

ROAD TO PERDITION: THE MAKING OF AN IDEALIST IN CONRAD'S *UNDER WESTERN EYES*

Yang, Yu-Miao, PhD (First and Corresponding author)
Assistant Professor
Department of Applied English
I-Shou University
No.1, Sec. 1, Syuecheng Rd.
Dashu District, Kaohsiung City 84001, TAIWAN
yyangp@isu.edu.tw

ABSTRACT

Compared to Razumov, whose metamorphosis is the backbone of *Under Western Eyes*, Haldin seems to be a relatively minor character. Although proportionally insignificant, the role Haldin plays in *Under Western Eyes* is pivotal in every aspect. It is his unexpected visit in Razumov's room that rings up the curtain on the world of the Russian revolution, an appearance that produces a tidal wave that sweeps through the world of *Under Western Eyes* even after his death. As an idealistic revolutionist, Haldin is a man who "believe[s] in the power of a people's will to achieve anything", and this faith is so strong that "it becomes his religion". In the end, Haldin is crucified for his political belief. Conducting bloody campaign to achieve his goal, Haldin is presented with a typical Conradian moral dilemma. Tracking Haldin's trajectory from bright prospect to utter destruction in *Under Western Eyes*, this paper thus seeks to examine Conrad's attempt of making an idealist.

Keywords: Idealism, Autocracy, Political Novels.