's narrative intentions, becomes explicit when Jim describes his emotional state in the extreme circumstances. And even when he tells Jim that he believes or understands him, it is evident that he tries to reach out for him by reason alone, since his emotional response is not there. At one point Marlow is a condescending reader who listens to Jim "like you would to a small boy in trouble" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 88). However, when Jim says that he was deliberating with himself whether he would die after he realized he was in the boat with the skipper, Marlow solemnly declares his "readiness to believe implicitly anything he thought fit to tell" him (Conrad *Lord Jim* 100). His judgment that Jim is guilty complicates his response to Jim's story, which accounts for Marlow's confusion after the conversation with the French lieutenant, who pronounces honor as the highest value of human life. Torn between compassion for an individual and devotion to societal values, Marlow says, "He was guilty, too. He was guilty -- as I had told myself repeatedly, guilty and done for; nevertheless, I wished to spare him the mere detail of a formal execution. I don't pretend to explain the reasons of my desire -- I don't think I could" and leaves it to the reader to use his/her imagination to understand his, Marlow's, emotions he cannot fully convey: "if you haven't got any sort of notion by this time, then I must have been very obscure in my narrative, or you too sleepy to seize upon the sense



of my words" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 118). And, when Jim's actions cannot be explained or accounted for by reason, Marlow admits his failure to understand the motivation for Jim's actions. There is, for example, Marlow's response to Jim's refusal to escape from the court:

I felt angry -- not for the first time that night. "The whole wretched business," I said, is bitter enough, I should think, for a man of your kind..." "It is, it is," he whispered twice, with his eyes fixed on the floor. It was heartrending. He towered above the light, and I could see the down of his cheek, the colour mantling warm under the smooth skin of his face. Believe me or not, I say it was outrageously heartrending. It provoked me to brutality. "Yes," I said; "and allow me to confess that I am totally unable to imagine the advantage you can expect from this licking of the dregs." "Advantage!" he murmured out of his stillness. "I am dashed if I do," I said enraged. ... I opened my mouth to retort, and discovered suddenly that I'd lost all confidence in myself; all it was as if he, too, had given me up ... (Conrad *Lord Jim* 119).

The tension in the relationships between Jim and Marlow, therefore, reflects the complexity of relationships between an expatriate writer and his compatriot reader. On the artistic level, Marlow does not accept guilt as the essential paradigm of Jim's narrative; however, on the moral level, he considers Jim guilty. Almost despite himself, Marlow is attracted to Jim's personality and his story, but he is unable to understand it completely due to their difference in background experience and personal sensibility. In the case of Conrad, it is his ambivalent relationships with the Polish reader. Marlow's ambivalent response to Jim's narrative mirrors the complexity of the Polish audience's reaction to Conrad's creativity out of a foreign culture.

During the German occupation (1939-1945), Poland was reading *Lord Jim*, which was circulated by the partisans, to draw courage and endurance (Morf 149). The Polish reader identified with Jim's restless romanticism, as well as his sensitivity to the concept of honor. In the introduction to *Lord Jim* which was published in Jerusalem and intended for the use of Polish soldiers and officers, the editor Wit Tarnawski maintained that "the Polish reader had no difficulty, contrary to the English reader" in understanding

Jim (Morf 149). The reason behind such a success of the novel in Poland is the Polish reader's identification with Jim due to closeness in sensibility. Polish readers used to say, "Jim is one of us, he is a Pole" (Morf 149).

## CHAPTER 3

### THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE EXPATRIATE WRITER AND THE READER FROM THE ADOPTED CULTURE IN *UNDER WESTERN EYES*

As a stranger you have no right to anything here, perhaps here we are particularly strict or unjust toward strangers, I don't know, but there it is, you have no right to anything.

Franz Kafka. *The Castle*.

The basic paradigm of author-reader relationships dramatized in *Lord Jim* is reproduced in *Under Western Eyes*. The only essential difference in the pattern consists in the reader's and the writer's cultural backgrounds: Jim, the author, and Marlow, the reader, belong to the same culture (they are both English), whereas Razumov, the author, and the teacher of languages, the reader, belong to different cultures: Razumov is Russian and the Language Teacher is English. Whereas in *Lord Jim* the author-reader paradigm is hidden in the deep structure of the novel, in *Under Western Eyes* it is declared explicitly, since the narrative structure of the novel is based on language teacher's retelling of what he read in Razumov's diary. Relationships between Razumov, the Russian expatriate, and the English Teacher dramatize the emigre writer's ambivalent relationship with the reader of the adopted culture, as well as comment on the experience of expatriation.

The English Teacher's interpretation of Russia, constituting the narrative focus of the novel, is based on his reading of Razumov's diary about his life in Russia, as well as his encounter with Razumov and the Haldin family in Switzerland. In the very beginning of the novel, the Language Teacher, who is also the primary narrator, explains

that his narrative is based on "documentary evidence" of Razumov's diary. He gives a detailed description of the journal's format:

The document, of course, is something in the nature of a journal, a diary, yet not exactly in its actual form. For instance, most of it was not written up from day to day, though all the entries are dated. Some of these entries cover months of time and extend over dozens of pages. All the earlier part is a retrospect, in a narrative form, relating to an event which took place about a year before (*Conrad Under Western Eyes* 55).

The journal is written in Russian, and the Language Teacher, conveying his understanding of the Russian text to the English reader, becomes the interpreter of the Russian sensibility and culture to the foreign audience. This is why for the sake of the argument's economy the Language Teacher will be referred to as "translator". The Translator, for whom Russian is not his first language, is doomed to have a complex relationship with the text he interprets by virtue of language differences alone, even though he self-confidently claims that his knowledge of the Russian language "is sufficient for what is attempted here" (*Conrad Under Western Eyes* 55). To be absolutely comfortable with the foreign text, the reader had to be perfectly bilingual and bicultural. If the reader who is not bilingual, much less bicultural, says he/she is perfectly comfortable with the foreign text, it means either that the text is very simple or that the reader is arrogant. In the context of the Translator's background of living the first nine years of his life in Russia, his linguistic and cultural expertise is no doubt rather limited. Razumov's diary, in turn, reflecting "the perplexities and the complex terrors" (*Conrad Under Western Eyes* 203) of the author's life, tells a turbulent story of guilt and betrayal, of crime and punishment placed against the background of the turmoil of Russian life of the turn of the century. The Translator's narrative is an attempt at truthful representation of Razumov's story, and he admits that he "could not have observed Mr. Razumov or guessed at his reality by the force of insight, much less have imagined him as he was," which means that the narrator tries to be as close to the

original as one can. At the same time, the Translator is in the stage of his personal development when "the world is but a place of many words and a man appears a mere talking animal not much more wonderful than a parrot" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 55). As a professional in languages, he, therefore, feels that understanding a foreign narrative is the matter of understanding the dictionary meaning of the words, so he equates understanding a foreign text with ability to translate it into one's first language. This constitutes his major mistake in dealing with Razumov's diary. The Translator, therefore, is either a conceited reader, who has no doubts about his power to understand the foreign text, or the reader trapped by delusions of the structures of thought of which he is part and the culture he belongs to.

In *Under Western Eyes*, Kirylo Sidorovitch Razumov, the student of philosophy, is a young man of no parentage, whose great grandfather was a peasant, a serf, and whose "closest parentage was defined in the statement that he was a Russian" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 61). Razumov, whose name in Russian means "of reason," represents Russian intellectual tradition, which is uniquely distinct from the Western intellectual tradition. As a writer in his diary, he reflects the fate of intellectuals, who are forced to leave the country against their will since they do not accept the political reality of their country.<sup>1</sup> His diary demonstrates how political events translate into personal histories:

The origin of Mr. Razumov's record is connected with an event characteristic of modern Russia in the actual fact: the assassination of a prominent statesman -- and still more characteristic of the moral corruption of an oppressed society where the

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<sup>1</sup> Terry Eagleton observes that "Conrad, of course, was continuously preoccupied with a conflict between the structures of English rationality and kinds of experience which those structures failed to encompass" (31). Contemplation of the limitations of one culture is the direction any expatriate writer goes irrespectively of his/her rational intentions.

noblest aspirations of humanity, the desire for freedom, an ardent patriotism the love of justice, the sense of pity, and even the fidelity of simple minds are prostituted to the lusts of hate and fear, the inseparable companions of an uneasy despotism (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 58).

The assassination of the Minister of State Mr. de P-- brings Haldin, who killed the minister, to Razumov's apartment in search of help. After Razumov betrays the revolutionary he has neither encouraged nor approved, he has to leave the country. Razumov's diary, therefore, comments on the events that led to expatriation.

Razumov, like Jim, is a charismatic personality. He is a desired companion among Russian students who exhaust themselves by ardent discussion due to the power of his taciturn personality. By his comrades at the St. Petersburg University, Razumov

was looked upon as a strong nature -- an altogether trustworthy man. This, in a country where an opinion may be a legal crime visited by death or sometimes by a fate worse than mere death, meant that he was worthy of being trusted with forbidden opinions. He was liked also for his amiability and for his quiet readiness to oblige his comrades even at the cost of personal inconvenience (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 57).

Similar to Jim, who is an achiever by nature, Razumov is aspiring towards the highest goals in his field. He is planning to write an essay, which could bring him the silver medal, the prize offered by the Ministry of Education. He dreams of fame and glory, hoping that distinction "would convert the label Razumov into an honored name" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 63). However, his ambitious dreams of creativity within his own culture are disrupted by political events beyond his control and outside his intellectual interests. Russian political and social reality, according to Conrad, does not encourage any intellectual creativity, since life outside the university has very little to offer to a man of education and talent. Razumov has to choose 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" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 77). Razumov has only two real choices. They are embodied by

Ziemianitch (his name comes from Polish *ziemia*, which means land), the drunken peasant, incapable of action, and Haldin, the ardent revolutionary and the fighter for noble liberal ideals by means of throwing bombs at the government officials who happen to be in the crowd of ordinary citizens.

Not believing in revolutions as a solution for social and political problems, and desiring to work for the progress within the boundaries of legality, Razumov does not associate with revolutionary circles. Revolution for Razumov means disruption; it is sterile, like a volcanic eruption, and results in "the ruin of the fertile ground" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 79). And though Haldin assures him that revolutionaries who "kill the bodies of the prosecutors of human dignity" are necessary "to make room for the self-contained, thinking men" like Razumov, Razumov feels "the safety of his lonely existence to be permanently endangered" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 69). Encounter with Haldin, the revolutionary terrorist, makes him feel very insecure, and he feels that he is going to be ruined by the revolution:

Razumov saw himself shut up in a fortress, worried, badgered, perhaps ill-used. He saw himself deported by an administrative order, his life broken, ruined, and robbed of all hope. He saw himself -- at best -- leading a miserable existence under police supervision, in some small, far-away provincial town, without friends to assist his necessities or even take any steps to alleviate his lot -- as others had. Others had fathers, mothers, brothers, relations, connections to move heaven and earth on their behalf -- he had no one. The very officials that sentenced him some morning would forget his existence before the sunset.

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 *Under Western Eyes* 68-69).

For Haldin, however, as for any revolutionary activist, national revolution is the way either to power or heroic immortality. "My spirit," says Haldin, "shall go on warring in some Russian body till all falsehood is swept out of the world. The modern civilization is false, but a new revelation shall come out of Russia. ... You are a skeptic.

I respect your philosophical skepticism, Razumov, but don't touch the soul. The Russian soul that lives in all of us. It has a future. It has a mission" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 69). Razumov does not operate within the paradigm of the soul; he metaphorically represents reason, which is reflected both in his name and occupation. In his response to Haldin's offer of cooperation, he rejects nationalism and articulates the inevitably cosmopolitan orientation of intellectuals:

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 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 (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 100).

However, power belongs to people with no benign vision nor morals, government bureaucrats like Minister de P --, the president of the notorious Repressive Commission, who

served the monarchy by imprisoning, exiling, or sending to the gallows men and women, young and old, with an equable, unwearied industry. In his mystic acceptance of the principle of autocracy he was bent on extirpating from the land every vestige of anything that resembled freedom in public institutions; and in his ruthless persecution of the rising generation he seemed to aim at the destruction of the very hope of liberty itself (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 58).

Apparently, the government cannot offer Razumov acceptable life choices either. His opinion of the Russian political system shows his contemptuous distrust for government bureaucracy:

What is a throne? A few pieces of wood upholstered in velvet. But a throne is a seat of power too. The form of a government is the shape of a tool -- an instrument. But twenty thousand bladders inflated by the noblest sentiments and jostling against each other in the air ... holding no power, possessing no will, having nothing to give" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 79).



Razumov's rejection of Ziemianitch, Haldin, and bureaucratic circles reflects his dislocation from all political forces of the country: it is a sign of the social vulnerability of a Russian intellectual.

In turn, Razumov believes in autocracy and the benevolent dictator "who would come in the appointed time" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 79). Not being a "moss-grown reactionary" and recognizing the unacceptability of despotic bureaucracy, abuses, and corruption, Razumov needs social stability for his creative intellectual activity. Razumov believes that "the train of thought is never false. The falsehood lies deep in the necessities of existence, in secret fears and half-formed ambitions, in the secret confidence combined with secret mistrust of ourselves in the love of hope and the dread of uncertain days" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 79). For social protection Razumov turns to the nobleman Prince K--, "once a great and splendid figure in the world and now, his day being over, a Senator and a gouty invalid, living in a still splendid but more domestic manner." Many Russian intellectuals, afraid of political unrest, turned to autocracy "for the peace of their patriotic conscience as a weary unbeliever, touched by grace, turns to the faith of his fathers for the blessing of spiritual rest. Like other Russians before him, Razumov felt the touch of grace upon his forehead" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 79). But, since autocracy had to be protected by the military, Razumov is doomed to associate with people like General T, who "embodied the power of autocracy, because he was its guardian. He was the incarnate suspicion, the incarnate anger, the incarnate ruthlessness of a political and social regime on its defense. He loathed rebellion by instinct" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 118-119). Razumov's naive trust in the absolute power of intellect tells him that "the man was simply unable to understand a reasonable adherence to the doctrine of absolutism" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 119). Association with the aristocracy, the weak and dying class in early

twentieth-century Russia, whose domination had to be heavily supported by semi-autonomous military and bureaucracy, brings Razumov to personal destruction.

Left with untenable political and social choices, Razumov has no spiritual guidance or support either, since Russian Orthodoxy, the dominating religion, is notorious for forming an alliance with secular powers. According to Mrs. Haldin, "in Russia the church is so identified with oppression, that it seems almost necessary when one wishes to be free in his life, to give up hope of future existence" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 133). Thus, according to Conrad, a Russian intellectual with his naive idealistic trust in the monarchy as a stronghold of the country's stability, who does not want to prostitute himself into supporting the system and who feels aversion for terrorism and bloodshed of national revolutions which promised liberation from despotism, has nowhere in his country to turn to.

This is precisely why Razumov is "as lonely in the world as a man swimming in the deep sea. The word Razumov was the mere label of a solitary individuality" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 61). Since his closest parentage is defined in the statement that he is a Russian, whatever good he expects from life "would be given or withheld from his hopes by that connection 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 *Under Western Eyes* 61). Razumov's loneliness makes him an outcast in his own country:

Razumov longed desperately for a word of advice, for moral support. Who knows what true loneliness is -- not the conventional word, but the naked terror? To the lonely themselves it wears a mask. The most miserable outcast hugs some memory or some illusion. Now and then a fatal conjunction of events may lift the veil for an instant. For an instant only. No human being could bear a steady view of moral solitude without going mad (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 83).

A stranger at home, Razumov feels that his land does not hold him:

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 his tale -- in all this great, great land?

Razumov stamped his foot -- under the soft carpet of snow felt the hard ground of Russia, inanimate, cold, inert, like a sullen and tragic mother hiding her face under a winding-sheet -- his native soil! -- his very own -- without a fireside, without a heart! (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 78).

Russia, the sullen tragic mother, in her helplessness can no longer protect her children from political structures created by men in the zeal of power struggle, and Razumov, an uprooted man, a misfit, unwittingly moves towards expatriation.

As an intellectual, Razumov feels that the foundation of his existence is threatened by political turmoil in Russia metaphorically represented by Haldin, the revolutionary terrorist who makes an unexpected appearance in Razumov's apartment asking to help him escape from the police. A politically unstable environment brings death to those who depend on their creative mind for professional self-fulfillment and daily survival. "The scoundrels and the fools are murdering my intelligence" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 117), Razumov complains, and he loses "all hope of saving his future, which depended on the free use of his intelligence" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 118). Conrad once more expresses his view of the fate of intellectuals in revolutions through the English teacher:

... in a real revolution the best characters do not come to the front. A violent revolution falls into the hands of narrow-minded fanatics and of tyrannical hypocrites at first. Afterwards comes the turn of all the pretentious intellectual failures of the time. Such are the chiefs and the leaders. You will notice that I have left out the mere rogues. The scrupulous and the just, the noble, humane, and devoted natures; the unselfish and the intelligent may begin the movement -- but it passes away from them. They are not the leaders of a revolution. They are its victims: the victims of disgust, of disenchantment -- often of remorse. Hopes grotesquely betrayed, ideas caricatured -- that is the definition of revolutionary success. There have been in every revolution hearts broken by such successes (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 158).

Conrad's view of relationships between intellectuals and revolutions corresponds to the axiom followed by the twentieth-century post-revolutionary Russian intelligentsia, which says that revolutions are designed by romantic idealists, executed by criminals, and profited from by fools. By showing Razumov's uprootedness in his own country, Conrad opens a discussion of the importance of an individual's creative and intellectual life, which is so easily smashed in a revolution. The son of a Polish revolutionary poet and activist Appollo Korzeniowski, who participated in the 1863 Warsaw uprising against Russian domination, Conrad had a chance to witness all the developments and the consequences of a revolution first hand.

Since Razumov is trapped by Russian political reality, his first and only writing that the reader sees is explicitly political. In spite of his will, he is drawn into political discussion even though he has no intentions to get involved in politics:

He dragged himself painfully to the table and dropped into the chair. He flung the book away and took a square sheet of paper. It was like the pile of sheets covered with his neat minute handwriting, only blank. He took a pen brusquely and dipped it with a vague notion of going on with the writing of his essay -- but his pen remained poised over the sheet. It hung there for some time before it came down and formed long scrawly letters.

Still-faced and his lips set hard, Razumov began to write. When he wrote a large hand his neat writing lost his character altogether -- became unsteady, almost childish. He wrote five lines one under the other.

History not Theory.  
Patriotism not Internationalism.  
Evolution not Revolution.  
Direction not Destruction.  
Unity not Disruption.

He gazed at them dully. Then his eyes strayed to the bed and remained fixed there for a good many minutes, while his right hand groped all over the table for the penknife (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 104).

Trying to avoid politics in his creative writing, Razumov gets in the middle of it. Such is the fate of intellectuals in the time of national renaissance: caught in other people's

political games, they have to take sides in spite of their original intentions. Writers, and especially poets, become spokesmen for the national liberation movement long before the movement takes the form of an organized process. Having observed the revolutionary activity of his father, the poet of Polish national renaissance, Conrad contemplates how much free choice a writer has if he lives in the time of revolution.

Razumov's expatriation, therefore, is not the event of his choice. Like Jim, who is forced to jump off the ship by the circumstances, Razumov is banished from the country by all the political forces he tries to avoid. One of his fellow students, Madcap Kostia, offers him money to go abroad, just as Brierly is ready to pay for Jim's escape from the trial. Kostia says that Razumov "must be preserved for our country" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 116), since it is clear to everybody that Razumov is falling under suspicion and will be persecuted because of association with Haldin. Kostia even suggests that Razumov take a false beard and disguise himself, since the man in Russia "doesn't get the police ransacking his rooms without there being some devilry hanging over his head" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 116). Councillor Mikulin, who investigates Razumov's possible involvement with the revolutionaries, also advises Razumov to leave the country as soon as possible, since he thinks there is a chance that the revolutionary circles will find out who betrayed Haldin. Razumov feels that he is caught between two hostile worlds, the world of revolutionaries and the world of secret police; his desire to escape, as well as the entrapment by both forces is dramatized in his last conversation with Councillor Mikulin:

Razumóv, with an impatient wave of his hand, went on headlong, 'But really, I must claim the right to be done once for all with that man. And in order to accomplish this I shall take the liberty ...'

Razumov on his side of the table bowed slightly to the seated bureaucrat. '... To retire -- simply to retire,' he finished with great resolution.

He walked to the door, thinking, 'Now he must show his hand. He must ring and have me arrested before I am out of the building, or he must let me go. And either way ...'

An unhurried voice said --  
 'Kirylo Sidorovitch.'  
 Razumov at the door turned his head.  
 'To retire,' he repeated.  
 'Where to?' asked Councillor Mikulin softly (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 130).

Councillor Mikulin's notorious question "Where to?" reflects the insoluble problem: where does one escape from the issues one can neither control nor cope with in one's culture? For an intellectual, according to Conrad, the safest choice is expatriation.

Expatriation, however, is not by any means an attractive or easy solution to Razumov's social and moral entrapment, since it is accompanied by a psychological complex of guilt and betrayal. Like Jim, who has to face the inquiry of his country after the jump, Razumov has to account for betraying Haldin after he leaves the country. Trying to escape the haunting presence of his betrayal, he tries to distance himself from the forces he does not want to be loyal to:

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 *Under Western Eyes* 82).

Successfully intellectualizing his guilt, Razumov evades the tortures of remorse until he meets Natalia Haldin. Guilt, the inevitable companion of any emigre, equals the expatriation from communal cultures to betrayal.<sup>2</sup> That is why Razumov is guilty not

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<sup>2</sup> Conrad's ambivalent response to his communal legacy has not remained unnoticed by English critics. Michael Siedel, for example, comments that Conrad is interested in "writing up or "into" the moral confusion embedded in the life of the renegade, a figure whose fate signals the lot of those who violate communal principles in which Conrad is somewhat embarrassed to believe in the first place. The dilemma in Conrad's fiction, at least before the severe irony of skepticism obliterates even the sentimental romance of communal obligation, is that the narrative capacity to describe the effects of isolation is effaced by the mysterious, silent powers of the *isolato*" (44). Siedel's shrewd observation, however, betrays a Western reader: communal obligation may seem a sentimental romance only to a critic from an individualistic culture; in a communal

only before the revolutionaries for betraying their comrade in arms, but also before the secret police for possibly encouraging Haldin's trust. The General, who questions Razumov on his association with Haldin, thinks that his "great and useful quality of inspiring confidence" results from Razumov's sympathetic attitude towards the revolutionary ideas or activities. Razumov immediately finds himself justifying his own actions in front of everybody:

I don't know what he [Haldin] meant. I only know there was a moment when I wished to kill him. There was also a moment when I wished myself dead. I said nothing. I was overcome. I provoked no confidence -- I asked for no explanations --' (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 91).

Razumov's state of mind when he tells his life story in the fictional diary is very similar to that of Jim when he tells his story to Marlow; in both novels the storyteller is under suspicion and guilty of a crime he does not feel responsible for. Razumov is doomed to live the rest of his life as a suspect of conspiracy with the revolutionaries:

Razumov sat up in anguish. Was he to remain a political suspect all his days? Was he to go through life as a man not wholly to be trusted -- with a bad secret police note tacked on to his record? What sort of future could he look forward to? (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 108).

Razumov, like Jim, feels that he is a helpless toy in the hands of evil and cruel forces and that his life no longer belongs to him. The loss of identity brings him to the verge of questioning the reasons for his existence:

The true Razumov had his being in the willed, in the determined future -- in that future menaced by the lawlessness of autocracy -- for autocracy knows no law -- and the lawlessness of revolution. The feeling that his moral personality was at the mercy of these lawless forces was so strong that he asked himself seriously if it were worth while to go on accomplishing the mental functions of that existence which seemed no longer his own (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 113)

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culture obligation vis-a-vis one's culture is an essential part of the paradigm, which borders on tyranny and causes haunting guilt so well conveyed in Conrad's fiction.

Abandoning "all hope of saving the future, which depended on the free use of his intelligence" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 118), Razumov loses his future to guilt, which, together with suspicions, to a great extent will be shaping his life. However, Razumov's guilt is not explicit, like Jim's; in fact, it is sublimated into the unconscious. Razumov intellectualizes his past and channels what could become a guilty conscience due to betrayal into anger and rejection of Russia's revolutionary ideology. However, even though Razumov persuades himself that he has the right to distance himself from the uninvited intrusion of Haldin and the memory of his arrest, it is under the influence of suppressed guilt that he confesses the truth to Haldin's sister Natalia. The importance of hidden guilt as the driving force behind Razumov's actions and thoughts consists in the fact that the scene of confession becomes the culmination of the narrative.

It is in the state of crushed identity that Razumov begins writing in his diary. After the first meeting with Councilor Mikulin, Razumov is "extremely exhausted, and he records a remarkably dream-like experience of anguish" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 121), and "the diary proper consisting of the more or less daily entries seems to have begun on that very evening after Mr. Razumov returned home" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 120). The key to Razumov's meeting with Councilor Mikulin is that Razumov is a suspect, and the decision to write a diary is the result of the need to explain oneself. Turning to a diary as the only interlocutor is very common for an expatriate, the eternal outsider, who has nobody to ask for understanding and trust.

As an expatriate writer, Razumov at once enters very complex and ambivalent relationships with his country about thematic choices of his writing. Since his persona is not in high demand in his country, he feels that what he writes is as insignificant and unacceptable as his life:

Razumov woke up for the tenth time perhaps with a heavy shiver. Seeing the light of day in his window, he resisted the inclination to lay himself down again. He did not remember anything, but he did not think it strange to find himself on the sofa in



his cloak and chilled to the bone. The light coming through the window seemed strangely cheerless, containing no promise as the light of each new day should for a young man. It was the awakening of a man mortally ill, or of a man ninety years old. He looked at the lamp which had burned itself out. It stood there, the extinguished beacon of his labours a cold object of brass and porcelain, amongst the scattered pages of his notes and small piles of books -- a mere litter of blackened paper -- dead matter -- without significance or interest (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 105-106).

Razumov's creativity is completely stifled after his room was searched by "a very superior gentleman in a fur coat and a shiny hat, who sat down in the room and looked through all the papers himself" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 112). Russia has had a tradition of a very strong state censorship, which has been stifling all attempts of liberal or independent thinking. Unexpected searches in the homes of intellectuals for forbidden books or samples of politically disapproved writing were common not only under the Czars, but also under the Soviets. After the search, Razumov finds himself in a total chaos:

All his books had been shaken and thrown on the floor. His landlady followed him, and stopping painfully began to pick them up in 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.

The disorder affected him profoundly, unreasonably. He sat down and stared. He had a distinct sense of his very existence 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 steady for himself (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 112-113).

Lack of freedom of expression has made many intellectuals like Razumov leave Russia and go to the West European and North American countries in search of freedom and protection for their spiritual and creative life. However, like all expatriates, Razumov finds himself neither welcome nor even accepted, and Councilor Mikulin's question "Where to?" reveals "an insoluble problem" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 131) of an expatriate's life: where does an intellectual go to look for freedom, justice, and possibilities of self-fulfillment? Razumov is left between the two worlds. Having

repudiated his country, he feels he cannot accept the Western world, which is interested in his country for the wrong reasons: it entertains itself reading about the tragic events of Haldin's execution in the newspapers:

'What's going on with us is of no importance -- a mere sensational story to amuse the readers of the papers -- the superior contemptuous Europe. It is hateful to think of. But let them wait a bit!' (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 200).

As a writer, therefore, Razumov does not want to tell the true story of what happened to him in his country to anybody in the West, since he knows it will be neither understood nor accepted. The dialogue between Razumov and the Translator about telling the truth to the Haldin family about what happened to their son in Russia reads like Conrad's contemplation about the content of his own writing vis-a-vis Poland:

'Dear me! Won't the truth do, then? I hoped you could have told them something consoling. I am thinking of the poor mother now. Your Russia is a cruel country.'

He [Razumov] moved a little in his chair.

'Yes,' I repeated. 'I thought you would have had something authentic to tell.'

The twitching of his lips before he spoke was curious.

'What if it is not worth telling?'

'Not worth - from what point of view? I don't understand.'

'From every point of view.'

I spoke with some austerity.

'I should think that anything which could explain the circumstances of that midnight arrest...'

'Reported by a journalist for the amusement of the civilized Europe,' he broke in scornfully.

'Yes, reported ... But aren't they true? I can't make out your attitude in this. Either the man is a hero to you, or ...'

He approached his face with fiercely distended nostrils close to mine so suddenly that I had the greatest difficulty in not starting back.

'You ask me! I suppose it amuses you, all this. Look here! I am a worker. I studied: Yes, I studied very hard. There is intelligence here.' (He tapped his forehead with his finger-tips.) 'Don't you think a Russian may have sane ambitions? Yes -- I had even prospects. Certainly! I had. And now you see me here, abroad, everything gone, lost, sacrificed. You see me here -- and you ask! You see me, don't you? -- sitting before you.'

He threw himself back violently. I kept outwardly calm.

'Yes, I see you here; and I assume you are here on account of the Haldin affair?'

His manner changed.

'You call it the Haldin affair -- do you?' he observed indifferently.  
'I have no right to ask you anything,' I said (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 195-196).

As Razumov tries to understand the Translator's intentions behind his inquiry of the circumstances of Haldin's arrest, he expresses distrust in the sincerity of Western readers' interest in Russian events as he contemplates the reasons behind such interest. Razumov, again, points out that news from Russia serves to entertain the West suffering from boredom:

But what did the man mean by his extraordinary rigmarole about the newspaper, and that crazy old woman? he thought suddenly. It was a damnable presumption, anyhow, something that only an Englishman could be capable of. All this was a sort of sport for him -- the sport of revolution -- a game to look from the height of his superiority (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 208).

An expatriate writer, therefore, faces a very difficult choice. Writing on the themes of his country, he finds himself feeding the amusement of superior contemptuous Europe. Since the Western reader has a totally different interpretation of the events in the writer's country, by virtue of the choice of the subject the writer stages misunderstanding with the reader and thus dooms himself to failure as a writer. On the other hand, the expatriate writer does not know the adopted culture well enough: like Razumov, he "must understand this!" and he is "not expected to understand that!" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 196), which makes the task of writing on the life of the adopted culture extremely difficult. Conrad solved this dilemma by rejecting both choices on the surface level. He never explicitly wrote on Polish issues, and when he was asked why he did not write about Poland, he responded with a question: "Who will read my writings?". At the same time, Conrad avoided English themes as much as he could. As an expatriate writer, he felt safe placing his novels in exotic settings of real or imaginary countries and portraying people who were either travelers or immigrants.

Like any expatriate, Razumov is disempowered by leaving behind the culture he knows and moving to the country which offers him nothing but permanent questions.

His voice is very weak , "practically extinct, dried up in his throat; and the rustling effort of his speech too painful to give real offense" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 196). This is the voice of the person suppressed by the environment who has difficulty of self-expression:

He [Razumov] was barely audible, as if his throat had no more resonance than a dry rag, a piece of tinder. It was so pitiful that I [Language Teacher] found it extremely easy to control my indignation (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 197).

Razumov's relationships with the Language Teacher, his Western reader and the translator of Russian character, begins on the note of mutual lack of sympathy.

Razumov aggressively fights the Translator's condescending and patronizing attitude by questioning and challenging his authority:

'This is beyond everything,' were his [Razumov's] first words. 'It is beyond everything! I find you here, for no reason that I can understand, in possession of something I cannot be expected to understand! A confidant! A foreigner! Talking about an admirable Russian girl! Is the admirable girl a fool, I begin to wonder? What are you at? What is your object?' (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 196-197).

The Translator's response to Razumov's challenge for a fight signals complete lack of understanding between the two men:

As I was saying, Mr. Razumov, when you have lived long enough, you will learn to discriminate between the noble trustfulness of a nature foreign to every meanness and the flattered credulity of some women; though even the credulous, silly as they may be, unhappy as they are sure to be, are never absolute fools. It is my belief that no woman is ever completely deceived. Those that are lost leap into the abyss with their eyes open, if all the truth were known (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 197).

Not being able to control the intensity of his frustration of a person disempowered by his exilic condition, Razumov, "hardly able to keep on his feet" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 198), directs his anger against the Translator whose close friendship with Natalia Haldin, an admirable Russian girl, is for him a metaphor of being robbed of everything that rightfully belongs to him. Wondering if the admirable girl is a fool, Razumov means to say that she is a fool to associate with a foreigner. Responding to

this emotional outcry, the Translator plunges into a patronizing Gradgrindian soliloquy contemplating on the issue of female intelligence. Here the reader is presented with a clash of emotional and reasonable sensibilities, which in the context of the characters' background becomes a metaphor for communication problems between the Eastern and the Western cultures.<sup>3</sup> As Razumov and the Translator continue their dialogue, it becomes evident that they will never agree on anything; moreover, they do not seek understanding altogether:

'Upon my word,' he [Razumov] cried at my elbow, 'what is it to me whether women are fools or lunatics? I really don't care what you think of them. I -- I am not interested in them I let them be. I am not a young man in a novel. How do you know that I want to learn anything about women? ... What is the meaning of all this?'

'The object, you mean, of this conversation, which I admit I [the Language Teacher] have forced upon you in a measure.'

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<sup>3</sup> Eagleton looks at *Under Western Eyes* as a cultural dialogue. He writes: "The point of the primal ironies, partial views, disclaimers and reservations which forms the structure of *Under Western Eyes* is to sustain a precariously fine tension between 'English' and 'foreign' experience. The provincial pragmatism of English culture is sharply exposed, in the light of foreign currents of feeling with which it cannot deal; the English expatriate abroad is revealed as impotent. At the same time, the flaws of that foreign experience -- its ruthless intensities and destructive impersonality -- are contrasted with the kindness and sensitivity of the English liberal. Yet the balance is not quite so reciprocal as that account of it would suggest. For the true conflict within the novel is not between English conservatism and foreign revolutionism: it is between English conservatism and foreign 'spirit'. ... By abstracting that 'spirit' from the particular political projects within which it is realized, English culture can be satirized for its paucity of passionate imagination without its actual assumptions being at all undermined. The 'style' of Russian existence -- its 'mystic' inwardness and dramatic poetry -- is used to criticize the inert pieties of England; yet when it goes beyond a matter of style to a question of its political embodiments, assent is quickly withdrawn." (30) In *Under Western Eyes* the cultural dialogue is so central that it is explicitly stated in the title. However, in other Conrad's novels the same dialogical structure is as powerfully present as in this novel, except it is either hidden behind symbols and metaphors or understated and played down.

'Forced! Object!' he repeated, still keeping half a pace or so behind me. 'You wanted to talk about women, apparently. That's a subject. But I don't care for it. I have never ... In fact, I have other subjects to think about.'

'I am concerned here with one woman only -- a young girl -- the sister of your dead friend -- Miss Haldin. Surely you can think a little of her. What I meant from the first was that there is a situation which you can not be expected to understand.'

I listened to his unsteady footfalls by my side for the space of several strides.

'I think that it may prepare the ground for your next interview with Miss Haldin if I tell you of it. I imagine that she might have had something of the kind in her mind when she left us together. I believe myself authorized to speak. The peculiar situation I have alluded to has arisen in the first grief and distress of Victor Haldin's execution. There was something peculiar in the circumstances of his arrest. You no doubt know the whole truth ...'

I felt my arm seized above the elbow, and next instant found myself swung so as to face Mr. Razumov.

'You spring up from the ground before me with this talk. Who the devil are you? This is not to be borne! Why! What for? What do you know what is or is not peculiar. What have you to do with any confounded circumstances, or with anything that happens in Russia, anyway?' (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 197-198)

Thus, Razumov's anger and disappointment in the West is expressed in his relationship with the Language Teacher, who is for him a fussy, officious "blundering elderly Englishman" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 207). Razumov's attitude to the Translator is not personal: it reflects "the accumulated bitterness" of "the wrecking of his life" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 207), and it is guided by his irrational response to the relationship between East and West. East is stereotyped to be irrational and, consequently, inferior, which makes Razumov remark that "We are Russians, that is -- children; that is -- sincere; that is -- cynical" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 214). West, in turn, is considered to be reasonable and, therefore, superior. In *Under Western Eyes*, these stereotypes are metaphorically preserved in the characters' social roles: the character representing the English culture is the teacher, the role associated with authority and superiority due to age and accumulated knowledge, whereas Razumov representing the East is a student, and his role is associated with irrationality of youth and inferiority due to lack of knowledge and experience. Trying to fight the effects of

the stereotypes, Razumov is hostile to the Language Teacher and channels all his energy into compensations.

Razumov's refusal to acknowledge the superiority of the West becomes articulated through his lack of appreciation of Western suburban landscapes. The view opening at the gates of Chateau Borel causes contemptuous comment on Western culture which for Razumov becomes a triumph of well-organized mediocrity:

The whole view, with the harbour jetties of white stone underlining vividly the dark front of the town to the left, and the expanding space of water to the right with jutting promontories of no particular character, had the uninspiring, glittering quality of a very fresh oleograph. Razumov turned his back on it with contempt. He thought it odious -- oppressively odious -- in its unsuggestive finish: the very perfection of mediocrity attained at last after centuries of toil and culture. And, turning back on it, he faced the entrance to the grounds of the Chateau Borel (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 211).

Razumov's response to the Western landscape conveys the Eastern view of the shortcomings of the Western culture, which, he feels, is trying to substitute drive, originality, passion, and involvement with superficial perfection achieved by order, well-planned mundane labor, placidity, and withdrawal.

Razumov has very little appreciation of the political achievements of the West. Watching the urban life of Switzerland, he rails against the Western democracy:

'Democratic virtue. There are no thieves here, apparently,' he muttered to himself, with displeasure. Before advancing into the grounds he looked back sourly at an idle working man lounging on a bench in the clean, broad avenue. The fellow had thrown his feet up; one of his arms hung over the low back of the public seat; he was taking a day off in lordly repose, as if everything in sight belonged to him.

'Elector! Eligible! Enlightened!' Razumov muttered to himself. 'A brute, all the same' (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 211).

Razumov's state of mind after he arrives in Geneva betrays the signs of profound shock caused by the change of cultural environment. He suffers the split of personality and is traumatized by the emergence of a new personality under the pressure of the

circumstances beyond his control, the personality he neither knows nor understands and much less welcomes:

Razumov felt a faint chill run down his spine. It was not fear. He was certain that it was not fear -- not fear for himself -- but it was, all the same, a sort of apprehension as if another, for someone he knew without being able to put a name to the personality. But the recollection that the officious Englishman had a train to meet tranquilized him for a time (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 208).

Even though at times Razumov calms down "getting hold of the actuality into which he had been thrown" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 223), he feels that he can not retain his identity against the pressure of the environment entering into the conflict with his unconscious and demanding the change not only of persona, but of personal and collective unconscious:

He felt, bizarre as it may seem, as though another self, an independent sharer of his mind, had been able to view his whole person very distinctly indeed. 'This is curious,' he thought. After a while he formulated his opinion of it in the mental ejaculation: 'Beastly!' This disgust vanished before a marked uneasiness. 'This is an effect of nervous exhaustion,' he reflected with weary sagacity. 'How am I to go on day after day if I have no more power of resistance -- moral resistance?' (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 232).

This movement of doubling resulting from the shock of encounter with a profoundly different culture becomes the thematic focus in the *Secret Sharer* and is dramatized through the characters of the Captain and Leggatt, where the parent culture, the secret sharer of an expatriate's mind, is metaphorically represented through Leggatt, the secret sharer of the Captain's cabin. In *The Secret Sharer*, Razumov's nervous exhaustion of the person with split personality is intensified into the Captain's feeling of insanity.

Resisting the loss of identity in the new environment, Razumov tries to preserve his spiritual independence and not become "a slave even to an idea" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 242) or to particular personalities who hold the position of authority among Russian emigres abroad. In his conversation with Peter Ivanovich, "the great revolutionist" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 230), great feminist, and "an awful despot"



(Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 233), he distances himself from the immigrant revolutionary community. Peter Ivanovich, who is in the position of authority in the Russian revolutionary circles abroad, "must direct inspire, influence. He can't bear thinking of any one escaping him" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 238). Razumov, with his desire for intellectual and personal independence, challenges his authority:

You [Peter Ivanovich] have been condescending enough. I quite understood it was to lead me on. You must render me the justice that I have not tried to please. I have been impelled, compelled, or rather sent -- let us say sent -- towards you for a work that no one but myself can do. You would call it a harmless delusion: a ridiculous delusion at which you don't even smile. It is absurd of me to talk like this, yet some day you will remember these words, I hope. Enough of this. Here I stand before you -- confessed! But one thing more I must add to complete it: a mere blind tool I can never consent to be' (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 231).

Trying to avoid the suppression within the immigrant communities, Razumov does not mix with any of them leading "solitary and retired existence" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 208) and remaining as lonely as he was in Russia:

He neglected Peter Ivanovich, to whom he was accredited by the Stuttgart group; he never went near the refugee revolutionarists, to whom he had been introduced on his arrival. He kept out of that world altogether. And he felt that such a conduct, causing surprise and arousing suspicion, contained an element of danger for himself (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 207- 208).

Abroad, Razumov produces the impression of an extraordinary man "meditating some vast pain, some great undertaking; he is possessed by it -- he suffers from it -- and from being alone in the world" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 210). Razumov's paranoid fixation on the past is similar to that of Jim, but whereas Jim is permanently justifying himself, Razumov denies and suppresses the event which disturbs his conscience. Exaggerated attention to the past, combined with feelings of guilt and betrayal, are central for an expatriate sensibility. However, Razumov ultimately finds some balance which allows him to exist without permanent pain and visible restlessness:

But in all the months that had passed over his head he had become hardened to the experience. The consciousness was no longer accompanied by the blank dismay and the blind anger of the early days. He had argued himself into new beliefs; he had made for himself a mental atmosphere of gloomy and sardonic reverie, a sort of murky medium through which the event appeared like a featureless shadow having vaguely the shape of a man; a shape extremely familiar, yet utterly inexpressive, except for its air of discreet waiting in the dusk. It was not alarming (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 245).

Once again, like it was in Russia, Razumov experiences strong pressure to join the political movement when revolutionary nationalistic circles push him to cooperate with them. Razumov, in turn, does not appreciate the people involved into this activity, nor does he believe in their ideals. But he feels that he cannot distance himself from the revolutionaries completely:

He longed to be on the other side of the bars, as though he were actually a prisoner within the grounds of this centre of revolutionary plots, of this house of folly, of blindness, of villainy and crime. Silently he indulged his wounded spirit in a feeling of immense moral and mental remoteness (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 247).

Razumov's entrapment by politics he is trying to avoid both at home and abroad is common for a writer representing the country going through the process of establishing the national state. As Councillor Mikulin puts it in predicting Razumov's future, "You are a young man of great independence. Yes. You are going away free as air, but you shall end by coming back to us" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 283). Conrad's father, poet and translator Appollo Korzeniowski, had neither a personal nor a moral choice when he turned to the cause of the Polish national liberation. Like Razumov, he was "the instrument of Providence" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 283). To avoid the entrapment by politics, Joseph Conrad had to emigrate. In his novel *Nostromo*, he contemplates the writer's relationship with the world of politics when he shows the fate of an expatriate writer Martin Decould who returns to Sulaco and becomes one of the leaders of the democratic movement in the country fighting for national liberation.

According to Conrad, involvement in politics is a dead end, which is why Razumov thinks that in "this world of men nothing can be changed -- neither happiness nor misery. They can be only displaced at the cost of corrupted consciences and broken lives -- a futile game for arrogant philosophers and sanguinary triflers" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 256). Involved in politics against his will, Razumov loses all his individual freedom, and all his energy goes into the efforts to regain it. In the famous conversation with Sofia Antonovna, he almost breaks down as he fights for his personal space:

'Enough of this,' he began in a clear, incisive voice, though he could hardly control the trembling of his legs. 'I will have no more of it. I shall not permit anyone ... I can see very well what you are at with those allusions ... Inquire, investigate! I defy you but I will not be played with.'

He had spoken such words before. He had been driven to cry them out in the face of other suspicions. It was an infernal cycle bringing round that protest like a fatal necessity of his existence. But it was no use. He would always be played with.

Luckily life does not last forever.

'I won't have it!' he shouted, striking his fist into the palm of his other hand (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 262).

In this fight, Razumov's voice changes from weak and unclear to an incisive shout of despair. Alone against the whole world, he loses hope:

He made a gesture of despair. It was not his courage that failed him. The choking fumes of falsehood had taken him by the throat -- the thought of being condemned to struggle on in that tainted atmosphere without the hope of ever renewing the strength by a breath of fresh air (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 263).

Like Jim, he feels that his past is catching up with him, threatening to destroy him, but whereas Jim's past, expatriation metaphorically transformed into a jump, Razumov's past is explicitly connected with the country of his birth. This connection between Razumov's destruction and events that happened to him in Russia opens up a very important topic in emigre writing: ambivalent relationship of an expatriate with his country. In *Under Western Eyes*, they are dramatized in two directions: one is

Razumov's relationships with Russian men representing the expatriate's rejection of the political power of his country, and the other avenue is Razumov's relationships with Natalia Haldin metaphorically representing the expatriate's nostalgia for the land and soul of his country.

Banished from the country by Russian political regime more specifically, by Haldin, who has induced Razumov to cooperate after the terrorist act, by Councillor Mikulin, who sent him as a spy abroad, by Prince K-, who never protected him, by General T-, who looked at every man as a criminal, and by eternally drunk Ziemianicz, incapable of any action, Razumov meets Natalia Haldin in Switzerland and feels that his life will never be the same:

He raised his face, pale, full of unexpressed suffering. But that look in his eyes of dull, absent obstinacy, which struck and surprised everybody he was talking to, began to pass away. It was as though he were coming to himself in the awakened consciousness of that marvelous harmony of feature, of lines, of glances, of voice, which made of the girl before him a being so rare, outside, and, as it were, above the common notion of beauty. He looked at her so long that she coloured slightly (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 319).

Natalia, the most attractive female character in Conrad, incarnates the best features of a Russian person. She is strong and graceful, educated and independent thinking, passionate and stoic; interestingly enough, none of these qualities are to be found in Russian men around Razumov. Every physical description of Natalia is associated with physical strength and beauty: "Her walk was not that hybrid and uncertain gliding affected by some women, but a frank, strong, healthy movement forward" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 195). In the educational establishment for girls which Natalia attended "she was looked upon rather unfavorably. She was suspected of holding independent views on matters settled by official teaching" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 161). At the same time, Natalia is very open about her views, which she

conveys with the strong conviction. Her spiritual connection with her brother, Victor Haldin, is based on sharing liberal ideals and her unconditional belief in their triumph:

To Natalia Haldin, her brother with his Petersburg existence, not enigmatical in the least (there could be no doubt of what he felt or thought) but conducted a little mysteriously, was the only visible representative of a proscribed liberty. All the significance of freedom, its indefinite promises, lived in their long discussions, which breathed the loftiest hope of action and faith in success (*Under* 162).

Natalia's desire to remain faithful to her brother's "departed spirit" (*Under* 162) is her commitment to the cause of liberal ideas which she promotes in a non-violent way unlike her brother.

Razumov and Natalia form a special relationship from the beginning, which is the bond of two people coming from the same culture and, therefore, able to give each other the understanding that is lacking because of their expatriate status. Metaphorically, this bond is the irrational relationship of the expatriate with his land which develops its own way irrespective of the political reality. As the Translator watches Razumov and Natalia talking to each other, he feels that they share a world very remote from the foreign reality they live in:

To me, the silent spectator, they [Razumov and Natalia] looked like two people becoming conscious of a spell which had been lying over them ever since they first set eyes on each other. Had either of them cast a glance then in my direction, I would have opened the door quietly and gone out. But neither did; and I remained, every fear of indiscretion lost in the sense of my enormous remoteness from their captivity within the sombre horizon of Russian problems, the boundary of their eyes, of their feelings -- the prison of their souls (*Conrad Under Western Eyes* 321).

The bond between Razumov and Natalia is described as a spell, a mysterious, immaterial and incomprehensible connection with Russia, the connection associated with power and ability to influence through the unconscious. Conrad spells out the mechanism of how culture influences the people's psyche: through eyes, feelings, and souls.

Under the spell of Russia, rejected by the political establishment, a stranger in Switzerland, for whom life abroad feels like "a game of makebelieve" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 297), Razumov begins to write in the state of profound despair out of immeasurable solitude. In his dreams, he sees faces, words, sights, Prussia, Saxony, Wurtemberg, Zurich, Geneva, which wear him "into harsh laughter, to fury, to death -- with the fear of awakening at the end" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 298). His diary is, therefore, an attempt at "psychological and mental self-confession, self-analysis" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 293). The Language Teacher comments that it is "the pitiful resource of a young man who had near him no trusted intimacy, no natural affection to turn to" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 293). Writing in the diary in secret calms down Razumov, and as the process "reconciled him to his existence" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 316), he even feels guilty about writing since it feels like "strange self-indulgence" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 316) to try to escape despair.

However, it is not only to come to terms with himself that Razumov begins to write. He feels writing to be his vocation, and as he contemplates his future as a writer, he becomes conscious of the special mission he has to perform:

If I believed in an active Providence,' Razumov said to himself, amused grimly, 'I would see here the working of an ironical finger. To have Julius Laspara put in my way as if expressly to remind me of my purpose is -- Write, he had said. I must write -- I must, indeed! I shall write -- never fear. Certainly. That's why I am here. And for the future I shall have something to write about' (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 278).

The phrase "that's why I am here" suggests that Razumov feels that his place as a writer is outside Russia. Here Conrad comments on the complexity of the expatriate writer's relationships with his culture, which for various reasons stifles the writer's creativity. As soon as one's writing identity becomes incompatible with basic intellectual and/or spiritual foundations of the culture, one has to sacrifice the comfort of familiar cultural environment for the call of creative and intellectual self-fulfillment.

It is Western individualism, which allows a person much more personal space than Russian communal lifestyle, that allows Razumov to start writing. Razumov's privacy in Russia was interrupted by Haldin's unexpected intrusion as he was thinking over his prize winning essay on philosophy, and he has had neither the peace nor comfort necessary for writing since. Harassed out of the country by the secret police, he finds the spiritual comfort of solitude necessary for writing on the island. "I wish I were in the middle of some field miles away from everywhere" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 279), Razumov thinks. The island as a metaphor for personal space, which every intellectual living in a communal culture lacks, is "the place for making a beginning of that writing which had to be done" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 279-280). Consequently, the "naive, odious, and innate simplicity" of "that unfrequented tiny crumb of earth named after Jean Jacques Rousseau" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 279) gives Razumov precisely what he needs: solitude. Conrad describes the moment when Razumov begins to write in great detail as if he were reproducing his own experience as a beginning expatriate writer:

'I shall always come here,' he said to himself, and afterwards he sat for quite a long time motionless, without thought and sight and hearing, almost without life. He sat long enough for the declining sun to dip behind the roofs of the town at his back, and throw the shadow of the houses on the lake front over the islet, before he pulled out of his pocket a fountain pen, opened a small notebook on his knee, and began to write quickly, raising his eyes now and then at the connecting arm of the bridge. These glances were needless; the people crossing over in the distance seemed unwilling even to look at the islet where the exiled effigy of the author of the *Social Contract* sat enthroned above the bowed head of Razumov in the sombre immobility of bronze. After finishing his scribbling, Razumov, with a sort of feverish haste, put away his pen, then rammed the notebook into his pocket, first tearing out the written pages with an almost convulsive brusqueness. But the folding of the flimsy batch on his knee was executed with thoughtful nicety. That done, he leaned back in his seat and remained motionless holding the papers in his left hand. The twilight had deepened. He got up and began to pace to and fro slowly under the trees (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 280).

Conrad brings together two expatriate writers, Razumov and Rousseau, in Geneva, in Switzerland, the country with three official languages and many dialects and with no dominating political or ideological structure, known in Europe as the heart of democracy and stability. In the country of such multicultural diversity as Switzerland, an expatriate does not feel bound to take a definite political or ideological stand to become accepted, which gives him more freedom than, for example, in England where one would have either to support the constitutional monarchy or become an anarchist, or in France where one would have to be either a royalist or a republican.

Razumov and Rousseau are brought together in the crucial moment of their creative life. Biographically, Rousseau had to flee to Switzerland after he realized that his views on monarchy and governmental institutions outraged the political and religious establishment of France, and in 1776, at the invitation of David Hume, he moved to England where he began to write his *Confessions*, a frank novel of self-revelations. Similarly, Razumov has to leave his country persecuted by the political establishment, and it is abroad, on an island, that he begins to write his confessions, the diary. Like Rousseau and Razumov, Conrad, in profound disagreement with his country's political situation, has to leave his country to avoid the pattern of his father's self-destructive involvement in the national liberation movement against the Russian monarchy.

Bringing together Razumov and Rousseau, Conrad contemplates the moral and social dilemmas of the European intellectuals trapped by law, morals, political and family structures against the background of major social changes. For Rousseau, however, politics and morality can never be separated; therefore, the individual, progressing in the development of moral sense can find genuine happiness and fulfillment only in a social situation. The state, a unity expressing the general will, is created to preserve freedom. The general will is contrasted to the will of all, which is



merely the aggregate will, the accidentally mutual desires of the majority. Rousseau questioned the dominating assumption that what the majority wants is correct, arguing that the individuals who make up the majority may, in fact, wish something that is contrary to the goals and needs of the state, to the common good. The general will is to secure freedom, equality, and justice within the state, regardless of the will of the majority, and in the social contract individual sovereignty is given up to the state in order that these goals might be achieved. When a state fails to act in a moral fashion, it ceases to function in the proper manner and ceases to exert genuine authority over the individual. Rousseau's *The Social Contract*, with its slogan 'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity', became the bible of the the French Revolution and of European progressive movements. At the same time, the main thesis was vulnerable to totalitarian perversions. The Slavic world was greatly influenced by Rousseau's ideas, and slogans of French Revolution by the turn of the century became an essential part of Russian democratic movement. Therefore, Conrad in *Under Western Eyes* is asking the same questions in legal and social spheres as Rousseau.

The importance of societal influence on the individual's upbringing and education, discussed in *Under Western Eyes*, is the focus of Rousseau's attention in his novel *Emile, ou Traite de l'education*, a simple romance of a child reared apart from other children as an experiment. According to his method, the narrative of development and education is a vehicle for a theory of humans derived from reflection on moral intuitions. The most important of these intuitions are basically good and, if proper development is fostered, the natural goodness of the individual can be protected from the corrupting influences of the society. The child Emile must therefore be raised in a rural rather than an urban environment, so that he may develop in continuity with nature rather than in opposition to it. The earliest impulses of a child are allowed to develop but are channeled into a genuine respect for persons, a respect growing out of self-love

rather than pride. Brought into community by an instinctual pity, or sympathy for those around him, Emile develops a moral sense, and an urge towards perfection and inner growth allows him to rise above the passions and achieve virtue.

Unlike Emile, Razumov never experienced the society's assumptions that his moral intuitions are good. Russian legalism subservient to the ruling individuals makes him try to prove that he is innocent, which is an essentially futile exercise. Nevertheless, brought into the world devoid of pity, sympathy, or love, Razumov, rising above passions, develops the desire to achieve virtue through perfection and inner growth. Razumov's exile, therefore, dramatizes Conrad's understanding of the profound conflict between the society and the individual both on the legal and the moral levels.

However, having found the desired solitude, Razumov does not feel totally comfortable in the "pretentious and shabby" spiritual climate of "this absurd island" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 279), which can also read as Conrad's allusion to England. His relationship with the newly adopted land which is to feed his creative imagination is conveyed through complex auditory imagery. As he tries to tune his ear to the sounds of the land he does not know, he fails to respond to all the subtle complexity of the foreign nature:

His fine ear could detect the faintly accentuated murmur of the current breaking against the point of the island, and he forgot himself in listening to them with interest. But even to his acute sense of hearing the sound was too elusive (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 280).

Attracted to the possibility of solitude, Razumov nevertheless does not have the sense of unity with the land, and the solitude is from the beginning bordering on isolation:

'Extraordinary occupation I am giving myself to,' he murmured. And it occurred to him that this was the only sound he could listen to innocently, and for his own pleasure, as it were. Yes, the sound of water, the voice of wind -- completely foreign to human passions. All the other sounds of this earth brought contamination to the solitude of a soul (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 280).

As an expatriate writer, Razumov cannot draw inspiration from a foreign land, since he feels that his soul is "in danger from the fires of this earth" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 280). Reluctant to make any new friends, since the people in Switzerland "no longer cared for anything in the world" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 299), turning into a social outcast, Razumov remains emotionally disconnected from the world he lives in. As the result of Razumov's alienation from the land of the adopted country, the solitude he desires becomes negative experience, in spite of the fact that, as Conrad remarks, "the bitterness of the solitude from which he suffered was not an altogether morbid phenomenon" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 280). To crown it all, as Councillor Mikulin's secret agent, he is legally outside both countries.

Having become "a vanquished phantom" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 286) in his own country, since he cannot bring himself to become a servant "of the mightiest homogeneous mass of mankind with a capability for logical, guided development in a brotherly solidarity of force and aim such as the world had never dreamt of" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 287-288), disconnected from the country he finds himself living in, Razumov feels that he no longer belongs to himself:

Rest, work, solitude, and the frankness of intercourse with his kind were alike forbidden to him, Everything was gone. His existence was a great cold blank, something like the enormous plain in the whole of Russia leveled with snow and fading gradually on all sides into shadows and mists (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 288-289).

Razumov's writing reflects his ambivalent relationships with both parent and adopted cultures. His diary reflects the state of mind of the person who does not belong anywhere, of "a somnambulist struggling with the very dream which drives him forth to wander in dangerous places" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 299). "I think there is no longer anything in the way of my being completely accepted," he says to himself as he is

writing sincerely believing he will be able to overcome his status of an outcast by creativity (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 298).

However, the most controversial, and therefore painful point in the expatriate writer's creativity is the thematic content of his fiction. The parent culture expects the writer to discuss the burning issues of the country's politics and national identity. However, to be accepted abroad, the expatriate writer has to write about the issues attractive to his adopted reader, which in Conrad's case meant staying away from discussing Poland's numerous national and political problems. The expatriate writer, therefore, is always torn between the call of his country and the desire to establish relationships with the new reader. Razumov's last conversation with Natalia Haldin reflects the complexity of the expatriate writer's relationships with his country. Natalia-Russia has a strong irrational hold on Razumov metaphorically conveyed through his unasked love for her, and the calling voice of his country is too strong for him to ignore as he is writing in his diary:

The fifteen minutes with Mrs Haldin were like the revenge of the unknown: that white face, that weak, distinct voice; that head, at first turned to him eagerly, then, after a while, bowed again and motionless -- in the dim, still light of the room in which his words which he tried to subdue resounded so loudly -- had troubled him like some strange discovery. And there seemed to be a secret obstinacy in that sorrow, something he could not understand; at any rate, something he had not expected (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 317).

The haunting memory of Haldin, the sign of Razumov's very strong, but negative connection with his country, combines with the haunting presence of Natalia:

It was she who had been haunting him now. He had suffered that persecution ever since she had suddenly appeared before him in the garden of the Villa Borel with an extended hand and the name of her brother on her lips (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 318).

The image of Natalia with extended hand, which reads like the movement of his land towards reconciliation, marks the profound change in Razumov's relationship with his

country as he turns towards the best in it incarnated in Natalia. Influenced by Natalia's beauty and virtue, Razumov becomes more open in spite of himself:

It was as though he were coming to himself in the awakened consciousness of that marvelous harmony of feature, of lines, of glances, of voice, which made of the girl before him a being so rare, outside, and, as it were, above the common notion of beauty. He looked at her so long that she coloured slightly (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 319).

Natalia/Russia invites Razumov for a dialogue, and as she tries to find out what happened with her brother, she urges Razumov to talk about the events that happened in Petersburg. "What is it that you knew?" she asks him. "I felt that you were the only person who could assist me" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 319), she insists as Razumov tries to evade the subject saying: "But there is a question of fitness. Has this occurred to you?" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 320). When Natalia insists with feeling, "Who more fit that you?", Razumov tries another tack:

Men are poor creatures, Natalia Victorovna. They have no intuition or sentiment. In order to speak fittingly to a mother of her lost son one must have some experience of the filial relation. It is not the case with me -- if you must know the whole truth. Your hopes have to deal here with "a breast unwarmed by any affection", as poet says ... That does not mean it is insensible,' he [Razumov] added in a lower tone (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 320).

As the dialogue continues, it focuses on Razumov's personal sensibility arising from the lack of love and affection which does not allow him, he thinks, to touch a Russian theme. Claiming himself inexperienced in dealing with the subject, Razumov asks Natalia not to have any expectations as to the content of his story:

'I am certain your heart is not unfeeling,' said Miss Haldin softly.

'No. It is not as hard as a stone,' he went on in the same introspective voice, and looking as if his heart were lying as heavy as a stone in that unwarmed breast of which he spoke. 'No, not so hard. But how to prove what you give me credit for -- ah! that's another question. No one has ever expected such a thing from me before. No one whom my tenderness would have been of any use to. And now you come. You! Now! No, Natalia Victorovna. It's too late. You come too late. You must expect nothing from me' (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 320).

Though they have a disagreement as to Razumov's ability to tell the story, their unity, evident to the Language Teacher, is based on their Russianness:

To me, the silent spectator, they looked like two people becoming conscious of a spell which had been lying on them ever since they first set eyes on each other. Had either of them cast a glance then in my direction, I would have opened the door quietly and gone out. But neither did; and I remained, every fear of indiscretion lost in the sense of my enormous remoteness from their captivity within the sombre horizon of Russian problems, the boundary of their eyes, of their feelings -- the prison of their souls (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 320-321).

Razumov claims that he is not interested in Russia because, looking at it more realistically than Natalia, he sees its cruelty and ugliness:

I have had the misfortune to be born clear-eyed. And if you only knew what strange things I have seen! What amazing and unexpected apparitions! But why talk of all this? (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 321).

Comparison between Western and Russian reality leaves Russia at a disadvantage.

"Look near you, here abroad where you are, and then look back at home, whence you came," he suggests to Natalia so that she would understand why he does not want to talk about Russia. Natalia, optimistic about the future of Russia, with "an ardent conviction" in her tone, argues that he "must look beyond the present" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 321) trying to convince Razumov that it is his moral obligation to explore Russian identity and continue Russian tradition:

'On the contrary, I want to talk of all this with you,' she protested with earnest serenity. The sombre humours of her brother's friend left her unaffected, as though that bitterness, that suppressed anger, were the signs of an indignant rectitude. She saw that he was not an ordinary person, and perhaps she did not want him to be other than he appeared to her trustful eyes. 'Yes, with you especially, she insisted. With you of all the Russian people in the world ...' A faint smile dwelt for a moment on her lips. 'I am like poor mother in a way. I too seem unable to give up our beloved dead, who, don't forget, was all in all to us. I don't want to abuse your sympathy, but you must understand that it is in you that we can find all that is left of his generous soul' (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 321).

Razumov is torn in two parts: on the one hand, he wants to follow "the spell of suggestive sound" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 323) of Natalia's voice and include Russian reality in his narrative; on the other hand, he knows that since there is "neither the truth nor consolation to be got from the phantoms of the dead," (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 323), his examination of Russian identity (or the famous Russian soul, in other words) will be devoid of vital energy, for it will be working against the required mythology of the culture. Thus, he can not tell the story Natalia/Russia wants to hear. since he knows the truth behind what has become the Victor Haldin myth, the truth being that Victor's courageous self-sacrifice for the noble cause was essentially a failed attempt of escape, a failure he is responsible for. Thus, Razumov's response to Natalia's attempt to use the authority of Sophia Antonovna's good opinion of him means denouncing the whole tradition of his parent culture and the very idea of national identity:

You know, Natalia Victorovna, I have the greatest difficulty in saving myself from the superstition of an active providence. It's irresistible... The alternative, of course, would be the personal Devil of our simple ancestors. But, if so, he has overdone it altogether -- the old Father of Lies -- our national patron -- our domestic god, whom we take with us when we go abroad. He has overdone it. It seems that I am not simple enough... That's it! I ought to have known... And I did know it,' he added in a tone of poignant distress which overcame my astonishment (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 325).

Conrad is saying here that focusing on national issues is too simple for him, and reducing oneself to contemplating the immediate needs of one's own culture means limiting one's thematic choices as a writer.

The decision to turn one's back on one's national identity is not an easy one. In the case of Razumov it is metaphorically represented by his betrayal of the national hero Haldin and his attendant guilt. His last conversation with Natalia about restoring one's relationships with one's cultural legacy is explicitly painful for him:

The next moment he [Razumov] gave me a very special impression beyond the range of commonplace definitions. It was as though he had stabbed himself outside and had come in there to show it; and more than that -- as though he were turning the knife in the wound and watching the effect. That was the impression, rendered in physical terms. One could not defend oneself from a certain amount of pity (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 325).

Finally, giving way to Natalia's persuasion, Razumov decides to tell her the true story, in which he deconstructs the national revolutionary mythology Natalia so sincerely believes in and equates with national identity. The first discovery is that "Ziemianitch was a brute, a drunken brute... But a man of the people... to whom they, the revolutionists, tell a tale of sublime hopes" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 327).

Razumov's second revelation, his confession, becomes more than Natalia/Russia's forgiving nature can take: the truth of Haldin's betrayal:

But suppose that the real betrayer of your brother -- Ziemianitch had a part in it too, but insignificant and 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.'

'And you know the story! But why, then--'

'I have heard it. There is a staircase in it, and even phantoms, but that does not matter if a man always serves something greater than himself -- the idea. I wonder who is the greatest victim in that tale? '

'In that tale!' Miss Haldin repeated. She seemed turned into a stone.

'Do you know why I came to you? It is simply because there is no one in the whole great world I could go to. Do you understand what I say? No one to go to. Do you conceive the desolation of the thought -- no one -- to -- go -- to?'

Utterly misled by her own enthusiastic interpretation of two lines in the letter of a visionary, under the spell of her own dread of lonely days, in their overshadowed world of angry strife, she was unable to see the truth struggling on his lips. She was on the point of extending her hand to him impulsively when she spoke again.

'An hour after I saw you first I knew how it would be. The terrors of remorse, revenge, confession, anger, hate, fear, are like nothing to the atrocious temptation which you put in my way the day you appeared before me with your voice, with your face, in the garden of that accursed villa'

She looked utterly bewildered for a moment; then, with a sort of despairing insight went straight to the point (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 327-328).

In spite of profound disagreement with Razumov on the vision and understanding of Russia's reality, Natalia asks for the truth: "The story, Kirylo Sidorovitch, the story!" she



insists, and her words sound like his country's demand to respond to her needs by writing for her and about her people. Razumov, however, can not do it and thus cuts the last spiritual link with his legacy:

"There is no more to tell!" He made a movement forward, and she actually put her hand on his shoulder to push him away; but her strength failed her, and he kept his ground, though trembling in every limb. 'It ends here -- on this very spot.' He pressed a denunciatory finger to his breast with force, and became perfectly still (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 328).

Natalia is shocked by the discovery of the truth, and she rejects Razumov: "'It is impossible to be more unhappy...!' The languid whisper of her voice struck me with dismay. 'It is impossible... I feel my heart becoming like ice'" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 329).

In this conversation, therefore, there are two levels of meaning functioning simultaneously. On the one level, Razumov and Natalia's last conversation is contemplating the possibility of including Russian (in case of Conrad, Polish) themes into the story. On the other level, it dramatizes the difference in understanding of the reality between the expatriate writer and his country: the parent culture expects writers to develop and promote its mythology, whereas the expatriate writer who sees the reality differently can but deconstruct it. Razumov's failed love affair with Natalia metaphorically represents this irreconcilable disagreement, and Natalia's heart becoming like ice signifies Conrad's realization that the expatriate's ties with the parent culture are forever broken. It was while writing about the relationship between the expatriate writer and his country in *Under Western Eyes*, the most painful and irreconcilable problem in the expatriate writer's life, that Conrad suffered a severe breakdown.

Reading the expatriate text loaded with such emotional intensity presents all kinds of challenges for the reader of the adopted culture. The Language Teacher, anticipating

no linguistic difficulties, finds the cultural context, which goes beyond the grammatical level of language, difficult to understand:

Yet I confess that I have no comprehension of Russian character. The illogicality of their attitude, the arbitrariness of their conclusions, the frequency of the exceptional, should present no difficulty to a student of many grammars; but there must be something else in the way, some special human trait -- one of those subtle differences that are beyond the ken of mere professors. What must remain striking to a teacher of languages is the Russian extraordinary love of words. They gather them up; they cherish them, but they don't hoard them in their breasts; on the contrary, they are always ready to pour them out by the hour or by the night with enthusiasm, a sweeping abundance, with such an aptness of application sometimes that, as in the case of very accomplished parrots, one can't defend oneself from the suspicion that they really understand what they say. There is a generosity in their ardour of speech which removes it as far as possible from common loquacity; and it is ever too disconnected to be classed as eloquence... (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 56).

The Translator's interest in Razumov's diary goes beyond linguistic curiosity; realizing that there will be incomprehensible differences in character, he reads it "like the open book of fate" which brings in him unusual associations and revives memory of the days spent with Razumov and Natalia Haldin, "startlingly pitiless in its freedom from all forebodings" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 135). The Translator admits that the diary is full of perplexities, complex terrors, and sleeplessness (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 203), which complicates his relationship with the text. In order to understand the sensibility of the culture foreign to him, the Translator has to work his way through the text easy to interpret on the grammatical level, but incomprehensible on the sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic levels. His main difficulty is in dealing with

... the moral conditions ruling over a large portion of this earth's surface; conditions not easily to be understood, much less discovered in the limits of the story, till some key-word is found; a word that could stand at the back of all the words covering the pages, a word which, if not truth itself, may perchance hold truth enough to help the moral discovery which should be the object of every tale (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 105).

The Translator's reading of Russian reality through the text which he reads with difficulty is judgmental. He equates Russian identity with cynicism:

In its pride of numbers, in its strange pretensions of sanctity, and in the secret readiness to abuse itself in suffering, the spirit of Russia is the spirit of cynicism. It informs the declarations of statesmen, the theories of her revolutionists, and the mystic vaticinations of the prophets to the point of making freedom look like a form of debauch, and the Christian virtues themselves appear actually indecent...(Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 105).

Through the Language Teacher, the narrator of *Under Western Eyes*, Conrad represents an average Western reader, a man of imagination, however "inexperienced in the art of narrative" who "has his instinct to guide him in the choice of his words, and in the development of the action" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 131). Trying to convey the content of Razumov's diary as truthfully as he can, he earnestly conveys his own understanding of the text of the diary and the slice of the Russian reality he has a chance to witness as he associates with Razumov and Natalia Haldin.<sup>4</sup> The Translator confesses:

A grain of talent excuses many mistakes. But this is not a work of imagination; I have no talent; my excuse for this undertaking lies not in its art but in its artlessness. Aware of my limitations and strong in the sincerity of my purpose, I would not try (were I able) to invent anything. I push my scruples so far that I would not even invent a transition (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 131).

On more than one occasion throughout the novel the Translator, an average Western reader, openly admits that he does not understand Russian sensibility:

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<sup>4</sup> Eagleton observes that the novel, "by the use of its narrator-device, can therefore satirize the limits of English empiricism by the portrayal of passionate experience beyond its scope, without permitting that empirical position to be undermined; it can indulge, through Razumov, a wholly un-English nihilism without allowing that stance to be fully affirmed" (28).

That propensity of lifting every problem from the plane of the understandable by means of some sort of mystic expression, is very Russian. I knew her well enough to have discovered her scorn for all the practical forms of political liberty known to the western world. I suppose one must be a Russian to understand Russian simplicity, a terrible corroding simplicity in which mystic phrases clothe a naive and hopeless cynicism. I think sometimes that the psychological secret of the profound difference of that people consists in this, that they detest life, the irremediable life of the earth as it is, whereas we westerners cherish it with perhaps an equal exaggeration of its sentimental value (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 134).

The Translator comes from a more stable social and political environment than Razumov. By the beginning of the twentieth century, West European countries had gone through the major turmoil of bourgeois revolutions, had abolished autocracies or learned to control their monarchies and were engaged in creating democratic infrastructures. Thus, the Translator remarks: "To us Europeans of the West, all ideas of political plots and conspiracies seem childish, crude inventions for the theatre or a novel" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 138). The Language Teacher admits, that the life of an average young man from the West would be dramatically different from that of Razumov. The difference in lifestyle accompanied by different sensibilities serves as an impediment for understanding between the cultures, so for a Westerner Razumov's thoughts would "appear shocking, inappropriate, or even improper" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 72) and, therefore, would be hard to comprehend:

It is unthinkable that any young Englishman should find himself in Razumov's situation. This being so it would be a vain enterprise to imagine what he would think. The only safe surmise to make is that he would not think as Mr. Razumov thought at the crisis of his fate. He would not have an hereditary or personal knowledge of the means by which a historical autocracy represses ideas, guards its power, and defends its existence. By an act of mental extravagance he might imagine himself arbitrarily thrown into prison, but it would never occur to him unless he were delirious (and perhaps not even then) that he could be beaten with whips as a practical measure either of investigation or of punishment (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 72).

Thus, the Translator is saying that any foreign text strongly resists interpretation by virtue of cultural differences between the reader and the author.<sup>5</sup>

On more than one occasion the Translator, "removed by the difference of age and nationality as if into the sphere of another existence" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 151), comments on the major misunderstanding between East and West, as well as his own failure to comprehend Russian character or lifestyle:

Russian simplicity often marches innocently on the edge of cynicism for some lofty purpose. But it was a vain enterprise for sophisticated Europe to try and understand these doings. Considering the air of gravity extending even to the physiognomy of the coachman and the action of the showy horses, this quaint display might have possessed a mystic significance, but to the corrupt frivolity of a Western mind, like my own, it seemed hardly decent (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 151).

The failure of West European and Slavic countries to understand each other is mutual. Natalia points out the differences in sensibility as she defends the idea of the Russian revolution in her conversation with the Translator:

'I tell you what,' said Miss Haldin, after a moment of reflection. 'I believe that you hate revolution; you fancy it's not quite honest. You belong to a people which has made the bargain with fate and wouldn't like to be rude to it. But we have made no bargain. It was never offered to us -- so much liberty for so much hard cash. You shrink from the idea of revolutionary action for those you think well of as if it were

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<sup>5</sup> Daphna Erdinast-Vulcan is one of many English critics who describe the obvious cultural differences between the Language Teacher and his Razumov "as a reflection of an ideological-cultural relationship. The narrator who introduces himself as a sample of the Western mind, who is -- as Berthoud points out -- 'on guard against metaphysics' -- represents the alternative to the 'Russian' state of mind. He lives, in Berlin's terms, by the 'negative' concept of liberty. Razumov, who, as we have already seen, is initially trying to opt out of the passionate transcendentalism of his compatriots and glorifies (Western) rationality, eventually discovers that he cannot break free of the metaphysical, and submits to it. The narrator cannot will himself into Razumov's submission, but as the story unfolds he gradually learns to perceive his inability to do so as a lack, an absence in himself and in what he represents. Far from being a superior vantage point of reason, individual autonomy, and freedom, the West becomes a wasteland of sterile properties and impotent grief" (*Joseph Conrad and the Modern Temper* 122).

something -- how shall I say it -- not quite decent" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 157).

Political and socio-economic differences reflect on the level of interpersonal relationships. When the Translator tries to communicate with Natalia, he discovers that he does not have the cultural knowledge to be able to connect fully to what she is saying:

It may be that I understood her much better than I was able to do. The most precise of her sayings seemed always to me to have enigmatical prolongations vanishing somewhere beyond my reach (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 145).

Here Conrad shares his expatriate frustration about failure to fully comprehend the meaning of a foreign utterance because language does not convey all the complexity of meaning inherent in human speech. It becomes obvious that studying the language alone does not solve all communication problems when one deals with a foreign culture.

The most important extralinguistic communication problem involves an understanding of the emotional structure of the cultural sensibility. East European and West European cultures suggest different, even opposite, ways of dealing with the emotional side of human nature: the Western world, where emotions are belittled, favors strong control of logical reason over an individual's feelings, whereas the Slavic world allows great freedom of emotional expression. Carl Jung writes that "the development of Western philosophy during the last two centuries has succeeded in isolating the mind in its own sphere and in severing it from its primordial oneness with the universe. Man himself has ceased to be the microcosm and eidolon of the cosmos, and his 'anima' is no longer the consubstantial *scintilla*, or spark of the *Anima Mundi*, the World Soul" (Jung 476). The Western world, therefore, has accepted restrictions imposed by the mind on physical and metaphysical spheres. In turn, in the East, "mind is a cosmic factor, the very essence of existence" (Jung 480). The East bases itself "on psychic reality, that is, upon the psyche as the main and unique condition of existence" (Jung 481). Eastern

recognition, therefore, is a "psychological or temperamental fact rather than the result of philosophical reasoning (Jung 481). The Western attitude, according to Jung, is that of extroversion, whereas the Eastern collective attitude is that of introversion. The Christian West considers man to be wholly dependent upon the grace of God and ultimately upon the Church as the divinely sanctioned earthly instrument of man's redemption, whereas the East insists that man is "the sole cause of his higher development," for it believes in self-liberation (Jung 482). Jung makes an emphatic statement of psychological, philosophical, and religious incompatibility between East and West when he compares Christianity and Buddhism:

In the same way Western man is Christian, no matter to what denomination his Christianity belongs. For him man is small inside, he is next to nothing; moreover, as Kierkegaard says, "before God man is always wrong." By fear, repentance, promises, submission, self-abasement, good deeds, and praise he propitiates the great power, which is not himself but *totaliter aliter*, the Wholly Other, altogether perfect and "outside," the only reality. If you shift the formula a bit and substitute for God some other power, for instance the world of money, you get a complete picture of Western man -- assiduous, fearful, devout, self-abashing, enterprising, greedy, and violent in his pursuit of the goods of this world: possessions, health, knowledge, technical mastery, public welfare, political power, conquest, and so on. What are the popular movements of our time? Attempts to grab the money or property of others and to protect our own. The mind is chiefly employed in devising suitable "isms" to hide the real motives or get more loot. I refrain from describing what would happen to Eastern man should he forget his ideal of Buddhahood, for I do not want to give such an unfair advantage to my Western prejudices. But I cannot help raising the question of whether it is possible, or indeed advisable, for either to imitate the other's standpoint. The difference between them is so vast that one can see no reasonable possibility of this, much less its advisability. You can not mix fire and water. The eastern attitude stultifies the western, and vice versa. You cannot be a good Christian and redeem yourself, nor can you be a Buddha and worship God. It is much better to accept the conflict, for it admits only for an irrational solution, if any (Jung 482-483).

The Slavic world, caught between East and West, is a complex mixture of the Eastern and Western attitudes, different from the two, but interminably aspiring to the condition of each style. If one stays within Jung's paradigm, it aspires to Western power

of money, and at the same time it reproduces the Eastern attitude to man as the only and unique condition of existence.<sup>6</sup> Conrad conveys this Eastern attitude to emotions inherent in Russian sensibility through Natalia, who says: "We Russians have no right to be reserved with each other. In our circumstances it is almost a crime against humanity" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 152). The Language Teacher, in turn, represents the condescending attitude to emotions when he says: "I was grateful to Miss Haldin for not embarrassing me by an outward display of deep feeling. I admired her for that wonderful command over herself, even while I was a little frightened at it" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 141). At one point Conrad openly says through the narrator that the difference in dealing with emotions presents the greatest barrier for communication between two cultures. Trying to understand Natalia's feelings beyond her words, the Language Teacher contemplates:

She [Natalia] ceased on that note, and for a space I reflected on the character of her words which I perceived very well must tip the scale of the girl's feelings in that young man's favour. They had not the sound of a casual utterance. Vague they were to my Western mind and to my Western sentiment, but I could not forget that, standing by Miss Haldin's side, I was like a traveler in a strange country (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 185).

Talking to Natalia, the Translator feels that they lose each other even though he is trying hard to enter her world:

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<sup>6</sup> Erdinast-Vulcan describes Razumov's personality split as the result of the clash of conflicting cultural patterns in his psyche: "From this point onwards there is an increasingly widening split in Razumov's personality between the thin coating of detached rationality which he tries to maintain along with his claim for individual autonomy and his view of himself as a demonic figure engaged in a transcendental struggle, which gradually takes over and colors his entire outlook. The dialogic quality of the novel can, I think, be traced to an irreconcilable split between the two modes of perception: the Russian mode of perception, which recognizes and accepts the metaphysical, and the 'Western' outlook, which is secular, rational, and materialistic" (*Joseph Conrad and the Modern Temper* 114).



I perceived that she was not listening. There was no mistaking her expression; and once more I had the sense of being out of it -- not because of my age, which at any rate could draw inferences -- but altogether out of it, on another plane whence I could only watch her from afar (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 185).

The image of two people who try to communicate while existing on two different planes metaphorically represents the expatriate writer's paradigm of his/her relationship with the reader from the adopted culture: however hard they try to communicate, they always feel the distance and estrangement from each other by virtue of cultural differences.

Fear of Russian emotions, therefore, is the dominant key in the Translator's attitude to all the situations where he either associates with Russians or watches them communicate with each other. As he walks with Natalia listening to her narrative of meeting with Razumov, the Translator thinks to himself:

It was here, then, I thought, looking round at that plot of ground of deplorable banality, that their acquaintance will begin and go on in the exchange of generous indignations and of extreme sentiments, too poignant, perhaps, for a non-Russian mind to conceive (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 189).

It is on the level of understanding emotions that communication with the foreign culture fails dramatically, and Conrad, particularly sensitive to this problem by virtue of his expatriate status, makes emotional incompatibility between the Language Teacher and the Russian characters he associates with the dominant feature of their relationships.

At the same time, differences in sensibility make the foreign culture interminably attractive, which is represented through the Translator's understated infatuation with Natalia. It is through the eyes of the narrator, who speaks of the seductive frankness of Natalia's strong and shapely hand, enigmatical prolongations of her speech, and other qualities that leave nobody indifferent (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 145) that the reader sees Natalia's beauty. The Translator's affectionate interest in Natalia is mixed with the desire to protect her vulnerable emotionality from the Western reality which is incompatible with her idealistic nature:

Poor Mrs. Haldin! I confess she frightened me a little. she was one of those natures, rare enough, luckily, in which one cannot help being interested, because they provoke terror and pity. One dreads their contact for oneself, and still more for those one cares for, so clear it is that they are born to suffer and to make others suffer, too... She was one of those who do not know how to heal themselves, of those who are too much aware of her heart, who, neither cowardly nor selfish, look passionately at its wounds -- and count the cost (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 300).

However, afraid and disapproving of direct or intense expression of any sentiments, the Translator strongly connects with Natalia on the emotional level. He empathizes with her "youth robbed arbitrarily of its natural lightness and joy, overshadowed by an un-European despotism; a terribly sombre youth given over to the hazards of a furious strife between equally ferocious antagonisms" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 301). Trying to account for the reasons behind his frequent visits to the Haldins' house, he explains that his interest for Natalia is called for by the enigma of a different culture:

The Westerner in me was discomposed. There was something shocking in the expression of that face. Had I been myself a conspirator, a Russian political refugee, I could perhaps have been able to draw some practical conclusion from this chance glimpse. As it was, it discomposed me strongly, even to the extent of awakening an indefinite apprehension. All this is rather inexplicable... (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 300).

As the reader of Russian character, the Translator is taken beyond his personal depth limited by his own culture, which accounts for his attraction not only to Natalia, but also to Razumov and his story. Relationships between Razumov and the Language Teacher dramatize the tension between the expatriate writer and the foreign reader. Their first meeting establishes irrational hostility and antagonism which becomes the dominant of their relationship:

It flashed upon me that in leaving us together Miss Haldin had an intention -- that something was entrusted to me, since by a mere accident I had been found at hand. On this assumed ground I put all possible friendliness into my manner. I cast about for some right thing to say, and suddenly in Miss Haldin's last words I perceived the clue to the nature of my mission.

'No,' I said gravely, if with a smile, 'you [Razumov] cannot be expected to understand.'

His clean-shaven lip quivered ever so little before he said, as if wickedly amused

'But haven't you heard just now? I was thanked by that young lady for understanding so well.'

I looked at him rather hard. Was there a hidden and inexplicable sneer in his retort? No. It was not that. It might have been resentment. Yes. But what had he to resent? He looked as though he had not slept for very well of late. I could almost feel on me the weight of his unrefreshed, motionless stare, the stare of a man who lies unwinking in the dark, angrily passive in the toils of disastrous thoughts. Now, when I know how true it was, I can honestly affirm that this *was* the effect produced on me. It was painful in a curiously indefinite way -- for, of course, the definition comes to me now while I sit writing in the fullness of my knowledge. But this is what the effect was at that time of absolute ignorance. This new sort of uneasiness which he seemed to be forcing upon me I attempted to put down by assuming a conversational, easy familiarity (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 196).

This conversation establishes the major framework of the relationship between the Language Teacher and Razumov, the quintessence of which is the Translator's arrogant condescending words 'you cannot be expected to understand' which he utters as soon as he says he realizes the nature of his mission. The nature of his mission, therefore, is to humiliate Razumov and undercut his "curiosity and scorn, tempered by alarm" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 195). This conversation also betrays Razumov's resentment at being patronized and his passive anger of the person who feels trapped by the circumstances far beyond his control.

The Translator is very judgmental and prejudiced against Razumov, and, completely identifying him with the other Russians he met, he fails to see him as an individual. When he sees Razumov for the first time, the Translator thinks he is a revolutionist, like other Russian people he knows, which, in fact, is the opposite to what Razumov actually represents:

And the shadow, the attendant of his countrymen, stretching across the middle of Europe, was lying on him too, darkening his figure to my mental vision. 'Without doubt,' I said to myself, 'he seems a sombre, even a desperate revolutionist; but he is young, he may be unselfish and humane, capable of compassion, of...' (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 196).

The Translator's attitude to Razumov varies from unreserved condescension to hidden patronizing as he explains to him his view of female nature which Razumov "cannot be expected to understand":

As I was saying, Mr. Razumov, when you have lived long enough, you will learn to discriminate between the noble trustfulness of a nature foreign to every meanness and the flattered credulity of some women; though even the credulous, silly as they may be, unhappy as they are sure to be, are never absolute fools. It is my belief that no woman is ever completely deceived. Those that are lost leap into the abyss with their eyes open, if all the truth were known (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 197).

The Translator, confident of his superiority in understanding female issues, is essentially as chauvinistic as Razumov, and his speech here is not an attempt to stop abuse of women; in fact, it is a statement of Razumov's inferiority and an attempt to make superiority/inferiority the basic paradigm of their relationships where the Translator will always have the right to say, "I believe myself authorized to speak" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 198) and silence Razumov's voice, however unacceptable it may seem.

Sorry for Razumov's "display of unexpectedly profound emotion" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 198), within certain limits, the Translator at the same time is a sympathetic interested listener trying to analyze Razumov's emotions:

It was not anger; it was something else, something more poignant, and not so simple. I was aware of it sympathetically, while I was profoundly concerned at the nature of that exclamation (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 201).

As an interested reader, the Translator urges Razumov to explore Russian themes by asking him to tell the true story of Haldin's arrest. Razumov, however, resists the invitation to analyze his past:

'Dear me! Won't the truth do, then? I hoped you could have told them something consoling. I am thinking of the poor mother now. Your Russia is a cruel country.'  
He [Razumov] moved a little in his chair.  
'Yes,' I repeated. 'I thought you would have had something authentic to tell.'  
The twitching of his lips before he spoke was curious.  
'What if it is not worth telling?'

'Not worth -- from what point of view? I don't understand.'  
 'From every point of view' (*Under Western Eyes* 201).

In spite of his efforts to read Russian life, however, the Translator fails to understand its deep problems. Trying to analyze it from the perspective of Western standards, he falls into the trap of political mythology. Considering Haldin a hero, he does not understand his relationship with Razumov, since he lacks essential knowledge of the culture. As the result, in his reading of Russian life and character he abandons his logical reason and descends to the irrational, intuitive level when he says, "I think that you people are under a curse." In the same conversation he suggests that Russia's way out of socio-economic difficulties is metaphysical, almost bordering on exorcism: "'A curse is an evil spell,' I tried him again. ' And the important, the great problem, is to find the means to break it'(Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 204). Such a simplistic understanding of social phenomena belies the Translator's assumed superiority.

The tension of the first meeting between the Translator and Razumov is never resolved into any productive quality; the only sentiment, the Teacher says, he was carrying away from that conversation was that of hopelessness (*Conrad Under Western Eyes* 203). He feels exhausted by the encounter with the foreign culture, since he cannot get to the truth of the story, and his superficial observations of the Russian life are not enough to bring the satisfactory closure to the interaction. At a certain point of his association with Russians the Translator realizes that the Western reader needs to be educated to be able to understand the Russian reality:

To the morality of a Western reader an account of these meetings would wear perhaps the sinister character of old legendary tales where the Enemy of Mankind is represented holding subtly mendacious dialogues with some tempted soul. It is not my part to protest. Let me but remark that the Evil One, with his single passion of satanic pride for the only motive is, yet, on a larger, modern view, allowed to be not quite so black as he used to be painted. With the greater latitude, then, should we appraise the exact shade of mere mortal man, with his many passions and his miserable ingenuity in error, always dazzled by the base glitter of mixed motives,

everlastingly betrayed by a short-sighted wisdom (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 290).

Short-sighted wisdom of cultural conventions is a serious barrier in understanding between the expatriate writer and the average reader of the culture he adopts. According to Conrad, therefore, in order to understand the foreign text, the reader must go beyond the wisdom of his/her culture and assume the cosmopolitan, a-political, essentially human attitude. If the reader is unwilling and/or unable to overcome his/her cultural limits, the foreign text becomes "a strange stage for an obscure drama" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 319), "cruel and absurd" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 313), provoking a wide range of response from terror to pity. There is, however, one emotion the uneducated reader is not able to experience from the encounter with the foreign text: the satisfaction of understanding.

The Translator feels that as the reader of Russian life, he is an outsider by virtue of belonging to a different culture even when he watches Razumov and Natalia talk. He says that he has the sense of his "enormous remoteness from their captivity within the sombre horizon of Russian problems, the boundary of their eyes, of their feelings -- the prison of their souls" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 321). When Natalia is looking for Razumov to ask him more questions about her brother's arrest, the Translator feels overwhelmed by the intensity of emotions he cannot identify with and he confesses: "I felt profoundly my European remoteness, and said nothing, but I made up my mind to play my part of helpless spectator to the end" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 314). As an outsider, the Translator misreads the relationships between Razumov and Natalia by mistaking the strong cultural bond between them for a personal connection. As he watches Razumov and Natalia communicate, he thinks that the sister and the friend of the dead man have common ideas, hopes, and aspirations: "all this must draw them to each other fatally. Her very ignorance and his loneliness to which he had alluded so

strangely must work to that end" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 322). The Translator even thinks that Natalia and Razumov are intended for each other:

The period of reserve was over; he was coming forward in his own way. I could not mistake the significance of this late visit, for in what he had to say there was nothing urgent. The true cause dawned upon me: he had discovered that he needed her -- and she was moved by the same feeling. It was the second time that I saw them together, and I knew that next time they met I would not be there, either remembered or forgotten. I would have virtually ceased to exist for both these young people (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 322).

However, in reality Razumov and Natalia's relationship turned in the opposite direction: having found out the truth about her brother's arrest, Natalia rejects Razumov. Thus the Language Teacher proves to be complete failure as the reader.

The Translator also fails as the reader of Razumov's personality since his "extremely unpleasant" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 302) response to Razumov is developed into the conviction of Razumov's evil nature. When the Translator describes his impression of Razumov as he finds him in his place, he says that Razumov is consciously evil:

The fatigue of that day and the struggle with himself had changed him [Razumov] so much that I would have hesitated to recognize that face which, only a few hours before, when he brushed against me in the post-office, had been startling enough but quite different. It had been not so lived in then, and its eyes not so sombre. They certainly looked more sane now, but there was upon them the shadow of something consciously evil (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 315).

However, the Translator's limitations as the reader are put to the most difficult test in the scene of Razumov's last conversation with Natalia when he makes his confession about Haldin's arrest. This scene tests the reader's ability to cope with the expatriate's true story. As usual, the Translator is frightened by the emotional intensity of the intercourse:

The next moment he [Razumov] gave me a very special impression beyond the range of commonplace definitions. It was as though he had stabbed himself outside and had come in there to show it; and more than that -- as though he were turning the knife in the wound and watching the effect. That was the impression, rendered in physical terms. One could not defend oneself from a certain amount of pity. But

it was for Miss Haldin, already so tried in her deepest affections, that I felt a serious concern. Her attitude, her face, expressed compassion struggling with doubt on the verge of terror (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 325).

The Translator is appalled by Razumov's true story; having heard his confession, the Translator feels rage, "incredulity, struggling with astonishment, anger, and disgust" of such intensity that he is deprived of the power of speech (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 328). In the state of shock from the truth, the Translator banishes Razumov from Natalia's house, whispering:

'This is monstrous. What are you staying for? Don't let her catch sight of you again. Go away!...' He [Razumov] did not budge. 'Don't you understand that your presence is intolerable -- even to me? If there's any sense of shame in you ...' (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 328)

It is not Natalia, but the Language Teacher who banishes Razumov and closes the door and sits down in Natalia's drawing room contemplating his discovery. "The meaning of what I had seen reached my mind with a staggering shock," he writes. However, the Translator proves completely unable to operate on the deepest level of the text that is opened to him by the revelation of the truth. His response to Razumov's confession shows that as the reader the Translator is either confused or, possibly, is functioning outside the limits of his ability. Having banished Razumov, he utters a desperate outcry concerning the fate of Natalia's veil which Razumov pressed to his face before he left: "'That miserable wretch has carried off your veil!' I cried, in the scared, deadened voice of an awful discovery'" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 329), the Translator narrates. The Translator's response to Razumov's true story is Conrad's statement that there are certain levels of the expatriate text which the reader from the adopted culture can neither cope with nor understand. "The rest remained unspoken" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 329) writes Conrad, referring to the heart of darkness of the foreign culture.

Razumov and the Language Teacher, therefore, do not appreciate each other since their different cultural backgrounds hamper mutual understanding. Razumov, the writer,



represents the intellectual potential of the culture going through major shifts in socio-economic formations; to be more precise -- he represents Russia in the period of abolishing the monarchy, so he brings with him the issues which are difficult to comprehend to the reader from an established Western democracy. Razumov is banished from his country by political reality which he cannot avoid however hard he tries. His exile, however, which gives him the desired solitude for writing, becomes as bitter as his life at home. Razumov does not share his compatriots' revolutionary ideas and seeks self-expression in writing the diary. Profoundly humiliated, lost and confused, Razumov encounters his average Western reader, the Language Teacher, who is attracted to the enigma of the foreign culture and shows interest in Razumov's legacy. However, Razumov does not want to write about his culture not only because of his ambivalent relationship with it, but because he feels that the Language Teacher will not be able to take the truth of his past. The Translator's condescending and patronizing attitude does not encourage Razumov to tell his true story. Ultimately Razumov, the writer, is banished by his reader who can accept only what he can explain by his logical reason from the perspective of his cultural conventions. Thus, through the relationships between Razumov and the Language Teacher, Conrad is making a statement that emigre fiction is never accepted by an average reader in the adopted culture; an expatriate writer, therefore, should orient oneself to the elite reader. The author-reader relationship in the context of expatriation in *Under Western Eyes* reproduces the emigre writer's response to his own experience of creativity within the foreign culture. In the case of Conrad, this is his relationship with the English reader.

As an example of an English reader's response to Conrad, one could quote what Naipaul writes about *Lord Jim*:

It is this explicitness, this unwillingness to let the story speak for itself, this anxiety to draw all the mystery out of the straightforward situation, that leads to the mystification of *Lord Jim*. It isn't always easy to know what is being explained. The

story is usually held to be about honor. I feel myself that it is about the theme -- much more delicate in 1900 than today -- of the racial straggler. And, such is Conrad's explicitness, both points of view can be supported by quotation. *Lord Jim*, however, is an imperialist book, and it may be that the two points of view are really one.

Whatever the mystery of *Lord Jim*, it wasn't of the sort that could hold me. Fantasy, imagination, story if you like, had been refined away by explicitness. There was something unbalanced, even unfinished about Conrad. He didn't seem to be able to go beyond his first simple conception of the story; his invention seemed to fail so quickly. And even in his variety there was something tentative and uncertain (192).

English critics openly admit that Conrad's cultural ambiguity "is the source of another difficulty for his readers. We are never sure of the exact position of the mind reflecting behind the composition -- whether it is, as it were, with the English reader or against him; whether it presents its case for our mutual sympathy and understanding or for our edification and improvement," maintains the American critic Eloise Knapp Hay (*The Political Novels of Joseph Conrad* 17). Frustrated by the English readers' response to his fiction, in the preface to *Lord Jim* (written in 1917, seventeen years after the novel was published), Conrad attempts to defend both the novel and his protagonist. English reviewers, Conrad complains, "maintained that the work started as the short story got beyond the writer's control. One or two discovered internal evidence of the fact, which seemed to amuse them. They pointed out the limitations of the narrative form. They argued that no man could have expected to talk all that time, and the other men to listen so long. It was not, they said, very credible" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 7). Jim baffled English readers with his sensitivities, and Conrad feels he has to explain his character and justify himself as a writer, just like Jim feels the urge to explain and justify himself to Marlow and, ultimately, to the whole world. Jim, Conrad says, "is not a type of wide commonness. But I can safely assure my reader that he is not the product of coldly perverted thinking. He's not a figure of Northern Mists either. One sunny morning in the commonplace surroundings of an Eastern roadstead, I saw his form pass by - appealing -

- significant -- under a cloud -- perfectly silent. Which is as it should be. It was for me, with all the sympathy of which I was capable, to seek fit words for his meaning. He was 'one of us'" (Conrad *Lord Jim* 8). Conrad does not say who he means by "us"; in the context of his life, however, Jim becomes, like Conrad, the citizen of the world, in certain aspects disconnected from the English reality.

In his interview with the Polish journalist Marian Dabrowski, which is one of the rare interviews where Conrad openly discusses his Polish heritage, he explicitly points out that he feels the distance between him and the English reader resulting from the cultural differences. "The English critics," says Conrad, "since I am in fact an English writer -- when discussing me always note that there is something in me which cannot be understood, nor defined, nor expressed. Only you can grasp this undefinable factor, only you can understand the incomprehensible. It is *polosc* (polonitas), that *polosc* which I took into my work from Mickiewicz and Slowacki (Morf 95). Conrad apparently exaggerates the influence of literature on shaping his sensibility, since it takes more than reading Mickiewicz and Slowacki to appropriate the cultural codes. However, he very sensitively responded, both symbolically in his writing, and explicitly in his interviews and the prefaces to his novels, to the ambivalent aspect of relationships between the expatriate writer and the reader from the adopted culture.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE EXPATRIATE WRITER'S HOMECOMING IN *NOSTROMO*

In *Lord Jim* and *Under Western Eyes*, Conrad makes a statement that relationships with the parent country are the central part of the expatriate experience. Jim's haunting guilt and Razumov's betrayal constitute the paradigm of the emigre writer's existence vis-a-vis his own culture. It is natural for the emigre writer, therefore, to look for possible resolution of the tension in the ambivalence of the relationship with the country the expatriate left behind. This search becomes the dominant theme in Conrad's *Nostramo*. The novel, representing "the heat and clash" of Conrad's own emotions (Conrad *Nostramo* XXXII), is the story of Martin Decoud's return to his native Costaguana dramatizing the hidden dream of every expatriate: homecoming.<sup>1</sup> The need to clarify one's relationship with one's own culture exists as the irrational call of the wild in the writer's subconscious as "that mysterious thing which has nothing to do with the theories of art;" it becomes, as Conrad puts it in the Author's Note to *Nostramo*, "a subtle change in the inspiration, a phenomenon for which I cannot in any way be held responsible" (XXIX). Conrad contemplates the fate of the writer who makes his cultural legacy central to his life and creativity through Martin Decoud's association with the

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<sup>1</sup> Critics have rightly noted that Decoud is, in many ways, "a sharer of Conrad's temperament and history. He does, indeed, act as a spokesman for the author" writes Daphna Erdinast-Vulcan, "or for a certain aspect of the Conradian temper ... in his commentary on the universal human need for idealization" (76). However, the universal reading of Martin Decoud's character proves to be too general and therefore insufficient.

treasure of San Tome silver mine, his relationship with Antonia Avellianos, and the incorruptible Nostromo.<sup>2</sup>

At his first appearance in the novel Martin Decoud is introduced as a Costaguana-born professional journalist. A young Creole intellectual, he assimilated in France, where he has lived for many years. If it were not for his skin color, he would be easily taken for a Frenchman: his

shirt collar, cut low in the neck, the big bow of his cravat, the style of his clothing, from the round hat to the varnished shoes, suggested an idea of French elegance; but otherwise he was the very type of a fair Spanish Creole. The fluffy mustache and the short, curly, golden beard did not conceal his lips, rosy, fresh, almost pouting in expression. His full round face was of that warm, healthy, Creole white which is never tanned by its native sunshine (Conrad *Nostromo* 125).

Martin's connection with his parent culture is not very strong: "His people had been long settled in Paris, where he had studied law, had dabbled in literature, had hoped now and then in moments of exaltation to become a poet like that other foreigner of Spanish blood, Jose Maria Hereida" (Conrad *Nostromo* 125).

While living in Paris, Martin contributes to the Costaguana paper the *Semenario*, the principal newspaper in Sta Marta. However, the core of his identity as a writer consists in a condescending attitude to his country. He writes his articles on European affairs "to pass time," and has no name as a journalist since the newspaper publishes his writing under the heading "From our special correspondent," though the authorship was an open secret" (Conrad *Nostromo* 125). In France, he acts as a translator of his culture to the French hroughaudience. When important Parisian reviews ask him to write his

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<sup>2</sup> In her book *Joseph Conrad and the Modern Temper*, Erdinast-Vulcan interprets the complexity of *Nostromo* as the result of the concurrent existence of the two ostensibly conflicting modes of discourse: the mythical and historiographic.

opinion on the events in Costaguana, he writes them "in a serious tone and in the spirit of levity" (Conrad *Nostramo* 126).

Condescending to his culture, Martin, in turn, is not treated as an equal by the people he associates with in France. Martin, the writer, seeks his French friends' approval asking their judgment of his work. "Have you read my thing about the regeneration of Costaguana -- *une bonne blague, hien?*" (Conrad *Nostramo* 127) he asks his intimates. In response to his attempts to get accepted, his friends patronizingly call him "little fellow Decoud" (Conrad *Nostramo* 126).

The paradigm of West European superiority discussed in *Under Western Eyes* through the Razumov/Language Teacher relationship is, therefore, reproduced in *Nostramo* through little details of Martin Decoud's life in Paris. Disconnected from his cultural legacy and belittling his heritage, Martin assumes a French persona, and tries to live up to it imagining himself "Parisian to the tips of his fingers" (Conrad *Nostramo* 127). However, Conrad comments that denial of one's heritage means being disconnected from the self, so Martin is "in danger of remaining a sort of nondescript dilettante all his life" (Conrad *Nostramo* 127). Moreover, it results in the conflict with something so deep that for Conrad it is denial of one's nature. Conrad says that while in Paris, Martin pushed "the habit of universal raillery to the point where it blinded him to the genuine impulses of his own nature" (Conrad *Nostramo* 127). This is the biting merciless language in which Conrad describes Martin's artificial life in Paris:

As a matter of fact, he was an idle boulevardier, in touch with some smart journalists, made free of a few newspaper offices, and welcomed in the pleasure haunts of pressmen. This life, whose dreary superficiality is covered by the glitter of universal blague, like the stupid clowning of a harlequin by the spangles of a motley costume, induced in him a Frenchified -- but most un-French -- cosmopolitanism, in reality a mere barren indifferentism posing as intellectual superiority (Conrad *Nostramo* 126).

The life of an expatriate writer in Western Europe, therefore, for Conrad is colored with humbug, deceit, pretense, indifference, and is essentially dreary and barren. Attempts to assimilate in the West are for him associated with the "stupid clowning of a harlequin by the spangles of a motley costume."

However, in spite of Decoud's vain posing of intellectual superiority, his relationship with Costaguana is not that simple. Distancing himself from his country, he does not deny it completely. In Costaguana, "where the tale of compatriots in Europe is jealously kept," everybody knew that "it was "son Decoud," a talented young man, supposed to be moving in the higher spheres of Society' (Conrad *Nostramo* 125-126). Martin corresponds with his people; he knows the history of Costaguana and gives his own interpretation of its life to his French associates which betrays his disapproval of the country's political reality:

Imagine an atmosphere of opera-bouffe in which all the comic business of stage statesmen, brigands, etc., etc., all their farcical stealing, intriguing, and stabbing is done in dead earnest. It is screamingly funny; the blood flows all the time, and the actors believe themselves to be influencing the fate of the universe. Of course, the government in general, any government anywhere, is a thing of exquisite comicality to a discerning mind; but really we Spanish-Americans do overstep the bounds. No man of ordinary intelligence can take part in the intrigues of *une farce macabre*. However, these Riberists, of whom we hear so much just now, are really trying in their own comical way to make the country habitable, and even to pay some of its debts. My friends, you had better write up Senor Ribera all you can in kindness to your own bondholders. Really, if what I am told in my letters is true, there is some chance for them at last (Conrad *Nostramo* 126)

Translating his country's unacceptable political reality into the light and unobtrusive language of theater metaphor, Martin makes it sound less intense, less tragic, and, therefore, more acceptable for the French audience. Trying to amuse his audience, Martin, like Razumov, has to appropriate the true story of his country's reality to suit the needs of an average Western reader.

In fact, though Martin does not sound like a man who is compassionate or empathetic to the problems of its people, he truthfully portrays the spirit of political reality of his country where political games are deeply embedded in the people's everyday lives. Martin's views of his country are shared by other characters. Mrs. Gould, for example, sees the same problems in Costaguana when she comes from England to live in it after she marries Charles Gould:

In all these households she could hear stories of political outrage; friends, relatives ruined, imprisoned, killed in the battles of senseless civil wars, barbarously executed in ferocious proscriptions, as though the government of the country had been a struggle of lust between bands of absurd devils let loose upon the land with sabres and uniforms and grandiloquent phrases. And on all the lips she found a weary desire for peace, the dread of officialdom with its nightmarish parody of administration without law, without security, and without justice (Conrad *Nostramo* 73).

Under the dictatorial rule of Guzman Bento, who in official petitions was called Citizen Savior of the Country, Costaguana suffered from "the sombre imbecility of political fanaticism. The power of supreme government had become in his dull mind an object of strange worship, as if it were some sort of cruel deity. It was incarnated in himself, and his adversaries, the Federalists, were the supreme sinners, objects of hate, abhorrence, and fear, as heretics would be to a convinced Inquisitor" (Conrad *Nostramo* 113).

Martin's detached irony in his attitude to his country is the way of saving himself from being burned by identifying with the problems he can neither control nor resolve. He does not want to be directly involved in his country's problems, and the language of Don Pepe saying, "Poor Costaguana! Before it was everything for the padres, nothing for the people; and now it is everything for these great politicians in Sta. Marta, for negroes and thieves" (Conrad *Nostramo* 74) is not his language.

However, Martin's connection with his country is strong enough for him to be selected as an executive member of the patriotic small-arms committee of Sulaco. Even



though for him it is "the height of the unexpected, one of those fantastic moves of which only his "dear countrymen" were capable," Martin accepts the offer, which proves that his condescending ironic attitude is superficial. Though he, seduced by the force of an established culture, speaks French at home, his roots in Costaguana are much stronger than he is willing to admit. His extended family and friends live in the old country and speak its language. Facing the deepest problem of the expatriate existence, the unresolvable relationships with one's culture, at the age of thirty Martin is ready to deal with them as he accepts the offer.

Martin tries to resolve his relationship with Costaguana by returning home to help his country to establish new democratic government. In his country, he feels more naturally compatible with the sensibility of the culture. He does not have to make an effort to be accepted; he receives a warm welcome and submits "to being embraced and talked to without a word" (Conrad *Nostramo* 129). Martin is moved "in spite of himself by that note of passion and sorrow unknown on the more refined stage of European politics" (Conrad *Nostramo* 129). Thus, Martin Decoud, "the adopted child of western Europe" (Conrad *Nostramo* 129) on the irrational level is connected to his country which immediately shows at the moment of contact.

Martin's connection with his culture is metaphorically represented through his relationship with Antonia Avellanos. It was the letter written in Antonia's handwriting that called him to return home, and it is Antonia's presence that is critical for Martin's decision to stay in the country. Martin carries out his secret mission on behalf of the President-Dictator with the help of the private citizens "behind the back of the War Minister, Montero, a mistrusted member of the Ribera government" who was difficult to get rid of at once (Conrad *Nostramo* 127). He approaches it far more seriously than anyone could expect from the vain and disdainful "Costaguana boulevardier" (Conrad *Nostramo* 128) and displays "earnestness and ability" in "carrying out his mission,

which circumstances made delicate, and his want of special knowledge rendered difficult" (Conrad *Nostramo* 128). Martin's sister never saw Martin "take so much trouble about anything in his life" (Conrad *Nostramo* 128). Since Martin is attracted to the irrationality of his country's political games, he wants to see "the precious consignment delivered safely in Sulaco" (Conrad *Nostramo* 128) and leave the country after this, but in Sulaco he meets Antonia Avellanos.

It is because of Antonia that Martin stays in the country even though he intended to leave. Conrad describes in detail the moment when Martin makes the decision to stay:

But when the tall Antonia, advancing with her light step in the dimness of the big bare sala of the Avellanos house, offered him her hand (in her emancipated way), and murmured, "I am glad to see you, Don Martin," he felt how impossible it would be to tell these two people that he intended to go away by the next month's packet. Don Jose, meantime, continued his praises. Every accession added to public confidence; and, besides, what an example to the young men at home from the brilliant defender of the country's regeneration, the worthy expounder of the party's political faith before the world! Everybody had read the magnificent article in the famous Parisian review. The world was now informed: the author's appearance at this moment was like a public act of faith. Young Decoud felt overcome by a feeling of impatient confusion. His plan had been to return by way of the United States through California, visit the Yellowstone Park, see Chicago, Niagara, have a look at Canada, perhaps make a short stay in New York, a longer one in Newport, use his letters of introduction. The pressure of Antonia's hand was so frank, the tone of her voice was so unexpectedly unchanged in its approving warmth, that all he found to say after his low bow was: "I am inexpressibly grateful for your welcome; but why need a man be thanked for returning to his native country? I am sure Dona Antonia does not think so."

"Certainly not, senor," she said, with that perfectly calm openness of manner which characterized all her utterances. "But when he returns, as you return, one may be glad -- for the sake of both" (Conrad *Nostramo* 129-130).

Martin has never been indifferent to Antonia, a "youthfully austere" tall girl who at the age of sixteen had "a character so strongly formed that she ventured to treat slightly his pose of disabused wisdom" (No 128). Antonia's presence in Martin's life, "an only son, spoiled by his adoring family" (Conrad *Nostramo* 128), is as powerful as it is irrational. Her criticism has an unexpectedly strong impact on him:

This attack disconcerted him so greatly that he had faltered in his affectation of amused superiority before that insignificant child of a school-girl. But the impression left was so strong that ever since all the girl friends of his sisters recalled to him Antonia Avellanos by some faint resemblance, or by the great force of contrast. It was, he told himself, like a ridiculous fatality. And, of course, in the news the Decouds received regularly from Costaguana, the name of their friends, the Avellanos, cropped up frequently -- the arrest and the abominable treatment of the ex-Minister, the dangers and hardships endured by the family, its withdrawal in poverty to Sulaco, the death of the mother (Conrad *Nostramo* 129).

Martin's invisible emotional bond with Antonia represents his continual essentially emotional connection with his country which exists below his vanity, cosmopolitan pretense, and ironic detachment. His French persona hides the different side of his personality connected with his cultural legacy and carefully suppressed into the unconscious.

Antonia Avellanos represents not only the land of the expatriate's parent country (as is the case of Natalia Haldin in *Under Western Eyes*), who, as Conrad says, is the only one who had kept in his memory "the aspect of continued life" (Conrad *Nostramo* XXXIV), but also all the complexity of the country's national liberation movement. Antonia, whom Conrad modeled on his first love, is his advocacy of constructive nationalism which is an important component of the cultural sensibility in the period of state formation. For Conrad, the female presence in the culture is a call for stability in the context of masculine political games. Here is how Conrad connects Antonia and her Polish prototype in their female capability "of inspiring a sincere passion in the heart of a trifler" (Conrad *Nostramo* XXXIV) and, implicitly, therefore, equates Costaguana and Poland:

If anything could induce me to revisit Sulaco (should hate to see all these changes) it would be Antonia. And the true reason for that -- why not be frank about it? -- the true reason is that I have modeled her on my first love. How we, a band of tallish schoolboy friends, the chums of her two brothers -- how we used to look up to that girl just out of the school-room herself, as the standard-bearer of a faith to which we all were born, but which she alone knew how to hold aloft with an unflinching

hope! She had perhaps more glow and less serenity in her soul than Antonia, but she was an uncompromising puritan of patriotism, with no taint of the slightest worldliness in her thoughts. I was not the only one in love with her; but it was I who had to hear oftenest her scathing criticism of my levities -- very much like poor Decoud -- or stand the burnt of her austere, unanswerable invective. But never mind. That afternoon when I came in (a shrinking yet defiant sinner) to say the final good-bye I received a hand-squeeze that made my heart leap and saw a tear that took my breath away. She was softened at last, as though she had suddenly perceived (we were such children still) that I was really going away for good, going very far -- even as far as Sulaco, lying unknown hidden from all eyes in the darkness of the Placid Gulf.

That's why I long sometimes for another glimpse of the "beautiful Antonia" (or can it be the Other?) moving in the dimness of the great cathedral, saying a short prayer at the tomb of the first and last Cardinal-Archbishop of Sulaco, standing absorbed in filial devotion before the monument of Don Jose Avellanos, and with a tender, faithful glance at the medallion-memorial to Martin Decoud, going out serenely into the sunshine of the Plaza, with her upright carriage and her white-head, a relic of the past disregarded by men awaiting impatiently the dawns of other New Eras, the coming, of more revolutions (Conrad *Nostramo* XXXV).

Antonia Avellanos is not an ordinary girl of her country: she represents the best in her culture. She is "the poor motherless girl, never accompanied, with a careless father, who had thought only of making her learned" (Conrad *Nostramo* 154). Antonia was born in Europe and educated partly in England, but her life is devoted to her country. Her appearance suggests strength, determination and independent character; she is described as "a tall grave girl, with a self-possessed manner, a wide, white forehead, a wealth of rich brown hair, and blue eyes" (Conrad *Nostramo* 115). Antonia is a proud girl, like all the Corbelan family where her mother came from. She is reputed "to be terribly learned and serious" and the other young ladies of Sulaco stand "in awe of her character and accomplishments" (Conrad *Nostramo* 115).

Brought up and educated by her father, Antonia became his support in the cause of fighting for democracy in Costaguana. As an adult, she retains a strong spiritual connection with her father, who passionately desired for his country peace, prosperity, and "an honorable place in the comity of civilized nations" (Conrad *Nostramo* 115). Don Jose Avellanos loved his country and devoted his life to the cause of national

liberation and social justice. In the service of the endangered Ribera government, he displayed "an organizing activity and an eloquence of which the echoes reached even Europe" (Conrad *Nostramo* 112). He was ready to sacrifice his life for the national self-respect of his country:

He had served it lavishly with his fortune during his diplomatic career, and the later story of his captivity and barbarous ill-usage under Guzman Bento was well known to his listeners. It was a wonder that he had not been a victim of the ferocious and summary executions which marked the course of that tyranny. Don Jose Avellanos, clanking his chains among the others, seemed only to exist in order to prove how much hunger, pain, degradation, and cruel torture a human body can stand without parting with the last spark of life. Sometimes interrogatories, backed by some primitive method of torture, were administered to them by a commission of officers hastily assembled in a hut of sticks and branches, and made pitiless by the fear for their own lives. A lucky one or two of that spectral company of prisoners would perhaps be led tottering behind a bush to be shot by a file of soldiers (Conrad *Nostramo* 113).

Antonia's refusal to follow the standards of conventional femininity is Conrad's statement of the uniqueness of Costaguana's legacy. Antonia is not "content with peeping through a barred window at a cloaked figure of a lover ensconced in a doorway opposite -- which is the correct form of Costaguana courtship" (No 124). Everybody believes that "the learned and proud Antonia would never marry -- unless, indeed, she married a foreigner from Europe or North America, now that Sulaco seemed on the point of being invaded by all the world" (No 124). It is through the eyes of Antonia that the reader first sees Martin Decoud, and it is under the spell of Antonia's proud independence that Martin's vanity begins to crumple.

Antonia explicitly points out that Martin's return will change not only the life in his country, but, none the less importantly, Martin's personal identity. After he meets Antonia and decides to stay, Martin experiences profound psychological change. He no longer feels "an idle cumberer of the earth"; his attitude becomes that of "more excellent gravity," and he becomes "the Journalist of Sulaco" (Conrad *Nostramo* 130).

Association with his country gives him not only the feeling of acceptance and emotional support, but, more importantly, social status. As Martin looks toward Antonia "posed upright in the corner of a high, straight-backed Spanish sofa, a large black fan waving slowly against the curves of her fine figure, the tips of crossed feet peeping from under the hem of the black skirt" (Conrad *Nostramo* 130), he breathes out the words, "Pro Patria!", thus making the connection between Antonia and his fatherland inseparable.

With Antonia's encouragement, Martin's life and activity in Sulaco become the continuation of the noble cause pursued by Don Jose Avellanos. Yielding to Don Jose's pressing entreaties, Martin takes the direction of a newspaper which could "voice the aspirations of the province" (Conrad *Nostramo* 131). Executing Don Jose's "old and cherished idea," Martin organized the newspaper, the organ which could "counteract the effect of the lies disseminated by the Monterist press: the atrocious calumnies, the appeals to the people calling upon them to rise with their knives in their hands and put an end once for all to the Blancos, to these Gothic remnants, to these sinister mummies, these impotent paralytics, who plotted with foreigners for the surrender of the lands and the slavery of the people" (Conrad *Nostramo* 131).

Establishing the newspaper is viewed by the democratic forces of Sulaco as "the only remedy" (Conrad *Nostramo* 131) to solve the country's economic and political problems. Having agreed to head the newspaper *Porvenir*, Martin becomes the central figure of the national liberation movement. His newspaper issued three times a week works within a very intense schedule, and every day on the streets of Sulaco one can see Martin, "the Journalist of Sulaco going to and fro on the business of his august calling" (Conrad *Nostramo* 131).

As Martin invests his time and intellectual energy in the democratic processes in Sulaco, he is forced to make political and moral choices. He has to respond to the question, "But who are you for, really, in your heart?" (Conrad *Nostramo* 138)

addressed to him by Don Jose. As Martin connects his life and spirituality with his country, he becomes involved in the national liberation movement and loses his condescending ironic attitude. His discussion of Sulaco's history with Don Jose, Antonia, Mrs. Gould and Ignacio, the old coachman, sounds like his condemnation of colonialism:

He [Martin] ruminated his discontent for a while, then began afresh with a sidelong glance at Antonia:

"No, but just imagine our forefathers in morions and corselets drawn up outside this gate, and a band of adventurers just landed from their ships in the harbor there. Thieves, of course. Speculators, too. Their expeditions, each one, were the speculations of the grave and reverend persons in England. That is history, as that absurd sailor Mitchell is always saying."

"Mitchell's arrangements for the embarkation of the troops were excellent!" exclaimed Don Jose.

"That! -- that! oh, that's really the work of that genoese seaman! But to return to my noise; there used to be in the old days the sound of trumpets outside that gate. War trumpets! I'm sure they were trumpets. I have read somewhere that Drake, who was the greatest of these men, used to dine alone in his cabin on board ship to the sound of trumpets. In those days this town was full of wealth. Those men came to take it. Now the whole land is like a treasure-house, and all these people are breaking into it, while we are cutting each other's throats. The only thing that keeps them out is mutual jealousy. But they'll come to an agreement some day -- and by the time we've settled our quarrels and become decent and honorable, there'll be nothing left for us. It has always been the same. We are a wonderful people, but it has always been our fate to be' -- he did not say "robbed," but added, after a pause -- "exploited!" (Conrad *Nostramo* 144).

Advocating the idea of national unity against colonial invasion of Costaguana, Martin connects national identity with the treasure, the central metaphor of the novel which dramatizes the movement of the invaded nation towards statehood and independence.

Being involved with the national liberation movement of the parent country for Martin is much more difficult than living the life of an expatriate in Western Europe. His involvement with the life of Sulaco makes him redefine his identity: he can no longer be an expatriate outsider, and what he sees and hears going on around him exasperates "the preconceived views of his European civilization" (Conrad *Nostramo*

145). He finds that to contemplate revolutions from the distance of the Parisian boulevards is "quite another matter. Here on the spot it was not possible to dismiss their tragic comedy with the expression, "*Quelle farce!*" (Conrad *Nostramo* 145).

Involvement in the political and actual life of his country changes not only his outlook, but the whole structure of his personality, since the "reality of the political action, such as it was, seemed closer, and acquired poignancy by Antonia's belief in the cause. Its crudeness hurt his feelings. He was surprised at his own sensitiveness" (Conrad *Nostramo* 145). Martin's conversion from a Parisian boulevardier into a nationalistically-oriented person is reflected in his words: "I suppose I am more of a Costaguanero than I would have believed possible" (Conrad *Nostramo* 145). His discussions of the vision of Costaguana's place in the world economy and culture, as well as the country's identity, betray his critical attitude to Costaguana's home and foreign politics:

The natural treasures of Costaguana are of importance to the progressive Europe represented by this youth, just as three hundred years ago the wealth of our Spanish fathers was a serious object to the rest of Europe -- as represented by the bold buccaneers. There is a curse of futility upon our character: Don Quixote and Sancho Panza, chivalry and materialism, high-sounding sentiments and a supine morality, violent efforts for an idea and a sullen acquiescence in every form of corruption. We convulsed the continent for our independence only to become the passive prey of a democratic parody, the helpless victims of scoundrels and cutthroats, our institutions a mockery, our laws a farce -- a Guzman Bento our master! And we have sunk so low that when a man like you has awakened our conscience, a stupid barbarian of a Montero -- great Heavens! a Montero! -- becomes a deadly danger, and an ignorant, boastful Indio, like Barrios, is our defender (Conrad *Nostramo* 140-141).

However, never assimilated into Parisian life, Martin also remains different from his compatriots in Costaguana. He does not feel he completely belongs among the people of his country not only because, as an expatriate, the person of two worlds, he sees all the political issues more objectively, but because he resists assuming the national perspective as he is expected to. He has a disagreement with Don Jose about Barrios, whom Don Jose considers "competent enough for his special task in the plan of



campaign" (Conrad *Nostramo* 141). Martin's conversation with Antonia reflects his attempt to retain his objective position and independent sensibility, which is not identical to that of the Costaguana inhabitants. He is explaining that he is essentially above the political fights he is drawn into by his position of a journalist:

"You can't think I am serious when I call Montero a *gran' bestia* every second day in the *Porvenir*? That is not a serious occupation. No occupation is serious, not even when a bullet through the heart is the penalty of failure!"

Her [Antonia's] hand closed firmly on her fan.

"Some reason, you understand -- I mean some sense -- may creep into thinking; some glimpse of truth. I mean some effective truth, for which there is no room in politics or journalism. I happen to have said what I thought. And you are angry! If you do me the kindness to think a little you will see that I spoke like a patriot."

She opened her red lips for the first time, not unkindly.

"Yes, but you never see the aim. Men must be used as they are. I suppose nobody is really disinterested, unless, perhaps, you, Don Martin" (Conrad *Nostramo* 146).

Martin argues for a chance to retain intellectual and spiritual independence, which shows his reluctance to follow the defined notions of how a true patriot should behave and what he should think. However, Antonia/Costaguana has a very strong and rigid notion of patriotism. Accusing Martin of losing sight of the aim, she uses her irrational influence on him to force him into her understanding of patriotism.

Martin's attempts to protect his independence and preserve the bond with Antonia dramatize the complexity of the expatriate's relationship with his parent country. Antonia, feeling her irrational influence on Martin, "with a rigid grace" (Conrad *Nostramo* 150), does not say much, if anything, does not argue, and does not try to convince him. When he makes his desperate speech in the window scene, declaring that he shall go to the wall, Antonia responds in a very reserved manner; even that declaration does "not make her look at him. Her head remained still, her eyes fixed upon the house of the Avellanos, whose crippled plasters, broken cornices, the whole degradation of dignity was hidden now by the gathering dusk of the street. In her whole

figure her lips alone moved, forming the words: 'Martin, you will make me cry'" (Conrad *Nostramo* 150). Martin responds very powerfully to Antonia's scanty reserved words; he is "startled, as if overwhelmed by a sort of awed happiness, with the lines of a mocking smile still stiffened about his mouth, and incredulous surprise in his eyes" (Conrad *Nostramo* 150). Conrad explains the nature of the power of Antonia's influence on Martin as he comments on the relationship between the impact of the statement and the personality of the speaker. "The value of a sentence," the narrator says, "is in the personality which utters it, for nothing new can be said by man or woman" (Conrad *Nostramo* 150).

Antonia's voice, the voice of his land, stirs the most uncontrollable layers of his personality. Similarly, Natalia Haldin's voice seduces Razumov into opening his soul contrary to his reasonable intentions. Antonia, who hardly speaks ten words together in the novel, seduces Martin by her voice more than by the content of her speech:

She [Antonia] was facing him [Martin] now in the deep recess of the window, very close and motionless. Her lips moved rapidly. Decoud, leaning his head back against the wall, listened with crossed arms and lowered eyelids. He drank in the tones of her even voice, and watched the agitated life of her throat, as if waves of emotion had run from her heart to pass out into the air in her reasonable words. He also had his aspirations; he aspired to carry her away out of these deadly futilities of pronouncements and reforms. All this was wrong -- utterly wrong; but she fascinated him, and sometimes the sheer sagacity of a phrase would break the charm, replace the fascination by a sudden unwilling thrill of interest. Some women hovered, as it were, in the threshold of genius, he reflected. They did not want to know, or think, or understand. Passion stood for all that, and he was ready to believe that some startlingly profound remark, some appreciation of character, or a judgment upon the event, bordered on the miraculous. In the mature Antonia he could see with an extraordinary vividness the austere school-girl of the earlier days. She seduced his attention; sometimes he could not restrain a murmur of assent; now and then he advanced an objection quite seriously. Gradually they began to argue; the curtain half hid them from the people in the sala (Conrad *Nostramo* 151-152).

A person's relationship with one's country exists in the personal subconscious, and the choices the expatriate writer makes about his/her parent culture are always

emotional choices, which means that they are painful and unpredictable. As any honest writer in the period of transition from despotism to democracy would do, Martin becomes the spokesman of the national liberation movement, and as he works for the noble cause, he identifies more and more with his people and their history:

"We Occidentals," said Martin Decoud, using the usual term the provincials of Sulaco applied to themselves, "have been always distinct and separated. As long as we hold Cayta nothing can reach us. In all our troubles no army has marched over those mountains. A revolution in the central provinces isolates us at once. Look how complete it is now! The news of Barrios' movement will be cabled to the United States, and then only in that way will it reach Sta Marta by the cable from the other seaboard. We have the greatest riches, the greatest fertility, the purest blood in our great families, the most laborious population. The Occidental Province should stand alone. The early Federalism was not bad for us. Then came this union which Don Henrique Gould resisted. It opened the road to tyranny; and, ever since, the rest of Costaguana hangs like a mill stone round our necks. The Occidental territory is large enough to make any man's country. Look at the mountains! Nature itself seems to cry to us, 'Separate!'" (Conrad *Nostramo* 152).

Through subtle innuendoes of her behavior, therefore, Antonia conveys her expectation of Martin's unconditional devotion to the national cause, and meeting her expectations becomes Martin's biggest problem. Martin's conversation with Antonia at the window in the Casa Gould, critical for understanding all the complexity of the expatriate writer's relationship with his parent culture, is the most important of all contacts between Martin and Antonia. It is here that they become as close emotionally as they could possibly become, and Martin feels that he "never made it up with her so completely in all their intercourse of small encounters" (Conrad *Nostramo* 150). It is in this scene that Martin opens his deepest incompatibility with the role Antonia/Costaguana expects him to play. Antonia demands sacrifice, courage, constancy, and suffering (Conrad *Nostramo* 154). As an expatriate, he does not feel ready to make sacrifices, even for the "great cause" (Conrad *Nostramo* 154), and he cannot make the great cause the object of his life:

"Well," he argued mockingly, "you do keep me writing deadly nonsense. Deadly to me! It has already killed my self-respect. And you may imagine," he continued,

his tone passing into light banter "that Montero, should he be successful, would get even with a man of intelligence who condescends to call him a *gran bestia* three times a week. It's a sort of intellectual death; but there is the other one in the background for a journalist of my ability."

"If he is successful!" said Antonia thoughtfully.

"You seem satisfied to see my life hang on a thread," Decoud replied, with a broad smile. "And the other Montero, the 'my trusted brother' of the proclamations, the guerrillero -- haven't I written that he was taking the guests' overcoats and changing plates in Paris at our Legation in the intervals of spying on our refugees there, in the time of Rojas? He will wash out that sacred truth in blood. In my blood! Why do you look annoyed? This is simply a bit of the biography of one of our great men. What do you think he will do to me? There is a certain convent wall round the corner of the Plaza, opposite the door of the Bull-Ring. You know? Opposite the door with the inscription, 'Intrada de la Sombra.' Appropriate, perhaps! That's where the uncle of our host gave up his Anglo-South-American soul. And, note, he might have run away. A man who has fought with weapons may run away. You might have let me go with Barrios if you had cared for me. I would have carried one of those rifles, in which Don Jose believes, with the greatest satisfaction, in the ranks of poor peons and Indios, that know nothing either of reason or politics. The most forlorn hope in the most forlorn army on earth would have been safer than that for which you have made me stay here. When you make war you may retreat, but not when you spend your time in inciting poor ignorant fools to kill and die" (149).

Thus, writing on the issues of his country, Martin feels that he is acting contrary to the call of his creativity. According to him, investing one's energy in national issues is anti-intellectual, and for the writer to become the spokesman of national liberation movement means intellectual death. For Conrad, apparently, intellectual issues are above national politics, and a writer should devote his life to the search of the truth beyond politics and nationalism. Feeling the possibility of a tragic death, Martin knows that his life and talent will be consumed by the turmoil of the revolutions, which means that his energy will be wasted since it will go into fighting against the lack of morality, corruption, and stupidity of the whole country. Martin tells Antonia that Charles Gould's silver mine, the treasure of Sulaco, is the container of vice. Martin knows that making his enormous fortune in the colonized country, Charles Gould, the respected financial magnate of Sulaco and the benefactor, has not succeeded "by his fidelity to a theory of

virtue" (Conrad *Nostramo* 151). Martin is also aware that creating an independent state for the Occidental provinces of Costaguana is a long process which will consume the lives of more than one generation:

After one Montero there will be another, the lawlessness of a populace of all colors and races, barbarism, irremediable tyranny. As the great Liberator Bolivar had said in the bitterness of his spirit, "America is ungovernable. Those who worked for her independence have ploughed the sea." He [Martin] did not care, he declared boldly; he seized every opportunity to tell her [Antonia] that though she had managed to make a Blanco journalist of him, he was no patriot. First of all, the word has no sense for cultured minds, to whom the narrowness of every belief is odious; and secondly, in connection with the everlasting troubles of his unhappy country it was hopelessly besmirched; it had been the cry of dark barbarism, the cloak of lawlessness, of crimes, of rapacity, of simple thieving (Conrad *Nostramo* 154).

The ambivalent character of domestic economy and politics does not allow Martin to take the stand of unconditional devotion to that Antonia demands. Martin feels that by accepting his country without questioning it he will compromise his honesty as a writer. Moreover, the expatriate condition does not allow one to see one side of the problem. Ability to contain different, at times opposing, cultural codes and conventions prevents Martin from becoming a patriot in the nationalistic sense of the word. Thus, in *Nostramo* the expatriate writer follows the pattern of relationships with his country dramatized in *Under Western Eyes*: attracted to the land and responding to his irrational connection to the parent culture, the writer does not accept its political milieu and feels involvement in its affairs to be a threat to his intellectual creativity. Hence, Martin's attitude to Antonia is full of tension:

Decoud had often felt his familiar habit of ironic thought fall shattered against Antonia's gravity. She irritated him as if she, too, had suffered from that inexplicable feminine obtuseness which stands so often between a man and a woman of the more ordinary sort. But he overcame his vexation at once. He was very far from thinking Antonia ordinary, whatever verdict his scepticism might have pronounced upon himself. With a touch of penetrating tenderness in his voice he assured her that his only aspiration was to a felicity so high that it seemed almost unrealizable on this earth (Conrad *Nostramo* 158).

Martin's expatriate sensibility is different from the sensibility of any culture he lives in; in Paris, he looks French but does not belong to the environment, and though he belongs to Costaguana by blood, his attitude to the country he lives in is that of a spiritual outsider whose perception of his country's political identity is contrary to the doctrines of the established national leaders (Conrad *Nostramo* 152). This double nature of an expatriate mentality is not a mechanical mixture of the two cultures he/she belongs to; in fact, interaction of two cultures in the expatriate's psyche translates into the different quality of thinking, which is why Martin cannot fully identify with either of the two cultures.

Martin's attitude to the parent culture swings from acceptance and identification to critical disapproval. He does not express much appreciation of the important people of Sulaco, be it the Catholic priest Padre Corbelan, Doctor Monygham or English businessman Charles Gould and his wife Mrs. Gould. Martin sees the Sulaco life very realistically and he has no illusions about what its people can achieve within their lifetime. For Padre Corbelan, Martin says, the idea of political honor, justice, and honesty consists in

the restitution of the confiscated church property. Nothing else could have drawn that fierce converter of savage Indians out of the wilds to work for the Riberist cause! Nothing else but that wild hope! He would make a pronunciamiento himself for such an object against any government if he could only get followers! (Conrad *Nostramo* 156).

The owner of the silver mine, the source of the country's treasure and the metaphor of its economic, political, and cultural identity, is an Englishman, Charles Gould, who, along with his wife, Martin feels, is culturally incompatible with the country's sensibility. Martin understands that the very English reasonable selfish participation in the life of Sulaco cannot contribute to the great cause founded on the emotional basis of

nationalism demanding unconditional devotion. Martin's expectations of the respectable Goulds are very realistic:

What does Don Carlos Gould think of that? But, of course, with his English impenetrability, nobody can tell what he thinks. Probably he thinks of nothing apart from his mine; of his 'Imperium in imperio.' As to Mrs. Gould, she thinks of her schools, of her hospitals, of the mothers with the young babies, of every sick old man in the three villages. If you were to turn your head now you would see her extracting a report from that sinister doctor in a check shirt -- what's his name? Monygham -- or else catechizing Don Pepe, or perhaps listening to Padre Roman. They are all down here to-day -- all her ministers of state. Well, she is a sensible woman, and perhaps Don Carlos is a sensible man. It's part of solid English sense not to think too much; to see only what may be of practical use at the moment. These people are not like ourselves. We have no political reason; we have political passions -- sometimes (Conrad *Nostramo* 156).

Martin sees the reality of colonial industrialization introduced by the Gould concession, even if it is disguised by Mrs. Gould's sincerely caring attitude to local women, children, and the sick. He cannot "pay sufficient respect" to either Charles Gould's motives or even to Mrs. Gould's. He does not hesitate to express to Mrs. Gould his disapproval of the seemingly civilizing presence of the English:

"Think also of your hospitals, of your schools, of your ailing mothers and feeble old men, of all population which you and your husband have brought into the rocky gorge of San Tome. Are you not responsible to your conscience for all these people? Is it not worth to make another effort, which is not at all so desperate as it looks, rather than -- (Conrad *Nostramo* 180).

Martin's political convictions can be identified as realistic rather than the romanticism of the nationalistic orientation his country demands in the colonial period of state formation. Contemplating the reasons why a person gets involved in a nationalistically patriotic movement, Martin points out that there are always personal advantages under the surface of the selfless devotion to the great cause:

What is a conviction? A particular view of our personal advantage either practical or emotional. No one is a patriot for nothing. The word serves us well. But I am clear-sighted, and I shall not use that word to you, Antonia! I have no patriotic illusions. I have only the supreme illusion of a lover" (Conrad *Nostramo* 156).

For Martin, Antonia's patriotism is "a novel sort of vanity" (Conrad *Nostramo* 178), and he calls his position "sane materialism" (Conrad *Nostramo* 184) and distances himself from the emotional structure of his culture. "I am not a sentimentalist," he tells Mrs. Gould, "Life is not for me a moral romance derived from the tradition of a pretty fairy-tale... I am practical. I am not afraid of my motives" (Conrad *Nostramo* 180).

Heavy involvement in the political life of Costaguana, however, makes Martin's writing exclusively political in spite of his original intentions. Even his letter to his favorite sister, "the handsome, slightly arbitrary, and resolute angel, ruling the father and mother Decoud in the first-floor apartments of a very Parisian house" where he conveys his "thoughts, actions, purposes, doubts, and even failures" (Conrad *Nostramo* 184) is very political from the start:

"Prepare yourself and our little circle in Paris for the birth of another South American republic. One more or less, what does it matter? They may come into the world like evil flowers on a hot-bed of rotten institutions; but the seed of this one has germinated in your brother's brain, and that will be enough for your devoted assent (Conrad *Nostramo* 184).

As the letter continues (and it is quite lengthy), its tone becomes less personal and shifts to analytic as it relates the Costaguana events. At times, the letter reads like the information of the Reuters Agency:

From the time the fugitive President had been got off to the S.S. Minerva, the tide of success had turned against the mob. They had been driven off the harbor, and out of the better streets of the town, into their own maze of ruins and tolderias. You must understand that this riot, whose primary object was undoubtedly the getting hold of the San Tome silver stored in the lower rooms of the custom-house (besides the general looting of the Ricos)), had acquired a political coloring from the fact of two Deputiés to the Provincial Assembly, Senores Gamacho and Fuentes, both from Bolson, putting themselves at the head of it -- late in the afternoon, it is true, when the mob, disappointed in their hopes of loot, made a stand in the narrow streets to the cries of 'Viva la Libertad! Down with Feudalism!' (I wonder what they imagine Feudalism to be.) 'Down with the Goths and Paralytics.' I suppose the Senores Gamacho and Fuentes knew what they were doing. They are prudent gentlemen. In the Assembly they called themselves Moderates, and opposed every energetic measure with philanthropic pensiveness. At the first rumors of Montero's victory



they began to show a subtle change of the pensive temper, and began to defy poor Don Juste Lopez in the presidential tribune with an effrontery to which the poor man could only respond to by a dazed smoothing of his beard and the ringing of the presidential bell. Then, when the downfall of the Riberist cause became confirmed beyond the shadow of a doubt, they blossomed into convinced Liberals, acting together as if they were Siamese twins, and ultimately taking charge, as it were, of the riot, in the name of Monterist principles (Conrad *Nostramo* 187-188).

However, since there are no established information agencies offices in Costaguana, Martin's personal communication channels keep the world informed about the events in the Costaguana. Thus, as in the case of Razumov in *Under Western Eyes*, the only piece of expatriate writing the reader gets to see is intensely political.

Martin's identity as a writer mirrors the split he experiences as a person. The "exotic dandy of the Parisian boulevard" (Conrad *Nostramo* 189), he writes on the ugliness of death, treachery, riots, intrigues, power struggle -- the issues that connect the writer with the very core of reality. The description of Martin's appearance in the process of writing shows him as a person who turns away from his polished and elegant French persona and responds to the deep levels of his personality which connect him to his cultural legacy:

Behind him, on the back of the chair from which he had risen, hung his elegant Parisian overcoat, with a pearl-gray silk lining. But when he turned back to come to the table the candlelight fell upon a face that was grimy and scratched. His rosy lips were blackened with heat, the smoke of gunpowder. Dirt and rust tarnished the lustre of his short beard. His shirt collar and cuffs were crumpled, the blue silken tie hung down his breast like a rag; a greasy smudge crossed his white brow. He had not taken off his clothing nor used water, except to snatch a hasty drink greedily, for some forty hours. An awful restlessness had made him his own, had marked him with all the signs of desperate strife, and put a dry, sleepless state into his eyes. He murmured to himself in a hoarse voice, "I wonder if there's any bread here," looked vaguely about him, then dropped into the chair and took the pencil up again. He became aware he had not eaten anything for many hours (Conrad *Nostramo* 189-190).

Martin's environment is whole and culturally integrated in contrast to his personality split between the two incompatible cultures. This cultural difference with his

own culture results in Martin's isolation; he says that he feels "more lonely than ever" (Conrad *Nostramo* 191) writing to his sister:

"I have the feeling of a great solitude around me," he continued. "Is it, perhaps, because I am the only man with a definite idea in his head, in the complete collapse of every resolve, intention, and hope around me? But the solitude is also very real. All the engineers are out, and have been for two days, looking after the property of the National Central Railway, of that great Costaguana undertaking which is to put money into the pockets of Englishmen, Frenchmen, Americans, Germans, and God knows who else. The silence about me is ominous (Conrad *Nostramo* 190).

Martin's solitude is a mirror image of Jim's and Razumov's loneliness, but whereas Jim and Razumov feel isolated abroad, Martin experiences a profound emotional and spiritual void separating him from his parent country. Jim tells the story out of loneliness; Razumov writes to overcome his solitude, and Martin writes to his sister to express what he cannot discuss with anyone around him. Thus, the recurrent connection between solitude and writing establishes the need to overcome cultural isolation as a very important incentive behind the expatriate writing.

Expatriate writers do not find any understanding in the adopted cultures: nobody understands Jim, and the Language Teacher does not understand Razumov. At the same time, the expatriate writer does not find understanding in the parent culture either. Writing the letter to his sister, Martin feels that she is his only sympathetic and understanding reader:

It occurred to him that no one could understand him so well as his sister. In the most special heart there lurks at such moments, when the chances of existence are involved, a desire to leave a correct impression of the feelings, like a light by which the action may be seen when personality is gone, gone where no light of investigation can ever reach the truth which every death takes out of the world. Therefore, instead of looking for something to eat or trying to snatch an hour or so of sleep, Decoud was filling the pages of a large note-book with a letter to his sister (Conrad *Nostramo* 190).

Like Razumov who hears only his own heartbeat when he is writing on the island of Jean Jacques Rousseau, Martin is not supported by the sounds of his land as he writes

to his sister. Before he leaves Sulaco forever in an attempt to save the treasure of San Tome mine, he hears no sounds, "neither in the room nor in the house, except the drip of the water from the filter into the vast earthenware jar under the wooden stand. And outside the house there was a great silence" (Conrad *Nostramo* 201). Unable to find understanding among the readers of the parent culture, the expatriate writer has to turn to people who can trespass the boundaries of their own culture for appreciation. This is why, on the eve of leaving the country with the treasure, when he needs to relieve his soul to a sympathetic reader, of all people Martin writes to the daughter of an expatriate family living in Paris.

Like Jim, who is telling his story to explain the reason behind his jump, like Razumov, who writes his diary to relate the events that lead to his banishment from Russia, Martin writes to explain expatriation. In the long letter to his sister, which has no importance for the plot and could be easily taken out with no damage done to the structure of the novel, Martin explains why he is forced to leave the country. "Sulaco is no place either for me," he writes, "or the great store of silver belonging to the Goulds Concession" (Conrad *Nostramo* 200). Similar to Razumov, Martin's reasons for leaving his country are purely political. Trapped in power struggle, he is entrusted with a mission of extraordinary political importance:

"I am not running away, you understand," he wrote on. "I am simply going away with that great treasure of silver which must be saved at all costs. Pedro Montero from the Campo and the revolted garrison of Esmeralda from the sea are converging upon it. That it is there lying ready for them is only an accident. The real objective is the San Tome mine itself, as you may well imagine; otherwise the Occidental Province would have been, no doubt, left alone for many weeks, to be gathered at leisure into the arms of the victorious party (Conrad *Nostramo* 201).

The treasure, the symbol of the country's political and cultural identity, belongs to a foreigner, Charles Gould, which makes it the symbol of the country's lost identity.<sup>3</sup> As Martin contemplates Gould's cultural incompatibility with the sensibility of Costaguana, he is actually saying that the country's identity is defined by the people who are indifferent strangers to it; their domination in his country, in turn, results in Martin's ambivalent relationships with Sulaco:

Don Carlos Gould will have enough to do to save his mine, with its organization and its people; this 'Imperium in Imperio,' this wealth-producing thing, to which his sentimentalism attaches a strange idea of justice. He holds to it as some men hold to the idea of love and revenge. Unless I am much mistaken in the man, it must remain inviolate or perish by an act of his will alone. A passion has crept into his cold and idealistic life. A passion which I can only comprehend intellectually. A passion that is not like the passions we know, we men of another blood. But it is dangerous as any of ours" (Conrad *Nostramo* 201-202).

Agreeing to ship the silver that belongs to a foreigner out of Sulaco, Martin symbolically commits himself to his country's lost identity. And it is on the eve of the departure with the treasure that Martin feels particularly disconnected from reality; "all this is life," he writes to his sister, "must be life, since it is so much like a dream" (Conrad *Nostramo* 205).

The presence of the treasure, his country's lost identity, does not fill Martin with vital energy; in fact, it drains him from the beginning. For most Europeans in Sulaco, "the silver of the mine had been the emblem of a common cause, the symbol of the supreme importance of material interests" (Conrad *Nostramo* 214). Martin's sane

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<sup>3</sup> The ambivalent aspect of the treasure symbolism has been noted in criticism as a recurrent motif: "In some of the stories the means whereby the hero exerts his will is objectified, usually in the form of a quasi-talismanic *treasure*. This may be an actual hoard of gold, silver, or some other valuable commodity, such as mine in *Nostramo*, Kurtz's ivory ... , or else a merely speculative fund, ... the existence of which may be doubtful or even false (Lang 2).

materialism, paradoxically, does not suggest unconditional devotion to material interests. His involvement with the mission of saving the treasure is more circumstantial than romantic or conceptual, and in the presence of the treasure, Martin begins to lose his own identity. As soon as the lighter with the silver departs for the Isabela, Martin feels as if he had been "launched into space" (Conrad *Nostromo* 215), and his psychological state is described in terms of death:

When his [Nostromo's] voice ceased, the enormous stillness, without light or sound, seemed to affect Decoud's senses like a powerful drug. He didn't even know at times whether he were asleep or awake. Like a man lost in slumber, he heard nothing, he saw nothing. Even his hand held before his face did not exist for his eyes. The change from the agitation, from the passion and the dangers, from the sights and sounds of the shore, was so complete that it would have resembled death had it not been for the survival of his thoughts. In this foretaste of eternal peace they floated vivid and light, like unearthly clear dreams of earthly things that may haunt the souls freed by death from the misty atmosphere of regrets and hopes. Decoud shook himself, shuddered a bit, though the air that drifted past him was warm. He had the strangest sensation of his soul having just returned into his body from the circumambient darkness in which land, sea, sky, the mountains and the rocks were as if they had not been (Conrad *Nostromo* 215-216).

Martin's transition into the new reality where he falls under the spell of the power of the treasure is described in terms of stagnation, obscurity, blackness, heaviness, and hopelessness and, again, death:

The solitude could almost be felt. And when the breeze ceased, the blackness seemed to weigh upon Decoud like a stone.

"This is overpowering," he muttered. "Do we move at all, capataz?"

"Not so fast as a crawling beetle tangled in the grass," answered Nostromo, and his voice seemed deadened by the thick veil of obscurity that felt warm and hopeless all about them (Conrad *Nostromo* 216).

The power of the treasure is difficult to resist or evade. Martin and Nostromo feel that the "existence of the treasure, barely concealed in this improbable spot, laid a burden of secrecy upon every contemplated step, upon every intention and plan of future conduct" (Conrad *Nostromo* 244). Connection with the expatriate's cultural legacy is as strong as Martin and Nostromo's connection with the silver, and the irrationality and

subconsciousness of this connection is conveyed through the powerful presence of the lost silver: nobody knows where the national identity is situated and nobody can see it, but it shapes people's lives.

Two people are involved in the mission of saving the silver, and through their different attitudes to the treasure Conrad comments the expatriate writer's role in the mission of saving one's country's lost identity. Nostromo is the leader, and Martin's role in it is rather passive. For the incorruptible Nostromo, the Everyman of Sulaco, "the removal of the treasure was a political move. It was necessary for several reasons that it should not fall into the hands of Montero" (Conrad *Nostromo* 217). However, Martin takes "another view of the enterprise" and feels that Nostromo does not seem to have the slightest idea of what he is given to do. In fact, for Martin, "possession of so much a treasure is very much like a deadly disease" for men situated as they are (Conrad *Nostromo* 218). Indifferent to the dangers that seem obvious to Martin, romantically inspired by the importance of his mission, Nostromo intends to make his mission "the most famous and desperate affair" of his life -- "wind or no wind" (Conrad *Nostromo* 218), which is Conrad's way of saying that people of action like Nostromo, finding either glory or wealth in the time of revolutionary turmoil, profit from it. However, people like Martin who are "in the toils of an imaginative existence" (Conrad *Nostromo* 219) have nothing to gain in this period of their country's history.

Martin's psychological sufferings caused by physical exhaustion as he is trying to handle the enormous oar to keep the heavily laden lighter convey the feeling that he has already lost his life:

In his unskilfulness Don Martin overexerted himself. Now and then a sort of muscular faints would run from the tips of his aching fingers through every fibre of his body and pass off in a flush of heat. He had fought, talked, suffered mentally and physically, exerting his mind and body for the last forty-eight hours without intermission. He had had no rest, very little food, no pause in the stress of his thoughts and his feelings. Even his love for Antonia, whence he drew his strength

and his inspiration, had reached the point of tragic tension during their hurried interview by Don Jose's bedside. And now, suddenly, he was thrown out of all this into a dark gulf whose very gloom, silence, and breathless peace added a torment to the necessity for physical exertion. He imagined the lighter sinking to the bottom with an extraordinary shudder of delight. "I am on the verge of delirium," he thought. He mastered the trembling of all his body, exhausted of its nervous force (Conrad *Nostromo* 219).

At the same time association with the treasure gives energy to Nostromo. Like an Everyman completely identifying with the cultural legacy of his country, Nostromo draws spiritual strength from it. Inspired by the importance of his role in the mission of saving the country's treasure, he betrays his dependency on his reputation as he talks to himself on the lighter: "No! There is no room for fear on this lighter. Courage itself does not seem good enough. I have a good eye and a steady hand; no man can ever say he ever saw me tired, or uncertain what to do..." (Conrad *Nostromo* 228). In turn, Martin's ironic attitude does not allow him to take his mission seriously; before the departure he speaks of his role in the political power struggle as about the occupation he has undertaken against his vocation:

The incorruptible capataz de cargadores is the man for that work; and I, the man with a passion but without a mission, I go with him to return -- to play my part in the farce to the end, and, if successful, to receive my reward, which no one but Antonia can give me (Conrad *Nostromo* 202).

Martin feels disempowered when associating with the silver. He feels that he cannot function in the intellectual mode which is the only existence he knows:

Decoud was affected by the novelty of his position. Intellectually self-confident, he suffered from being deprived of the only weapon he could use with effect. No intelligence could penetrate the placid gulf (Conrad *Nostromo* 227).

It is through Nostromo that Conrad comments on the writer's role in the matter of saving the country's identity. Trying to tell Martin that he is trapped as the result of getting involved with the mission, Nostromo says, "You will find no other sort of rest, I can

promise you, since you let yourself be bound to this treasure whose loss would make no poor man poorer" (Conrad *Nostromo* 219).

Through the opposition of Martin and Nostromo while saving the treasure, Conrad dramatizes the impact of nationalism on the people of different temperaments, intellectual aspirations, and moral convictions. Nostromo, a whole, consistent, and simple character, obtains the treasure due to his inability to resist the seduction of sudden easy enrichment. "I must grow rich very slowly," says Nostromo to himself when he realizes that the silver believed to be lost can belong only to him. Corruption, according to Conrad, is the result of the honest ordinary man's encounter with the unlimited possibilities of power. Essentially, the corruption of Nostromo is Conrad's vision of the post-colonial political democracy established through the romantic slogans of nationalism. Martin Decoud, Conrad's double, mirrors the author's distrust for the common people who come to power as the result of revolutionary turmoils. Martin does not trust the incorruptible Nostromo from the beginning, which shows his ability to read people's characters beyond their reputations. Having found out that he will join Nostromo in the mission of saving the silver, Martin describes Nostromo's nature in the letter to his sister, and his judgment of his partner's hidden qualities proves to be true in the end. Both hostages of political games, the two men have no sympathy lost between them:

I recognized something impassive and careless in its tone, characteristic of that Genoese sailor [Nostromo] who, like me, has come casually here to be drawn into the events for which his skepticism as well as mine seems to entertain a sort of passive contempt. The only thing he seems to care for, as far as I have been able to discover, is to be well spoken of. An ambition fit for noble souls, but also a profitable one for an exceptionally intelligent scoundrel. Yes. His very words. 'To be well spoken of. Si, señor.' He does not seem to make any difference between speaking and thinking. Is it sheer naiveness or the practical point of view, I wonder? (Conrad *Nostromo* 203).



In the middle of the journey, Martin watches Nostromo's hidden, deeper, "unsuspected by everyone" (Conrad *Nostromo* 233) qualities come to the surface:

There remained only one thing he [Martin] was certain of, and that was the overweening vanity of his companion. It was direct, uncomplicated, naive, and effectual. Decoud, who had been making use of him, had tried to understand his man thoroughly. He had discovered a complete singleness of motive behind the varied manifestations of a consistent character. This was why the man remained so astonishingly simple in the jealous greatness of his conceit. And now there was a complication. It was evident that he resented having been given a task in which there were so many chances of failure (Conrad *Nostromo* 228).

Through Martin's penetration into the character of Nostromo, who is "true to the general formula expressing the moral state of humanity" (Conrad *Nostromo* 203), Conrad voices his concern that the way in which individuals will come to the highest positions of power in the turmoil of the transition to the post-colonial democratic world may be essentially criminal or dishonest. Investigating the sources of corruption under the surface of integrity, Conrad nails egoism as the core component of the individual's psychological structure that leads to the downfall. According to Martin's observations, Nostromo "was made incorruptible by his enormous vanity, that finest form of egoism which can take on the aspect of every virtue" (Conrad *Nostromo* 247).

It is in the presence of the treasure that the deepest differences between Martin and Nostromo which shape their lives are revealed. The expatriate writer, according to Conrad, does not have much in common with the everyman who, through the force of circumstances of practical politics, gets involved in the national cause. In the extreme circumstances of the sea voyage, in the middle of the mission, Martin realizes that he and Nostromo are complete strangers:

There was nothing in common between them but the knowledge that the damaged lighter must be slowly but surely sinking. In that knowledge, which was like the crucial test of their desires, they seemed to have become completely estranged, as if they discovered in the very shock of the collision that the loss of the lighter would not mean the same thing to them both. This common danger brought their

differences in aim, in view, in character, and in position into absolute prominence in the private vision of each. There was no bond of conviction, of common idea; they were merely two adventurers pursuing each his own adventure, involved in the same imminence of deadly peril. Therefore they had nothing to say to each other. But this peril, this only incontrovertible truth in which they shared, seemed to act as an inspiration to their mental and bodily powers (Conrad *Nostromo* 243-244).

Even though Martin and Nostromo, involved in a common cause, share the same space "like a pair of blind men aware of each other and their surroundings by some indefinable sixth sense" (Conrad *Nostromo* 244), their interests and aspirations are widely different. An expatriate writer, therefore, according to Conrad, does not feel at home among his compatriots even when they are involved in the common cause of saving their country's identity. Involvement in the national liberation movement is expected to unite a nation for the purpose of creating a statehood. However, the expatriate writer cannot find his place in this process.

In fact, association with his country's legacy, Conrad feels, is lethal for an emigre writer. It is because of his involvement in attempting to save the treasure that Martin dies. Moreover, through the heavily symbolic circumstances of Martin's death, Conrad is saying that for an expatriate writer homecoming is suicidal. The description of Martin's last moments before the suicide associated with the treasure show the conceptual aspect of Martin's connection with the silver:

The sun was two hours above the horizon when he got up, gaunt, dirty, white-faced, and looked at it with his red-rimmed eyes. His limbs obeyed him slowly, as if full of lead, but without tremor; and the effect of that physical condition gave to his movements an unhesitating, deliberate dignity. He acted as if accomplishing some sort of a rite. He descended into the gully; for the fascination of all that silver, with its potential power, survived alone outside of himself. he picked up the belt with the revolver, that was lying there, and buckled it round his waist. The cord of silence could never snap on the island. It must let him fall and sink into the sea, he thought. And sink! He was looking at the loose earth covering the treasure. In the sea! His aspect was that of a somnambulist. He lowered himself down on his knees slowly and went on grubbing with his fingers with industrious patience till he uncovered one of the boxes. Without a pause, as if doing some work done many times before, he slit it open and took four ingots which he put into his pockets. He covered up the

exposed box again and step by step came out of the gully. The bushes closed after him with a swish (Conrad *Nostromo* 414).

With the four silver ignots in his pockets, Martin sets the dinghy afloat, rows it straight towards the setting sun, and, watching the "glory of merciless solitude" and listening to the silence which "stretched like a dark, thin string" (Conrad *Nostromo* 415), he draws the revolver and pulls the trigger. It is the four silver ignots that drag him to the bottom of the sea, leaving the glittering surface of the Placid Gulf "untroubled by the fall of his body" (Conrad *Nostromo* 416). According to Conrad, therefore, the expatriate writer's homecoming results in the consummation of his life and talent through the insatiable struggle for his country's political identity:

A victim of the disillusioned weariness which is the retribution meted out to intellectual audacity, the brilliant Don Martin Decoud, weighted by the bars of San Tome silver, disappeared without a trace, swallowed up in the immense indifference of things. His sleepless, crouching figure was gone from the side of the San Tome silver; and for a time the spirits of good and evil that hover near every concealed treasure of the earth might have thought this one had been forgotten by all mankind (Conrad *Nostromo* 416).

As a writer, Martin sinks into oblivion. Since nobody is to know the real reasons behind his death or its circumstances, "the end of Don Martin Decoud never became a subject of speculation for anyone except Nostromo" (Conrad *Nostromo* 411-412). Martin is not buried in Sulaco, which means that his spiritual connection with his country after his death is broken.

Martin's psychological state before his death mirrors the core component of the expatriate sensibility. Solitude, according to Conrad, is instrumental in destroying the person's identity. Solitude, Conrad says, "from mere outward condition of existence becomes very swiftly a state of soul in which the affectations of irony and skepticism have no place. It takes possession of the mind, and drives forth the thought into the exile of utter unbelief" (Conrad *Nostromo* 413). It is the solitude that undermines Martin's ability to cope with the situation when he is left alone with the silver on the Isabels:

After three days of waiting for the sight of some human face, Decoud caught himself entertaining the doubt of his own individuality. It had merged into the world of cloud and water, of natural forces and forms of nature. In our activity alone do we find the sustaining illusion of an independent existence as against the whole scheme of things of which we form a helpless part (Conrad *Nostramo* 413).

Solitude, Conrad feels, "is the enemy known but to few on this earth, and whom only the simplest of us are fit to withstand" (Conrad *Nostramo* 412).

Contemplating the reason's behind Martin's death, Conrad names two of them. Martin, the "brilliant Costaguanero of the boulevards had died from solitude and want of faith in himself and others" (Conrad *Nostramo* 412). Essentially, the inability to believe in anything, or in other words, accept the conventions of any culture unconditionally, is another important aspect of the exilic condition. Martin's sadness, Conrad says, is "the sadness of a skeptical mind. He beheld the universe as a succession of incomprehensible images" (Conrad *Nostramo* 413). In the state of depression, when "an immense melancholy descended upon him palpably," Martin cannot forgive the people of Sulaco, "who had beset him, unreal and terrible, like jibbering and obscene spectres." He even sees himself "struggling feebly in their midst" (Conrad *Nostramo* 413), which sets Martin apart from the romantic type of fighter for the national liberation.

Martin's resistance to the idea of complete involvement of the deepest levels of one's personality in one's country's burning political problems links him to Razumov who rejects any involvement in Russia's politics outright. Like Razumov, Martin is trapped by politics in spite of his resistance to its overpowering presence and is completely destroyed. Decoud, who "recognized no other virtue than intelligence" and "erected passions into duties" (Conrad *Nostramo* 413), is a victim of the time that calls for the people of action and is prepared to sacrifice the intellectuals. That is why Martin's "intelligence and his passion were swallowed up easily in this great unbroken solitude of waiting without faith" (Conrad *Nostramo* 413).

Ultimately, the political battles for the national cause also consume the lives of the men of action, after they enjoy the fruits of their victories for a while. Nostromo, our man, also dies through association with the treasure, and his last words are about this: "The silver has killed me. It has held me. It holds me yet. Nobody knows where it is" (Conrad *Nostromo* 464). National identity, the ideological construct, which is to take the country out of its colonial existence, is based on exclusion, which explains its violent aspect, and it is through a woman, Emilia Gould, that Conrad expresses his attitude to the concept which demands human sacrifice: "No one misses it now. Let it be lost forever" (Conrad *Nostromo* 464).

Through the fate of Martin Decoud, Conrad contemplates his relationships with his country, Poland. He dramatizes the archetypal situation of his homecoming to his country, famous for its silver, which is torn, like Costaguana, between its more aggressive and successful neighbors. In fact, the outcome of Martin Decoud's life in Sulaco is Conrad's justification of his difficult and ambivalent decision never to return to Poland and be prepared to give his life for its liberation.

## CHAPTER 5

### DOUBLES IN THE CONTEXT OF EXPATRIATION

Conrad's literary universe abounds with doubles: Jim and Marlow, Jim and Brown, Jim and Brierly, Razumov and Haldin, Razumov and the Language teacher, Decoud and Nostromo, not to mention the Captain and Leggatt. Almost devoid of female characters, Conrad's world of seamen forces the author to dramatize various issues through the doubles. Framed by a specifically literary anxiety of identity (or, alternatively stated, by the problematic nature of literary freedom) the fictional double is best assessed and interpreted from within a socio-linguistic and anthropological context.<sup>1</sup> In essence, the simple possibility of a non-referential literary universe, predicated on the simple fact that language can shape a double of the world, creates conditions wherein any self-conscious use of literary language involves, implicitly, the creation of duplicity and the doubling of the referential self.<sup>2</sup> And, consequently, the

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<sup>1</sup> Doubles are usually interpreted in psychoanalytical terms as a representation of a repressed essential component of a character's personality. This is how Robert Hampson comments on the connection between Jim, Brierly and Brown: Brown has the same effect on Jim as Jim has on Brierly: he represents a secret fear and a secret guilt, the self-mistrust that is part of a personality constructed on identification with an altered identity" (125-126). Without naming it, the critic is describing the expatrial paradigm of identification with altered identity. One needs to take this argument one step further to be able to explain the reasons behind the fear and mistrust of an altered identity.

<sup>2</sup> Conrad's duplicity has not remained unnoticed by the critics. However, attempts to explain his use of doubles to mirror his own duplicity out of the English culture alone result in the interpretations which, failing to explain his deepest paradigm, do not make him seem much different from any other English writer of the time. Thus, Daphna Erdinast-Vulkan maintains that "Conrad, a 'homo duplex' as he defined himself, has predicated the best of his work on a purging of his own temperament, a rejection of the

change of the language, which happens with the change of the culture in case of expatriation, results in doubling of the self caused by the simultaneous existence of the two cultural and linguistic archetypes in the expatriate's psyche. In expatriate fiction doubles particularly strongly demonstrate how major political structures and ideological constructs translate into the formation of an individual psyche and character, reflect in actions, emotions and relationships.<sup>3</sup>

Doubles are accompanied by, or associated with, profound loss of some intimate essential quality (property, characteristics) which represents part of the character's identity. This loss is a result of a circumstantial shift from a mastered and controlled space to a new realm of social existence which requires a re-discovery of self and re-

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Nietzschean outlook. He could neither accept its celebration of ethical and epistemological relativism, nor endorse its view of the role of art as the supreme lie. His moral heritage and his desperate personal need for a stable frame of reference, impelled him into a heroic (and foredoomed) struggle with the modern temper." Her study, therefore, focuses on "the tension inherent in Conrad's response to modernity: the tension between the writer's temperamental affinity with the Nietzschean conception of culture as a set of fragile illusions imperfectly overlaid on a chaotic, fragmented and meaningless reality, and its ideological need to reinstate the Ptolemaic (i.e. integrated and anthropocentric) universe. I would suggest that this ambivalence is the key to some of its notorious ambiguities, to the thematic and structural problematics of his work, and to the development of his artistic vision (3-4). Almost every European writer of the turn of the century was one way or another responding to the chaos, fragmentation, and the loss of meaning accompanying the advent of modern age. However, a writer belonging to several cultures, in addition to the above mentioned issues, powerfully responds to his/her exilic condition, which sets the expatriate writer apart from anyone writing within one culture exclusively.

<sup>3</sup> Gustav Morf, establishing Conrad's double identity, analyzes his fiction either in the autobiographical context or deals with the symbolism related to Conrad's jump and the consecutive guilt in the context of Polish cultural categories (Morf 149-158). From this perspective, however, in spite of Morf's insightful observations and important factual research, it is difficult to explain the phenomenon of gentleman Brown otherwise than in moral terms, as the case of a mere scoundrel (Morf 148), or the role of Stein otherwise than in psychoanalytic terms, as a psychiatrist who can penetrate into Jim's unconscious and offer the cure for his disease (Morf 147).

defining the ways the new self will be communicating with the changed immediate environment. And, since the self communicates with the world by means of language, this shift in cultural and political associations involves the search for a new language which will shape one's new identity, on the one hand, and master the new reality, on the other.<sup>4</sup> Joseph Conrad's doubles, therefore, which appear as a response to a profound loss of social and personal identity, both mirror and dramatize the clash of political and anthropological issues.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Conrad's linguistic history is quite complex. As a child until he was seventeen, he was raised in the Polish family which stayed with their language at the time when the official language of the country was Russian. During the period of maturation, he was exposed to the French milieu, and since French was the language the children of Polish gentry were taught as a compulsory part of their education, Conrad blended easily into the French culture. However, when he, almost without preparation, found himself in the English speaking environment, he could not start writing in Polish, since the aspects of life he intended to write about as an adult were not introduced into his mind within the Polish language environment. He undoubtedly lacked the vocabulary to describe the culture so different from his own; moreover, he would lack nautical and geographical vocabulary in Polish to describe his sea voyages. Commenting on his choice of English as the language for his writing, Conrad explains that what attracted him in English was "the sheer appeal of the language"; he also points to his "quickly awakened love for its prose cadences" and "a subtle and unforeseen accord" of his "emotional nature with its genius" (Morf 292).

<sup>5</sup> According to Michael Siedel, structurally "narrative worlds are filled with people and objects that represent the very allegorical principles upon which they were conceived... secret sharers and doppelgangers allegorize mimesis as doubling" (15).



### 5.1. Doubles in *The Secret Sharer*.

*The Secret Sharer* is the most famous "double" story. Many critics and readers "have liked *The Secret Sharer*, but few of them have cared to say what the story is 'about.' And they may have been wise to be cautious" (Guerard "Introduction" 9). The general character of this piece, which makes it so appealing to the audience, invites a general reading.<sup>6</sup> Guerard's interpretation of *The Secret Sharer* as a story of initiation is presently dominating the critical scene. But, since in a way every story is about initiation, this reading fails to differentiate *The Secret Sharer* from numerous other stories of initiation in various periods and nations. Such a reading fails to recognize distinct features of Conrad's expatriate sensibility and its connection to the literary form of the narrative. However, taking into consideration the complexity of the author's cultural background, the reader can see how through the doubles, *The Secret Sharer* attempts to resolve the central essentially unresolvable issue of the exilic condition: the expatriate's relationship with the parent culture.

However, Conrad's exilic patterns are so well hidden behind his symbolism in this story that they have successfully remained unrecognizable. There are several reasons behind his reluctance to express his expatriate anxieties explicitly (something the twentieth century post-colonial writers feel more comfortable doing), one of them being the complex relationships with his English reader. At the same time, brought up on the traditions of Polish romanticism, which, written abroad at the time of the partition of Poland, smuggled into the country and read in secret, had to hide its political message

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<sup>6</sup> Robert Hampson, for example, interprets *The Secret Sharer* as the conflict of legality and personal loyalty where human relationship and individual moral bond are "at variance with the moral bond of the community implicit in the laws and maritime tradition" (193). However, this frame of reference leaves many facts of the text beyond interpretation, one of them, as Hampson himself admits, is Leggatt's criminal status as the most problematic part of the Captain's identification with him (192).

behind heavy symbolism, Conrad tended to avoid making blunt explicit political statements, with the exception of his political novels, which made his expatriate paradigm almost unrecognizable to the reader. Through the immediacy of the Captain's irrational and intense identification with Leggatt, Conrad contemplates the emotional aspect and the power of the most elusive category: cultural legacy. At the same time, he attempts to dramatize an ideal outcome of the expatriate's relationship with his/her parent culture, the ideal neither he nor any other expatriate ever achieves.

The plot of *The Secret Sharer* develops against the background of the protagonist's journey home, which from the very beginning channels the narrative into the core issues of expatriate existence. The motif of the "homeward journey" (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 19) is not in any way an essential component of the plot and could be easily dismissed, if it were not of symbolic significance for the deep structure of the narrative. For an expatriate, the journey home is always a "long journey" (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 20) which calls for certain resolution in the expatriate's ambivalent relationship with one's parent culture. The need to resolve the essentially unresolvable issues makes the Captain's journey home "a long and arduous enterprise" (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 20).

The protagonist's relationships with the environment reproduce the basic exilic paradigm: the Captain finds that he does not fit in with his environment.<sup>7</sup> His situation

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<sup>7</sup> H.G. Wells, struck by Conrad's personality, describes him as a misfit: "I found ... something...ridiculous in Conrad's *persona* of a romantic adventurous un-mercenary intensely artistic gentleman carrying an exquisite code of unblemished honor through a universe of baseness..." (Morf 293). Jessie Conrad writes that she began to understand her husband's behavior which always seemed strange to her only when she came to Poland and saw that all the people of the country behaved like her husband.

of being new on the ship where the others have known each other for some time mirrors the archetypal exilic displacement:

In consequence of certain events of no particular significance, except to myself, I had been appointed to the command only a fortnight before. Neither did I know much of the hands forward. All these people had been together for eighteen months or so, and my position was that of the only stranger on board. I mention this because it has some bearing on what is to follow. But what I felt most was my being a stranger to the ship; and if all the truth must be told, I was somewhat of a stranger to myself. The youngest man on board (barring the second mate), and untried as yet by a position of the fullest responsibility, I was willing to take the adequacy of the others for granted. They had simply to be equal to their tasks; but I wondered how far I should turn out faithful to that ideal conception of one's personality every man sets up for himself secretly (*Conrad The Secret Sharer* 21).

The protagonist, new to his role as a captain of the ship, is in a position of command, but he finds himself psychologically out of control. The psychological state of disempowerment, which does not agree with his position of power, and reflects the essential component of exilic condition, becomes the counterpoint of the Captain's relationships with his environment. The protagonist's directly stated disconnection from reality is reinforced through the visual and auditory imagery:

There must have been some glare in the air to interfere with one's sight, because it was only just before the sun left us that my roaming eyes made out beyond the highest ridges of the principal islet of the group something which did away with did away with the solemnity of perfect solitude. The tide of darkness flowed on swiftly; and with tropical suddenness a swarm of stars came out above the shadowy earth, while I lingered yet, my hand resting lightly on my ship's rail as if on the shoulder of a trusted friend. But, with all that multitude of celestial bodies staring down at one, the comfort of quiet communion with her was gone for good. And there were also disturbing sounds by this time -- voices, footsteps forward; the steward flitted along the main deck, a busily ministering spirit; a hand bell tinkled urgently under the poop deck.... (*Conrad The Secret Sharer* 20).

The sounds and voices of the environment, essentially foreign for the Captain, are disturbing and bring him no comfort. Like Razumov in Switzerland, the Captain does not get the feeling of security from listening to the voices of the land he finds himself in by the force of circumstances.

The key word in the description of the protagonist's relationships with his environment is "the stranger." "My strangeness, which had made me sleepless," the Captain says, "had prompted that unconventional arrangement, as if I had expected in those solitary hours of the night to get on terms with the ship of which I knew nothing, manned by men of whom I knew very little more" (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 22-23). The ship itself, however, is very attractive for the Captain: "the stretch of her main-deck" seems to him "very fine under the stars. Very fine, very roomy, very inviting" (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 23). It is the people who make the Captain's experience difficult because of "the novel responsibility of command" (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 23).

The extreme aspect of the tension between the Captain and his environment is dramatized in his relationships with the first mate. The opposition between the Captain and the mate mirrors the conflict of essentially different sensibilities: logical, extroverted, and emotional, introverted. The mate, representing the power of logical reason, evolves theories around every small detail of his existence, and makes the Captain extremely uncomfortable as he overwhelms him with the extent of his information:

His dominant trait was to take all things into earnest consideration. He was of painstaking turn of mind. As he used to say, he "liked to account to himself" for practically everything that came in his way, down to a miserable scorpion he had found in his cabin a week before. The why and the wherefore of that scorpion -- how it got on board and came to select his room rather than the pantry (which was a dark place and more what a scorpion would be partial to), and how on earth it managed to drown itself in the inkwell of his writing desk -- had exercised him infinitely. The ship within the islands was much more easily accounted for; and just as we were about to rise from table, he made his pronouncement. She was, he doubted not, a ship from home lately arrived. Probably she drew too much water to cross the bar except at the top of spring tides. Therefore she went into that natural harbor to wait for a few days in preference to remaining in an open roadstead (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 21-22).

The Captain, representing the introverted sensibility allowing free expression of emotions, feels that his behavior is permanently disapproved of by the mate:

My nerves were so shaken that I could not govern my voice and conceal my agitation. This was the sort of thing that made my terrifically whiskered mate tap his forehead with his forefinger. I had detected him using that gesture while talking on deck with a confidential air to the carpenter. It was too far to hear a word, but I had no doubt that this pantomime could only refer to the strange new captain (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 49).

By the standards of his environment, the Captain's behavior is irrational and erratic. The steward, who is "shouted at, checked without rhyme or reason, arbitrarily chased out" of the Captain's cabin, "suddenly called into it, sent flying out of his pantry on incomprehensible errands", experiences the "maddening" effect of the Captain's behavior and feels uncomfortable. In the process of their communication, the Captain watches "the growing wretchedness of his expression" (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 49). The Captain confesses that he hates the sight of the steward and abhors the voice of this "harmless man" (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 48) because he fears that the steward will "bring on the disaster of the discovery" (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 48). The tension between the Captain and his environment reproduces the tension between the foreigner and an unknown culture.

Like any expatriate, the Captain is a misfit on the ship: whatever he does is unusual, and all his actions, including professional instructions, are strange. It is important to note that the Captain's strangeness existed before the meeting with Leggatt. On the evening of the crucial meeting with his double, the Captain dismisses everybody from the deck and feels that his commands are contradictory to the established rules of the ship:

I felt painfully that I -- a stranger -- was doing something unusual when I directed him to let all hands turn in without setting an anchor watch. I proposed to keep on deck myself till one o'clock or thereabouts. I would get the second mate to relieve me in an hour.

"He will turn out the cook and the steward at four," I concluded, "and then give you a call. Of course at the slightest sign of any sort of wind we'll have the hands up and make a start at once."

He concealed his astonishment. "Very well, sir." Outside the cuddy he put his head in the second mate's door to inform him of my unheard-of caprice to take a five hour's anchor watch on myself. I heard the other raise his voice incredulously -- "What? The Captain himself?" Then a few more murmurs, a door closed, then another. A few moments later I went on deck (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 22).

The appearance of Leggatt reinforces the Captain's strange, unusual, unorthodox behavior.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, he feels profoundly the unfounded, barely disguised disapproval. As the Captain listens to Archbold's story of his dealings with Leggatt, he feels rejected because of some hidden facets of his identity:

I had become so connected in thoughts and impressions with the secret sharer of my cabin that I felt as if I, personally, were being given to understand that I, too, was not the sort that would have done for the chief mate of a ship like the *Sephora*. I had no doubt of it in my mind (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 42).

Archbold's irrational negative attitude to the Captain is reinforced by the Captain's response to Archbold's inquiries: they do not mesh with Archbold's expectations of how a person should behave under the circumstances. The Captain is aware of this growing distrust:

My lack of excitement, of curiosity, of surprise, of any sort of pronounced interest, began to arouse his distrust. But except for the felicitous pretense of deafness I had

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<sup>8</sup> According to Hampson, the Captain's unconventional behavior, "which allowed Leggatt to board the ship, implied flaws or weaknesses in the captain which identification with Leggatt both clarifies and further exemplifies. On the symbolic level, Leggatt's presence on board the ship can be seen to represent the captain's guilty awareness of the aspects of himself that do not correspond to his role as captain. The captain's self-division prevents his satisfactory fulfillment of his role and alarms the crew. More precisely, it is not so much self-division that is the captain's problem as self-consciousness in the role rather than the automatic performance of the role. ... The conclusion of the story can then be interpreted as dramatizing the splitting-off of that 'secret self' -- those parts of him that do not correspond to the 'ideal conception' that the narrator has of his own personality -- to achieve the satisfactory performance of the role" (193).

not tried to pretend anything. I had felt utterly incapable of playing the part of ignorance properly, and therefore was afraid to try. It was certain that he had brought some ready-made suspicions with him, and that he viewed my politeness as a strange and unnatural phenomenon (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 42).

Archbold is disconcerted by something in the Captain that reminded him of the man he is seeking which "suggested a mysterious similitude to the young fellow he had distrusted and disliked from the first" (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 42-43). The protagonist self-consciously feels that he is producing "a bad impression" (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 45). Doing his routine on the ship, he gets silent signals of the crew members' surprise at his actions:

A little later I moved away from the rail to look at the compass with such a stealthy gait that the helmsman noticed it -- and I could not help noticing the unusual roundness of his eyes. These are trifling instances, though it's to no commander's advantage to be suspected of ludicrous eccentricities (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 47).

The Captain meets disapproval not only on the personal, but also on the professional level as his actions are interpreted as incompetent. When he goes out on the deck to make all the necessary preparations for marooning Leggatt, he realizes that the crew responds very critically to his actions as the captain:

At midnight I went on deck, and to my mate's great surprise put the ship round on the other tack. His terrible whiskers flitted round me in silent criticism. I certainly should not have done it if it had only been a question of getting out of that sleepy gulf as quickly as possible. I believe he told the second mate, who relieved him, that it was a great want of judgment (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 52).

The Captain's incompatibility with his environment culminates in the marooning episode. The closer it gets to the moment when Leggatt is to be let out, the more intense becomes the crew members' negative response to the Captain's orders:

"Send a couple of hands to open the quarter-deck ports," I said, mildly.  
He actually had the impudence, or else so forgot himself in his wonder at such an incomprehensible order, as to repeat:  
"Open the quarter-deck ports! What for, sir?"

"The only reason you need concern yourself about is because I tell you to do so. Have them open wide and fastened properly."

He reddened and went off, but I believe made some jeering remark to the carpenter as to the sensible practice of ventilating a ship's quarter-deck. I know he popped into the mate's cabin to impart the fact to him because the whiskers came on deck, as it were by chance, and stole glances at me from below -- for signs of lunacy or drunkenness, I suppose (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 54-55).

The intensity of the mate's response to the Captain's orders in the marooning episode mirrors the fear of the expatriate's unconventional behavior which shakes the foundations of the culture. The expatriate, unfamiliar with the culture's conventions or unwilling to accept them, becomes the force jeopardizing the security and comfort of life within the familiar environment. The mate's behavior in the marooning episode, full of uncontrolled fear for his life, is an archetypal response to the actions of an outsider:

"My God! Where are we?"

It was the mate moaning at my elbow. He was thunderstruck, and as it were deprived of the moral support of his whiskers. He clapped his hands and absolutely cried out, "Lost!"

"Be quiet," I said, sternly.

He lowered his tone, but I saw the shadowy gesture of his despair. "What are we doing here?"

"Looking for the land wind."

He made as if to tear his hair, and addressed me recklessly.

"She will never get out. You have done it, sir. I knew it'd end in something like this. She will never weather, and you are too close now to stay. She'll drift shore before she's round. O my God!"

I caught his arm as he was raising it to batter his poor devoted head, and shook it violently.

"She is probably ashore already," he wailed, trying to tear himself away.

"Is she?... Keep good full there!"

"Good full, sir," cried the helmsman in a frightened, thin, childlike voice.

I hadn't let go the mate's arm and went on shaking it. "Ready about, do you hear? You go forward" -- shake -- and stop there" -- shake -- "and hold your noise" -- shake -- "and see these head-sheets properly overhauled" -- shake, shake -- shake.

And all the time I dared not look towards the land lest my heart should fail me. I released my grip at last and he ran forward as if fleeing for dear life (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 58-59).

The Captain's unconventional activity develops against the background of the landscape description loaded with deep symbolism betraying the author's expatriate



sensibility. The opening landscape description offers a very unusual resolution of the land/sea opposition. The land, through the negative visual imagery, is described as mysterious, incomprehensible, abandoned, savage, impassive, devious, barren, covered with ruins, and insignificant, which does not make it an attractive nor inviting place for the protagonist. The sea, in turn, contrary to the reader's expectations and the conventions of the marinistic literature, through positive visual imagery, is described as solid, still, and stable. In the context of the Captain's homeward journey, the land is foreign for the protagonist, whereas the sea is the medium that is to take him home. Thus, the land/sea opposition falls into the expatriate paradigm of the foreign and home land.

Leggatt, the Captain's double, is on several levels associated with the protagonist's home. Symbolically, Leggatt appears from the sea, paradoxically, a more secure environment than the land. The Captain recognizes that the sea is the environment which gives him spiritual and emotional support when he says, "... I rejoiced in the great security of the sea as compared with the unrest of the land, in my choice of that untempted life presenting no disquieting problems, invested with an elementary moral beauty by the absolute straightforwardness of its appeal and by the singleness of its purpose" (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 23). Leggatt's association with the sea is not merely circumstantial; in the moment of his appearance, he is described not so much as a human, but as a sea creature:

The side of the ship made an opaque belt of shadow on the darkling glassy shimmer of the sea. But I saw at once something elongated and pale floating very close to the ladder. Before I could form a guess a faint flash of phosphorescent light, which seemed to issue suddenly from the naked body of a man, flickered in the sleeping water with the elusive, silent play of summer lightning in a night sky. With a gasp I saw revealed to my stare a pair of feet, the long legs, a broad livid back immersed right up to the neck in a greenish cadaverous glow. One hand, awash, clutched the bottom rung of the ladder. He was complete but for the head. A headless corpse! (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 24).

Moreover, the description of Leggatt in the sea explicitly states that this is where he naturally belongs:

As he hung by the ladder, like a resting swimmer, the sea lightning played about his limbs at every stir; and he appeared in it ghastly, silvery, fishlike. He remained as mute as a fish, too (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 25).

Established through the symbolism of the land/sea paradigm, Leggatt's connection with the protagonist's home land (through the ocean) is reinforced on the realistic level through the similarity of their background. Leggatt happens to be "a Conway boy", just like the Captain who, being a couple years older, "had left before he joined" (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 27). Leggatt's association with the protagonist's parent culture is finalized through the symbolism of his name. Leggatt is a legate, an ambassador of the Captain's past, a delegate of his culture, a messenger of his legacy.<sup>9</sup>

Thus, Leggatt, the Captain's double, represents the legacy of the protagonist's parent culture, which in the foreign environment has to be suppressed. The subdued status of the expatriate's cultural legacy is metaphorically conveyed by Leggatt's criminal background. The "ugly business" (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 26) of the murder on *Sephora*, for which Leggatt is responsible, makes the Captain's open communication with him impossible. According to Conrad, Leggatt is "to be hidden forever from all friendly faces, to be a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth, with no brand of the curse on his sane forehead to stay a slaying hand ... too proud to explain" (Conrad *The Secret*

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<sup>9</sup> Hampson maintains that "Leggatt is more important as the embodiment of the captain's original feeling of being 'a stranger' to himself. He represents what Hewitt calls 'that fear that there are parts of himself which he has not yet brought into the light of day'. These are parts of himself which might interfere with the realization of what he calls 'that ideal conception of one's own personality every man sets up for himself secretly'" (192).

*Sharer* 60) as is the parent culture, especially if its codes are contradictory to the conventions of the adopted environment.

The voluntary character of the suppression of the cultural legacy is reinforced through Leggatt's desire to remain unnoticed. When he appears, he is "mute as a fish" (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 25) and very passive:

He made no motion to get out of the water, either. It was inconceivable that he should not attempt to come on board, and strangely troubling to suspect that perhaps he did not want to. And my first words were prompted by just that troubled incertitude (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 25).

Leggatt and the Captain communicate in whisper and neither of them is "ever to hear each other's natural voice" (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 56). The Captain contrives a whole scheme to keep Leggatt away from everybody's sight:

He had to sit still on a small folding stool, half smothered by the heavy coats hanging there. We listened to the steward going into the bathroom out of the saloon, filling the water bottles there, scrubbing the bath, setting the things to rights, whisk, bang, clatter -- out again into the saloon -- turn the key -- click. Such was my scheme for keeping my second self invisible. Nothing better could be contrived under the circumstances. And there we sat; I at my writing desk ready to appear busy with some papers, he behind me out of sight of the door. It would not have been prudent to talk in daytime; and I could not have stood the excitement of that queer sense of whispering to myself. Now and then, glancing over my shoulder, I saw him far back there, sitting rigidly on the low stool, his bare feet close together, his arms folded, his head hanging on his breast -- and perfectly still. Anybody would have taken him for me (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 38).

The Captain's biggest fear is that of having Leggatt's presence discovered, which further affects his relationships with the crew. "I came to hate the sight of the steward," he says, "to abhor the voice of that harmless man. I felt that it was he who would bring the disaster of discovery. It hung like a sword over our heads" (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 48). Association with Leggatt is obviously the cause of the Captain's internal psychological state. Overcome by fear, the Captain says, "My nerves were so shaken that I could not govern my voice and conceal my agitation" (Conrad *The Secret Sharer*

49). The Captain responds in a fierce attack of panic at the steward's performance of routine duties which jeopardizes Leggatt's secret existence:

I expected the steward to hook my coat on and come out at once. He was very slow about it; but I dominated my nervousness sufficiently not to shout after him. Suddenly I became aware (it could be heard plainly enough) that the fellow for some reason or other was opening the door of the bathroom. It was the end. The place was literally not big enough to swing a cat in. My voice died in my throat and I went stony all over. I expected to hear a yell of surprise and terror, and made a movement, but had not the strength to get on my legs. Everything remained still. Had my second self taken the poor wretch by the throat? I don't know what I could have done next moment if I had not seen the steward come out of my room, close the door, and then stand quietly by the sideboard.

"Saved," I thought. "But, no! Lost! Gone! He was gone!"

I laid my knife and fork down and leaned back in my chair. My head swam. After a while, when sufficiently recovered to speak in a steady voice, I instructed my mate to put the ship round at eight o'clock himself (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 50).

The Captain's fear of having Leggatt's existence discovered reflects perfectly in the suppression of the expatriate's cultural heritage within the adopted culture. Fearing dislocation in the environment and desiring acceptance results in the suppression of the parent culture for it is essentially incompatible with the new environment. Having taken Leggatt on board, the Captain thinks:

It occurred to me that if old "Bless my soul -- you don't say so" were to put his head up the companion and catch sight of us, he would think he was seeing double, or imagine himself come upon a scene of weird witchcraft; the strange captain having a quiet confabulation by the wheel with his own gray ghost. I became very much concerned to prevent anything of the sort (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 29).

Thinking of the possible effect of being seen with Leggatt in his cabin, the Captain expresses his apprehension that it would contribute to his crew's misunderstanding of him:

He was not a bit like me, really; yet, as we stood leaning over my bed place, whispering side by side, with our dark heads together and our backs to the door, anybody bold enough to open it stealthily would have been treated to the uncanny

sight of the double captain busy talking in whispers with his other self (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 31).

The immediate irrational connection established between the Captain and Leggatt after the first brief exchange is to a great extent based on the similar background.

Commenting on the reasons for understanding Leggatt so well, in the middle of Leggatt's telling his murder story, the Captain says:

He appeared to me as if our experiences had been as identical as our clothes. And I knew well enough the pestiferous danger of such a character where there are no means of legal repression. And I knew very well that my double was no homicidal ruffian. I did not think of asking him for details, and he told me the story roughly in brusque, disconnected sentences. I needed no more. I saw it all going on as though I were myself inside that other sleeping suit (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 27-28).

This understanding is, according to the Captain, "pure intuition" on his part (26) and functions on the subconscious level leaving reason uninvolved. The Captain tries to explain the basis for his understanding of Leggatt by their common age. "A mysterious communication was established already between us two," he says, "in the face of that silent, darkened tropical sea. I was young too; young enough to make no comment" (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 26). In *Under Western Eyes* Russia, another Slavic culture, is described in terms of youth and lack of experience. In Conrad's mind, youth is the attribute of Polish legacy.

The Captain's association with Leggatt dramatizes the complexity of relationships between the parent culture and the adopted culture in the expatriate psyche. Leggatt's charisma mirrors the natural irresistible magnetism of one's legacy. Seen through the Captain's eyes, his appearance inspires trust and sympathy:

He had rather regular features; a good mouth; light eyes under somewhat heavy, dark eyebrows; a smooth, square forehead; no growth on his cheeks; a small, brown mustache, and a well-shaped, round chin. His expression was concentrated, meditative, under the inspecting light of the lamp I held up to his face; such as a man thinking hard in solitude might wear. My sleeping suit was just right for his size. A well-knit young fellow of twenty-five at most. He caught his lower lip with the edge of white, even teeth (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 27).

Even though Leggatt's face is "thin and the sunburn faded, as though he had been ill," since he was kept under arrest in his cabin for nearly seven weeks, there is "nothing sickly in his eyes or in his expression" (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 30).

Leggatt's voice has a soothing effect on the Captain and takes away the self-conscious anxiety of his strangeness vis-a-vis his environment. "The voice was calm and resolute. A good voice. The self-possession of that man had somehow induced a corresponding state in myself," the Captain says. Leggatt's voice is the voice of a strong personality; what he says at the moment of the encounter with the Captain, at the time when he truly needs help, is "no mere formula of desperate speech, but a real alternative in the view of a strong soul" (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 26). Leggatt's voice, the protagonist's interior voice, is the voice of his cultural legacy, in its irresistible quality betraying its profound goodness and strength, assuring of its supporting presence, but doomed to be always suppressed. As the Captain puts it, there is "something unyielding in his character which was carrying him through so finely. There was no agitation in his whisper. Whoever was being driven distracted, it was not he. He was sane. And the proof of his sanity was continued when he took up whispering again" (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 51).

The reason for the irresistible attractiveness of one's legacy can not be identified, and, contemplating the nature of understanding between the Captain and Leggatt, Conrad, in his favorite impressionistic manner, admits the inability of language to explain the nature of the expatriate's connection to one's culture:

His whisper was getting fainter and fainter, and all the time he stared straight out through the porthole, in which there was not even a star to be seen. I had not interrupted him. There was something that made comment impossible in his narrative, or perhaps in himself; a sort of feeling, a quality, which I can't find the name for (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 33).

Leggatt's account of his feelings in the episode of his encounter with the Captain reads like an impersonated search of the forlorn culture for one of its lost souls:

"Your ladder --" he [Leggatt] murmured, after a silence. "Who'd have thought of finding a ladder hanging over at night in a ship anchored out here! I felt just then a very unpleasant faintness. After the life I've been leading for nine weeks, anybody would have got out of condition. I wasn't capable of swimming round as far as your rudder chains. And, lo and behold! there was a ladder to get hold of. After I gripped it I said to myself, 'What's the good?' When I saw a man's head looking over I thought I would swim away presently and leave him shouting -- in whatever language it was. I didn't mind being looked at. I--I liked it. And then you speaking to me so quietly -- as if you had expected me -- made me hold a little longer. It had been a confounded lonely time -- I don't mean while swimming. I was glad to talk a little to somebody that didn't belong to the *Sephora*. As to asking for the captain, that was a mere impulse. It could have been no use, with all the ship knowing about me and the other people pretty certain to be round here in the morning. I don't know -- I wanted to be seen, to talk with somebody, before I went on. I don't know what I would have said.... (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 34-35).

Leggatt's gregariousness is a very unexpected quality in the fleeing murderer.

Paradoxically, he is not desperately in need of help: as a good swimmer, he is perfectly self-reliant: he has decided that he will swim until he sinks, but he does not mean to drown himself (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 33). Leggatt's tragic dignity and self-containment reflects Conrad's trust in the survival of his culture.

Half of the Captain's mind identifies with Leggatt, "as though I had been faced by my own reflection in the depths of a somber and immense mirror," (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 27) he says. Torn in two parts, the Captain finds it painful to endure his external environment and finds consolation in Leggatt's presence, which has a soothing effect on him:

I left him suddenly. I felt I was producing a bad impression, but with my double down there it was most trying to be on deck. And it was almost as trying to be below. Altogether a nerve-trying situation. But on the whole I felt less torn when I was with him. There was no one in the whole ship whom I dared take into my confidence (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 45).

However, open recognition of Leggatt's existence which would jeopardize the protagonist's fragile relationships with his environment, can result in his ruin. "I realized suddenly," the Captain says, "that all my future, the only future for which I was fit, would perhaps go irretrievably to pieces in any mishap to my first command" (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 54). The interference of the parent culture with the expatriate's established life is dramatized through the figure of Brown in *Lord Jim*, who brings Jim's world and his life to the downfall. In *Under Western Eyes*, Razumov, who does not want to associate with the Russian immigrant community in Geneva, is crippled by his compatriots and left to die in the street. In *Nostromo*, politicians of Costaguana send Martin Decoud on the dangerous mission of saving the silver, and ultimately to his death, knowing that he has neither the experience of a seaman, nor the zeal of a revolutionary, nor the survival skills of Nostromo.

Uncontrolled association with one's parent culture threatens to break one's mental balance by creating multiple states of duplicity. The Captain, therefore, in a state of inner turmoil, tries to clear his mind "of the confused sensation of being in two places at once, and greatly bothered by the exasperated knocking" on his head which turns out to be on the outside of the door. From the start, the Captain feels extremely "tired, in a peculiar intimate way, by the strain of stealthiness, by the effort of whispering and the general secrecy" of the excitement of Leggatt's presence (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 35). The state of duality is very taxing. Feeling "dual more than ever" (SSH 36), the protagonist finds it difficult to function even in very unobliging professional situations, like breakfast with his crew:

At breakfast time, eating nothing myself, I presided with such frigid dignity that the two mates were only too glad to escape from the cabin as soon as decency permitted; and all the time the dual working of my mind distracted me almost to the point of insanity. I was constantly watching myself, my secret self, as dependent on my actions as my own personality, sleeping in that bed, behind that door which



faced me as I sat at the head table. It was very much like being mad, only it was worse because one was aware of it (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 37).

The Captain describes the sensations that accompany the process of appropriation of a different culture in terms of the support moving from under his feet:

This is not the place to enlarge upon the sensations of a man who feels for the first time a ship move under his feet to his own independent word. In my case they were not unalloyed. I was not wholly alone with my command; for there was that stranger in my cabin. Or rather, I was not completely and wholly with her. Part of me was absent. That mental feeling of being in two places at once affected me physically as if the mood of secrecy had penetrated my very soul (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 47).

Leggatt's presence in the Captain's life, where he is attempting to conceal his second self from the environment, is exhausting. For the Captain, it is "like being haunted" (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 50). "I think I had come creeping quietly as near insanity as any man who has not actually gone over the border" (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 50), he feels. The Captain's state of insanity metaphorically represents the expatriate's cultural shock from the encounter with the foreign environment which is accompanied by the destruction of cultural codes of the parent culture and, through doubling, results in creating a tenuous new identity.

The Captain's anxiety is explicitly connected with his second identity: "I was afraid he [Archbold] would ask me point-blank for news of my other self" (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 43). However, the Captain is afraid to lose Leggatt, his second self, as much as he is afraid to have him discovered. The Captain's first response to the steward episode is fear that Leggatt has been discovered. However, it immediately changes to panic at the possibility that Leggatt has not been discovered because he left the ship:

Had my second self taken the poor wretch by the throat? I don't know what I could have done next moment if I had not seen the steward come out of my room, close the door, and then stand quietly by the sideboard.

"Saved," I thought. "But, no! Lost! Gone! He was gone!"

I laid my knife and fork down and leaned back in my chair. My head swam (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 50).

The Captain explicitly recognizes his reluctance to let Leggatt go in their conversation when Leggatt asks to be marooned:

That's my affair. What does the Bible say? 'Driven off the face of the earth.' Very well, I am off the face of the earth now. As I came at night so I shall go."

"Impossible!" I murmured. "You can't."

"Can't?... Not naked like a soul on the Day of Judgment. I shall freeze on to this sleeping suit. The Last Day is not yet -- and ... you have understood thoroughly. Didn't you?"

I felt suddenly ashamed of myself. I may say truly that I understood -- and my hesitation in letting that man swim away from my ship's side had been a mere sham sentiment, a sort of cowardice (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 52).

The Captain's fear of losing Leggatt is essentially the fear of losing an essential part of identity that connects the expatriate to his culture.

The adopted culture requires a different persona and rejects the parent culture through rejection of the language, thus causing a profound shock of the expatriate psyche. Loss of language, therefore, is a central component of the cultural shock. In other words, since self is expressed through language, the loss of language is equal to the loss of identity. The Captain conveys his difficulty of self-expression when he says:

There are to a seaman certain words, gestures, that should in given conditions come as naturally, as instinctively as the winking of a menaced eye. A certain order should spring on to his lips without thinking; a certain sign should get itself made, so to speak, without reflection. But all unconscious alertness had abandoned me. I had to make an effort of will to recall myself back (from the cabin) to the conditions of the moment. I felt that I was appearing as an irresolute commander to those people who were watching me more or less critically (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 47).

However, the adopted language does not mechanically substitute for the parent language; in fact, they coexist in the expatriate psyche to express categories that cannot be literally translated from one language to the other. The Captain's difficulty with linguistic self-expression mirrors the expatriate predicament of conveying the concepts of the adopted culture in a foreign language, on the one hand, and untranslatability of

the concepts of the adopted culture into the parent language, on the other hand.<sup>10</sup> This feeling of being lost in language, the most painful aspect of translation of one's self into a different set of linguistic conventions, is a frequent subject of the expatriate writers' contemplation. As Eva Hoffman, a Polish-born North American author, meditates on the emotional cost of re-creating herself in a foreign language, her recollections explicitly represent the same archetypal state as Conrad's Captain finds himself in:

The worst losses come at night. As I lie down in a strange bed in a strange house -- my mother is a sort of housekeeper here, to the aging Jewish man who has taken us in return for her services -- I wait for that spontaneous flow of inner language which used to be my nighttime talk with myself, my way of informing the ego where the id had been. Nothing comes. Polish, in a short time, has atrophied, shriveled from sheer uselessness. Its words don't apply to my new experiences; they're not coeval with any of the objects, or faces, or the very air I breathe in the daytime. In English, words have not penetrated to those layers of my psyche from which a private conversation could proceed. This interval before sleep used to be the time when my mind became both receptive and alert, when images and words rose up to consciousness, reiterating what had happened during the day, adding the day's experiences to those already stored there, spinning out the thread of my personal story. Now, this picture-and-word show is gone; the thread has been snapped. I have no interior language, and without it, interior images -- those images through which we assimilate the external world, through which we take it in, love it, make it our own -- become blurred too (Hoffman 107-108).

Thus, acquiring the freedom of choice in self-expression through appropriating another language, the expatriate faces two choices. One of them is expressing oneself in the new

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<sup>10</sup> Hampson's interpretation of the Captain's inability to give the commands as the result of "a life of sharp anxieties and sudden concealments" does not go against the text, but, being too general, it leaves the questions about the content of the protagonist's anxieties and concealments unanswered. In Hampson's interpretation, the Captain looks like a psychiatric patient: "his nerves begin to go, and his men regard his strange behavior with suspicion: they assume he is either mad or drinking" (192). Staying with Hampson's understanding of the Captain's predicaments, the reader finds it hard to understand where by the end of the story the protagonist will be able to find energy to take control of his destiny, since all his behavior in the story is essentially self-destructive.

language, foreign, offering no connection between the concepts and instincts, reactions, knowledge and therefore restricting creativity. The other is remaining within the realm of one's mother tongue into which one can not translate associations and existential experience in the adopted culture linguistically or otherwise. "I'm not filled with language anymore," continues Eva Hoffman, "and I have only the memory of fullness to anguish me with the knowledge that, in this dark and empty state, I don't really exist" (Hoffman 108).

Contemplating the connection between the cultural and linguistic duplicity, Eva Hoffman comments on her choice of language to write in her diary:

For my birthday, Penny gives me a diary, complete with a little lock -- the visible symbol of the privacy in which the diary is meant to exist -- that creates my dilemma. If I am indeed to write something entirely for myself, in what language do I write? Several times, I open the diary and close it again. I can't decide. Writing in Polish at this point would be like resorting to Latin or Ancient Greek -- an eccentric thing to do in a diary, in which you're supposed to set down your most immediate experiences and unpremeditated thoughts in the most unmediated language. Polish is becoming a dead language, the language of the untranslatable past. But writing for nobody's eyes in English? That's like doing a school exercise, or performing in front of yourself, a slightly perverse act of self-voyeurism.

Because I have to choose something, I finally choose English. If I'm to write about the present, I have to write in the language of the self. As a result, the diary becomes surely one of the most impersonal exercises of that sort produced by an adolescent girl. These are no sentimental effusions of rejected love, eruptions of familial anger, or consoling broodings about death. English is not the language of such emotions. Instead, I set down my reflections on the ugliness of wrestling; on the elegance of Mozart, and on how Dostoyevsky puts me in mind of El Greco. I write down Thoughts. I Write.

There is a certain pathos to this naive snobbery, for the diary is an earnest attempt to create a part of my persona that I imagine I would have grown in Polish. In the solitude of this most private act, I write, in my public language, in order to update what might have been my other self. The diary is about me and not about me at all. But on one level, it allows me to make the first jump. I learn English through writing, and, in turn, writing gives me a written self. Refracted through the double distance of English and writing, this self -- my English self -- becomes oddly objective; more than anything, it perceives. It exists more easily in the abstract sphere of thoughts and observations than in the world. For a while, this impersonal self, this cultural negative capability, becomes the truest thing about me. When I

write, I have a real existence that is proper to the activity of writing -- an existence that takes place midway between me and the sphere of artifice, art, pure language. This language is beginning to invent another me. However, I discover something odd. It seems that when I write (or, for that matter, think) in English, I am unable to use the word "I." I do not go as far as the schizophrenic "she" -- but I am driven, as by compulsion, to the double, the Siamese-twin "you" (Hoffman 120-121).

While Eva Hoffman concentrates on the internal aspect of her duplicity, Joseph Brodsky contemplates the external aspect of the writer's double self relationship with the adopted culture. The Russian-born writer, who lived in North America, shares his own duplicity with the reader as he faces the same linguistic dilemma:

Given the lunacy this piece deals with, it ought to be written in a language other than English. The only option available to me, however, is Russian, which is the very source of the lunacy in question. Who needs tautology? Besides, several of the assertions I am going to make are, in their turn, quite loony, and best checked by a language that has a reputation for being analytical. Who wants to have his insights ascribed to the vagaries of some highly inflected language? Nobody, perhaps, save those who keep asking what language I think or dream in. One dreams in dreams, I reply, and thinks in thoughts. A language gets into the picture only when one has to make those things public. This, of course, gets me nowhere. Still (I persevere) since English isn't my mother tongue, since my grip on its grammar isn't that tight, my thoughts, for example, could get quite garbled. I sure hope that they don't; at any rate I can tell them from dreams. And believe it or not, dear reader, this sort of quibbling, which normally gets one nowhere, brings you straight to the core of our story. For no matter how its author solves his dilemma, no matter what language he settles for, his very ability to choose a language makes him, in your eyes, suspect; and suspicions are what this piece is all about. Who is he, you may wonder about the author, what is he up to? Is he trying to promote himself to the status of disembodied intelligence? If it were only you, dear reader, inquiring about the author's identity, that would be fine. The trouble is, he wonders about his identity himself -- and for the same reason. Who are you, the author asks himself in two languages, and gets startled no less than you would upon hearing his own voice muttering something that amounts to "Well, I don't know." A mongrel, then, ladies and gentlemen, this is a mongrel speaking. Or else a centaur (Brodsky "Collector's Item" 19).

Meditating on her cultural duplicity, Eva Hoffman uses the image of Siamese twins, Joseph Brodsky identifies with the centaur, and Conrad used to say that he is a duplex. In *The Secret Sharer*, Conrad conveys the expatriate's problems of linguistic self-expression due to cultural duplicity through the Captain's being "seriously affected"

(Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 47) by his duality to the extent of losing the ease and immediacy of linguistic self-expression.

However, the complexity of the relationships between the parent and the adopted legacy in the expatriate psyche requires peaceful resolution of the conflicting cultural patterns. The outcome of the Captain's association with Leggatt is Conrad's response to the exilic dilemma of unconditional love or complete rejection of one's legacy. Contemplating the role of one's heritage in the turmoil of expatriate life, in *The Secret Sharer* Conrad sees it as the only salvation. He dramatizes it through the hat episode when the Captain, in spite of all logic, puts the hat on Leggatt's head preparing him for marooning. In fact, it is the hat dropped by Leggatt in the sea that saves the Captain and the whole ship from disaster:

I swung the mainyard and waited helplessly. She was perhaps stopped, and her very fate hung in the balance, with the black mass of Koh-ring like the gate of the everlasting night towering over her taffrail. What would she do now? Had she way on her yet? I stepped to the side swiftly, and on the shadowy water I could see nothing except a faint phosphorescent flash revealing the glassy smoothness of the sleeping surface. It was impossible to tell -- and I had not learned yet the feel of my ship. Was she moving? What I needed was something easily seen, a piece of paper, which I could throw overboard and watch. I had nothing on me. To run down for it I did not dare. There was no time. All at once my strained, yearning stare distinguished a white object floating within a yard of the ship's side. White on the black water. A phosphorescent flash passed under it. What was that thing? ... I recognized my own floppy hat. It must have fallen off his head... and he didn't bother. Now I had what I wanted -- the saving mark for my eyes (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 60).

The Captain feels that by dropping the hat Leggatt contributes to saving the ship.

Leggatt's self-containment, like a gift of his legacy, comes as a salvation at the point of impending disaster.

By unconditionally accepting the heritage of his culture, and then overcoming the urge to cling to it, the Captain gains control of his life and fully integrates into the environment in which he felt like a stranger before meeting Leggatt. His union with the

ship, the coda of the story, represents Conrad's ideal of the expatriate's integration into the foreign culture:

Already the ship was drawing ahead. And I was alone with her. Nothing! no one in the world should stand now between us, throwing a shadow on the way of silent knowledge and mute affection, the perfect communion of a seaman with his first command (Conrad *The Secret Sharer* 61).

However, Conrad's resolution of the parent/adopted culture conflict in the expatriate psyche remains an ideal to be aspired to, which accounts for the story's numerous paradoxes serving to dramatize it. The reality of expatriate existence remains in the tension between the two, which, as in the case of Conrad, can be translated into the creative energy capable of producing the different quality of writing which elicits strong emotional response in the reader. With ironic detachment Conrad addresses the most profound and essential human experience: the relationship between the individual and the community. In doing so, he enables the reader vicariously to identify with the protagonist's displacement and reach, as the Captain does, a serenity borne of acceptance.

## 5.2. Doubles in *Under Western Eyes*.

The question of the Slavic countries' relation to the Western world has conditioned and dominated the development of the Slavic political and cultural thought, since the Slavic culture, unlike the Western culture, does not place itself in the center of civilization. This relation contains two opposing movements: national self-awareness and an interest in the West. The contradictory character of the Slavic relation to the West is mirrored in Conrad's *Under Western Eyes* against the background of the social and political reality of nineteenth-century Russia. The novel is, to a great extent, based on Conrad's "general knowledge of the condition of Russia and of moral and emotional reactions of the Russian temperament to the pressure of the tyrannical lawlessness, which, in general human terms, could be reduced to the formula of senseless desperation provoked by senseless tyranny" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 50). *Under Western Eyes* is Conrad's fictional examination of what he calls in the preface to the novel "not so much the political state as the psychology of Russia itself" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 49). Declaring his intentions to focus on the psychology of Russia, Conrad, in fact, analyzes its social aspects. However, as an outsider to any culture by virtue of his expatriate status, Conrad approaches any culture, including his own, analytically.<sup>11</sup> His study of Russia is based on binary oppositions which find their way into the novel through the doubles. Using the doubles, Razumov and Haldin, he dramatizes the relationships between the individual psychology, "the aspect, the character, and the fate

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<sup>11</sup> The analytical character of *Under Western Eyes* has been noticed by Naipaul, who writes that the novel which, with its cast of Russian revolutionaries and its theme of betrayal, promised to be Dostoyevskyan but then dissolves into analysis." He also complains about a "multiplicity of Conrads, and they all seemed to me to be flawed. ... The Conrad novel was like a simple film with an elaborate commentary" (192).



of individuals" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 50), and the political context of the country.<sup>12</sup> Through the relationship between Razumov and Haldin, Conrad shows the opposing social and cultural forces which fight to define the Russian national identity.<sup>13</sup>

The controversy between Razumov and Haldin mirrors the nineteenth-century discourse between the Slavophiles and the Westernizers about the future of Russia. Slavophilism and Westernism were two expressions of Russian romantic nationalism that clashed during the reign of Emperor Nicholas I (1825-55). The Westernizers believed that Russia had to absorb Western social reforms and technological developments because the more advanced Western nations provided a rough guide for Russia's own future. In turn, the Slavophiles who felt that Western reforms damaged the

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<sup>12</sup> Though Conrad's analytical approach implies an attempt at impartiality, the author's heavy emotional involvement with the issues discussed in the novel has not remained unnoticed. Discussing Conrad's failure to be neutral or objective in *Under Western Eyes*, Terry Eagleton writes: "We can note, to begin with, that neutrality in the narrator's sense of avoiding evaluative judgments can, of course, be as much a mode of commitment as explicit partiality: by withholding judgment at a critical point, it can silently endorse a questionable attitude. Aside from that relatively subtle form of deception, however, there are more obvious ways in which the novel's claim to strict neutrality can be less than justified" (23).

<sup>13</sup> Edna Erdinast-Vulkan interprets the Razumov/Haldin relationship in terms of shaping personal identity as "the process of reintegration by the acceptance of doubleness" which is at first unconscious and involuntary. "Razumov's betrayal of Haldin," she writes, "has cost him his treasured sense of individual autonomy and freedom. In his refusal to accept the bond of brotherhood, he has condemned himself to live with the 'corpse around his neck'. Only by accepting the rejected other, by overtly identifying with him, can he regain his former individuality. The metaphysical oxymoron -- which he has had to accept in his need for a father and a name -- postulates that he can become himself only when he becomes that other he has denied, that he can attain a measure of freedom only if he should submit to the bond of brotherhood. The concept of doubleness is, in this sense, a reintegration rather than a split of personality" (117).

Robert Hampson interprets the Razumov/Haldin opposition in psychoanalytical terms saying that "Haldin comes to suggest a repressed part of Razumov, a part of Razumov that has been split off and denied" (176).

soul of Russia held that it was only the three uniquely Russian institutions -- the Orthodox church, the village commune, and the autocracy -- that had enabled Russia to maintain its supposedly superior spiritual nature instead of becoming morally bankrupt like the egotistic, rationalistic West. Many of the Slavophiles' ideas were incorporated into Pan-Slavism in the latter half of the nineteenth century. As a political, religious, and cultural movement, Pan-Slavism attempted to unite the Slavs of Eastern Europe by awakening in them a sense of their ethnic kinship. Pan-Slavists believed that the predominantly Latin and Germanic culture of the West was dying and must yield to the young and vigorous Slavic culture. The growth of German nationalism encouraged russification with its claims that the struggle for survival among the great civilizations required the unification of the Slavs under Russian hegemony -- by force, if necessary. Ultimately the Pan-Slavism engendered national movements within distinct Slavic nations.

Westernization of Russia, which is aggressively continuing into the end of the twentieth century, began with the incorporation of Eastern Ukraine in 1654. The ecclesiastical academy in Kyiv (founded in 1637 by the Ukrainian churchman Petro Mohyla) educated future clergy according to contemporary European neoscholastic philosophical and juridical curricula; its graduates often continued their studies at central and western European Universities. Better trained and more learned than the native Muscovite clerics, the graduates of the Kievan academy were welcome in Moscow. They were first to organize regular schools there (for example, the Greco-Latin Slavonic Academy), and they brought Western political and juridical works and belle-lettres to the Kremlin court. The winds of culture and art blowing from the west also helped change Muscovite tastes in architecture, icon painting, church music, and poetry -- changes in style that are usually labeled Moscow baroque. These foreign and

innovative influences helped smooth the path for the forceful Europeanization that followed under Peter I.

By dint of his driving energy and ruthlessness, Peter I (1682-1725) transformed Russia and brought it into the concert of European nations. The territorial gains, requiring much effort and great expenditures of labor and resources, forced Peter to transform the institutional framework of the state and to attempt a restructuring of society as well. The central administration was streamlined along functional lines: a set of colleges on the European model displaced the prikazy, and a senate of appointed officials replaced the boyar дума; the church was put under direct state administration with the abolition of the patriarchate and the establishment of a Holy Synod (1721) of appointed ecclesiastical members supervised by a lay official. A navy was created, and the army was reorganized along professional Western lines, the peasantry furnishing the recruits and nobility the officers. The local administration, however, remained a weak link in the institutional chain, although it maintained the vast empire in obedience. The peasantry was subjected to compulsory labor (as in the building of the new capital, Saint Petersburg) and to military service, and every individual male peasant was assessed with a head, or poll, tax. By these measures the state severed the last legal ties of the peasants to the land and transformed them into personal serfs, virtually chattel, who could be moved and sold at will.

Other classes of society were not immune from state service either. Compulsory, lifelong service was imposed on the nobility, and their status was made dependent on ranks earned in military or administrative office (the Table of Ranks of 1722 also provided for automatic ennoblement of commoners through service). State service required education, and Peter introduced compulsory secular, Westernized schooling for the Russian nobleman. While resistance to compulsory service gradually forced its

relaxation, education became an internalized value for most nobles who were culturally Westernized by the mid-18th century.

However, Peter failed to reshape the merchants into a Western bourgeoisie, and his efforts at modernizing the economy had mixed results. The clergy turned into a closed castelike estate, losing its spiritual and cultural influence. According to N. Berdiayev, "Peter's reform of the church was a necessity. But it was carried out by violence and with no mercy on the religious feelings of the people" (Berdiayev 10). The weakening of the spiritual influence of the official Church was an inevitable result of Peter's reform and the triumph of Western enlightenment. The limitations of Peter's reforming drive were due to the inherent paradox of his policy and approach: he aimed at liberating the creative forces of Russian society, but he expected to accomplish this liberation only at his command and through compulsion, at a pace that precluded an adaptation of traditional patterns and values. He succeeded in transforming the upper class but failed to create a viable middle class or change the common people; the deep cultural gulf in the long run undermined the regime.

The influence of the West struck primarily the masses and strengthened the privileged classes. According to N. Berdiayev,

By the nineteenth century Russia had assumed the form of an immense, unbounded peasant country, enslaved, illiterate, but with its own popular culture based on faith, with a ruling noble class, idle and with little culture, which had lost its religious faith and its sense of nationality; with the Tsar at the top, in relation to whom a religious belief was retained; with a strong bureaucracy and a very thin and fragile layer of culture (Berdiayev 14).

Russian character by this time revealed the profound contradictions of the country's social and political reality. Russian people were "imperial-despotic and anarchic freedom-loving," "inclined to nationalism and national conceit," "a people of a universal spirit, more than others capable of oecumenic views; cruel and unusually humane; inclined to inflict suffering and illimitably sympathetic" (Berdiayev 14-15). Though

self-contradictory and unhealthy, full of oppression and injustice, Russia of the nineteenth century "was not a bourgeois country and it set itself against the bourgeois countries of the West. In this unique country political despotism was united with great freedom and breadth of life, with freedom in manner of life, with absence of barriers, imposed conventions and legalism" (Berdiayev 15).

The influence of the West on the educated Russian intelligentsia in the nineteenth century gave birth to love of "the people" and to liberationist movements. In the 1860s radical university students and nihilist critics voiced dissatisfaction with the pace and direction of Alexander's reforms, formed associations to propagandize socialist ideas, and student youth "went to people" in 1874-76 to enlighten and revolutionize the peasantry. Repressed by the government, the young radicals turned to terrorism. Eventually a group of Narodniki (populists) called the People's Will condemned the emperor Alexander II to death and after several dramatic but unsuccessful attempts they killed him on March 13, 1881.

Conrad's Victor Haldin represents the populist movement of radical intelligentsia in the stage when it resorts to terrorism as the means of the solution of Russia's numerous social and political problems. Connecting this social force with the origins of Russian communism, Berdiayev attributes this tendency to the influence of the East:

In the soul of the Russian people a struggle between East and West waged, and that struggle is continuing in the Russian revolution. Russian communism is a communism of the East. The influence of the West during the two centuries of its action failed to subdue the Russian people. We shall see that the Russian intelligencia is absolutely non-Western type, however much it swore by Western theories (Berdiayev 11-12).

Victor Haldin's last name in Russian sounds Oriental, and the first and the only time he appears in front of the reader he looks Oriental too:

All black against the usual tall stove of white tiles gleaming in the dusk, stood a strange figure, wearing a skirted, close-fitting, brown cloth coat strapped round the

waist, in long boots, and with a little Astrakhan cap on its head. It loomed lithe and martial (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 64).

Haldin's Astrakhan cap associates him with the historic developments in the South-East of European Russia where the Mongol khans of Golden Horde exercised their control over most of the country for several centuries. The Astrakhan khanate was one of the Mongol centers down the Volga established on the newly conquered territories.<sup>14</sup>

As opposed to Haldin, Razumov is a Westernizer, a young man of western sensibility. Pointing to their differences, Haldin associates Razumov with the West:

Ah! You are a fellow! Collected -- cool as a cucumber. A regular Englishman. Where did you get your soul from? There aren't many like you (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 69).

Razumov ("of reason") symbolically represents Western rationalism, and his life dramatizes the ambivalent way of rationalism into the Russian mentality profoundly influenced by the Eastern sensibility. According to Conrad, rationalism with its assumption that the most fundamental knowledge is based on reason and that truth is found by rational analysis of ideas independent of empirical data, emotive attitudes, or authoritative pronouncements is alien to the Russian mind. That is why Razumov, the young man of no parentage,<sup>15</sup> is "as lonely in the world as a man swimming in the deep

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<sup>14</sup> The Mongolian yoke proved costly in economic terms, because the initial conquest and subsequent raids to maintain the Russians in obedience were destructive of urban life and severely depleted the population. Equally costly -- even to the cities that accepted the conquest, such as Novgorod -- were the tribute payments in silver. Politically the yoke was not as burdensome as it was economically, for the Mongols ruled indirectly through the local princes, and the church was even shown respect and exempted from tribute (enabling it to assume a cultural and national leadership role). The most deleterious long-lasting effect of Mongol rule was isolation from Byzantium and Western Europe, which led to an aggressive inferiority complex which, in turn, led to looking elsewhere for solutions or to the complacency of the survivor.

<sup>15</sup> Erdinast-Vulkan responds to the symbolic nature of Razumov's orphanhood; however, she interprets it in terms of self and external authority: "Razumov's orphanhood is, first and foremost, metaphysical. The psychological quest for a father-

sea. The word Razumov was a mere label of a solitary individuality. There were no Razumovs belonging to him anywhere" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 61). However, in spite of the alienation from his environment, Razumov is represented as a Russian:

His closest parentage was defined in the statement that he was a Russian. Whatever good he expected from life would be given or withheld from his hopes by that connection 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 *Under Western Eyes* 61).

In his dialogue with Haldin, Razumov, expressing his quest for his own place in Russian life, points out to Haldin's emotional connection to his country which he, Razumov, has never enjoyed:

You [Haldin] 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 of 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 [Razumov] 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 *Under Western Eyes* 100-101).

The dialogue between Razumov and Haldin during their only meeting is essentially the controversy over the Russia's way to solve her burning social and

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figure is only a reflection of the need for a sovereign source of authority, a point of reference beyond the protagonist's fragile and isolated self" (110).

political problems; in fact, it is the discourse about Russia's identity. Haldin's romantic idealism pushes him into violent radicalism. Adopted by the Bolsheviks and established as the mainstream political approach, by the end of the twentieth century Russian radicalism has cultivated the species of a Soviet man for whom any measures, however extreme they may have to be, are acceptable as long as they help achieve the desired purpose. Telling Razumov about his preparation for the assassination of the Minister-President, Haldin makes it clear that terrorism has become the essential content of his life:

He told Razumov how he had brooded for a year; how he had not slept properly for weeks. He and 'Another' had a warning of the Minister's movements from 'a certain person' late the evening before. He and that 'Another' prepared their 'engines' and resolved to have no sleep till 'the deed' was done. They walked the streets under the falling snow with the 'engines' on them, exchanging not a word the livelong night. When they happened to meet a police patrol they took each other by the arm and pretended to be a couple of peasants on the spree. They reeled and talked in drunken hoarse voices. Except for these strange outbreaks they kept silence, moving on ceaselessly. Their plans had been previously arranged. At daybreak they made their way to the spot which they knew the sledge must pass. When it appeared in sight they exchanged a muttered good-bye and separated. The 'other' remained at the corner, Haldin took up a position a little farther up the street (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 66).

The central figure in the explosion, Haldin is not a blind follower of external will. In fact, he acts in accordance with his ardent convictions which justify terrorism by the evils of political power. Asking Razumov for help, Haldin transfers the discourse to the spiritual plane as he explains his position to him:

You suppose that I am a terrorist, now -- a destructor of what is. But consider that the true destroyers are they who destroy the spirit of progress and truth, not the avengers who merely kill the bodies of the persecutors of human dignity. Men like me are necessary to make room for self-contained, thinking men like you. Well, we have made the sacrifice of our lives, but all the same I want to escape if it can be done. It is not my life I want to save, but my power to do. I won't live idle. Oh no! Don't make any mistake, Razumov. Men like me are a rare. And, besides, an example like this is more awful to oppressors when the perpetrator vanishes



without a trace. They sit in their offices and palaces and quake. All I want you to do is to help me vanish (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 68).

Razumov, in turn, thinking that "it is more difficult to lead a life of toil and self-denial than to go out in the street and kill from conviction" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 331), stands for the non-violent way of changing the Russian society. He favors Western legalistic ways of resolving existing social problems through reforms. Therefore, the major disagreement between Razumov and Haldin focuses around the justification of the revolutionary violence. As a professional revolutionary, Haldin considers killing people to be "weary work" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 65); for Razumov, the "revolutionary curse" is an "ominous symptom of the time" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 117), and Haldin is a criminal; he believes that "a murder is a murder" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 73). Eagerly desirous of "safety, of an ordered life" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 108), Razumov attempts to make his own contribution to the prosperity of his country. Conrad, who of the two doubles is on Razumov's side, comments that his "quiet, steady, and laborious existence would vouch at length for his loyalty. There were many permitted ways to serve one's country. There was an activity that made for progress without being revolutionary. The field of influence was great and infinitely varied -- once one had conquered a name" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 108).

Haldin's revolutionary zeal is focused on autocracy. He is convinced that the removal of the royal family from the political scene will solve Russia's social problems. Razumov, in turn, sees autocracy as the only force that can ensure the legalistic environment he sees as necessary for change. Contemplating the role of Russian autocracy and recognizing its ambivalent character, Razumov feels that autocracy is unavoidable:

Of course he [Razumov] 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.'

He was persuaded that he was sacrificing his personal longings of liberalism -- rejecting the attractive error for the stern Russian truth. 'That's patriotism,' he observed mentally, and added, 'There's no stopping midway on the road,' and then remarked to himself, "I am not a coward" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 80).

Razumov does not accept Haldin's religious and spiritual justification of the revolutionary violence either. Thinking of Haldin's destructive position, Razumov asks himself, "What is he with his indignation, with his talk of bondage -- with his talk of God's justice? All that means disruption" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 79). Believing in "the man who would come at the appointed time (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 79), Razumov is essentially inviting a benevolent dictator. Haldin and his comrades in arms in Geneva speak the language of democracy, but behind it one can recognize the dictatorial disposition and the promise of violence. Peter Ivanovich, the important figure in the Russian revolutionary circle, holds a Marxist, essentially Bolshevik, repressive discourse about the future of Europe:

'I have never changed the faith I held while wandering in the forests and bogs of Siberia. The great powers of Europe are bound to disappear -- and the cause of their collapse will be very simple. They will exhaust themselves struggling against their proletariat. In Russia it is different. In Russia we have no classes to combat each other, one holding the power of wealth, and the other mighty with the strength of numbers. We have only an unclean bureaucracy in the face of a people as great and as incorruptible as the ocean (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 146).

Conrad also responds to the populist idealistic view of peasants' incorruptibility in *Nostramo* when he dramatizes the downfall of a simple man deemed incorruptible.

Razumov's hatred of Haldin, therefore, is not personal; in fact, Razumov sees Haldin as a conceptual enemy. As he speaks to Councillor Mikulin, he scornfully

criticizes Haldin's essentially utopian views of the Russian social system:

You think that you are dealing with a secret accomplice of an unhappy man. No, I don't know that he [Haldin] was unhappy. He did not tell me. He was a wretch from my point of view, because to keep a false idea is a greater crime than to kill a man. I suppose you will not deny that? I hated him! Visionaries work everlasting evil on earth. Their Utopias inspire in the mass of mediocre minds a disgust of reality and a contempt for the secular logic of human development (*Conrad Under Western Eyes* 127).

Recognizing the danger of radical actions on the basis of ideas, Razumov conveys Conrad's conservative political orientation. For him, social idealism combined with emotional freedom, low political culture is the most dangerous aspect of the Russian character. He comments on this issue in his conversation with the Councillor Mikulin:

Those intellectual fellows sit in each other's rooms and get drunk on foreign ideas in the same way young Guards' officers treat each other with foreign wines. Mere debauchery... Upon my word,' - Razumov, enraged by a sudden recollection of Ziemianitch, lowered his voice forcibly, - 'upon my word, we Russians are a drunken lot. Intoxication of some sort we must have: to get ourselves wild with sorrow or maudlin with resignation; to lie inert like a log or set fire to the house (*Conrad Under Western Eyes* 127-128).

According to Razumov, therefore, in a political environment where people have nothing more to invest their energy in but intoxicating themselves with ideas or alcohol, the ideas of liberty and justice may serve as an inspiration for uncontrolled mass violence. Razumov and Haldin's controversy is Conrad's warning of the national disaster which, unfortunately, turned out to be prophetic. Written in 1912, *Under Western Eyes* conceptually anticipates the major developments of the Bolshevik revolt of 1917, the Civil War and more than seventy years of violent communist repressions.

Razumov's rejection of a revolution as the way to create a better life also reflects his moral position. He feels that "all secret revolutionary action is based upon folly, self-deception, and lies" (*Conrad Under Western Eyes* 117). Conrad reinforces the message

of the immorality of the revolutionary violence through Razumov's entrapment by Haldin's revolutionary activity. Essentially apolitical, Razumov is dragged into major political games of his time against his will and ultimately becomes their victim. Suspected of possible prior conspiracy with Haldin, Razumov is forced into cooperation with the secret police. Unable to offer a reasonable explanation for the way his life begins to develop in the profoundly corrupted environment, nor to distance himself from his own life, Razumov feels all the developments since the appearance of Haldin to be the impact of fate:

He stared in dreary astonishment at the absurdity of his position. He thought with a sort of dry, unemotional melancholy; three years of good work gone, the course of forty more perhaps jeopardized -- turned from hope to terror, because the events started by human folly link themselves into a sequence which no sagacity can foresee and no courage can break through. Fatality enters your rooms while your landlady's back is turned; you come home and find it in possession bearing a man's name, clothed in flesh -- wearing a brown cloth coat and long boots -- lounging against the stove. It asks you, 'Is the outer door closed?' -- and you don't know enough to take it by the throat and fling it downstairs. You don't know. You welcome the crazy fate. 'Sit down,' you say. And it is all over. You can not shake it off any more. It will cling to you for ever. Neither halter nor bullet can give you back the freedom of your life and the sanity of your thought... It was enough to make one dash one's head against a wall (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 118).

Haldin, intoxicated by noble ideals, has turned his life into a mission of saving Russia and, ultimately, the world. As he conveys his vision to Razumov, he reveals his essentially slavophile, and even pan-slavist philosophy of Russia's exceptional role:

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. This is not murder -- it is war, war. My spirit shall go on warring in some Russian body till all falsehood is swept out of the world. The modern civilization is false, but a new revelation shall come out of Russia. Ha! You say nothing. You are a skeptic. I respect your philosophical skepticism, Razumov, but don't touch the soul. 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 *Under Western Eyes* 69-70).

Justifying his mission of saving the world by revolutionary violence, Haldin resorts to the category of soul. In Russian culture, the soul incorporates the depth of feeling and intellectual commitment which reinforces and supports emotions. The famous Russian soul, therefore, reflects the emotional aspect of the sensibility of the culture. Haldin himself, who speaks very much about his soul and the soul of Russia, is unusually emotional for an average dedicated revolutionary. Moved by his own soliloquy on the special mission of Russia, he "burst into tears. He wept for a long time. The dusk had deepened in the room. Razumov, motionless in sombre wonder, listened to the sobs" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 70). Believing in the immortality of his soul and its ability to carry on his mission, and taken over by the romanticism of ideas, Haldin invites death. "I believe in this world that I cannot conceive eternity otherwise than as a very long life. That is perhaps the reason I am so ready to die," he says. He dies as a romantic hero, unrepentant, after four secret interrogatories when he was brought four times before the delegated judges, and nothing could induce him to talk:

The venerable Chaplain of the Fortress being then admitted and exhorting the prisoner to repentance, entreating him also to atone for his crime by an unreserved and full confession which should help to liberate from the sin of rebellion against the Divine laws and the sacred Majesty of the Ruler, our Christ-loving land -- the prisoner opened his lips for the first time during this morning's audience and in a loud, clear voice rejects the venerable Chaplain's ministrations (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 126).

Haldin serves his idealistic political mission with religious dedication. According to Natalia, belief "in the power of a people's will to achieve anything" was her brother's religion (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 157). With the Russian Orthodox church losing its independence from secular power and becoming an institutional supplier of informers for the Russia's secret police, people like Haldin lose all possibility of moral support and guidance. Natalia Haldin and her mother who had the reputation of

liberalism were watched not only by the police-captain in their village, but also by the priest:

But the old priest of the village came one evening in the greatest distress and agitation, to confess that he -- the priest -- had been ordered to watch and ascertain in other ways too (such as using his spiritual power with the servants) all that was going on in the house, especially in respect of the visitors these ladies received, who they were, the length of their stay, whether any of them were strangers to that part of the country, and so on. The poor, simple old man was in agony of humiliation and terror. 'I came to warn you. Be cautious in your conduct, for the love of God. I am burning with shame, but there is no getting out from under the net. I shall have to tell them what I see, because if I did not there is my deacon. He would make the worst of things to curry favour. And then my son-in-law, the husband of my Parasha, who is a writer in the government Domain office, they would soon kick him out -- and maybe send him away somewhere.' The old man lamented the necessities of the times -- 'when people do not agree somehow' and wiped his eyes. He did not wish to spend the evening of his days with a shaven head in the penitent's cell of some monastery -- 'and subjected to all the severities of ecclesiastical discipline; for they would show no mercy to an old man,' he groaned. He became almost hysterical, and the two ladies, full of commiseration, soothed him to the best they could before they let him go back to his cottage (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 161-162).

The institutional crisis of the Eastern Christianity has become a major contributing factor for the possibility of the revolutionary ideology to gain the status of religion. According to Berdiayev, it is a property of a Russian spirit "to switch over the current of religious energy to non-religious objects, to the relative and partial sphere of science or social life" (Berdiayev 19).

However, Haldin's relationship with religion is more complex than it looks. His speech is the discourse of a profoundly religious person. At the same time, his religious beliefs, bordering on paganism, inclined towards the person's direct relationships with the divine powers without resorting to any religious institutions, is the spirituality of a Protestant rebel within the eastern Christianity which has never gone through Reformation. When Razumov asks Haldin directly if he believes in God, Haldin

responds evasively. At the same time, he connects his revolutionary activity with the execution of Divine Justice:

My father was a government official in the provinces. He had a little land, too. A simple servant of god -- a true Russian in his way. He was a soul of obedience. But I am not like him. They say I resemble my mother's eldest brother, an officer. They shot him in '28. Under Nicholas, you know. Haven't told you that this is war, war... But God of Justice! This is weary work.'

Razumov, in his chair, leaning his head on his hand, spoke as if from the bottom of an abyss.

'You believe in God, Haldin?'

'There you go catching at words that are wrung from one. What does it matter? What was it the Englishman said: "There is a divine soul in things..." Devil take them -- I don't remember now. But he spoke the truth. When the day of you thinkers comes don't you forget what's divine in the Russian soul -- and that's resignation. Respect that in your intellectual restlessness and don't let your arrogant wisdom spoil its message to the world. I am speaking to you now like a man with a rope round his neck. What do you imagine I am? A being in revolt? No. It's you thinkers are in everlasting revolt. I am one of the resigned. When the necessity of this heavy work came to me and I understood that it had to be done -- what did I do? Did I exult? Did I take pride in my purpose? Did I try to weigh its worth and consequences? No! I was resigned. I thought "God's will be done" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 70-71).

Haldin's complex religious beliefs, as well as his ambivalent political convictions, mirror the complexity of the Slavophile philosophy and its relationships with the Orthodoxy, absolutism, the state, and the people. Out of the three components which served as the foundation of the Russian official system, Slavophiles acknowledged the absolute primacy of the religious principle which for them was the Orthodoxy. The Russian people, they felt, needed to be freed from the distortion brought about by Western rationalism and political absolutism. A State for the Slavophiles was evil and government sinful. They opposed it the realization and development of a genuinely national spirit. Slavophiles considered that Russian people have a religious and spiritual vocation and therefore they "believed in the people, in justice that belonged to the people, and for them the people was first and foremost the muzhik [the peasant], who

kept the Orthodox Faith and the national tenor of life. The Slavophiles were warm defenders of the Commune, which they regarded as the original Russian structure of economic life among the peasantry ... They were decided opponents of the ideas of Roman Law on property. They did not regard property as sacred and absolute; owners of property they regarded as stewards only. They repudiated western, bourgeois, capitalist civilization" (Berdiayev 30). At the same time, the Slavophiles defended freedom of the person, of thought, of conscience and of speech, and they were democrats in recognizing the principle of sovereignty of the people.

Unlike Haldin, Razumov responds to Russia's spiritual and social crisis by developing a rational materialistic individualism:<sup>16</sup> "I want to guide my conduct by reasonable convictions." Recognizing the necessity of the existence of the *status quo*, he considers institutions "rational and indestructible" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 69). Razumov's skepticism allows him to retain a more distanced and therefore realistic view of Russian social processes and makes him a better reader of people's characters. Refusing "to accept blindly every development of the general doctrine" and "to be a slave even to an idea," Razumov declares his aspiration for the absolute independence. This statement conveying Razumov's individualistic mentality, perfectly acceptable in the Western culture, causes his rejection by the Russian communal culture. Having realized that by betraying Haldin and accepting the *status quo* he has lost his independence, Razumov writes to Natalia Haldin:

I suffer horribly, but I am not in despair. There is only one more thing to do for me. After that -- if they let me -- I shall go away and bury myself in obscure misery. In giving Victor Haldin up, it was myself, after all, whom I have betrayed most basely. You must believe what I say now, you can't refuse to believe this. Most basely. It is through you that I came to feel this so deeply. After all, it is they and not I who have the right on their side! -- theirs is the strength of invisible powers. So be it.

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<sup>16</sup> Erdinast-Vulkan observes that Razumov "prides himself on his Western (i.e., rational, and materialistic) outlook" (111).



Only don't be deceived, Natalia Victorovna, I am not converted. Have I then a soul of a slave? No! I am independent -- and therefore perdition is my lot (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 333).

Razumov's confession, the inner culmination of the novel, conveys Conrad's statement that Russia is not ready to accept individualism, and Razumov's bitter fate is the complex way individualism insinuates itself into the eastern communal culture.

Razumov feels no spiritual or emotional connection with the people surrounding him, no "bond of common faith", no "common conviction" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 82). As the rational individualist of the Western type, he has no social support in Russia either, which accounts for the fact that he, unlike Haldin, has neither parents nor family. He associates with autocracy and is highly recommended by the Prince K- who calls him "a young man of promise -- of remarkable aptitudes" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 89) and has "perfect confidence" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 93) in him. This movement of the novel conveys Conrad's perception of Western reforms in Russia which, introduced from the top, have very little support with the common people. Razumov, in the isolation of his "cool superior reason" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 80), feels profound scorn for Russia's Everyman, Ziemianitch. For him, Ziemianitch is "the brute" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 82) who deserves no more than to have a stick broken on his back, which is what Razumov does as he meets him in his usual haunt, "a low-class eating house on the outskirts of the town" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 66). In turn, Haldin, who, like his populist comrades, believes that he "must educate, educate everybody -- develop the great thought of absolute liberty and of revolutionary justice" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 277), enjoys a much wider social support. Both women of the family, his mother and Natalia, ardently share his convictions, and Haldin does not dissociate himself from the people like Razumov does. There is no impression that he, like Razumov, lives in a vacuum. Having selflessly decided to dedicate his life to educating the people, he closely associates with Ziemianitch, whom he calls "a bright

spirit" and "a hardy soul" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 66). His conversation with Razumov where they are discussing Ziemianitch betrays Haldin's idealized views of the peasants as the concentration of natural virtue who need some enlightenment to be able to save Russia from corruption. Even though Razumov does not say anything directly, it is obvious that their views of Russian people are quite opposite:

'And so you have seen Ziemianitch -- brother?'

'I've seen him.' Razumov, remembering the time he had spent with the Prince, thought it prudent to add, 'I had to wait some time.'

'A character -- eh? It's extraordinary what a sense of the necessity of freedom there is in that man. And he has sayings too -- simple, to the point, such as only the people can invent in their rough sagacity. A character that...'

', you understand, haven't had much opportunity...' Razumov muttered through his teeth.

Haldin continued to stare at the ceiling.

'You see, brother, I have been a good deal in that house of late. I used to take there books -- leaflets. Not a few of the poor people who live there can read. And, you see, the guests for the feast of freedom must be sought for in byways and hedges. The truth is, I have almost lived in that house of late. I slept sometimes in the stable. There is a stable...'

'That's where I had my interview with Ziemianitch,' interrupted Razumov gently. A mocking spirit entered into him and he added, 'It was satisfactory in a sense. I came away from it much relieved.'

'Ah! he's a fellow,' went on Haldin, talking slowly at the ceiling. 'I came to know him in that way, you see' (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 96).

Through the opposition of Razumov's and Haldin's political convictions, Conrad predicts the future of Russian national and cultural identity. Haldin's belief in the immortality of his spirit is the statement of the vitality of Slavophile ideals and practices:

'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 *Under Western Eyes* 98).

After death, Razumov thinks, Haldin "entered upon his future existence, long boots, Astrakhan fur cap and all, down to the very leather strap round his waist. A flickering,

vanishing sort of existence. It was not his soul, it was his mere phantom he had left behind on this earth" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 126). Even though for Razumov Haldin is a mere phantom, this phantom (which Karl Marx calls the phantom of communism) in 1917 materialized as a political system which changed the course of the world history.

Razumov's life of suffering through the purgatory of exile symbolically conveys Conrad's understanding that Western ideas, like any ideas foreign to the culture, will have to go a long and difficult way of transformation before they will be able to assimilate in the Russian mentality and be appropriated into the Russian lifestyle. Conrad's reading of this side of the Russian character is close to Berdyaev's, who feels that

Russians possess a particular faculty for assimilating Western ideas and doctrines and giving them an original form. But the assimilation of Western ideas and doctrines by the Russian intelligentsia was for the most part a matter of dogma. What was scientific theory in the West, a hypothesis, or in any case a relative truth, partial, making no claim to be universal, became among the Russian intelligentsia a dogma, a sort of religious revelation (Berdyaev 18).

In this totalitarian and dogmatic way the Russian intelligentsia accepted Saint Simonism, Fourierism, Hegelianism, materialism, Marxism.

As a Westernizer, Conrad invites westernization of Russia, but his warning is geared against the romantically intoxicated infatuation with ideas and their mechanical introduction into the mentality which is not ready for them. Razumov pays dearly for his attempts to approach life with his cool superior reason as he is trapped by emotional connection with the Haldin family and through his love for Natalia/Russia transcends the limitations of his own understanding of reality. Haldin, in turn, counting on his emotional connection with Razumov, through lack of reason proves himself to be a bad judge of political and psychological reality. Razumov returns to Russia profoundly transformed, "free from falsehood, from remorse -- independent of every single human

being on this earth" (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 338). In a way, he becomes like a hermit who attracts pilgrims with the power of his ideas. "Some of *us* always go to see him when passing through. He is intelligent. He has ideas... He talks well, too," says Sophia Antonovna (Conrad *Under Western Eyes* 347). The tension between the Slavophiles and the Westernizers which is symbolically represented by Razumov's betrayal of Haldin, his tortures of remorse and the confession mirror the incompatibility of the two approaches within the Russian culture. The twentieth-century reader can see the doubles in *Under Western Eyes* as the engine for Conrad's fictional study of the origins of Russian communism, as well as his warning against the shortcomings of the Slavophile nationalistic orientation, and the ambivalent aspect of mechanical or forceful westernization of Russia. In *Under Western Eyes*, complex relationships between the two sets of doubles, Razumov and the Language Teacher, on the one hand, and Razumov and Haldin, on the other hand, reinforce Conrad's statement of the incompatibility of cultures implicitly present in all his writing.

## CONCLUSION

### THE AUTHOR IS DEAD -- LONG LIVE THE AUTHOR!

Examination of Conrad's narrative in the context of expatriation reveals the major recurrent patterns which appear in different variations in all of his major works, leaving no doubt about the connection between the author's exilic condition and his choice of literary form and thematic patterns. Conrad's emigre sensibility insinuates its way into the text through the expatriation archetypes. This dissertation has traced Conrad's expatriation archetypes on all the levels of his fiction: thematic choices, narrative structure, and formal organization of the text. Conrad's major exilic patterns can be summarized as having the following features:

1. The protagonist is an expatriate figure (Jim, Razumov, Decoud, Kurtz, the Captain, Yanko Gooral, Verloc, the spy).

2. The emigre protagonist enters a very complex and ambivalent relationship with the parent and/or adopted culture.

3. The protagonist's relationships with the parent and/or adopted culture are dramatized through his relationships with the doubles and/or women.

4. The text dramatizes the clash of cultures, and the underlying foundation of the conflict is the essential incompatibility between the communal Eastern culture and the individualistic Western culture.

5. The outcome of the clash of the cultures is mutually destructive. The protagonist inflicts death and/or major disaster on the people who surround him, or in the case of Janko Gooral is viewed as the threat for the culture, and consequently dies or is destroyed himself (Jim, Razumov, Kurtz, Verloc, Decoud).

6. The protagonist's journey, the major organizational principle of the plot, does not reach any final destination or satisfactory closure.

7. The narrative is laid in an exotic or imaginary setting.

8. The implicit concept of the text is displacement which translates into the characters' extraordinary angst, loneliness, rootlessness, and unease.

9. The complex narrative structure is intended to create the atmosphere of retrospection, which accounts for the overall design of telling the story as the major organizational principle of most Conrad's texts.

10. The expatriation paradigm is reflected in the narrative structure when the text dramatizes the relationships between the expatriate writer and the reader from the parent or adopted culture.

11. Conrad's narrative is highly self-conscious.

12. Symbolic mode is not merely a narrative device but the major organizational principle of the narrative (Jim's jump, silver in *Nostramo*, doubling in *The Secret Sharer*).

On the formal level, expatriation archetypes can be traced in Conrad's use of the doubles which mirror the social and cultural conflicts. Doubles in Conrad are closely interwoven with the female archetypes, and both, in turn, serve to reproduce the expatriate's relationship with his parent culture, on the one hand, and the adopted culture, on the other. Summing up the patterns of Conrad's use of doubles, one can relate them either to the parent culture or to the adopted culture (see Table 1).

The major structural pattern of Conrad's fiction consists in the existence of the two or more sets of doubles simultaneously. In some novels, the protagonist, or an action hero, is developing emotionally charged relationships with men symbolically representing his parent culture: Jim and Brierly, Jim and Brown, Razumov and Haldin, Decoud and Nostromo. In *Lord Jim*, there are two sets of doubles connecting Jim with

his parent culture: Brierly, representing the culture at its best, and Brown, representing the culture at its worst. All the action heroes die or are otherwise destroyed by the double who represents the parent culture at its worst or through association with him (Brown, Haldin, Nostromo). This is Conrad's fictional justification of expatriation. In turn, the double representing the parent culture at its best (Brierly) dies through his association with the action hero, the expatriate figure. This pattern mirrors Conrad's concern that one of the major negative consequences of expatriation is the death of the best in the culture and destruction of its landscape.

The only narrative where the action hero is not destroyed as the result of association with the cultural double is *The Secret Sharer*. The Captain comes close to disaster which would have been caused by his identification with Leggatt, but comes out of the relationship stronger than he was before and able to take control of his own destiny. *The Secret Sharer* breaks Conrad's pattern of the tragic outcome of the relationship between the expatriate protagonist and his parent culture. However, the reason behind the change of an established pattern is Conrad's desire to explore the possibility of a harmonious relationship between the emigre and his legacy, the ideal to be aspired to and never to be achieved.

Very often, simultaneously with the doubles or instead of the doubles, Conrad dramatizes the protagonist's cultural archetypes through his relationships with women. Razumov, Decoud, and Kurtz are destroyed by association with the women they love who symbolically represent the parent culture (Natalia Haldin, Antonia Avellanos, and the Intended). Relationships between the expatriate protagonist and the women never end in happy marriage; in fact, the reader encounters the tragic breakup in the love story as Conrad's statement of the emotional complexity of the emigre's connection, or disconnection, from his parent culture. In *Under Western Eyes*, Razumov's relationship with his parent culture is dramatized both through his association with the double

Action Heroes	Cultural Doubles and Women				Narrative Doubles
	Parent Culture		Adopted Culture		
	Doubles	Women	Doubles	Women	
Jim	Brierly Brown			Jewel	Marlow
Razumov	Victor Haldin	Natalia Haldin			Language Teacher
Decoud	Nostromo	Antonia Avellanos			
Captain	Leggatt				
Kurtz		Intended			Marlow
Verloc			Stevie	Winnie	
Janko Goral				Amy Foster	Kennedy, The Country Doctor

**Table 1. Typology of Conrad's Doubles**



(Victor Haldin) and with the woman who happens to be the double's sister (Natalia Haldin), which contributes to the complexity of Razumov's choices. In fact, Razumov has no tortures of remorse after he gives Victor Haldin to the authorities, and it is only after encountering Natalia that his own actions get emotionally charged as a betrayal.

The protagonist's relationships with the adopted culture are also dramatized both through the doubles and the female characters. The doubles representing the adopted culture are destroyed by the action hero (Stevie dies as the result of Verloc's secret agent activities). In turn, the action hero is destroyed by the female character representing the adopted culture (Winnie and Verloc, Amy Foster and Yanko Goral). Whereas the relationships between action heroes and female characters representing the parent culture never end in marriage, the relationships between the protagonists and women representing the adopted culture always go as far as marriage (Winnie and Verloc, Jim and Jewel, Amy Foster and Janko Goral). However, their marriage is never a happy one, and it is terminated by the death of a hero. This archetype mirrors the complexity of assimilation when the expatriate is permanently threatening the established values of the adopted culture, which accounts for Verloc's intention to blow up the Greenwich observatory. His ultimate defeat in the power struggle with the adopted culture is dramatized through his death from Winnie's hand in this unique turn of the plot in English literature where the protagonist is killed by his wife. In *Lord Jim*, death of a hero is not caused by the female character, since the function of destroying the protagonist is carried out by his double from the parent culture, Brown, and Jewel, therefore, can be spared of this unenvied role.

On the other side of his narrative, between the reader and the action hero, Conrad places a set of narrative doubles which exist parallel to the cultural doubles. The narrative doubles (Marlow, English Teacher, and Kennedy, the country doctor in *Amy Foster*) survive, as opposed to the protagonists, to tell the tragic emigre story. Similarly,

Horatio in *Hamlet* is the only survivor who feels that it is his duty to let the world know the truth of what happened:

And let me speak to yet unknowing world  
How these things came about. So shall you hear  
Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts,  
Of accidental judgments, casual slaughters,  
Of deaths put on by cunning and [forc'd] cause,  
And in this upshot, purposes mistook  
Fall'n on the inventors' heads: all this can I  
Truly deliver (Shakespeare I 185).

Introduced to the world of literature by his father, Appollo Korzeniowski, the translator of Shakespeare, Conrad is particularly sensitive to the role of the writer as the spokesman of the people who have no voice in the society without any mature or otherwise democratic institutions. On the one hand, his narrative doubles, asserting the writer's duty to enlighten the unknowing world, dramatize the exceptional role of a writer in the Slavic world. On the other hand, on the formal level of expatriation discourse, they work as one more way of justifying expatriation when the writer, retaining his role of the observer, has to leave the country to survive and to be able to pursue his vocation.

Having acknowledged the existence of expatriation archetypes in Conrad, one can ask if there are any reasons for earlier critics to have failed to examine what seems to be the obvious patterns of his textual landscape. The deceptively easy answer to this question is of circumstantial nature: since majority of Conradians have been exposed to one culture, they identify with Conrad's exilic condition only on the most general level. However, more importantly, there exists a conceptual predicament which has not encouraged the examination of expatriation discourse in Conrad. Modern criticism since the sixties has been dominated by the post-structuralist premises that "it is the language which speaks, not the author; to write is, through a prerequisite impersonality (not at all to be confused with the castrating objectivity of the realist novelist), to reach that point

where only the language acts, 'performs', and not 'me'" (Barthes "The Death of the Author" 143).

Having proclaimed death of the author, post-structuralists have liberated modern criticism from the tyranny of concentration on the author, his life, his passions, and his role in the text formation. Barthes even suggests that the great achievements of art are the results of the authors' failures, vices, and even diseases, and to give a text "an Author is to impose a limit on that text, to furnish it with a final signified, to close the writing" ("The Death of the Author" 147). Barthes' shift of critical attention from the author to the reader has allowed the development of new approaches to interpreting the text, and the inclusion of the reader has encouraged the exploration of the space between the reader and the narrative.

However, post-structuralist exclusion of the author from the frame of critical reference has created an impasse in modern criticism. Not only is it hard to imagine the reader "without history, biography, psychology" as "*someone* who holds together in a single field all the traces by which the written text is constituted" (Barthes "The Death of the Author" 148), but it becomes obvious when one deals with an expatriate text that the death of the author does not necessarily automatically result in the birth of the reader. Denying the author's presence in the textual landscape has left Conrad's expatriate archetypes untouched, thus denying the reader access to the deepest levels of Conrad's text. Ignoring the author altogether, in fact, results in the birth of an uninformed reader, which, in turn, does not contribute to the reader's understanding of the text.

Buying into the argument that the text belongs to the language and not to the author, one falls into one's own trap when facing an expatriate text. Since an essential part of the author's experience belongs to a different culture and a different language, an expatriate writer very frequently uses the language to express the concepts which do not exist in the culture represented by the adopted language. A significant part of an

expatriate text, as this work demonstrates, is the artistic transformation of reality that is brought by the author from outside the language in which he/she operates. In other words, the expatriate paradigm neither originates in nor is reduced to the language. In fact, it goes far beyond any specific language to support the assumption that essence transcends expression. The critics of the nineties argue against Barthes' false premise that "if a magisterial status is denied the author, then the very concept of the author itself becomes otiose" (Burke 27). The examination of Conrad's expatriation discourse showing the powerful impact of the cultural forces which contribute to the formation of the author and then, in turn, transmutate into the literary patterns calls for reviving the author, returning him to the critical frame of reference, and redefining him as a cultural construct.

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