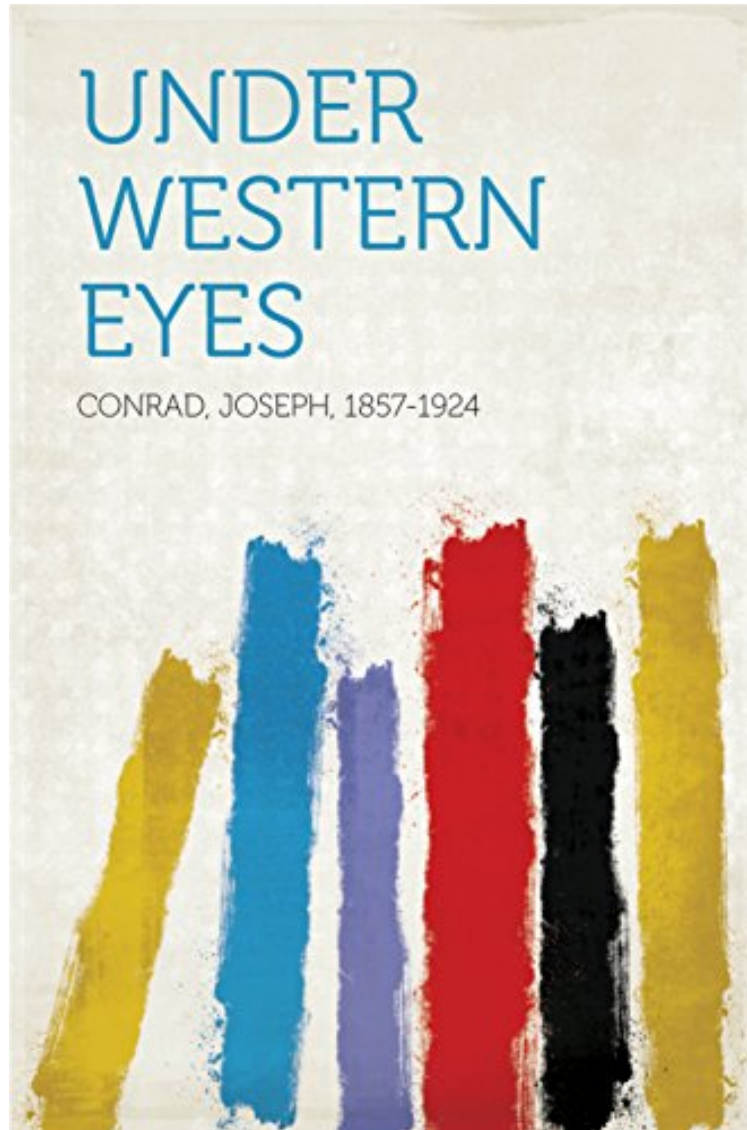


(Library ebook) Under Western Eyes

## Under Western Eyes

*Von Joseph, 1857-1924 Conrad*

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**Von Joseph, 1857-1924 Conrad : Under Western Eyes** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Under Western Eyes:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. In Life, You See, There Is Not Much Choice. You Have Either to Rot or to Burn.Von Tristram ShandyAs depressing as this limitedness of choice may seem however, that is exactly what life as such boils down to , what may be even more depressing is when the decision pounces upon you instead of being taken by you. In short, it is probably worse to be made to burn than to burn. So it happens to Kirylo Sidorovich Razumov, the tragic hero of Joseph Conrads political

novel *Under Western Eyes* (1911), who would rather have gone in for rotting in peace and quiet, but whom circumstances seem to predestine for burning. Razumov, the illegitimate son of a Russian nobleman, uses the scarce means provided for him in order to study philosophy, hoping to qualify for an appointment as a civil servant in tsarist Russia, thereby attaining the ultimate position this autocratic system would hold in store for him. He is well under way making his mark as an excellent student, but one night, fate crushes all his careful plans in the person of Victor Haldin, a fellow student of his and, as it soon turns out, the man who assassinated a high tsarist functionary some hours ago. Haldin, under the notion of a certain trustworthiness inherent in Razumov, has sought refuge in his fellow-students apartment and asks him to help him flee from the country. Razumov, finding that Haldin's accomplice to help him leave Russia, is a carter, now inert with drunkenness, decides to turn Haldin in to the authorities because he does not want to become further entangled with these revolutionaries. However, once his name becomes known to the authorities in connection with the revolution, he cannot go back into his old life. Instead, he is browbeaten into agreeing to be sent to Geneva in order to spy on the revolutionary exiles plans against tsarist Russia. There he very soon meets Victor Haldin's mother and daughter, who have no idea that Razumov is anything but a true friend and a sharer of Haldin's beliefs but the man who caused his execution. *Under Western Eyes* is the dark psychological tale of a young man who is neither void of egoism nor completely base and unfeeling. In fact, Conrad took great pains to retain a sense of moral ambiguity, avoiding taking sides for or against Razumov. We are able to share the young man's sense of isolation due to his as contemporaries would have it ignoble origins, to understand his ambitions and his will to get on in life, and we may also understand his rejection of any form of partnership in Haldin's political course, however justified it might be in itself. Nevertheless, although the novel certainly presents Haldin in rather positive a light there is an abundance of religious allusions, it still points out that the bomb thrown by Haldin also killed innocent bystanders. It is this sense of ambiguity that makes *Under Western Eyes* such an intense experience, because, like Razumov, we find ourselves groping for light and a way out of the dilemma caused by the young man's act of betrayal. The tale is redolent of Dostoevsky's greatest psychological novels, in theme, but also to a certain degree in style, for Conrad has none of his marvelous descriptions of nature here and instead concentrates on the characters' inner lives. However, it also challenges one of Dostoevsky's most dearly-held views, namely that Russia could be healed from her ailments by returning to her Russian values and discarding Western influences. Conrad makes it quite clear, and he seems to be right in this, as is shown by a look at present-day Russia and the continuance of disregarding human rights, that autocracy is something inveterately Russian and that it is only by taking example from the West and its political culture that Russia can overcome the curse of oppression and iniquity. Significantly, the narrator of the story, an English teacher, who spent his childhood in Russia, is regularly at a loss when it comes to understanding the thoughts and values of the Russian exiles in Geneva, and he points out that no one who has grown up in England can really measure the deforming effects of autocracy on the human mind and soul. Conrad not only criticizes the amount of ideological exorbitance on the part of the autocrats, who even need no ideology in order to support their claim to power, but rely on the normative force of the factual. The narrator's major mock is one of the revolutionaries, a certain Peter Ivanovich, an enthusiastic utopian feminist, who nevertheless ruthlessly exploits the women around him in order to further his own interests, and who is a man whose self-righteousness definitely exceeds his intelligence. Summing up, I can highly recommend this novel as another instance of Joseph Conrad's power as a political writer. 1 von 2 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. A tale of personal destruction, remorse, and redemption. Von Chris Willett (cwillett@math.uiuc.edu) I found *Under Western Eyes* to be Conrad's finest work and perhaps, along with *Anna Karenina*, the greatest of novels. The story of a young Russian whose life is destroyed by a misguided Russian revolutionist. The depth of the characters and the moral power of the storyline make this a must read for all (not too difficult). 0 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. perfect! Von olgamaxim@t-online.de almost better than anything! very good! perfect

Kurzbeschreibung  
HardPress Classic Books Series  
Pressestimmen "A century after its publication, *Under Western Eyes* is as compelling and as relevant to our own age as it was to an earlier age of political terrorism. John Peters' introduction and ample appendices offer a magisterial guide to the composition of this novel, which Conrad struggled to complete at the cost of his own mental health, and to the revolutionary struggles that were an integral part of the political, social, and intellectual crises of the decade leading up to the First World War. Like other Broadview Editions, which never skimp on the materials that make for a thorough understanding of the text, this edition of *Under Western Eyes* is the one to read." --Sanford Schwartz "This new edition of *Under Western Eyes* will significantly enhance our understanding of the novel. Peters' introduction is lucid, informative, and extremely well written. The appendices are superbly chosen. Together, they clarify why and how Conrad wrote the novel, and why it was such a major challenge for him, artistically, personally, and psychologically. The scholarly apparatus is brilliantly done; it is concise, compelling, well written, and illuminating. Any and all readers of the novel, even those who think they already know it well, will benefit enormously from this edition." --Stephen Ross  
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ber das ProduktSet in the tumultuous world of Tsarist repression and revolutionary intrigue, *Under Western Eyes* (1911) is a meditation on conflicting loyalties, political ideologies and national identity. This first extensively annotated edition provides a full listing of textual variants, extensive notes and the biographical history of the novel.