POLITICAL THEMES IN JOSEPH CONRAD'S UNDER WESTERN EYES AND
THOMAS MANN'S DOKTOR FAUSTUS

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis focuses on the political themes of Thomas Mann's *Doktor Faustus* and Joseph Conrad's *Under Western Eyes*; it explores in particular the similarities in their treatment of political material. Because of their distinct aims and concerns, art and politics approach social reality in different ways. Topical political discourse especially tends to simplify and systematize life, whereas literature retains and emphasizes its complexities and ambiguities. An examination of Thomas Mann's and Joseph Conrad's non-fictional writings and biographical background indicates that the two authors held political views which were often biased and simplistic. Their fiction, however, mirrors political reality in all its complexity. *Doktor Faustus* and *Under Western Eyes* present and dramatize political problems without offering solutions or one-sided views. Through Adrian Leverkühn and Razumov, the essentially demonic nature of the German and Russian national character is investigated. Leverkühn is the symbol and culmination of Germany's cultural history, and his pact with the devil is a metaphor for Germany's movement towards Nazism. Razumov is a typical Russian whose fate embodies the dilemma of a country torn between cynical autocracy and lawless revolution. However, Leverkühn's and Razumov's involvement with the anti-rational and demonic is not unequivocally condemned. The novels also bring out forcibly the sterility and complacency of Western civilization. Western values are represented by the narrators, Zeitblom and the language teacher, whose criticism of Leverkühn and Razumov is always tinged with their own humanistic tradition. While Mann and Conrad offer an indictment of political systems which threaten the freedom of the individual, they also express a deep-seated scepticism of all political solutions.
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A NOTE ON REFERENCES

The edition of Conrad's Under Western Eyes cited throughout is that of the Collected Edition published by J.M. Dent and Sons, Ltd.

The edition of Mann's Doktor Faustus cited throughout is that of the Gesammelte Werke published by S. Fischer Verlag.

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Chapter I

Introduction

Joseph Conrad's reputation in Germany developed slowly and in a rather unusual way. Before his death in 1924, Conrad's name was practically unknown in Germany, and even obituaries in German newspapers were short and uninformed. Recognition did not begin until the second half of the nineteen twenties and was followed, in the thirties, by a real surge of interest. Of the seven books published on Conrad in German before 1970, one appeared in 1926, one in 1959, and the other five in the thirties. During the forties, however, Conrad's popularity was again minimal and publications about him stopped almost completely. Finally, after the forties, Conrad's reputation in Germany was assured. The reasons for the fluctuations are complex. But it seems relatively certain that the initial lack of interest can be attributed to two related factors. First, the then prevalent intellectual snobbishness in Germany was inherently hostile to Conrad's adventure plots. Secondly, Germany was not a sea nation and Conrad's sea settings, totally alien to German experience, were undoubtedly too strange to arouse interest. There were of course some exceptions to the general neglect and misunderstanding of Conrad's genius. The most prominent of these was Thomas Mann who was an early and perceptive reader of Conrad's works. Indeed, Mann was particularly instrumental in bringing about an eventual change in attitude toward Conrad. In 1926, the renowned publishing house S. Fischer decided to publish and advertise Conrad in Germany. The first works to appear were The Secret Agent, Chance, The Shadow-Line, and Youth. The decision to introduce two long psychological "land" novels, followed only then by two shorter sea stories, was obviously a concession to
German literary taste. S. Fischer further insured Conrad's success by soliciting Thomas Mann for the introduction to The Secret Agent and Jacob Wassermann for that to The Shadow-Line. The prestigious patronage Conrad's novels received obviously attracted the attention of many critics who from then on commented abundantly on Conrad's achievement.

Mann not only admired Conrad but also found that he had many things in common with him. During a long stay at an American hospital, Mann concentrated on Conrad's novels because he detected a certain affinity between them and his own Doktor Faustus: "...so schienen noch immer die Romane Conrads die dem gegenwärtigen Stadium meines eigenen 'Romans' angepassteste oder doch am wenigsten störende Unterhaltung zu sein..." It is interesting to note that Mann apparently admired Conrad for the adventure settings which alienated most other German readers. He describes his fascination with Conrad as follows:

...ich hatte mit Lord Jim begonnen, fuhr fort mit Victory und las in Wochen die ganze Reihe dieser Romane durch, unterhalten, beeindruckt und als Deutscher irgendwie beschämt durch eine männliche, abenteuerliche und sprachlich hochstehende, psychologisch-moralisch tiefe Erzählkunst, wie sie bei uns nicht nur selten ist, sondern fehlt."

Mann's interest in Conrad was, in his own words, first aroused when he listened to John Galsworthy lecture on Conrad and Tolstoy, and when he heard that André Gide "Englisch gelernt habe ausdrücklich, um Conrad im Original lesen zu können." It seems that Mann's enthusiasm for Conrad remained constant throughout his life. In 1951, four years before his death, Mann still maintained that Conrad was a genius. Countering frequent claims that he, Thomas Mann, is the "foremost novelist of the age," he explained:

I am no such thing; Joseph Conrad was, as people ought to know. I could never have written Nostromo, nor the magnificent Lord Jim; and if he in turn could not have written The Magic Mountain or Doctor Faustus, the account balances out very much in his favor."
Although this statement no doubt contains some false modesty on Mann's part, it demonstrates clearly that Conrad was one of his favorite authors. Mann was above all fascinated by Conrad as "ein Erzählerphänomen." And, although he underestimated Conrad's intellectual depth, he felt that other qualities amply compensated for this: "Er ist ein Erzähler, der zu viel äusseres Leben aufgenommen hat, um sehr innerlich zu sein. Aber er ist ein Mann und sehr oft ein wahrer Dichter." From the evidence in letters and "Die Entstehung des Doktor Faustus," one can conclude that Mann thoroughly appreciated Conrad's achievement.

In view of Mann's avowed admiration of Conrad, it is surprising that few critics have concentrated on possible connexions between Mann's and Conrad's works. The Conrad bibliographies list only four relatively short studies on similarities between Mann and Conrad. Harvey Gross looks at Death in Venice and Heart of Darkness through Freud's Civilization and its Discontents; LB. Addison also concentrates on the sublimation of the ego in the same two novels; Julian B. Kaye has contributed an interesting though rather superficial study of Doktor Faustus and Under Western Eyes; and Jacqueline Viswanathan discussed point of view in Wuthering Heights, Under Western Eyes, and Doktor Faustus. None of these critics claims a direct influence of Conrad on Mann—such an influence would indeed be difficult to establish—but they evidently feel that there is sufficient evidence for at least the argument for an imaginative affinity between the two authors. Kaye is perhaps too hasty in calling Under Western Eyes a "source" for Doktor Faustus but the following point is nevertheless well taken:

It is obvious that Under Western Eyes is but one source, albeit an important one, of Mann's encyclopaedic synthesis of European history and culture. But it is instructive to observe one writer using the literary experience of another to stimulate his own imagination.
An obvious point of contact between Mann and Conrad is that they are both critics of civilization. Especially *Death in Venice* and *Heart of Darkness* can be seen as "allegories of culture" that can be read "in the old, rich moral way." But the political themes in *Doktor Faustus* and *Under Western Eyes* raise moral problems which also illustrate the deficiencies of civilization. They show in particular that the ills of twentieth-century society and culture cannot be solved politically. There is perhaps no better way to illustrate the tragedy of the modern predicament than the frustrating conclusion that no external (political) influences can either arrest or alter the course of history.

A potential danger in *Doktor Faustus* and *Under Western Eyes* is the use of a political theme in literature. It is generally believed that the basic assumptions that politics, on the one hand, and literature, on the other, make about man and the world are at odds. Politics is narrowly systematic and tries to offer absolute answers, whereas literature is ingeniously complex and demonstrates the illusory nature of definite solutions. How can such contradictory tendencies be reconciled? Fixed ideological beliefs have to be sacrificed to art's more flexible and complex vision of reality. The personal, political prejudices Mann and Conrad betray in non-fictional statements are transcended in *Doktor Faustus* and *Under Western Eyes*. The novels refrain from endorsing any political system and investigate instead the workings of politics as a general human phenomenon. The political situations Mann and Conrad depict in *Doktor Faustus* and *Under Western Eyes* are not assessed according to simplistic political prejudices but take into account the complexities and ambiguities inherent in all human manifestations. The object of this study is to show that the contradiction between political and literary aspects can be resolved successfully. By means of similar imaginative and technical solutions, Mann and Conrad
achieve in Doktor Faustus and Under Western Eyes a balance between the political concerns and the richness of human experience.

In order to appreciate fully the merits of Doktor Faustus and Under Western Eyes as political novels, the problems associated with political themes in literature must be considered carefully. The first chapter will therefore concentrate on the problems of the political novel. This chapter does not pretend to be an exhaustive analysis of the political novel; its aim is merely to give a general idea of the challenge this type of literature presents. Since one of the major difficulties the political novelist faces is the necessity to transcend his personal bias in favor of a relatively objective view, special emphasis will be placed on the political opinions Mann and Conrad manifest in non-fictional sources. Mann's political position is easily established because he wrote extensively on political issues. But Conrad's attitude is more difficult to pinpoint. Although he has left some political documents, a complete picture of his views has to be inferred with the help of additional biographical information. The juxtaposition of Mann's and Conrad's political attitudes will also reveal that the two authors adhered to similar conservative principles. This knowledge is crucial to any intelligent evaluation of the political implications in Doktor Faustus and Under Western Eyes. The first chapter will thus suggest the challenging nature of the political novel and provide a political profile of Mann and Conrad which will furnish a useful background to the study of Doktor Faustus and Under Western Eyes.

The other two chapters will focus on the novels themselves. The discussion will center on the fundamental opposition between rational and anti-rational responses to the world, and on their political consequences. Mann and Conrad evaluate the political situation in Germany and Russia from two antithetical sides. Leverkühn and Razumov, the demonic heroes of
Doktor Faustus and Under Western Eyes, are seen through the rational eyes of Zeitblom and the language teacher. The temperamental gap between hero and narrator permits a reciprocal appraisal of Russia or Nazi Germany and of Western civilization. It is not a coincidence that Mann and Conrad resorted to the same narrative technique; their choice was imposed by the particular political intention. The discussion of Leverkühn and Razumov in the second chapter, and of Zeitblom and the language teacher in the third, will illustrate the advantages of the narrative technique for meeting the complex challenge of the political novel.

The second chapter will discuss Leverkühn as the symbolic German and Razumov as the typical Russian. Leverkühn symbolizes the culmination of Germany's cultural achievements and, at the same time, he anticipates and even prepares the way for Nazism. Mann thereby suggests that Germany's best qualities—its cultural and intellectual achievements—were tragically destined to cause the country's political ruin. Razumov, however, does not symbolize his country but is a typical Russian whose fate illustrates the predicament of a country torn between the equally illogical forces of autocracy and revolution. The representative quality of the heroes, however, indicates that both Mann and Conrad felt that the political consequences have their source in the national character. Leverkühn's decisions are determined by his identification with the mythical Faust figure and by Germany's need for a cultural renewal. His music grows out of the dialectical progress of Germany's cultural history and represents a direct response to the country's modern reality. Razumov's actions are motivated by less sophisticated influences. He reacts primarily to external circumstances. But his reactions are conditioned by the knowledge of the peculiarly Russian nature of these circumstances. His mind works in accordance with an instinctual understanding of the Russian soul. In both Doktor Faustus and
Under Western Eyes, the hero's fate is clearly determined by forces over which he has no control. This wins the sympathy of both the reader and the author. Indeed, Leverkühn and Razumov are both condemned and saved by their authors. Mann's and Conrad's equivocal attitude toward their heroes thus suggests that a clear and definite moral judgement of Germany and Russia is ultimately impossible.

The moral ambiguities inherent in any political situation are further underlined by the often unfavorable treatment of the humanistic and democratic Western tradition. Zeitblom and the language teacher are contrasted with Leverkühn and Razumov so that their Western values can function as a moral yardstick for Nazi Germany and Russia. But this yardstick is itself suspect. Mann and Conrad are often overtly ironic toward their narrators and thereby undercut the assessments Zeitblom and the language teacher offer. The narrator's position in both Doktor Faustus and Under Western Eyes is particularly undermined by his myopic vision and by the inadequacy of his own Western values. The hero naturally gains in stature every time the narrator or his value system are shown to be deficient. The narrator's limited understanding of the hero's world obviously weakens many of his negative implications. Similarly, the dangerous and evil political solutions, for which Nazi Germany and Russia are condemned, appear less objectionable when compared with the mediocrity and complacency of Western society. The conclusion one must draw from the narrator's function in Doktor Faustus and Under Western Eyes is again that the political situation they depict does not admit easy answers because it is complex and often enigmatic. No alternative is absolutely superior to all the others so that the two novels demonstrate the inadequacies of all political solutions.
Footnotes


3 Ibid., p. 273.


6 Mann, Gesammelte Werke, X, 645.


10 Kaye, p. 65.
Leverkuhn and Razumov are called "demonic" in that they manifest some of the characteristics associated with Nietzsche's dionysian hero. Partly modelled on Nietzsche's life, Leverkuhn is a prime example of the Dionysian hero. Of Conrad's heroes, Kurtz of *Heart of Darkness* would be the most dionysian. But although Razumov lacks the genius of both Leverkuhn and Kurtz, he nevertheless shares enough of their irrational and evil tendencies for the term "demonic" to be applied to him also.
In speaking of the "political novel," a critic immediately faces the problem of classification. In *Politics and the Novel*, Irving Howe suggests a pragmatic solution to this problem. Pointing out that "such loose terms as the political or the psychological novel" can hardly be defined as genres because they "do not mark any fundamental distinctions of literary form," he proposes:

Perhaps it would be better to say: a novel in which we take to be dominant political ideas or the political milieu, a novel which permits this assumption without thereby suffering any radical distortion and, it follows, with the possibility of some analytical profit.

Unlike George Orwell in *Animal Farm* or in *1984*, Thomas Mann and Joseph Conrad did not support or oppose any one political system. Their novels are not as exclusively dominated by a political idea as Orwell's. For them, politics was primarily a vital aspect of culture. *Doktor Faustus* and *Under Western Eyes* use the political theme above all to illustrate certain truths about man and his world. The ethical and metaphysical examinations, however, take place in a "political milieu" and a political analysis imposes itself. In fact, *Doktor Faustus* and *Under Western Eyes* cannot be discussed meaningfully outside the political realm.

Political themes in literature are viewed today with much suspicion. Critics and writers feel that literature and politics are incompatible because either the political commitment is detrimental to aesthetic values or pure aestheticism is morally and socially irresponsible. The uneasiness about political themes in literature is a relatively recent phenomenon. In England, the eighteenth-century political satirists were not aware of the
problematical nature of their literature. Even early nineteenth-century political literature was not really conscious of itself. In Dickens, for instance, the social and political interests merge harmoniously with aesthetic considerations. What George Woodcock says about Hazlitt applies no doubt to many other figures of that time:

For Hazlitt there was never any problem of making a choice between politics and literature, like that which has faced many contemporary writers. He saw the two forms of writing merely as differing expressions of the same attitude towards the world.3

The same can be said of eighteenth-century German literature. Schiller's political dramas, for instance, show no trace of aesthetic anxiety. But in nineteenth-century Germany, the group "Junges Deutschland" is at least intuitively aware of a gap between politics and literature. The "Jung-deutschen" are known both as polemical pamphleteers and as romantic poets. Their attitude is characterized by a "Zwiespalt von positiver, traditionsgebundener dichterischer und traditionsverneinender, negativer feuilletonistischer Aussage." The most prominent representative of the "Junges Deutschland" group was no doubt Heinrich Heine, whose bitter and vehement political pamphlets contrast strangely with his lyrical poetry. Even Georg Büchner, a writer of social dramas like Dantons Tod (1835), Leonce und Lena (1879), and Woyzeck (1879), contributed to a political pamphlet, Der hessische Landbote, although he was not associated with the "Junges Deutschland" group. But basically, the highly self-conscious scepticism toward politics in art did not awaken in either England or Germany until the turn of the century.

The tension between literature and politics was especially apparent in arguments for and against the autonomy of art. The problem was debated with particular passion in the early decades of the twentieth-century when the neo-romantic theory of art for art's sake was opposed to the nineteenth-
century conception of literature as a criticism of life. Referring to

Stephen Spender, B. Bergonzi has described the two trends as follows:

Another usage has been suggested by Stephen Spender, who makes a distinction between the Modern and the Contemporary: in literature the Modern is marked by aesthetic concentration, imaginative intensity and boldness, a stress on individual sensibility, a corresponding indifference to purely social values, and a certain contempt for the recent past (which may, however, be associated with attachment to a 'tradition' embodying the more remote past); the Contemporary writer, on the other hand, is not very interested in artistic innovation. He is positively involved with the world he lives in, is a serious commentator on it and is inclined to activist and progressive social attitudes. Such writing is perpetually in danger of declining into journalism. If Eliot and Pound and Joyce and Lawrence offer clear, though sometimes conflicting, versions of the Modern, the Contemporary can be represented by Shaw and Wells and Galsworthy and the Georgian poets; and, for that matter, by most living English novelists.5

The historical situation determined which of the two attitudes was dominant. The whole problem, however, is too complex for discussion here, especially because the exponents of one attitude tend to interpret the literary climate according to their own bias. Orwell, for instance, argued in "The Frontiers of Art and Propaganda" that the advent of fascism inevitably put an end to the aesthete's social isolation:

In a world in which Fascism and Socialism were fighting one another, any thinking person had to take sides, and his feelings had to find their way not only into his writings but into his judgements on literature. Literature had to become political, because anything else would have entailed mental dishonesty.6

But, on the other hand, John W. Aldridge's retrospective evaluation of the same period in literature sums up the aesthetes' feelings as follows:

In witness of this we have the thoroughly depressing experience of the thirties. Then we elevated quantities of third-rate tractarian work to prominence simply because it articulated the right social and political attitudes, while writers of first-rate novels having to do with subjects other than the sufferings of the proletariat and the corruption of the capitalistic system
tended to be either ignored or dismissed as "irrelevant" and "irresponsible."

Great literature is of course both aesthetically and socially responsible. Orwell was well aware of this when he maintained that "Aesthetic scrupulousness is not enough, but political rectitude is not enough either."

The famous Ezra Pound case illustrates best the distortions resulting from a one-sided interpretation of art's task. In an article discussing the Pound case, Theodore Ziolkowski points out that Pound was awarded the Bollinger Prize in 1949 because his poetry was evaluated by an aesthetically oriented committee. But in 1972, Pound was turned down for the Emerson-Thoreau medal because this time he was judged on his political opinions rather than on his artistic achievement. Ziolkowski therefore concludes that "'Aesthetic scrupulousness' awarded the Bollinger Prize to Pound, while 'political rectitude' took away the Emerson-Thoreau medal." In Germany, aesthetic and socially committed movements also coexisted uneasily. Naturalism expressed the social problems of industrialization, and although Gerhardt Hauptmann, its main exponent, was not motivated by social problems alone, he depicted above all the misery of the lower classes. Expressionism was also a protest against industrialization and the impending holocaust of the Second World War. Especially the poetry of Georg Heym is permeated by the apocalyptic fear of mass society and war. But, during the same period, New Classicism looked to the past and revived classical forms. Stephan George's poetry addresses itself to an intellectual elite and experiments extensively with form. New Romanticism also turned against the social consciousness of the present and immersed itself in the traditional values of the past. Hugo von Hoffmannsthal felt strongly that it is the artist's task to preserve the cultural heritage so that his work is characterized by a "bürgerliche 'Spätzeitstimmung' mit ihrem elegisch-ästhetischen Schmelz."
Most of the twentieth-century writers were politically conservative. This is even true of Germany's literary elite during the Hitler period. Although Fascism inflicted much suffering and often death on those who remained in Germany and uprooted those who left, the majority of German writers stayed politically to the Right. Their literature often sought a new transcendence (Gottfried Benn) or escaped into religious hope (Reinhold Schneider). With the notable exception of Brecht, German writers looked nostalgically back to Germany's cultural heritage and, in order to dissociate themselves and their tradition from Hitler's Germany, they differentiated between a good and a bad Germany. This differentiation permitted them to be conservatives or even reactionaries and remain, at the same time, opposed to Nazism.

In England, the explicitly or implicitly conservative tendencies of prominent figures like Pound, Yeats, T.S. Eliot, D.H. Lawrence, and Wyndham Lewis have puzzled many critics. There has been a concentrated effort to explain why the Right is usually more attractive than the Left. In "Writers and Politics," Stephen Spender argues convincingly that conservative writers "put literature before politics, and their first concern was to preserve the civilization without which, as they thought, neither past nor future literature could survive." Spender believes that the "vision of the greatness of the European past" is what decided men like Yeats, Pound, or T.S. Eliot against democracy and progress. David Daiches expands on Spender's explanation when he points out that although these conservatives looked to an apparently more organic social order in the past, they were at the same time hostile to traditional artistic conventions. Daiches sums up this paradox by saying: "So we can get reactionaries in politics who are revolutionaries in art." According to Daiches, the political Right satisfies the creative mind's need for both order and disorder in the fol-
Art, then, is bound up with a concept of order; the avant-garde artist rejects the order of the bourgeois world because it is hypocritical, unreal and stultifying (not necessarily all these things simultaneously) and turns to the visible order of the political Right, often a romanticized and politically inaccurate concept of such an order, rather more often than he turns to the political Left. But this is an oversimplified formula. For in a sense the artist needs disorder as much as he needs order; he needs liberty for his imagination; he needs an independence, even an arrogance, of mind and heart that allows him to trust his own vision implicitly. And here, too, we have part of the explanation of why the modernist artist has turned to the Right more than to the Left.\textsuperscript{14}

The tensions necessary to art threaten to be destroyed by the equalizing and levelling effect of democracy. The artist feared that the result would be artistic sterility. Contemporary art certainly lacks much of the tension which was characteristic of earlier periods. John W. Aldridge attributes the apparent sterility of today's literature to the absence of the individual and unique in a society dominated by mass media which engender stereotype responses to life. Moreover, the population explosion, with the inevitable conglomeration of people into large cities, has turned man into an alienated being without any real social ties. For Daiches, this modern predicament has its source in the Industrial Revolution during which "Man has been dehumanized, individuals have become 'isolated, unrelated.'"\textsuperscript{15}

Aldridge sees the tragedy of modern life particularly in the denaturalized relationship of man to other men and to his own experiences:

It is also undoubtedly true that the conditions of life in a mass society force us to do more and more of our living at secondhand, to relate to experience tangentially and voyeuristically, that because of the sheer density of population and our lack of access to population units of engageable size, we feel deprived of the traditional means of relating to others as private persons, and of valuing our relationship with others just because it is an intimate and precious ingredient of our total relationship to life.\textsuperscript{16}
The conservative writers of the first half of this century obviously foresaw the black picture Aldridge paints of modern life and art. Their views should above all be appreciated as a valid protest against political trends which would inevitably prove detrimental to life and art. With Spender, one may well say: "Often their politics only shows that they care less for politics than for literature."

Both Thomas Mann and Joseph Conrad are clearly "reactionaries in politics" and "revolutionaries in art." Their attitude toward art was basically ambivalent because although they were committed to aesthetic values, they could not subscribe to the amorality demanded by art for art's sake. Mann was perhaps more disturbed and divided about this problem. Although he often supports pure aestheticism, he just as often argues for the artist's moral responsibility. He says, for instance, echoing Nietzsche: "Das Leben selbst ist nur als aesthetisches Phänomen zu rechtfertigen." And, Ernst Nündel concludes from a page in "Forderung des Tages" that art is for Mann "ein aussermoralischer, von Ethik, von Lebensbefehl nichts wissender Gesichtspunkt." But other statements testify just as clearly to Mann's firm belief in the artist's social responsibility. In one instance, he even claims that ethics represents the motivating force of his art:

Was ich suchte, was mich anging, worauf ich Nachdruck legte, war Sittliches, war Moral; und die moralistisch getönte, die moralverbundene Kunst war es, zu der ich aufblickte, die ich als meine Sphäre, als das mir Zukehmmliche und Urvertraute empfand.

Mann's moral feelings are, in his own opinion, the product of his middle class background. He came from a respectable business family and proudly maintained throughout his life the bourgeois values of discipline, duty, puritanism, and solidity. The symbol for this type of "Bürger" is Thomas Buddenbrook whom Mann calls a "Leistungsethiker," a description the author
implicitly applies also to himself. But Mann was also an artist and could never feel completely at home in either the bourgeois or the bohemian world. He therefore identified his predicament with a description of C.F. Meyer by Franz Ferdinand Baumgarten because he saw himself also as "einen verirrten Bürger und einen Künstler mit schlechtem Gewissen."

Conrad did not experience the gap between aestheticism and ethics as acutely as Mann. His belief in both art and moral responsibility never expresses itself in clear terms. Although he argues that in "writing fiction...facts don't matter," he is opposed to an amoral interpretation of artistic freedom: "It must not be supposed that I claim for the artist in fiction the freedom of moral Nihilism." The aesthetic climate of his time obviously strikes him as too polemical and he therefore qualifies his own commitment to aesthetic craftsmanship as follows:

In that uneasy solitude the supreme cry of Art for Art itself loses the exciting ring of its apparent immorality. It sounds far off. It has ceased to be a cry, and is heard only as a whisper, often incomprehensible, but at times and faintly encouraging.

But Conrad was also against the excesses of committed literature and warned his friend Galsworthy against the dangers of being carried away by moral feelings. Unlike Mann, whose opinions on the subject of art and morality are contradictory, Conrad always searches for a compromise. Putting his faith in "a few very simple ideas," he sees in the seaman's code a paradigm for artistic craftsmanship: "And I have carried my notion of good service from my earlier into my later existence." Good service in literature depends on artistic sincerity and on a careful use of words. Conrad points to this double challenge of literature by saying: "The things 'as they are' exist in words; therefore words should be handled with care lest the picture, the image of truth abiding in facts, should become distorted—or blurred." Although Conrad believes in the aesthetic purpose of language,
he still demands that words give a precise image of reality. This attitude underlies particularly the theoretical position in the famous Preface to the *Nigger of the "Narcissus":*

"A work that aspires, however humbly, to the condition of art should carry its justification in every line. And art itself may be defined as a single-minded attempt to render the highest kind of justice to the visible universe, by bringing to light the truth, manifold and one, underlying its every aspect."28

In an observation to Galsworthy, Conrad finally demonstrates, in no uncertain terms, that art for him consists in a harmonious relationship between form and content: "However, the whole of the truth lies in the presentation; therefore the expression should be studied in the interest of veracity. This is the only morality of art apart from subject."29 The preference Conrad seems to give questions of "art" in his non-fictional writings must be attributed to the fact that he takes it for granted that the choice of "subject" is dictated by principles of good taste. The position Conrad adopts, guarding against the excesses of both pure aestheticism and tendentious moralizing, is perhaps best expressed by Conrad himself when he describes himself as an "imperfect Aesthete."30

Aside from a similar attitude toward art, Mann and Conrad also share similar political convictions. Although Hitler's rule of terror convinced Mann eventually that democracy is the only viable alternative to Fascism, his earlier position was, and to some extent remained, conservative. A clear shift from the anti-democratic stance in "Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen" to an acceptance of democracy in later essays and in *Doktor Faustus* must be taken into account in any discussion of Mann's political views. "Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen" is relevant to a study of *Doktor Faustus* because the novel refutes the opinions the political treatise had defended earlier. Zeitblom's humanism, for instance, is permeated with arguments
expressed in "Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen," and the intellectual circles, whose ideas prepare the way for Nazism, often literally echo Mann's own position in the political treatise. No political analysis of Doktor Faustus can in fact afford to neglect a glance at "Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen."

The main thrust of Mann's criticism in "Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen" is directed against democracy, progress, and internationalism. The "Zivilisationsrat," typified by Mann's brother Heinrich, is the symbol for all undesirable changes in the present and the future. His modern values impress Mann as dangerous to German life and art. Mann believes in "Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen" that a healthy atmosphere for cultural achievements could be provided only by an aristocratic system: "Aber 'rückwärts gerichtet,' reaktionär, wird die Kunst immer sein." Like Pound or Eliot, Mann obviously cares more for literature than for politics because his primary political objective is the preservation of the cultural heritage which had produced Bach, Beethoven, Wagner, Goethe, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche. In line with Daiches' explanation of why the political Right fascinates artists, Mann objects to democracy on the following grounds:

Ehre als Lebensreiz gibt es überhaupt nur, wo es aristokratische Ordnung, Distanz-Kultur, Hierarchie gibt; demokratische Menschenwürde ist im Vergleich damit das langweiligste und unlustigste Ding von der Welt.  

The sterility Mann associates with democracy manifests itself especially in the "demokratische Moral" which strives cowardly and without imagination for "Sicherheit, Ungefährlichkeit, Behagen, Leichtigkeit des Lebens..." Although Mann knows that democracy will eventually triumph, he welcomes any resistance to its progress. In "Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen" he therefore views especially the First World War as a legitimate struggle of the aristocratic Germany against the democratic West. The aggressor in this
war is for Mann not Germany but the West whose values threaten to destroy Germany's national character. Mann further supported the First World War because all wars represent a powerful antidote to bourgeois complacency. Echoing Nietzsche, Mann now argues for "eine Erhöhung, Steigerung, Veredelung des Menschen durch den Krieg." Moreover, contrary to popular belief, Mann maintains that man experiences "Zivilisation, Fortschritt und Sicherheit nicht als unbedingtes Ideal" because there remains within him a primeval "Verlangen nach dem Furchtbaren." That the German people are particularly susceptible to the primeval call is brought out by the popularity of Wagner's music. But the typical German is an anti-political intellectual and is therefore not very well suited to warfare. Germany had in the past remained outside the political power struggle in Europe but it is now time that it voice a "gültigen Anspruch auf die Teilhaberschaft an der Verwaltung der Erde, kurz, auf politische Macht." Rome, Spain, France and England have had their chance to rule the world and it is now Germany's turn because it has "die höchsten universalistischen Überlieferungen, die reichste kosmopolitische Begabung, das tiefste Gefühl europäischer Verantwortlichkeit." Mann contends that Germany must seize power even if it does not really desire it. The West, symbolized especially by France, is ridden by impotent rhetoric and only Germany is ready to act and to sacrifice itself for the necessary regeneration of Europe:

Das deutsche Volk, als Volk durchaus heroisch gestimmt, bereit, Schuld auf sich zu nehmen und ungeneigt zu moralischer Duckmäuselei, hat nicht geflennt über das, was die ihrerseits radikal erbarmungslosen Feinde seines Lebens ihm antaten, aber es hat auch an seinem Notrecht auf revolutionäre Mittel nicht gezweifelt, hat die Verwendung solcher Mittel gebilligt und mehr als gebilligt.

But Mann is sadly aware that the war can at best delay the victory of democracy. Expressing the basic futility of struggling against history, he therefore considers it necessary to defend his position in "Betrachtungen
Man kann einen Fortschritt sehr wohl als unvermeidlich und schicksalsgegeben betrachten, ohne im mindesten gestimmt zu sein, mit Hurra und Hussa hinterdrei zu hetzen, — was, sollte ich denken, der Fortschritt auch gar nicht nötig hat.  

History, of course, proved Mann's forebodings right. Democracy, condemned as a terrible leveller of existence in "Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen," is presented later, in Mann's radio messages from America, as the only alternative to Fascism. Ironically, Mann not only learned to tolerate but came to support democracy as the only system capable of ensuring the continuation of literature.

But did Mann change his opinions about democracy as fundamentally as it appears at first sight? Once the Nazis used his own and Nietzsche's views for their own purposes, Mann understood that a conservative position was no longer tenable. Faced with the undesirable choice between Fascism and Socialism, Mann decided that the disadvantages of democracy by far outweighed the advantages of the other possibilities. Opposition to Nazism made it expedient for Mann to leave Germany for Switzerland in 1933. In 1939 he went to the U.S.A, where he felt politically at ease under the strong leadership of Roosevelt. But the McCarthy era, characterized by an atmosphere of irrational persecution, determined Mann to return to Switzerland where he died in 1955. In the most important broadcast from America, "Deutschland und die Deutschen," Mann seeks to explain what has happened to Germany under Hitler. Especially in the context of Doktor Faustus, the following argument is indeed significant:

Eines mag diese Geschichte uns zu Gemüte führen: dass es nicht zwei Deutschland gibt, ein böses und ein gutes, sondern nur eines, dem sein Bestes durch Teufelslist zum Bösen ausschlug. Das böse Deutschland, ist das fehlgegangene gute, das gute im Unglück, in Schuld und Untergang.
Mann cannot forget the cultural triumphs of Germany and deplores deeply the tragic circumstances which had conspired to corrupt what was best in this country. There remains in Mann a nostalgia for the aristocratic past and, in "Die Entstehung des Doktor Faustus" (published in 1949), there are still traces of his old scepticism toward democracy. Speaking of some letters he had received in America, he says:

Einer war dabei von Bert Brecht, streng, vorwurfsvoll, wegen meines Unglaubens an die deutsche Demokratie. Wie hatte ich ihn merken lassen, diesen Unglauben? Und traf der Vorwurf zu? Vielleicht schien mir, dass ein zu fürchterliches Stück Arbeit noch zu leisten sei, bevor deutsche Demokratie überhaupt zur Diskussion stehen würde.41

Indeed, Mann's conversion to democracy never produced a spirited defense of its values like that of aristocracy in "Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen."

Erich Heller is particularly conscious of Mann's half-hearted support of democracy:

For the irritating truth is that he was an incomparably profounder political thinker when he was a 'non-political' man, a political 'obscurantist' and 'reactionary', than ever as the advocate of democracy, progress and, more recently, 'co-existence'...42

Mann could not uphold democratic values enthusiastically because they remained always alien to his deepest convictions. Democracy was for him a compromise and not a conviction, and it is doubtful that he ever fundamentally changed his reservations about it. In the midst of apocalyptic events, Mann simply chose the lesser of two evils. Mann's political attitude is thus basically conservative.

Compared to Mann's systematic political thought, Conrad's political views often appear confused and unclear. It is therefore much more difficult to define Conrad's political position. In his Conrad's Politics, Avrom Fleishman argues: "The record of Conrad's political opinions is a record of growth. It shows no consistent application of first principles,
nor systematic doctrine, nor even a sustained temperamental attitude." However, broadly speaking, Conrad can be defined as a conservative. In the absence of a voluminous political study like "Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen," Conrad's views have to be pieced together from various biographical and non-fictional writings. The resulting picture reads very much like Mann's conservative position. In order to arrive at this conclusion, it is not enough to rely only on Conrad's written statements. His aristocratic background and heritage as well as his later change of nationality had a strong bearing on his political attitude and are helpful for a full understanding of his political views.

Conrad was born as the son of Apollo and Evélina Korzeniowski who were both "members of the Polish landowning nobility." His childhood coincided with a politically very turbulent period in Polish history. The Korzeniowskis lived in that part of Poland which was under Russian rather than Prussian or Austrian rule. The Poles resented the Russian oppression most, and the population in Conrad's part of Poland was especially restless. But although national feelings were very strong, all revolutionary activities were doomed to fail not only because of Russia's numerical superiority but also because of Poland's internal divisions. The "Appeasers," advocating Polish independence within the Russian Empire, were apparently without much influence. But the two strong groups, the "Whites" and the "Reds," could unfortunately not agree on a common policy against Russia. The "Whites" sympathized with a return to a pre-partition feudal system and wanted to solicit foreign help. The "Reds," however, favored radical social reforms and demanded an internal "successful armed uprising." The Polish struggle for independence was further complicated by social and minority problems. The possibilities for a realistic realization of Polish aspirations to freedom were obviously limited.
But Apollo Korzeniowski, a prominent member of the "Reds," was not a realist. A romantic in both his creative and his political efforts, Korzeniowski combined old and new in an often contradictory manner. A. Busza stresses that Korzeniowski was "very sceptical of all new social developments" and concludes: "This may be difficult to reconcile with his revolutionary tendencies, but Apollo Korzeniowski was a man of many contradictions." But, above all, Korzeniowski was a fervent patriot and a firm supporter of Polish "messianism." When the Crimean War raised Polish hopes for independence, he decided to become involved in revolutionary activities. In 1861 he therefore moved to Warsaw where he assisted in the preparations for the 1863 uprising. Unfortunately, he was arrested still in 1861 and imprisoned. The final verdict was exile to a distant province in Russia. Evelina accompanied her husband, probably not voluntarily as Baines contends, but because she "was co-accused in the trial before a military tribunal and sentenced together with her husband." The journey into exile turned into an unbelievable nightmare when both Evelina and Conrad became seriously ill and were nevertheless forced to continue the trip. The terrors of Russian autocracy haunted the Korzeniowskis for the rest of their short lives. Although Conrad was still very young, he was painfully aware of the oppressive atmosphere surrounding him. He later recalled, for instance, the impression the end of a visit to Thaddeus Bobrowski, Evelina's brother, left on him:

I remember well the day of our departure back to exile. The elongated, bizarre, shabby travelling-carriage with four post-horses, standing before the long front of the house with its eight columns, four on each side of the broad flight of stairs. On the steps, groups of servants, a few relations, one or two friends from the nearest neighbourhood, a perfect silence, on all the faces an air of sober concentration....

When Conrad was only seven years old, his mother died of tuberculosis because
she had been denied sufficient medical help and a milder climate. Conrad's early childhood had thus been dominated by the atmosphere of revolutionary activities, the cruelties of exile, and the early death of his mother.

After Evelina's death, Conrad lived with his father in an environment of melancholy and morbid mysticism. Korzeniowski's spirits were crushed after the death of his wife and the failure of the 1863 insurrection. A bitterly disappointed man and suffering himself from tuberculosis, Korzeniowski was obviously not a suitable companion for his young son. Conrad was also without playmates so that his father's library provided the only source of entertainment. Eventually Korzeniowski was given permission to settle in Austrian occupied Galicia where the political climate was less oppressive. But the move came too late for Korzeniowski's health and he died shortly afterwards. Conrad was now eleven years old and an orphan.

Although Conrad was still quite young when his father died, the patriotic heroism of Apollo Korzeniowski must have left a strong imprint on the young mind. Especially the enormous procession at Korzeniowski's funeral, a moving tribute to "a man who had sacrificed his life to his conception of patriotic duty," must have strengthened this imprint. Conrad was further saturated with stories of patriotic martyrdom because, as Z. Najder points out, the 1863 insurrection brought tragedy to both the Korzeniowski and the Bobrowski families:

Stefan Bobrowski was murdered by his right-wing political opponents in a staged duel; his brother Kazimierz was imprisoned; Apollo's father Teodor died on his way to join the partisans; one of Apollo's brothers, Robert, was killed in battle; another, Hilary, was sent into exile.

Moreover, as Busza points out, Conrad was placed briefly under the guardianship of Stefan Buszczynski and Izydor Kopernicki so that "after Apollo Korzeniowski's death, Conrad remained for some time yet under the influence of men similar to his father." The influence of the Polish revolutionary
spirit on Conrad should not be underestimated.

But Conrad was also sceptical of his father's revolutionary hopes and illusions. This scepticism was fostered primarily by his last guardian, Evelina's brother Thaddeus Bobrowski. Bobrowski was in most ways the very opposite of Korzeniowski; he was reasonable, practical, and opposed to revolutionary follies. Although he freed the serfs on his estate, he was in favor of gradual change and was outspokenly anti-revolutionary. According to Busza, he followed his own council and thereby "alienated the reactionaries by his social views and the radicals by his political outlook."

Undoubtedly, the influence of this realist counteracted the romantic impression Korzeniowski had left on his son. A strict man, Bobrowski did not tolerate the disordered life style Conrad had become accustomed to in his father's house. As a youth, Conrad rather resented his uncle's disciplinary pressures so that Busza and Najder speculate that Conrad left Poland partly in order to escape Bobrowski's immediate control. In later years, however, Conrad learned to appreciate his uncle's reasonable and pragmatic outlook on life. Bobrowski was most certainly a father figure for Conrad and may have shaped the writer's attitude to life more than anyone else. At any rate, Fleishman contends that Conrad's political views were basically in agreement with Bobrowski's:

Conrad learned to recognize the obsoleteness of his father's theories both in method and aim. Conrad's subsequent political principles and aversion to radical violence were shaped by his uncle's mentorship, not by his father's example.

However, it would be dangerous to assume that Bobrowski completely replaced Korzeniowski in Conrad's life. In actual fact, both influences contributed to the making of Conrad the novelist: "Apollo Korzeniowski grounded Conrad in Polish romantic literature, whilst Bobrowski in his long letters introduced him to the positivist mode of thinking."
Despite the many differences, an interesting link between Korzeniowski and Bobrowski should not be overlooked: they were both aristocrats. Although Korzeniowski sacrificed his life for a revolutionary cause, he was one of the last exponents of a tradition "dominated by values commonly called 'soldierly' and 'aristocratic', descending from the medieval ideals of chivalry." The conservative Bobrowski was particularly conscious of the incongruity between Korzeniowski's revolutionary commitment and his deep conservative sympathies:

Though he considered himself a sincere democrat and others even considered him 'extremist' and 'red' he had a hundred-fold more traits of the gentry in him...than I had in myself, though I was not suspected, either by him or others, of being a democrat.  

Conrad saw his father very much in the same light as Bobrowski. He consistently denied that Korzeniowski was a revolutionary because revolutionary principles were foreign to his nature. Eloise Knapp Hay depicts Conrad's evaluation of his father's political mood as follows:

"Remembering his father's reverence for the old Republic and his ideal of social cohesion, Conrad protested in some fairness that he must not be identified with revolutionaries whose aim was the liberation of one segment of a nation at the expense of any other. At the same time, profiting from his uncle's instruction, Conrad strengthened his guard against the idealization of society that had induced Korzeniowski to lose everything in a quixotic gamble."

Korzeniowski's revolutionary fervor was stimulated more by the struggle against Russian oppression than by opposition to the social order. It is clear that Conrad learned from both his father and his uncle a conservative respect for Poland's cultural heritage.

Conrad's own conservatism is perhaps best expressed in his hostile attitude toward democracy and progress. Although, like Mann, he came to accept the inevitable triumph of democracy, his initial opposition was vehement. In 1885, in a letter to Spiridion Kliszczewski, Conrad associates
"the day of universal brotherhood" with "despoilation and disorder" and with "the ruin of all that is respectable, venerable and holy." Moreover, listing together "robbery, equality, anarchy and misery," he seems to indicate that they have much in common. Democracy, however, is not only anarchic but paradoxically also leads to "the iron rule of a militarism despotism" because "Socialism must inevitably end in Caesarism." The polemical invective against democracy in this letter finally culminates in the rhetorical question: "Where's the man to stop the rush of social-democratic ideas?"

In other letters, especially those to Cunninghame Graham, similar anti-democratic feelings are expressed more moderately. Conrad was convinced that his prominent socialist friend was a blind idealist. He detected in Graham the same mixture of revolutionary and aristocrat as in his father Apollo Korzeniowski: "Vous,—vous êtes essentiellement un frondeur. Cela vous est permis. Ce sont les nobles qui ont fait la Fronde, du reste." Conrad was deeply sympathetic to Graham's pure idealism but could not share his optimism. A democratic society seemed to him only a wishful dream because he saw man as too weak and selfish for genuine brotherhood: "Into the noblest cause, men manage to put something of their baseness."

Graham's admirable ambitions for man are therefore unrealistic and the friend "misguided by the desire of the Impossible." Conrad defends his attitude with the argument that any genuine change in society must originate in man's inner nature and cannot be enforced by external political pressure. Graham's idealistic socialist zeal therefore exasperates Conrad: "Alas! what you want to reform are not institutions—it is human nature. Your faith will never move that mountain. Not that I think mankind intrinsically bad. It is only silly and cowardly." In another letter to Graham, Conrad reiterates the same doubts about democratic and socialist principles. Stressing emphatically that he is "not a peace man, not a democrat," Conrad
announces proudly that he had abused the students at the University of Warsaw "for their social democratic tendencies." Convinced that democrats are blind to man's true nature, Conrad derides "L'idée démocratique" as merely a "très beau phantôme" and calls "international fraternity" an illusion which "imposes by its size alone." Arguing that "L'homme est un animal méchant," who cannot even live in peace with immediate neighbours, Conrad concludes: "La société est essentiellement criminelle." In Fleishman's words, Conrad evidently "employs the fatalism of the modern age to counteract the Victorian optimism implicit in utopian socialism." Although Conrad's late Victorian despair is, as Ian Watt points out in "Joseph Conrad: Alienation and Commitment," counteracted by a sense of commitment, this commitment is often individual rather than collective.

During the long acclimatization in England, Conrad's anti-democratic sentiments slowly modified and a gradual change in attitude can be detected in his correspondence. The Boer war still irritates Conrad because, as Kipling claims, "it was undertaken for the cause of democracy." But although Conrad believes that liberty "can only be found under the English flag all over the world," he nevertheless concedes that the Boers "are struggling in good faith for their independence." By 1920, Conrad has warmed considerably to the idea of democracy, for he writes in a letter to the National Committee Polish Government Loan: "For the only sound ground of democracy is that unselfish toil in a common cause." During the General Election of 1922, Conrad finally applauds even the establishment of the Labour party as the official opposition:

The Labour party has attained by its numbers to the dignity of being the official Opposition, which, of course, is a very significant fact and not a little interesting. I don't know that the advent of class-parties into politics is abstractly good in itself. Class for me is by definition a hateful thing. The only class really worth consideration
is the class of honest and able men to whatever sphere of human activity they may belong—that is, the class of workers throughout the nation. There may be idle men; but such a thing as an idle class is not thinkable; it does not and cannot exist. But if class-parties are to come into being (the very idea seems absurd), well then, I am glad that this one had a considerable success at the elections. It will give Englishmen who call themselves by that name (and amongst whom there is no lack of intelligence, ability and honesty) that experience of the rudiments of statesmanship which will enable them to use their undeniable gifts to the best practical effect. For the same reason I am glad that they have not got the majority.73

Conrad's confidence in the masses is still qualified but he concedes that with experience a democratic or socialist government is conceivable. From an initial rejection of democracy, Conrad has clearly moved to its conditional acceptance as a viable form of government.

Fleishman depicts a similar gradual acceptance of democracy in Conrad's attitude toward the Polish question. Conrad's initial solution to Polish independence was the re-institution of a monarchy:

At the outset of the war, Conrad advocated what has come to be called the Austrian solution to the Polish question: it called for the reconstruction of Poland as a semi-autonomous state of the Austro-Hungarian Empire....Their plan called for the re-establishment of Poland as a monarchical state within the Austro-Hungarian Empire, not as a modern democracy.74

But this solution did not find favor with the British Foreign Office. Conrad then proposed in "Note on the Polish Problem" that "England and France... should guarantee a Polish state with semi-colonial status—a new 'overseas' territory for the Western imperialist nations." Fleishman emphasizes that "Conrad's mid-war politics can be considered a step forward" because "the new state he envisioned was necessarily democratic" and thereby "marks an advance over the royalism of his initial solution." But Conrad's confidence in England and France was shaken when these powers did not act with the necessary urgency in behalf of Poland. In "The Crime of Partition,"
Conrad is bitterly disillusioned and accuses the allies of having been prepared to deliver "the fate of Poland into the hands of Russian Tsarism." Poland escaped its disastrous fate not because the allies intervened but because tsarism was defeated within Russia. Poland therefore owes nothing to the West and its loyalty to it will "be rooted in the national temperament" and not in "anything so trenchant and burdensome as the sense of an immeasurable indebtedness." In spite of Conrad's conviction that the allies betrayed Poland at Versailles, he still desired strong ties between his native and his adopted country. He finally welcomed a democratic solution to the Polish problem.

Conrad's resistance to democracy was influenced by similar conservative convictions as Mann's. He was firmly opposed to all forms of despotism and ultimately came to accept democracy as the lesser evil. In "Autocracy and War," Conrad voices a scathing indictment of Russian despotism. He claims that the Russian people is really divorced from its government and accuses the "ghost of Russian might" of having "buried millions of Russian people." The tragic split between the rulers and the ruled was particularly apparent during the Russo-Japanese war:

Never before had the Western world the opportunity to look so deeply into the black abyss which separates a soulless autocracy posing as and even believing itself to be, the arbiter of Europe, from the benighted starved souls of its people.

There is no rational explanation for the emergence of autocracy in Russia. Conrad argues that it did not respond to any human need but descended upon a helpless people without cause or warning. Despotism is not rooted in the country's tradition so that "Russian autocracy succeeded to nothing; it had no historical past, and it cannot hope for a historical future. It can only end." Devoid of human and historical justifications, despotism will ultimately destroy itself through its inherent cynicism. The vision of
autocracy as something alien to human experience manifests itself most forcefully when Conrad contends:

The Russian autocracy as we see it now is a thing apart. It is impossible to assign to it any rational origin in the vices, the misfortunes, the necessities, or the aspirations of mankind. That despotism has neither an European nor an Oriental parentage; more, it seems to have no root either in the institutions or the follies of this earth. What strikes one with a sort of awe is just this something inhuman in its character. It is like a visitation, like a curse from Heaven falling in the darkness of ages upon the immense plains of forest and steppe lying dumbly on the confines of two continents: a true desert harbouring no Spirit either of the East or of the West.  

Like his father before him, Conrad associates the West with civilization and Russia with barbarism. The deep and personal hatred he harbors against Russia naturally draws him to the West, even if democracy is the price he has to pay.

Conrad's political opinions are often inconsistent because they are influenced by contradictory emotions. His scepticism about human nature compels him to oppose democracy but his hatred for Russia forces him to endorse it in the end. But often Conrad's political convictions are also influenced by respect for Europe's cultural past and by the artist's natural hostility to narrow political views. The artist's complex vision of reality does not permit identification with any single political or social ideology. In a letter to E. Noble, Conrad states why all dogmatism is foreign to him:

Everyone must walk in the light of his own heart's gospel....That's my view of life,—a view that rejects all formulas, dogmas and principles of other people's making. These are only a web of illusions. We are too varied.  

Reality is for Conrad not primarily political but metaphysical and ethical. He does not believe that political ideologies can significantly alter the universe or human nature, and consequently considers all fixed answers to life's problems simplistic and illusory. Indeed, Conrad's vision of reality
is fundamentally opposed to all political solutions:

If we are 'ever becoming—never being,' then I would be a fool if I tried to become this thing rather than that; for I know I will never be anything. I would rather grasp the solid satisfaction of my wrong-headedness and shake my fist at the idiotic mystery of Heaven.

When Conrad seems to give preference to one political solution over another, he does so not because he believes it to be superior but only because he knows it to be less harmful. He is not so much a rational political thinker as a man whose feelings may coincide more with one school of political thought than another. In Fleishman's opinion, Conrad's attitude corresponds in many ways to Edmund Burke's social organicism. Fleishman is convincing because he does not pretend that Conrad chose to be a Burkian organicist but rather that his political views loosely fit the tenets of this tradition. Contrary to Rousseau, who believed that the state imposes unity on society, Burke argues that it is an organic outgrowth of individual morality. Where Rousseau thought of the social contract as a business agreement, Burke saw it as "a spiritual and cultural union." Burke emphasizes that the source of social unity is a country's historical and cultural consciousness. Social order is therefore not guaranteed by the innate morality of some abstract "General Will" but rather by the basic virtues of each individual member of society. Bertrand Russell essentially supports this interpretation of Conrad's attitude when he says:

Conrad's point of view was far from modern. In the modern world there are two philosophies: the one, which stems from Rousseau, and sweeps aside discipline as unnecessary; the other, which finds its fullest expression in totalitarianism, which thinks of discipline as essentially imposed from without. Conrad adhered to the older tradition, that discipline should come from within. He despised indiscipline, and hated discipline that was merely external.

Not unlike Mann, Conrad subscribed to political opinions which were favorable to the maintenance of cultural values, the dignity of the individual,
and the defense of a sense of hierarchy his sea-life had developed. Democracy's promise of social equality was a threat to the individual, to cultural excellence, and to social hierarchy. But although Conrad was apprehensive about democracy, his conservative views did not favor the despotism of the far Right. Conrad and Mann therefore shared a conservative attitude which was sympathetic to nineteenth-century political institutions because they demonstrated respect for the individual and showed a deep concern for the cultural heritage.

In writing a political novel, Mann and Conrad had to be careful that their political and aesthetic commitments did not conflict. They had to reconcile the peculiarities of politics and of art in various ways. Even on the level of language, a compromise between political rhetoric and the creative imagination had to be found. The politician addresses himself to the masses and uses words to sway and persuade them. He is fond of clichés and appeals to commonplace emotions because the majority of people respond best to the familiar. But poetic language solicits the attention of a more or less limited group of initiates. The poet dispises clichés and searches constantly for fresh ways of expressing ideas. Moreover, political rhetoric is prescriptive in that it establishes norms which tell men how to think and act. Poetic language, however, is descriptive in that it shows life as it is or might be. Jacques Ehrmann characterizes the difference between political and poetic language as follows:

Political language is thus realistic in the only acceptable sense of the word: that which subordinates reality to an ideology. It is therefore a means. Through it laws are made and carried out, and (world) order established.

For literature, on the contrary, to historicize is to use the world to conquer language; it is the attempt to inject man (the world, reality) into his language. Poetic language is thus the "elsewhere" of the world. From this point of view, and in spite of traces of "realism" (that is, of ideology, whose mark language inevitably bears) which do
enable the historian to situate it in history, poetic language is utopian.\textsuperscript{88}

The aesthetically committed writer will avoid political language even if his artistic emphasis threatens to obscure the political message. The author's political position is often hidden and he will rarely make direct political statements. In *Doktor Faustus* and *Under Western Eyes*, political rhetoric is rare and, when it does occur, it is spoken, as a rule, by a character in a dramatized situation.

The political novelist is further confronted with the problem of subject matter. Although both politics and literature profess to have man and his world as the basic concern, literature emphasizes the ambiguity and complexity of life whereas politics focuses on absolute principles and truths. Instead of embracing life in its fullness, political ideologies usually simplify it. Daiches says about this discrepancy between literature and politics:

Great literature militates against abstractions, against any reduction of human experience to formulae, and works always with the concrete and lively. In that sense all great literature is anti-political, turning away from statements about how society should be governed, turning away from slogans and polarizations between "goodies" and "baddies," in order to project and illuminate the ambigui­ties and ambivalences of human character. In that sense all political literature is bad literature.\textsuperscript{89}

Aldridge makes a similar point when he claims that "The writer...is committed to a belief in the individual person and in the primacy of individual experience over collective experience, living human fact over social doc­trine." If the artist's aim is to mirror reality, a strong political bias would necessarily falsify the reflected impression. It is therefore only natural that great writers like Mann and Conrad are extremely careful not to let their political sympathies distort the truth of their fiction. In order to avoid the pitfalls of the political novel, they seek to establish some
distance between themselves and their work. In the introduction to *Under Western Eyes*, Conrad speaks of his "effort of detachment: detachment from all passions, prejudices, and even from personal memories" (p. viii). Such neutrality or objectivity is perhaps ultimately impossible but the success of a political novel depends on the degree to which it is achieved. Mann approaches aesthetic distance primarily through irony, which explains why he admired Conrad for his "moderne Doppelgesichtigkeit." The ability to see both sides, however, leads to ambiguities and concentrates on questions rather than answers. But politics is interested in answers and the political novel therefore works against the tendencies of its subject matter. Does this imply that an aesthetically successful treatment of a political theme is impossible? Irving Howe does not think so and asserts that the writer can profitably exploit the incongruities between literature and politics:

>The conflict is inescapable: the novel tries to confront experience in its immediacy and closeness, while ideology is by its nature general and inclusive. Yet it is precisely from this conflict that the political novel gains its interest and takes on the aura of high drama.92

In *Literatur und Politik*, Walter Jens reaches a similar conclusion. In addition to the inherent contradictions between literature and politics, Jens emphasizes that literature is being pushed into the background by the sciences. For answers to human problems, man turns today to the behavioral scientist, the psychologist, the social and political researcher, the philosopher, and even the natural scientist. Jens therefore contends:

>Kein Zweifel, der Raum der Dichtung ist schmaler geworden; im Jahrhundert der Wissenschaften bleibt ihr nicht gerade viel Platz. Die Gelehrten sitzen in unserer Zeit auf den Stühlen, die einst den Dichtern vorbehalten waren; sie geben dem Tag das Gesicht, sie gilt es zu fragen, wenn man wissen will, wer wir sind.93

But there are areas of human experience the sciences cannot usurp. Liter-
nature retains its place in the modern world because it depicts poetically what cannot be analyzed scientifically:

Heute, wo man dabei ist, die Wirklichkeit auf die Kürze von Formeln zu reduzieren, wo der Fanatismus zu Simplifizierungen führt und das "Entweder-Oder" die Stunde regiert, vertritt der große Schriftsteller, als Beschwörer des Janusgesichts und Verteidiger der Totalität, in Leben und Werk jenes "So-wohl als auch" und "Einerseits-andrerseits", das, allen Leugnungen zum Trotz, unsere Zeit in besonderem Mass charakterisiert, Voraussetzung eines lebenswürdigen Daseins ist und deshalb, im Wort der Poesie komplex gespiegelt, vor allem bewahrt werden sollte.94

The novelist cannot compete with the political analyst in providing political explanations but he can portray how man is caught up in a world of political contradictions. In Doktor Faustus and Under Western Eyes, the criticism is directed both against a particular political system and against political systems in general. Mann and Conrad depict man as a victim of political forces beyond his power of understanding.

In Doktor Faustus and Under Western Eyes, political questions emerge primarily as an interesting aspect of human experience in general. It has often been pointed out that Conrad's political novels center around the same metaphysical and moral problems as his sea stories. George Goodin even argues that Conrad's interest in Under Western Eyes is not political but moral:

What we will find is that Conrad uses character, action, and imagery to suggest the political realities underlying Russian life, and that this political content figures forth the moral realities found in human life itself.95

The intuition that Conrad's political themes are above all paradigms for larger issues is widespread. Lois A. Michel, for instance, says:

...because Conrad's cosmic view is subtle and complex, certain of its facets and values appear most clearly in depth through intensive and individualized approaches employing philosophic and political terms.96

Similarly, G.H. Bantock believes that "The world of the ship, for Conrad,
provides a microcosm of a right ordering of social life." Indeed, the political novels are permeated by the same themes of isolation, egotism, illusions, and moral rehabilitation as Conrad's other works. In *Doktor Faustus*, the political theme is also paradigmatic for questions arising in Mann's other novels. Mann measures Germany's guilt not through a political analysis but in terms of moral, metaphysical, and aesthetic considerations. The political dimension of *Doktor Faustus* is ultimately only an extension of Mann's typical theme of the artist's role in society. Mann and Conrad undoubtedly capitalize on the political conflict in order to illustrate the dilemma of human experience as such.

The paradigmatic nature of the political theme, however, opens especially *Under Western Eyes* to the criticism of an inadequately integrated structure. Conrad has often been wrongly attacked for an apparent lack of unity between the personal and the political theme in *Under Western Eyes*. Bantock, for instance, contends that Conrad "has misjudged his theme" because, after a very successful first part, the novel "degenerates into a variation of the *Lord Jim* theme." *Under Western Eyes* consequently leaves the impression that "There are, in fact, two themes: one is the social-political dilemma with its personal implications of loneliness and isolation; the other is the one of relationship between Razumov and Natalia." Frederick R. Karl also argues that there are two contradictory themes in *Under Western Eyes*. He implies that the personal theme is more successful so that "This novel demonstrates, in fact, that those sections devoted exclusively to political events are esthetically detrimental to the whole." No such criticism is usually levelled at Mann. In *Doktor Faustus*, the parallel between the personal and the political theme is indeed almost too tidy and systematic. The reader is continually reminded that the aesthetic and the political subject matter are one and the same. Mann partly achieves the
tight unity of Doktor Faustus by means of the almost exclusively symbolic value of Adrian Leverkühn. Leverkühn is not a character of flesh and blood but, in Mann's words, "eine Idealgestalt" who resists concretization: "Dabei, merkwürdigerweise, gab ich ihm kaum ein Aussehen, eine Erscheinung, einen Körper." Mann clarifies that Leverkühn has to remain intangible in order to realize fully his symbolic role:

Ein Verbot war hier einzuhalten—oder doch dem Gebot größter Zurückhaltung zu gehorchen bei einer äusseren Verlebendigung, die sofort den seelischen Fall und seine Symbolwürde, seine Repräsentanz mit Herabsetzung, Banalisierung bedrohte. Undoubtedly, Mann establishes a more obvious link between the political and the personal theme than Conrad. But Under Western Eyes also retains its unity for, although Razumov is a more tangible physical presence than Adrian, his personal fate is clearly representative of the political situation in Russia. The contention that Under Western Eyes lacks unity is largely unfounded and seems to be based on a misreading of the novel.

The following two chapters will now demonstrate that Doktor Faustus and Under Western Eyes successfully avoid a simplistic explanation of the political questions they investigate and that the complexities of reality are always preserved. It will also be seen that the political vision in the novels does not necessarily reflect Mann's and Conrad's conservative views. And it will become evident that Mann and Conrad paint a portrait of Germany and Russia which does not compete with the political analysis provided by specialists; it renders a more sensitive account of the often contradictory aspects involved in a political situation. Against the background of Mann's and Conrad's personal feelings and the general problems associated with the political novel, Doktor Faustus and Under Western Eyes can now be analyzed in more detail.
Footnotes


2 Ibid., p. 17.


8 Orwell, p. 126.


10 Glaser, p. 288.


12 Ibid., p. 373.


14 Ibid., pp. 106-107.

15 Ibid., p. 105.
16 Aldridge, p. 349.

17 Spender, p. 373.

18 Thomas Mann, Gesammelte Werke (Frankfurt: S. Fischer, 1960), X, 668.

19 Ernst Nündel, Die Kunsttheorie Thomas Manns (Bonn: Bouvier, 1972), p. 27.

20 Thomas Mann, Gesammelte Werke, XII, 537.

21 Ibid., XII, 541.


23 Ibid., p. 80.


25 Wright, p. 124.

26 Ibid., p. 122.

27 Ibid., p. 20.

28 Conrad, Nigger, p. xi.

29 Wright, p. 21.

30 Ibid., p. 124.

31 Mann, Gesammelte Werke, XII, 396.

32 Ibid., p. 481.

33 Ibid., p. 492.
34 Mann, Gesammelte Werke, XII, 461.
36 Ibid., p. 205.
37 Ibid., p. 207.
38 Ibid., p. 338.
39 Ibid., p. 67.
40 Ibid., XI, 1146.
41 Ibid., XI, 188.
45 Ibid., p. 3.
47 Najder, p. 6.
50
Najder, p. 7.

51
Busza, p. 143.

52
Ibid., p. 148.

53
Fleishman, p. 8.

54
Busza, p. 161.

55
Najder, pp. 2-3.

56
Baines, p. 21.

57

58

59
Ibid.

60
Ibid.

61
Ibid.

62
Ibid., p. 269.

63
Ibid., p. 229.

64
Ibid.

65
Ibid., p. 269.

66
Ibid.
68 Ibid.
69 Fleishman, p. 27.
71 Ibid., p. 288.
73 Ibid., p. 285.
74 Fleishman, pp. 16-17.
75 Ibid., p. 17.
76 Ibid.
78 Ibid., p. 129.
79 Ibid.
80 Ibid., p. 86.
81 Ibid., p. 89.
82 Ibid., p. 97.
83 Ibid., p. 98.

86 Fleishman, p. 57.

87 Bertrand Russell, Portraits from Memory and Other Essays (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1956), p. 84.


89 Daiches, pp. 109-110.

90 Aldridge, p. 349.

91 Mann, Gesammelte Werke, X, 654.

92 Howe, p. 20.


94 Jens, p. 32.


98 Ibid., p. 133.

99 Ibid., p. 135.

101
Mann, *Gesammelte Werke*, XI, 204.

102
Ibid., p. 204.
Chapter III
Leverkühn and Razumov

A major concern of both *Under Western Eyes* and *Doktor Faustus* is civilization and, more specifically, the political problems of Russia and Germany. Mann and Conrad do not merely want to indict Hitler's Germany or pre-revolutionary Russia but seek to comprehend the deeper causes for the two countries' political conditions. In the introduction to *Under Western Eyes*, Conrad states explicitly that his novel "was an attempt to render not so much the political state as the psychology of Russia itself" (p. vii). Mann's attitude is basically the same for he says in "Deutschland und die Deutschen," an essay of special relevance to *Doktor Faustus*, that he wanted to deal with Germany "rein psychologisch" in order to discover "das Rätsel im Charakter und Schicksal dieses Volkes." But Mann's aim is to explain and account for the German tragedy in terms of the nation's cultural past, whereas Conrad is more interested in diagnosing Russia's situation in order to warn against the threat posed by that country. For both authors, however, the "political state" essentially grows out of some innate qualities of the Russian or German mind. And it is through Adrian Leverkühn, the symbol for Germany, and Razumov, the typical Russian, that these qualities manifest themselves in the two novels.

Adrian's symbolic function is made convincing through the method of "mythic identification." Influenced by Freud and even more by Jung, Mann was particularly fascinated by the concept of the archetype. Freud's "archaic remnants" are for Jung "mental forms whose presence cannot be explained by anything in the individual's own life and which seem aboriginal, innate, and inherited shapes of the human mind." In the essay "Freud und die Zu-
"kunft," Mann adapts Jung's archetype to his own purposes and speaks of "mythic identification" in terms of "Leben im Mythus, das Leben als weihvolle Wiederholung." Each individual is conceived as a combination of "formelhaften und individuellen Elementen" so that Adrian's life is determined by his Faust identification and yet remains individual. By patterning himself on the Faust model, Adrian becomes an expression of Germany and, at another level, of the human mind in general. Mann chose Faust as his mythic figure because he is for him most representative of the German character. This is underlined when he explains in "Deutschland und die Deutschen":

Und der Teufel, Luthers Teufel, Faustens Teufel, will mir als eine sehr deutsche Figur erscheinen, das Bündnis mit ihm, die Teufelsverschreibung, um unter Drangabe des Seelenheils für eine Frist alle Schätze und Macht der Welt zu gewinnen, als etwas dem deutschen Wesen eigentümlich Naheliegendes. Ein einsamer Denker und Forscher, ein Theolog und Philosoph in seiner Klause, der aus Verlangen nach Weltgenuss und Weltherrschaft seine Seele dem Teufel verschreibt,—ist es nicht ganz der rechte Augenblick, Deutschland in diesem Bild zu sehen, heute, wo Deutschland buchstäblich der Teufel holt?

Indeed, it is astonishing just how closely Mann adheres to the plot of the old chapbook Faust. Gunilla Bergsten's *Thomas Mann's Doctor Faustus* demonstrates conclusively the exact chronological correspondences between the chapbook and *Doktor Faustus*. But Adrian is more than a simple reincarnation of the old myth. Since several characters in German history, especially Beethoven, Wagner, Luther, and Nietzsche, were for Mann Faust reincarnations, Adrian emerges as the culmination of German intellectual and cultural history.

Aside from the novel's agreement with the chapbook Faust, Adrian's link with the Faust myth is stressed by his relationship to Faustian figures like Beethoven and Luther, and by the way in which his fate repeats incidents in the life of another Faust reincarnation: Nietzsche. Moreover, Adrian's own father is presented as a Faustian searcher. He is described as a man
"besten deutschen Schlages" who has a "Physiognomie, wie geprägt von vergangenen Zeiten" (p. 20) and who has a weakness for "die elementa spekulieren" (p. 22). Obsessed by forbidden speculations about the world, Jonathan Leverkühn demonstrates that inorganic matter can look and act as if it were organic and thereby anticipates his son's later attempts to make art behave as if it were life. The Faustian essence Adrian has inherited from his father is enhanced by the atmosphere of his native town Kaisersaschern, an "altstädtische Umgebung...deren Erinnerungen und Baudenkmale weit in vorschismatische Zeiten, in eine christliche Einheitswelt zurückreichen" (p. 15). Through Kaisersaschern, situated "mitten im Heimatbezirk der Reformation, im Herzen der Luther-Gegend" (p. 15), Adrian is associated with both the present and the past, for the reformation is a bridge to both "unsere Welt freien Denkens" and "zurück ins Mittelalter" (p. 15). Mann's use of "mythic identification," lending itself to a very complex structure of references and associations, thus produces a hero of rich and far-reaching symbolic significance.

Razumov is not a symbol for his country in the same way that Adrian is for his. As a typical Russian, he both incorporates and is the victim of Russian qualities. Nevertheless, he identifies strongly with his country and draws all his strength from it. Conrad informs us that, stripped of all family and social ties, Razumov's "closest parentage was defined in the statement that he was a Russian" (pp. 10-11). This concurrence of man and country is further stressed when Razumov tells Haldin: "You come from your province, but all this land is mine—or I have nothing" (p. 61). But the most emphatic expression of Razumov's consciousness as a Russian occurs when he exclaims to Peter Ivanovitch: "I don't want anyone to claim me. But Russia can't disown me. She cannot!...I am it" (p. 209). Significantly, this "I am it" corresponds exactly to Mann's characterization of mythic identifi-
cation with Charlemagne, he says in "Freud und die Zukunft":


Adrian's conscious repetition of the Faust myth is heroic but Razumov's identification with his country only serves to rationalize his personal, less than sublime motives. Conrad obviously wants to expose the absurdity and inauthenticity of the Dostoevskian type of mysticism. Moreover, unlike Germany's tragedy, Russia's political state is not the result of its intellectual past. Russia is depicted as unfathomable and mysterious; its political dilemma is seen more in terms of moral and ideological history. Razumov never articulates the essence of Russia clearly but embraces it through the land's physical presence:

Razumov received an almost physical impression of endless space and of countless millions....Under the sumptuous immensity of the sky, the snow covered the endless forests, the frozen rivers, the plains of an immense country, obliterating the landmarks, the accidents of the ground, leveling everything under its uniform whiteness, like a monstrous blank page awaiting the record of an inconceivable history(p. 33).

Like the Golfo Placido or the mountain Higuerota in Nostromo, Russia is everlasting, enduring indifference.

Having established the relationship between the hero and his country in Doktor Faustus and Under Western Eyes, it is now possible to analyze Adrian and Razumov in detail. In the case of Doktor Faustus, it is necessary to discuss what intentions Adrian Leverkühn was to realize for the author. In Mann's opinion, Hitler was possible because even the best German qualities, especially those revealed by the country's achievements in art and religion, contributed tragically to an atmosphere congenial to the rise of a dictator. In Doktor Faustus, Mann wanted to demonstrate that, because of the cyclical
nature of history, Nazism was essentially a repetition of earlier periods in the country's development. The novel points out that religious and aesthetic attitudes anticipated Nazi ideology throughout history. This complex intention required, of course, the technique of the Faust identification. However, since Mann felt that music was more typical of the German character than science, Faust's traditional role was inadequate. Music is not only an area in which German artists have always excelled, but it is also closely related to theology, another field of German achievement. Although music has often glorified the divine, it is at the same time a "dämonisches Gebiet" and a "christliche Kunst mit negativem Vorzeichen." This link between music and religion in both its divine and demonic aspects is further strengthened by Adrian's theological studies prior to his final commitment to music. Adrian's stay at Halle permits a discussion of Germany's religious history and of contemporary theological attitudes. Similarly, the hero's interest in music evokes Germany's cultural past and suggests the dangers inherent in a modern aesthetics based on similar principles as Nazism. Through the Faust identification, Adrian thus joins Germany's past, present, and future.

The richest symbol for Adrian's life and art is the magic square which constantly dominates the wall above the piano. Incorporating both mathematical logic and enigmatic numerology, the magic square embodies Adrian's cold intellect and intoxicating demonism. Ideally, Adrian would like to harmonize his rational and irrational tendencies so as to achieve the perfection symbolized by the complementarity of antithetical categories in the magic square. But he discovers not only that one of the two sides tends to dominate but also that a breakthrough in art is at this time possible only with the dangerous and destructive help of the devil. The first part of *Doktor Faustus* is designed to show how Adrian's early experiences and influences
teach him that, at certain points in history, the demonic becomes a necessity. The second part of the novel then focuses on the good and evil which the pact with the devil entailed in both art and politics.

That Adrian has the potential to achieve the balance represented by the magic square is obvious from his basic character traits. From earliest youth he manifests excessive intellectuality and an equally excessive fascination with the demonic. Too intelligent to be interested in school, he is nevertheless curious about mathematics because of its concern with order and systems. The extent of this curiosity is evident from the statement that "eine alberne Ordnung ist immer noch besser als gar keine" (p. 94). The immediate result of this exaggerated fascination with the abstract and intellectual is Adrian's coldness. Insisting on emotional distance, he persists in a formal type of address even with his closest friends. This withdrawal from the world betrays a proud scorn for mankind and alienates the composer from the human community. Adrian is well aware of the negative implications of his need for distance: "...ich bin ein schlechter Kerl, denn ich habe keine Wärme....Lau möchte ich mich nicht nennen; ich bin entschieden kalt..." (p. 174). But intellectual pride and emotional coldness are counterbalanced in Adrian by a propensity for the demonic. We have seen already that he has inherited a Faustian character from his father. Aware of his demonic tendencies, Adrian laughs uncannily during his father's forbidden experiments and suffers from his father's type of headache the moment he begins his own speculative work with music. The primary tension between Adrian's rational and irrational sides is clearly consonant with the image of the magic square.

Although the logical and yet enigmatic nature of music corresponds to Adrian's temperament, he first turns to theology. The novel offers several reasons for this choice. Adrian himself claims that he hoped a career in theology would curb his pride and cure his coldness. But Zeitblom suspects
"dass er seinerseits seine Wahl aus **Hochmut** getroffen hatte" (p. 110).

Similarly, the devil is convinced that Adrian's interest in theology was really the result of a fascination with the demonic. In the end, Adrian himself subscribes to this explanation for in his address at Pfeiffering he says: "...und war mein Gottesstudium heimlich schon des Bündnisses Anfang und der verkappte Zug zu Gott nicht, sondern zu Ihm" (p. 661). Independent of Adrian's initial motive, his studies at Halle clearly initiate him into the demonic. The two theology professors he meets at the university introduce him, each in his own way, to the devil. They are associated with different religious periods in Germany's history and offer divergent attitudes to the demonic. Professor Kumpf is an obvious parody of Luther. He not only imitates Luther's language and gestures but he is, like his model, "mit dem Teufel auf sehr vertrautem, wenn auch natürlich gespanntem Fuss" (p. 130). Zeitblom characterizes this attitude to the devil as "gehässige Realitäts-Anerkennung" (p. 131). Kumpf is also a "massiver Nationalist lutherischer Prägung" (p. 130), who is generally anti-intellectual and anti-meta-physical. Through Kumpf, Luther is clearly seen to have anticipated Nazism in two ways: like Hitler, he disparaged reason and, through his separation from Rome, gave rise to nationalism, a concept which was to become central to Hitler's campaign. Adrian's encounter with Kumpf thus familiarizes him with the idea of a physical devil and re-emphasizes Adrian's position between Germany's past and future.

A more sophisticated exponent of demonism is professor Schleppfuss, whose very name and physical appearance suggest the devil. Schleppfuss' advantage over the simple Kumpf is that he explains his "dämonische Welt- und Gottesauffassung psychologisch" (p. 134). But in spite of this suggestion of modernism, his doctrines reach back to St. Augustine and to the Inquisition. He argues that the devil is "ein unvermeidliches Zubehör der heiligen Exi-
stenz Gottes selbst" (p. 135) and claims that human freedom is "die Freiheit zu sündigen" (p. 137). Virtue consists of not using the freedom God was forced to grant man. Schleppfuss consequently asserts that "die Tätigkeit der Inquisition von rührendster Humanität beseelt gewesen sei" (p. 137), because, through torture, the sinner was permitted to see the errors of his ways. But, more significantly, Schleppfuss' clever theodicy offers also a sophisticated justification for evil, a justification Adrian is to rely on later: "Die wahre Rechtfertigung Gottes in Ansehung des Schöpfungsjammers... bestehe in seinem Vermögen, aus dem Bösen das Gute hervorzubringen" (pp. 139-140). Adrian's stay at Halle thus teaches him the real existence of the devil and provides him with a religious justification for making a pact with him.

Adrian resorts to a pact with the devil because he cannot achieve the regeneration of art without demonic help. As a member of a decadent and sophisticated civilization, Adrian lacks the elemental energy to liberate music from its exhausted conventions. Indeed, sterile art forms rule so supreme that Adrian realizes that "auf fromme, nüchterne Weis, mit rechten Dingen, kein Werk mehr zu tun und die Kunst unmöglich geworden ist ohne Teufelshilf" (p. 662). The desired artistic breakthrough is possible only if Adrian is willing to sacrifice soul and body to destructive powers. In this way, Mann shows that, in order to regenerate dead art forms, the genius must inevitably turn to forbidden and dangerous sources.

Adrian's critical mind is quick to discover that existing art forms are indeed sterile. Instead of leading to authentic expression, even his own experiments with conventional devices always result in parodies of traditional music. In despair, Adrian therefore wonders: "Warum müssen fast alle Dinge mir als ihre eigene Parodie erscheinen? Warum muss es mir vorkommen, als ob fast alle, nein, alle Mittel und Konvenienzen der Kunst heute nur noch
zur Parodie taugten" (p. 180). Parody, however, signals not only the end of old conventions in art, but also the beginning of a search for new devices. Adrian's penchant for parody therefore suggests that he is struggling for new ways of expression. But until the composition of "Dr. Fausti Weheklage," marking his artistic breakthrough, Adrian is confined to parody, an art form the devil characterizes as "aristokratischen Nihilismus" (p. 322). Adrian feels frustrated and stifled by this nihilism and seeks to transcend it. In order to do so, he first attempts to account for the sources of art's sterility. He is first of all convinced that art is at variance with modern reality and asks himself:

...ob das Werk als solches, das selbstgenügsam und harmonisch in sich geschlossene Gebilde, noch in irgendeiner legitimen Relation steht zu der völligen Unsicherheit, Problematik und Harmonielosigkeit unserer gesellschaftlichen Zustände...(p. 241).

But during the dialogue with the devil, a second reason emerges. Speaking of the "Unpässlichkeit, von der die Idee des musikalischen Werkes befallen ist," the devil argues:

Schiebe sie nicht auf gesellschaftliche Zustände! Ich weiss, du neigst dazu und pflegst zu sagen, dass diese Zustände nichts vorgeben, was verbindlich und bestätigt genug wäre, die Harmonie des selbstgenügsamen Werks zu gewährleisten. Wahr, aber nebensächlich. Die prohibitive Schwierigkeiten des Werks liegen tief in ihm selbst. Die historische Bewegung des musikalischen Materials hat sich gegen das geschlossene Werk gekehrt (p. 320).

Art's dynamic potential is consequently inhibited by external as well as internal circumstances.

Music can regain its authenticity, and thereby escape from parody, only by transcending existing conventions. Kretschmar's discussion of Beethoven indicates that art's cyclical motion leads inevitably to a regeneration. Speaking of Beethoven's farewell to the sonata convention, Kretschmar exclaims:

But every renewal of art is different; what liberates Beethoven's music suffocates Adrian's. Beethoven's rejection of the sonata convention introduces a new convention which is in its turn rejected by Adrian. Indeed, Adrian maintains that all existing art is artificial:

An einem Werk ist viel Schein, man könnte weitergehen und sagen, dass es scheinhaft ist in sich selbst, als 'Werk'. Es hat den Ehrgeiz, glauben zu machen, dass es nicht gemacht, sondern entstanden und entsprungen sei... (p. 241).

The romantic illusion of the instantaneous and inspired work of art is no longer congruous with modern requirements. Music needs a new raison d'être: "Schein und Spiel haben heute schon das Gewissen der Kunst gegen sich. Sie will aufhören, Schein und Spiel zu sein, sie will Erkenntnis werden" (p. 242). Beethoven's devices are now an obstacle to authentic art whose new demands are summarized by the devil as follows: "Zulässig ist allein noch der nicht fiktive, der nicht verspielte, der unverstellte und unverklärte Ausdruck des Leides in seinem realen Augenblick" (p. 321). This means that art should be life rather than to remain its mirror. Symbolic representation must therefore yield to imitative form. In "Dr. Fausti Weheklage," Adrian ultimately achieves this imitative form, for Zeitblom intimates that "die Klage ist der Ausdruck selbst" (p. 644). But "Dr. Fausti Weheklage" is Adrian's last work and before producing it he has to divest himself slowly of art's burdensome artificiality.

Adrian blames modern sophistication for the lack of spontaneity in art. He feels that civilization has alienated man from his natural origins and has thereby contributed to the falsification of artistic experience. Adrian even wonders whether modern civilization deserves the name of "culture" at all:
Ich möchte wissen, ob Epochen, die Kultur besessen, das Wort überhaupt gekannt, gebraucht, im Munde geführt haben. Naivität, Unbewusstheit, Selbstverständlichkeit scheint mir das erste Kriterium der Verfassung, der wir diesen Namen geben. Was uns abgeht, ist eben dies, Naivität, und dieser Mangel, wenn man von einem solchen sprechen darf, schützt uns vor mancher farbigen Barbarei, die sich mit Kultur, mit sehr hoher Kultur sogar, durchaus vertrug. Will sagen: unsere Stufe ist die der Gesittung, ein sehr lobenswerter Zustand ohne Zweifel, aber keinem Zweifel unterliegt es auch wohl, dass wir sehr viel barbarischer werden müssten, um der Kultur wieder fähig zu sein (p. 83).

And, since music is a product of this sophisticated but decadent civilization, it too must return to its primitive sources. When Kretschmar introduces the strange American Johann Conrad Beissel, Adrian is immediately fascinated by the composer's primitive music. Beissel's music shows that art embraces the elemental and demonstrates that it has the capacity always "von vorn zu beginnen, aus dem Nichts, bar jeder Kenntnis ihrer schon durchlaufenen Kulturgeschichte, des durch die Jahrhunderte Errungenen, sich neu zu entdecken und wieder zu erzeugen" (p. 87). And Beissel's primitive system of "master" and "servant" notes corresponds undoubtedly to the "Idee des Elementaren, des Primitiven, des Uranfänglichen" (p. 86). Adrian imitates the American's return to the sources of art with his own recourse to old texts. Especially fond of mythic subjects, he clearly models himself on Wagner, whose "Ring des Nibelungen" Kretschmar characterizes as "die Musik des Anfangs...und auch der Anfang der Musik" (p. 87). Adrian echoes Wagner further when he argues that only "Stoffe der romantischen Sage, der Mythenwelt des Mittelalters entnommen...der Musik würdig, ihrem Wesen angemessen seien" (p. 425). But the return to mythic materials is only a superficial immersion in the elemental. The true return can only be accomplished with the devil's help, for he alone can guarantee the "Lebenswirksamkeit" (p. 324) capable of penetrating "das Archaische, das Urfrüh, das längst nicht mehr Erprobte" (p. 316). Through the demonic, Adrian will experience "echte, alte, urtüm-
liche Begeisterung" and "prangende Unbedenklichkeit" (p. 316), for the devil promises him: "...die Epoche der Kultur und ihres Kultus wirst du durchbrechen und dich der Barbarei erdreisten" (p. 324). Adrian thus succumbs to the devil's temptation in order to strip himself of the accoutrements of civilization and its decadent art.

But the return to simplicity the devil promises does not imply an actual return to earlier art forms because man's fall into consciousness is irreversible. From his comments about Kleist's Marionettentheater, it is sufficiently evident that Adrian has no illusions about the possibility of recapturing lost simplicity:

Dabei ist nur von Aesthetischem die Rede, von der Anmut, der freien Grazie, die eigentlich dem Gliedermann und dem Gotte, das heisst dem Unbewusstsein oder einem unendlichen Bewusstsein vorbehalten ist, während jede zwischen Null und Unendlichkeit liegende Reflexion die Grazie tötet. Das Bewusstsein müsse...durch ein Unendliches gegangen sein, damit die Grazie sich wiedereinfinde, und Adam müsse ein zweites Mal vom Baum der Erkenntnis essen, um in den Stand der Unschuld zurückzufallen (pp. 410-11).

Since Adrian is neither God nor puppet, he must follow Adam's example. For him, spontaneity is not attainable through primeval disorder but through the most rational and highly self-conscious musical system. The basic principle of this system is "die vollständige Integrierung aller musikalischen Dimensionen, ihre Indifferenz gegeneinander kraft vollkommener Organisation" (p. 255). For Mann, the paradigm for a totally rational music is Schoenberg's twelve-tone system, on which Adrian's music theory is based. Instead of triads, Adrian stipulates a row of twelve tones in which no note may be repeated before the other eleven have been played. A tonal center is avoided because no note is emphasized through repetition. Moreover, atonal serial music permits no free notes so that Zeitblom fears that the "rationale Durchorganisation" might limit creative freedom. Adrian argues, however, that the self-imposed order allows for an almost unlimited number of compositional
combinations. In order to demonstrate the richness of Adrian's theory, it is perhaps useful to quote a description of Schoenberg's serial music:

While the tone-row technique may appear limited at first glance, it has been calculated that there are 479,001,600 different tone rows available. And each row can be treated in countless ways. It can appear vertically in chords as well as horizontally in melodies. The row can be transposed, or it can be moved to a different octave. It can be subdivided into phrases of different lengths.

This technique, which has for Zeitblom something "ungreifbar und vag Dämonisches" (p. 258), triumphs completely in "Dr. Fausti Weheklage" because "vermöge der Restlosigkeit der Form eben wird die Musik als Sprache befreit" (pp. 646-47).

From Mann's description of "Dr. Fausti Weheklage" it is clear that he wants the reader to see in it a significant breakthrough in art. But in spite of the aesthetic triumph, Adrian's life is not an unequivocal success. Not only is the composer physically and mentally destroyed, but his theories also form a close parallel to disastrous political doctrines. However, before the morality of Adrian's pact with the devil can be analyzed, the nature of the parallel between aesthetics and politics in Doktor Faustus must first be established.

The parallel between Adrian and Nazi Germany manifests itself above all through the novel's peculiar time structure. Zeitblom describes the time levels in Doktor Faustus as follows:

Ich weiss nicht, warum diese doppelte Zeitrechnung meine Aufmerksamkeit fesselt, und weshalb es mich drängt, auf sie hinzuweisen: die persönliche und die sachliche, die Zeit in der der Erzähler sich fortbewegt, und die, in welcher das Erzählte abspielt. Es ist dies eine ganz eigentümliche Verschränkung der Zeitläufe, dazu bestimmt übrigens, sich noch mit einem Dritten zu verbinden: nämlich der Zeit, die eines Tages der Leser sich zur geneigten Rezeption des Mitgeteilten nehmen wird, so dass dieser es also mit einer dreifachen Zeitordnung zu tun hat: seiner eigenen, derjenigen des Chronisten und der historischen (p. 335).

The time structure reiterates Adrian's position between Germany's past and
future. As we have seen already, Adrian is associated with the Reformation period and with the time of the Inquisition. Similarly, his music echoes that of Beissel, Beethoven, Wagner, Monteverdi, and the Romantics. And Adrian's choice of libretti connects him with European literary history as far back as the medieval legends. The time structure obviously reinforces the fact that Adrian's music is the culmination of German cultural history. At the same time, Nazism is the final result of Germany's disastrous political course. The parallel between aesthetics and politics in *Doktor Faustus* now suggests that the paradoxical combination of the highest sophistication and the most primitive barbarism is the source of both Germany's cultural leadership and its political tragedy.

The first dangerous political opinions are voiced during an excursion organized by the Winfried theology students at Halle. The students are presented as young intellectuals who foretell the future without realizing the terrifying implications of their words. Fond of academic jargon, they manifest an intellectual distance from real life and a careless pleasure in argument for its own sake. The students' basic innocence now contrasts strangely with the perverted content of their discussion. Equating Germany with youth, they proudly announce that "die deutschen Taten immer aus einer gewissen gewaltigen Unreife [geschahen]"(p. 158). They see themselves as healthy rebuilders whose strength is their immaturity. Exuberantly they predict: "Wir werden ihr [der Welt] in unserer Unreife noch manche Erneuerung, manche Revolution bescheren"(p. 158). Obviously tired of Germany as it is, they long, like Adrian, for a regeneration which cannot be achieved through civilization:

Jung sein heisst ursprünglich sein, heisst den Quellen des Lebens nahe geblieben sein, heisst aufstehen und die Fesseln einer Überlebten Zivilisation abschütteln können, wagen, zu anderen die Lebenscourage fehlt, nämlich wieder unterzutauchen im Elementaren(p. 159).
And if the rejection of civilization means the acceptance of the demonic, the students are apparently as willing to make that step as Adrian. When faced with the alternative between socialism and nationalism, the majority are deaf to the socialist's argument that the idea of "Deutschtum" might create a "Mythos von zweifelhafter Echtheit" which would put Germany into "eine entschieden dämonisch bedrohte Position..."(p. 167). But they enthusiastically approve of Deutschlin (obviously a symbolic name) who counters: "Nun, und?...Dämonische Kräfte stecken neben Ordnungsqualitäten in jeder vitalen Bewegung"(p. 167). The similarity between Deutschlin's statement and Adrian's music theory is, of course, immediately apparent. And so, long before Hitler's usurpation of power, ideas favorable to his ascendancy are beginning to germinate.

At a later stage, Adrian is juxtaposed to the historian Dr. Chaim Breisacher. With his "witternde Fühlung mit der geistigen Bewegung der Zeit" (p. 371), Breisacher is an excellent recording meter for German intellectual opinions in Munich just before the First World War. Like Adrian and the Winfried students, he is particularly opposed to civilization. Claiming that cultural history is "nichts als einen Verfallsprozess"(p. 371), he supports this assertion with evidence which is absurd but not illogical. Unopposed, he argues that the "Uebergang der Musik von der Monodie zur Mehrstimmigkeit, zur Harmonie, den man so gern als einen kulturellen Fortschritt betrachte... gerade eine Akquisition der Barbarei gewesen sei"(p. 372). Indeed, the historian observes a similar alienation from healthy origins in religion. David and Solomon are already "ursprungsfremd und verdummt"(p. 376) because they transformed Christianity into a symbolic religion. Breisacher objects to this transformation on the following grounds: "Kurzum, Volk und Blut und religiöse Wirklichkeit ist das längst nicht mehr, sondern humane Wassersuppe..."(p. 375). Original religious vitality is, moreover, also weakened by
the new emphasis on ethics, another humanistic influence. Breisacher's glorification of the primitive is clearly reminiscent of Adrian's insistence on the elemental in music.

The last significant political discussion takes place between the two World Wars. As Germany is hastening toward its catastrophic end, Adrian is working on his "Apocalypse." The parallel between art and politics, at first only hinted at, is now made much more explicit. Zeitblom explains that he deals with the Kridwiss circle and the "Apocalypse" in the same chapter because he feels strongly that the two subjects are really one. Since Kridwiss intellectuals voice opinions Adrian had pronounced earlier, Zeitblom now sees "Aesthetizismus als Wegbereiter der Barbarei" (p. 495). Zeitblom is first of all disturbed by the Kridwiss members' "heiteren Genugtuung" (p. 486) about their own dark forebodings. But even more disquieting is that they suggest actual means for the realization of an "intentionelle Re-Barbarisierung" (p. 491). Instead of parliamentary discussion, the Kridwiss circle posits "die Versorgung der Massen mit mythischen Fiktionen...die als primitive Schlachtrufe die politischen Energien zu entfesseln, zu aktivieren bestimmt seien" (p. 486). In order to prove the effectiveness of such myths, the intellectuals stage a fake trial which demonstrates the helplessness of rational argument against the persuasiveness of myths. Reason is, moreover, further undermined by the corruption of language. Words cherished by Western liberalism have taken on unintended meanings and are suddenly used in the service of despotism. Zeitblom summarizes the atmosphere in Munich by observing despairingly: "Rückschritt und Fortschritte, das Alte und Neue, Vergangenheit und Zukunft wurden eins" (p. 489). This atmosphere has of course been anticipated by Adrian some years before:

Interessantere Lebenserscheinungen...haben wohl immer dies Doppelgesicht von Vergangenheit und Zukunft, wohl immer
Undoubtedly, Adrian's aesthetics are meant to parallel and perhaps prepare for German political opinions.

But what are the moral implications of the parallel between aesthetics and politics? Frank Kermode's *The Sense of an Ending* gives us some pertinent insight into this question. Differentiating between fiction and myth, Kermode explains: "Fictions can degenerate into myths whenever they are not consciously held to be fictive. In this sense anti-Semitism is a degenerate fiction, a myth; and *Lear* is a fiction." What makes the degeneration into myth dangerous is that myths "rearrange the world to suit them." Ideas acceptable as recognized fictions can therefore be unacceptable as political myths. But is the artist morally responsible for the fictions he exposes to mythic interpretation? Mann evidently wants to find some moral justification for Adrian. Toward the end of *Doktor Faustus*, Adrian becomes a mirror image of Christ. Like Christ, he takes the suffering of his time upon himself and dies as a martyr for the sake of art. Adrian's redemption is further suggested by the unusual and paradoxical salvation of his soul. This salvation is based on religious sophistries perpetrated by Schleppfuss. Speculating on his chances for redemption, Adrian has earlier posited the following possibility:

Die contritio ohne jede Hoffnung und als völliger Unglaube an die Möglichkeit der Gnade und Verzeihung, als die felsenfeste Ueberzeugung des Sünders, er habe es zu grob gemacht, und selbst die unendliche Güte reiche nicht aus, seine Sünde zu verzeihen,—erst das ist die wahre Zerknirschung (p. 329).

Discouraging Adrian, the devil had then pointed out that the mere speculation on such a possibility must necessarily rule it out. But contrary to the devil's expectations, Adrian ultimately does qualify for the "contritio ohne Hoffnung." At the end of *Doktor Faustus*, the tortured genius rejects
salvation "nicht nur aus formeller Treue zum Pakt und weil es 'zu spät' ist, sondern weil er die Positivität der Welt, zu der man ihn retten möchte, die Lüge ihrer Gottseligkeit, von ganzer Seele verachtet" (p. 650). But if Adrian is indeed saved, the question arises whether Mann suggests that Germany is also saved. It is not easy to know how far Mann wants the reader to take the parallel between Adrian and Germany. At any rate, in the assessment of his country's guilt, Mann is at least searching for mitigating circumstances. In the course of the novel, Germany is described as an exceptional, if misled, nation. Zeitblom adds to Adrian's contention that the Germans "wollen immer eins und dans andere, sie wollen alles haben" (p. 115) the following:


This tragic vision suggests that Germany is a dynamic nation and the German "der ewige Student, der ewig Strebbende unter den Völkern" (p. 159). Germany has brought destruction upon itself and others because it heroically defied the sterile complacency of the West. Although Mann is far from absolving his country, he suggests that something good might yet come out of its aberrations. When Zeitblom speaks of a "Hoffnung jenseits der Hoffnungslosigkeit" (p. 651), he obviously refers back to Schlepfuss' contention that God has the power "aus dem Bösen das Gute hervorzubringen" (p. 140). If Adrian's music justifies his dangerous course of action, Germany's future may some day redeem the terrible present.

Unlike Adrian, who is an outstanding individual, Razumov is an average Russian who wants to defend himself against the unpredictable and irrational. Conrad stresses Razumov's normalcy when he says in the Preface:
He is an ordinary young man, with a healthy capacity for work and sane ambitions. He has an average conscience. If he is slightly abnormal it is only in his sensitivity to his position (p. ix).

The same point is brought home in *Under Western Eyes* itself. Razumov believes that he can establish an identity through diligent work and a sober attitude to daily life. He is a serious student who is concerned about his future. Wishing to pursue an academic career—for "a celebrated professor was a somebody" (p. 13)—Razumov participates in a coveted prize essay competition. His concerns are purely private and he avoids political involvement. This quiet and reserved student therefore keeps "an instinctive hold on normal, practical, everyday life" (p. 10) and does not choose to search below the surface of his tranquil existence.

Razumov's carefully planned and rational existence, however, is upset by Haldin's visit. Haldin is the irrational element which intrudes on Razumov's protected world. What confounds Razumov is neither Haldin's crime nor revolutionary fanaticism but the incomprehensible coincidence that brought Haldin to his rooms. Razumov is quite indifferent toward the moral implications of Haldin's act but is angered by the ironic misunderstanding which made Haldin mistake him for a fellow-revolutionary. Razumov is immediately conscious of the threat Haldin presents to his future. Born in Russia, Razumov has "an hereditary and personal knowledge of the means by which a historical autocracy represses ideas, guards its power, and defends its existence" (p. 25). Razumov's comprehension of his country's moral vacuity overwhelms him with "the sentiment of his life being utterly ruined by this contact with such a crime" (p. 16). In practical terms, Haldin's intrusion now forces Razumov to abandon his political aloofness in order to choose between Haldin and autocracy.

Frustrated by the choice he must make, Razumov is unable to think
rationally. His first relatively clear decision is to help Haldin escape in order to remove him from the premises. But he is uneasy about this solution, for "this evening's doings could turn up against him at any time as long as this man lived and the present institutions endured" (p. 21). Fear and anger obviously cloud Razumov's judgment and, driven by a "desperate desire to get rid of [Haldin's] presence" (27), Razumov directs his steps toward Ziemia-nitch's inn. Devoid of "rational determination" (p. 27), he acts as if in a trance and, in the end, madly beats the drunken "driver of devils." On the way back, Razumov walks "heedlessly" (p. 31), even moving in the wrong direction. But in spite of this trancelike state, his thoughts begin to assume a certain logic. He suddenly sees himself caught between "the drunkenness of the peasant" and the "dream-intoxication of the idealist" so that he now longs for "the stick, the stick, the stern hand" (p. 31). From here it is only one step to Razumov's conversion to autocracy. He convinces himself that Russia "wanted not the babble of many voices, but a man—strong and one" (p. 33)! Through rationalization, Razumov clearly extends his personal hatred for Haldin into a political conviction. In his newly formed opinion, "Haldin means disruption" (p. 34) and represents a "withered: member which must be cut off" (p. 36). The practical decision to betray Haldin is clothed in idealistic motives and, in order to remain under the illusion that he is master of his own fate, Razumov convinces himself that he has willed his choice: "If I must suffer let me at least suffer for my convictions, not for a crime my reason—my cool superior reason—rejects" (p. 35). Conrad disdainfully concludes about Razumov's lofty train of thought that he "had simply discovered what he had meant to do all along" (pp. 38–39). The betrayal is clearly not a rational act but the emotional rejection of the man who threatens Razumov's future.

The tragedy of Razumov's betrayal is that, forced out of his chosen
aloofness, he is presented with two equally disagreeable political choices. Haldin's revolutionary fanaticism and the government's repressive methods are similar in that they are both based on arbitrariness, injustice, and immorality. Razumov's original choice of a rational and practical life is inevitably alien to both political alternatives: "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" (p. 77). No matter which way he turns, Haldin's visit has pushed Razumov into a position where he must act against his own good. The full extent of the hero's dilemma will become evident once the nature of both revolution and autocracy in Under Western Eyes is clarified.

Revolution in Under Western Eyes is based on abstract concepts and on a contempt for reason. Haldin's faith in the "Russian soul that lives in all of us" (p. 22) represents the purest example of the true revolutionary's mystical belief in his mission. Willing to die for his cause, Haldin is convinced that, although his body will be destroyed, his soul will continue to haunt "the destroyers of souls which aspire to perfection of human dignity" (p. 58). With such utopian hopes, Haldin can afford to be indifferent toward the present. He silently accepts his martyrdom and rejoices in Russia's messianic mission: "The modern civilization is false, but a new revelation shall come out of Russia" (p. 22). Haldin is undoubtedly a living testimony to his sister's optimistic statement that "men serve always something greater than themselves—the idea" (p. 352). Haldin's dedication to the cause, however, is equalled only by Sophia Antonovna. She also believes in Russia's glorious future and is willing to sacrifice her happiness and, if necessary, her life for it. But the other revolutionaries in Under Western Eyes are caricatures of this idealism. Peter Ivanovitch's feminism is a mere pretense, as his treatment of Tekla demonstrates. He is an auto-
crat in the disguise of a revolutionary for not only can there "never be too many disciples" (p. 237) but his hypocritical faith in "a people as great and incorruptible as the ocean" (p. 119) is exposed when he inadvertently betrays his real attitude: "I believe, first, that neither a leader nor any decisive action can come out of the dregs of a people" (p. 211).

Excluded from the "dregs of a people" are the nobility and the peasantry. It is significant that these two classes have traditionally been opposed to liberalism and would therefore be sympathetic to Peter Ivanovitch's anti-socialism. In Razumov's eyes, both the genuine and the false idealist is, of course, odious and dangerous.

The revolutionary in Under Western Eyes is further misguided in his belief that a better future will emerge from the ashes of the existing order. Haldin is again the tragic victim of this misconception. He emphasizes that the destruction of the established system is a weary if necessary task. Regarding the assassination of Mr de P— as his duty, Haldin selflessly sees himself only as a stepping stone for better men: "Men like me are necessary to make room for self-contained, thinking men like you [Razumov]" (p. 19).

He is convinced that the only way to "make room" is through violence because, in Russia, the government lacks the necessary internal mechanism for peaceful reform:

The degradation of servitude, absolutist lies must be uprooted and swept out. Reform is impossible. There is nothing to reform. There is no legality, there are no institutions. There are only arbitrary decrees. There is only a handful of cruel—perhaps blind—officials against a nation (p. 133).

Haldin's philosophy that the end justifies the means is also endorsed by the gentle Natalia and by the self-effacing Tekla. They believe that their personal love for mankind can be universalized through political change and to this end Natalia is perfectly willing to condone violence: "I would take
The abstract idealism, the intoxicating mysticism, and the futile utopianism of revolution are obviously antithetical to Razumov's practical and rational outlook on life.

Autocracy resembles revolution in that it too is based on mysticism, fanaticism, and anti-rationalism. Mr de P-''s "mystic acceptance of the principle of autocracy"(p. 7) rests not on "Reason but Authority which expressed the Divine Intention"(p. 8). But unlike the revolutionary, the autocrat resorts to mysticism in order to maintain and justify the status quo. Far from endorsing a utopian belief in a better future, General T- is "inaccessible to reasonable argument"(p. 85) because of the autocrat's immediate "unbounded power over all the lives in Russia"(p. 306). Razumov regrets that this omnipotence is "unable to understand a reasonable adherence to the doctrine of absolutism"(p. 84) and feels that it is as emotional and fanatical as Haldin's revolutionary zeal. Indeed, Haldin's fanatical devotion to
the principles of revolution can only be compared to the autocrat's blind loyalty to the doctrine of absolutism. General T's existence, for instance, "has been built on fidelity" (p. 51) and Mikulin, the "faithful official" (p. 305), stoically goes to prison for a transgression he has not committed. Conrad sees in Mikulin's stoicism the typical example of "a Russian official's ineradicable, almost sublime contempt for truth" (pp. 305-306). In the absence of a sound moral foundation, Russia is governed by unpredictability and injustice.

Autocracy controls not only its own officials but terrorizes every living soul in Russia. Not even those who have fled the country can escape from it completely. Observing Natalia in Geneva, the language teacher remarks:

Whenever two Russians come together, the shadow of autocracy is with them, tingeing their thoughts, their views, their most intimate feelings, their private life, their public utterances—haunting the secret of their silences (p. 107).

The accuracy of this observation is born out by various incidents in Russia. There is a friend who no longer checks if Haldin picks up his mail because "he was afraid of compromising himself" (p. 109). There is also an old, bewildered priest who warns Natalia and her mother that he is forced to spy on them. And there is Natalia's fear about her brother's silence. Even Razumov is paralyzed by the thought that "General T- was perfectly capable of shutting him up in the fortress for an indefinite time" (p. 85). It is evident that the irrationalism and arbitrariness of autocracy is no more congenial to Razumov's nature than is revolution. His allegiance to the government is influenced by purely practical and not by idealistic considerations.

Whether Razumov turns to revolution or to autocracy, he is in each case confronted with a mode of existence alien to his temperament. It is therefore not surprising that he finds it difficult to cope with the new reality.
He is particularly unnerved because reason, his former foothold, has been unable to safeguard him against the inroads of the irrational. Finding himself in a situation in which ordinary rational thought and action have no value, he is momentarily completely discouraged:

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 of the whole of Russia levelled with snow and fading gradually on all sides into shadows and mists (p. 303).

But soon Razumov understands that his survival depends on his ability to create a new existence for himself. His safety will be ensured only if he can manage to satisfy and deceive both Mikulin and the revolutionaries. He therefore intends to win the confidence of both parties as a double agent.

The creation of this new and "safe" existence requires a life of secrecy and deception. Razumov's naturally honest disposition makes it difficult for him to adjust to this odious way of life. The betrayal of Haldin, instead of putting an end to fear and anger, only leads to new anxieties. Knowing that he is a suspect in the eyes of the government, Razumov is disconcerted and uneasy in the presence of every government official. General T- fills him with an intense dislike and he is angered that, in conversation, he has to control his impulses and watch his every word and gesture. To complicate matters, the revolutionaries mistakenly assume that Razumov was Haldin's accomplice and thereby force him into the role of revolutionary. The tremendous stress this false double identity puts on Razumov manifests itself through dangerous slips in conversations with officials and through a suspicious and rude behavior at the university. The pressure finally becomes so unbearable that Razumov, awaiting his departure for Geneva, hides from the outside world in his rooms.

By the time he arrives in Geneva, Razumov is almost resigned to the
fact that "secrecy should play such a large part in the comfort and safety of lives" (p. 52). Nevertheless, he remains nervous and apprehensive. Often his insufficiently controlled reactions threaten to betray him and it is only through the blindness of his associates that he is saved from detection. Natalia, for instance, naively mistakes a movement of terror for a sign of Razumov's friendship for her brother, and the language teacher fails to guess the reasons for the Russian's "moody brusqueness" (p. 193) and "boorishness" (p. 197). Razumov learns to hide his "feeling of nausea" (p. 215) and "his angry curiosity and his mental disgust" (p. 214) under a composed facial expression but deep inside he is never sure of himself. He therefore often wonders, as he had done earlier in the presence of government officials, "if he were saying the right things" (p. 207) and "whether he had not said there something utterly unnecessary—or even worse" (p. 256). Controlling his impulses and feelings eventually becomes an almost mechanical process but the effort Razumov expends on it begins to tell. Not only does the language teacher observe that "Mr Razumov's face was older than his age" (p. 181) but Razumov himself shows signs of tiredness. During a confrontation with Sophia Antonovna, his most dangerous enemy, Razumov "was conscious of an immense lassitude under his effort to be sarcastic" (p. 240). Longing for peace and sleep, he is generally worn out by the necessity to "preserve a clear mind and to keep down his irritability" (p. 248). In view of such mental and physical exhaustion, it is not surprising that Razumov "felt the need of perfect safety" (p. 278). The desire for safety is no longer dictated by the determination to survive but by the promise of "independence from that degrading method of direct lying which at times he found it almost impossible to practice" (pp. 279-80). Eventually circumstances and the gullibility or folly of the revolutionaries bring Razumov so close to safety that "the strength of falsehood seemed irresistible" (p. 360). But falsehood
is no more conducive to a peaceful existence than was his honest student life. With the reward for his efforts of deception in hand, Razumov is again surprised by the unexpected. Discovering his love for Natalia, he confesses his spying activities to the revolutionaries.

Razumov's confession is portrayed as a liberation from the world of appearances and falsehood. It is not a purely impulsive act but has been prepared for by Razumov's basic truthfulness. His "mortal distaste"(p. 282) for lies has often tempted him to tell the truth and he has felt frustrated by the reflection: "All sincerity was an imprudence. Yet one could not renounce truth altogether"(p. 209). The self Razumov is forced to repress still makes itself felt. The extent of Razumov's distaste for the role he must play in Geneva is obvious from the resentment of "being dealt with in any way by these people"(p. 278) and from the sensation of suffocating in "the choking fumes of falsehood"(p. 269). Razumov is now ready to liberate himself from his false identity.

The confession is specifically referred to as an escape "from the prison of lies"(p. 363). But Conrad makes it clear that this escape is not a willed act. In anticipation of being established as an irrefutably trustworthy revolutionary, Razumov visits Natalia's house, not to tell the truth but to unburden himself of the last lie. However, overpowered by love for Natalia—an emotion that is new to the orphan—Razumov is no longer master of his will. In the written confession to Natalia, Razumov explains how she compelled him to tell the truth: "You fascinated me—you have freed me from the blindness of anger and hate—the truth shining in you drew the truth out of me"(p. 361). Surprised once more by the unexpected, Razumov does not despair this time but welcomes the new danger to his life. In the letter to Natalia he rejoices: "You were appointed to undo the evil by making me betray myself back into truth and peace"(p. 358). Through the confession
Razumov is restored to his true self and, in addition, his old desire for an identity is fulfilled. Proud of the new consciousness of himself, Razumov explains to the revolutionaries: "To-day, of all days since I came amongst you, I was made safe, and to-day I made myself free from falsehood, from remorse—independent of every single human being on this earth" (p. 368). But liberation goes hand in hand with destruction. Razumov is acutely aware of the double-edged nature of his new found freedom: "I am independent—and therefore perdition is my lot" (p. 362). The instrument of perdition is the jealous Nikita who reduces Razumov to a deaf cripple. Under Western Eyes closes with Razumov living under the care of Tekla in the south of Russia. He is slowly dying, but is at peace with himself and is often visited by various revolutionaries who like to listen to his ideas. The final image of the helpless Razumov as a deaf oracle is not without irony but Conrad surely wants the reader to share Sophia Antonovna's admiration for the courageous act of self-destruction at the very moment when safety was almost assured. Through his unusual experiences, the average Russian of the first pages has acquired heroic stature.

But how does Razumov's story explain the "psychology of Russia?" Conrad's juxtaposition of Russia and the West suggests that Russia shares Razumov's compulsion for self-destruction. Unlike the West, Russia is dynamic and has the potential for both exceptional greatness and utter misery. Above all, Russia rejects the sterility of the West which Natalia characterizes as "a bargain with fate" (p. 114). The cold and unimaginative physical setting and the dullness of the people in Switzerland are the outward signs of this bargain. The "orderly roofslopes" of Geneva impress Razumov as "comely without grace, and hospitable without sympathy" (p. 141). Equally unattractive is the view of lake and harbor: "He thought it odious—oppressively odious—in its unsuggestive finish: the very perfection of mediocrity
attained at last after centuries of toil and culture" (p. 203). The indifference expressed in the landscape repeats itself in the people which the language teacher describes: "...I observed a solitary Swiss couple, whose fate was made secure from the cradle to the grave by the perfect mechanism of democratic institutions in a republic that could almost be held in the palm of one's hand" (p. 175). Contemplating the sterility of Western democracy, Natalia reflects that Russia has indeed done well to reject Western political solutions because: "We Russians shall find some better form of national freedom than an artificial conflict of parties—which is wrong because it is a conflict and contemptible because it is artificial" (p. 106). In spite of Conrad's admiration for Western political stability, he suggests that a case could be made for Russia's rejection of easy compromises in favor of a more dangerous but energetic and idealistic attitude in politics. It follows that what a nation or an individual gains from existence is proportional to the risk one is willing to take. In this sense Razumov and Russia are finally linked in the statement that "the terms men and nations obtain from Fate are hallowed by the price" (p. 114).

The juxtaposition of Adrian and Razumov in this chapter has suggested many similarities between Doktor Faustus and Under Western Eyes. Adrian, as the symbolic German, and Razumov, as the typical Russian, are obviously self-destructive heroes. This tragic fate is internally conditioned in Adrian and externally imposed on Razumov. Adrian is born with an irrational side which typifies the German people throughout history whereas Razumov is confronted with and victimized by the irrational elements in the national character of the Russian people. Adrian is immediately eager to accept demonic help, whereas Razumov sells his soul only gradually. This difference in attitude is particularly brought out in the devil scenes in Doktor Faustus and Under Western Eyes, which are both modelled on Ivan's confrontation with
the devil in Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*. The devil's visit in *Doktor Faustus* clearly functions within the novel's archetypal patterns.

For Mann the pact with a highly sophisticated devil, whose temptation represents a viable alternative to the hero's impass, is a serious matter which is supposed to illustrate Germany's precarious situation. In *Under Western Eyes*, on the other hand, the allusion to *The Brothers Karamazov* is highly ironic. The narrator's tone, describing the demonic type of discussions between Razumov and Councillor Mikulin, leaves no doubt about Conrad's contemptuous attitude toward Dostoevsky:

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 (pp. 304-305).

Through the ironic allusion to Dostoevsky, Conrad indicates that Razumov is morally responsible for his reprehensible betrayal of Haldin. He will not allow the devil to take the blame for the hero's actions as do, to some extent, Dostoevsky and Mann. Where Mann's devil is an influential presence in *Doktor Faustus*, Conrad's devil in *Under Western Eyes* is at best ridiculous.

In the context of guilt and retribution, it is important to understand that Adrian wills his fate whereas Razumov resists his. Because he is conscious of civilization's sterility, Adrian sympathizes from the beginning with demonic forces and ultimately refuses to be saved. But Razumov is or wants to be blind to the faults and weaknesses of civilization. His faith in rational behavior is conditioned by the pleasant and comfortable life the illusions of civilization promise. Only at the end of *Under Western Eyes* is he ready to accept the truth about himself and life. The penetration of
the surface illusions is, of course, a destructive, or more precisely, a self-destructive act. Both Razumov and Adrian are tortured by guilt feelings; Adrian convinces himself that he was born evil and Razumov is haunted by Haldin's phantom. But moral and physical pain are necessary for they heighten Adrian's already exceptional nature and turn Razumov's fate into "the story of a not uncommon man whom chance and suffering render extraordinary." It is indispensable that Adrian should pass through the supreme agony of Echo's death in order to create "Dr. Fausti Weheklage" and that Razumov should suffer in the "prison of lies" before he can experience a sense of liberation. Guerard succinctly summarizes Razumov's case when he says that "the crime which had broken Razumov has now fully made him." Denied a normal existence, both Adrian and Razumov eventually strike us as tragic heroes who are destroyed because of their unusual fate.

The authors of *Doktor Faustus* and of *Under Western Eyes* are in various degrees sympathetic toward their tragic heroes and the unhappy nations their fate characterizes. Russia and Germany must be condemned because of the despotism and terror they spread. But at the same time they deserve to be pitied because they courageously reject the sterility of civilization. Mann sees in Germany a nation with great intellectual and artistic capacities which has been misled tragically by its own ambitions. Mann is himself the product of German cultural values and as such he is torn between an outright condemnation of Nazism and a tentative justification for his country's terrible errors. Similarly, Conrad's hatred for Russia is not unequivocal. Although Russia has posed a threat to Conrad's native Poland for centuries, the author of *Under Western Eyes* was nevertheless sensitive to something admirable in this nation. In order to do justice to Russia, Conrad "had never been called before to a greater effort of detachment: detachment from all passions, prejudices, and even from personal memories" (p. viii). Crit-
ics, among them Irving Howe, have sometimes argued that Conrad "has failed to accept the challenge of his own book: to confront the revolutionists in their strength and not merely in their weakness...." Although Conrad admittedly did not approve of revolutionary ideals, he was nevertheless sympathetic to misled idealists like Haldin and Sophia Antonovna. The following statement by Guerard therefore sums up Conrad's artistic feat most accurately:

The novel's enormous personal achievement is to have done so much justice to Russia and things Russian. It reminds us, as we recall Conrad's hatred and disgusts, how great must have been the share of conscious imaginative integrity as well as how great the devil's share of unconscious sympathy.

In two different ways, Conrad's often favorable portrayal of Russia despite his natural antipathies, and Mann's condemnation of Germany despite his love for its past reveal the same attempt to achieve distance through artistic control. And, independent of their emotional commitment, both authors hope, perhaps to a different extent, that a better future may grow out of the present situation. Mann ends *Doktor Faustus* with Zeitblom's moving question:


In *Under Western Eyes*, Conrad sees even less hope for Russia's future; the guarded optimism in the last few pages is clearly tinged with irony. But Natalia's undiminished hope for "the day when all discord shall be silenced" (p. 376) is nevertheless a sentiment compatible with Conrad's "vision of community," a vision Avrom Fleishman discusses with much insight. It is at any rate possible to consider Adrian's ambivalent salvation and Razumov's questionable liberation as a sign that perhaps Germany will be cleansed and Russia will find some peace through the simple brotherhood of individuals.

Adrian and Razumov are neither unequivocally condemned or unequivocally
absolved from guilt so that Germany and Russia are evaluated as fairly as possible and that the complexities of political reality can be maintained. But the quite favorable treatment of Adrian and Razumov contains a tacit criticism of Western civilization. This imbalance is rectified through Zeitblom and the language teacher who are both exponents of Western values. Through them, Western civilization loses some of the extremely negative aspects the discussion of Adrian and Razumov has suggested. The next chapter will therefore concentrate on Zeitblom and the language teacher, both as narrators and as characters in the unfolding drama. It should then become obvious that Zeitblom and the language teacher are similar types of narrators and that they are both juxtaposed to the heroes in order to provide a more dialectical and comprehensive view of the political picture in *Doktor Faustus* and *Under Western Eyes*. 
Footnotes


4. Ibid., p. 492.

5. Ibid., XI, 1131.


7. Mann, Gesammelte Werke, IX, 496.

8. Ibid., XI, 1131.


11. Ibid., p. 41.


13. Ibid., p. 239.


Chapter IV

Zeitblom and the language teacher

The similarities between the narrators in *Doktor Faustus* and *Under Western Eyes* are more immediately obvious than those between the heroes. They provide the grounds of comparison in a study by Jacqueline Viswanathan and convince Julian Kaye of "internal evidence of influence." Zeitblom and the language teacher are alike in personality and attitude. They also fulfill their narrative task in similar ways. Apart from direct remarks in the narrative, Zeitblom and the language teacher comment on their subject through the contrast they unconsciously provide between their own ideological and moral convictions and those of the heroes. But is Kaye right in postulating that Mann was influenced by the narrative technique in *Under Western Eyes*? Although Conrad's use of the narrative device may have suggested the choice of Zeitblom, the difficulty of the political theme itself may easily account for the narrator. The highly explosive political subject and the author's emotional involvement required a distancing device in both *Doktor Faustus* and *Under Western Eyes*. The use of an intermediary narrator, who could be treated ironically by the author, made it possible to avoid a biased treatment of the political situation. The similarities between Zeitblom and the language teacher could therefore be accounted for by the background and temperament of the authors and by the problematical nature of political themes in literature.

Kaye's theory that Conrad influenced Mann directly is perhaps put in question by the fact that the narrative technique in *Doktor Faustus* and *Under Western Eyes* has been anticipated in earlier novels. Marlow, the narrator of *Heart of Darkness* and *Lord Jim*, functions clearly as a distancing device. He
is an eye-witness reporter whose orally communicated story is recorded by one of his listeners. Conrad's own personality is thereby twice removed. Similarly, Zeitblom's self-consciousness as a narrator has been prefigured in *Die Erwählten* and *Die Vertauschten Köpfe* where the narrator addresses himself directly to the reader, and the fictive biography in *Doktor Faustus* is surely the logical extension of the fictive autobiography in *Bekenntnisse des Hochstaplers Felix Krull*. It is undeniable that the narrative technique in *Doktor Faustus* and *Under Western Eyes* has to a large extent been suggested by the authors' earlier experiments with narrators.

Both Zeitblom and the language teacher have been subjected to criticism. Ignace Feuerlicht argues that the "humoristisch-auktoriale Erzählweise," successful in other works by Mann, has failed in *Doktor Faustus*:

Dichte Erzählweise hatte er in seinen grossen Romanen, dem *Zauberberg* und *Joseph*, viele Jahre lang geübt, und sie war ihm lieb und vertraut geworden, so dass er sie auch einmal benutzen wollte, wo sie vielleicht nicht ganz am Platz war.

Similarly, it is sometimes believed that Marlow would have served Conrad's purposes better than the language teacher. J.I.M. Stewart, for instance, complains that "the narrator's is in no sense, as Marlow's frequently is, a growing and changing sensibility in its own right; nor does he enrich or diversify the architecture of the book like Captain Mitchell in *Nostromo*."

An even more common reservation about Zeitblom and the language teacher is that, although perhaps appropriate narrative voices, they are inefficient and blind as characters. It is, of course, true that they are limited in their perspective but critics who treat them as ignorant fools who blunder insensitively into Adrian's and Razumov's lives are simplifying the case. Zeitblom is often described as a cowardly and passive spectator of apocalyptic events he is unable, or at least slow, to understand:

Aber er ist schüchter, ist ängstlich, ist der Routine anheimgefallen und gelangt schwer—immerhin gehört er aber zu
The language teacher is perhaps considered an even greater fool than Zeitblom. Indeed, his unfavorable reception prompted Conrad to write in the introduction to *Under Western Eyes*: "He himself has been much criticized; but I will not at this late hour undertake to justify his existence"(p. viii).

Tony Tanner is, of course, not wrong in saying that the language teacher "describes with amazed non-comprehension" what he observes about Russia.

But to characterize him as an "impercipient, incredulous narrator" who "becomes, as he always appears to Razumov, a vague peripheral fatuous presence" does underplay the language teacher's importance and perceptiveness. His limitations are imposed on him by the different world he lives in. And, although both Zeitblom and the language teacher are initially unaware of the dark and irrational side of life, through Adrian and Razumov they slowly become conscious of its existence. They clearly gain some insights into the shadowy regions of the demonic but choose to remain on the side of light and reason. This choice is obviously determined by their basic character and is certainly not altogether deliberate. Nevertheless, because of the glimpse into Adrian's and Razumov's world, Zeitblom and the language teacher affirm their own values no longer blindly but with a new consciousness of the alternatives.

No matter how unfavorably some critics react to Zeitblom and the language teacher, they were important to Mann and Conrad. In the introduction to *Under Western Eyes*, Conrad justifies his narrator's presence by pointing out: "He was useful to me and therefore I think that he must be useful to the reader both in the way of comment and by the part he plays in the development of the story"(pp. viii-ix). The narrator is further necessary to "produce the effect of actuality"(p. ix) and functions as a foil for Natalia.
who would otherwise be "too much alone and unsupported to be perfectly credible" (p. ix). And, when Conrad announces that he will show things Russian "as they appeared to the Western Eyes of the old teacher of languages" (p. viii), he finally suggests the narrator's importance as a contrast to the hero. Mann attributes perhaps less significance to the illusion of reality Zeitblom creates and stresses above all the possibility "das Dämonische durch ein exemplarisch undämonisches Mittel gehen zu lassen." But the narrators are also designed to translate the extraordinary experiences of Adrian and Razumov into ordinary language. Indeed, as Jacqueline Viswanathan indicates, "As embodiments of conventional and easily acceptable emotions and thoughts, the narrators are suited to their role as intermediaries between the actors and readers." Although Zeitblom and the language teacher are limited in their perception, within the fictional framework of the novels they are indispensable for an understanding of Adrian's and Razumov's fate.

Mann and Conrad were both intrigued by the possibility of using a narrator who is at the same time an actor in the drama. Zeitblom and the language teacher relate and evaluate events of the past, in which they themselves have played a part, from a later and therefore more informed point of view. The narrator's double role permits Mann and Conrad to treat Zeitblom and the language teacher ironically. Zeitblom narrates the story of Doktor Faustus consistently from a moment during the Second World War. Aside from references to the war and to the task of writing, the novel is told in the past tense. The informed narrator consequently often comments on his own part in the story and does not leave a gap between his present and his past knowledge. Zeitblom is primarily ironic because he is out of key with the events in Doktor Faustus so that the irony is introduced by the author who tells the reader, by means of symbolic patterns, more than the narrator himself knows. In Under Western Eyes, however, the irony originates partly from
another source. Like Zeitblom, the language teacher is also limited because the reader sees more than the narrator is aware of. But Conrad capitalizes further on the discrepancy between the knowledge of the narrator and that of the actor. Unlike Doktor Faustus, Under Western Eyes is mostly told in the present tense. With the exception of the language teacher's remarks to the reader, the story is not told from the informed narrator's point of view but from that of the less informed actor. Often the narrator disappears altogether; in reconstructing Razumov's diary, for instance, Conrad lets the characters speak almost in their own voices. The part the language teacher himself plays, however, is always presented in strict accordance with the limited knowledge he had in the past. Moreover, the time shifts in Under Western Eyes accentuate the dramatic irony: "The illusion of presentness," writes Guerard, "also permits the narrator's blundering unconscious ironies. For he is reconstructing a time when the first part of his narrative was untranslated." Mann and Conrad used limited narrators in order to introduce ironies which could undermine the framework from which Adrian and Razumov are evaluated.

It is important, however, to distinguish between the narrator and the author. Although the narrators often express opinions we know their authors share, Mann's and Conrad's ironic attitude toward them compels us to view them as distinct characters. Without this distance between author and narrator, Mann's or Conrad's bias would interfere and simplify the novels' political complexities. By preventing the reader from identifying the author with the narrator, the novels remain, to some degree, politically neutral and non-partisan. The language teacher in Under Western Eyes is clearly central to Conrad's "effort of detachment"(p. viii). Irving Howe, for instance, stresses that "The narrator is not simply an awkward intrusion: he signifies a wish on Conrad's part to dissociate himself from his own imagi-
nation." Guerard makes the same point perhaps even more succinctly. Referring to the "last meeting between Razumov and Nathalie Haldin" the language teacher witnesses, Guerard says:

But his presence, and the fact that this interview nominally occurred in the past, were extremely important to Conrad. They permitted him to keep his saving distance, and so permitted him to write coherently of violence and without embarrassment of passion. 12

Told by an omniscient narrator, the political comments in the novel would almost automatically be attributed to the author. And told by Razumov, a non-political man, the events in Under Western Eyes could no longer be viewed politically. In addition, therefore, to his neutralizing purpose, "one of the main functions of the narrator is to keep suggesting that we view the action politically." Through the language teacher, Conrad can thus control the novel's emotional and political level.

Zeitblom also creates a "saving distance" for Mann and is at the same time instrumental in politicizing the events in Doktor Faustus. Mann needed a distancing device like Zeitblom perhaps even more than Conrad. Not only did he take Germany's fate to heart but he claims that no other fictional figure in his works has fascinated him as much as Adrian. In order to remain in artistic control of his material, he therefore had to dissociate himself from it. In "Die Entstehung des Doktor Faustus" he leaves no doubt about the advantages Zeitblom's mediating voice offers:

...und überdies war die Massnahme bitter notwendig, um eine gewisse Durchheiterung des düsteren Stoffes zu erzielen und mir selbst, wie dem Leser, seine Schrecknisse erträglich zu machen. Das Dämonische durch ein exemplarisch undämonisches Mittel gehen zu lassen, eine humanistisch fromme und schlichte, liebend verschreckte Seele mit seiner Darstellung zu beauftragen, war an sich eine komische Idee, entlastend gewissermassen, denn es erlaubte mir, die Erregung durch alles Direkte, Persönliche, Bekenntnishaft, das der unheimlichen Konzeption zugrunde lag, ins Indirekte zu schieben und sie in der Verwirrung, dem Händezittern jener bangen Seele travestierend sich malen zu lassen." 14
Through Zeitblom, a narrator who is representative of Mann's own humanistic side, the author is able to parody many of his own attitudes. The element of self-parody in *Doktor Faustus* represents an important aspect of Mann's need for distance. Speaking again of Zeitblom, whose style parodies that of Goethe, Mann explains:

Seine Erregung aber war die meine, ich parodierte die eigene Erfülltheit und empfand als sehr wohlätig die Rolle, das Schreibenlassen, die Indirektheit meiner Verantwortlichkeit bei so viel Entschlossenheit zum Direkten, zum Einsatz von Wirklichkeit und Lebensgeheimnis.

But, apart from the advantages of indirection, Zeitblom's presence also introduces the novel's political theme. Like Razumov, Adrian is a non-political man and is consequently not interested in the political implications of his aesthetic theories. The important parallel between art and politics is obviously drawn by Zeitblom alone. Mann himself points to Zeitblom as the politicizing agent when he says:

Was ich durch die Einschaltung des Narrators gewann, war aber vor allem die Möglichkeit, die Erzählung auf doppelte Zeitebene spielen zu lassen, die Erlebnisse, welche den Schreibenden erschüttern, während er schreibt, polyphon mit denen zu verschränken, von denen er berichtet, also dass sich das Zittern seiner Hand aus den Vibratio- nen ferner Bombeneinschläge und aus inneren Schrecknissen zweideutig und auch wieder eindeutig erklärt.

The indirect approach to a political theme in *Doktor Faustus* and *Under Western Eyes* is achieved through the use of a narrator who cannot be identified with the author and who is responsive to political dimensions the heroes themselves ignore.

Since the reader is almost entirely dependent on the narrator for the portrait of the hero, Zeitblom's and the language teacher's temperament and personal opinions are of the utmost significance. It is even necessary to ask if they are capable of evaluating the situation in *Doktor Faustus* and *Under Western Eyes* accurately and if they can be trusted. Although a nar-
rator may be honest, it is possible that he is nevertheless unreliable in the interpretation of assimilated facts. Authors like Ford Maddox Ford and Scott Fitzgerald, both influenced by Conrad, have actually exploited the potential unreliability of a first person narrator who is primarily talking about a third person. In *The Good Soldier*, Ford characterizes the narrator, John Dowell, as a man who is confused about what he has witnessed and who is temperamentally unsuited to tell a "tale of passion." The reader therefore questions the accuracy of the portrait Dowell draws of Edward Ashburnham and of the other characters. Similarly, Fitzgerald conveys the story of *The Great Gatsby* through the eyes of Nick Carraway whose sceptical and often passive nature renders his impressions of the passionate and romantic Gatsby suspect. Does a similar contrast between the hero and the rather dull and colorless narrator in both *Doktor Faustus* and *Under Western Eyes* inevitably suggest that Zeitblom and the language teacher cannot be trusted? This question can only be answered when the author's tone is analyzed. In *The Good Soldier* and *The Great Gatsby* the author purposely alerts the reader to Dowell's and Carraway's unreliability. Through Dowell's shortcomings, Ford wants to demonstrate, above all, the relativity of truth or knowledge, and Fitzgerald makes Carraway blunder in order to heighten Gatsby's appeal. But in *Doktor Faustus* and *Under Western Eyes*, where the irony directed at the narrator is partly auto-irony on the author's part, the author is generally in much greater agreement with the narrator than in *The Good Soldier* or *The Great Gatsby*. At any rate, neither Mann nor Conrad presents us with a code or a frame of reference which would substantiate doubts about the basic reliability of Zeitblom and the language teacher. Unlike Ford and Fitzgerald, Mann and Conrad do not discredit the information furnished by the narrators but simply reveal the limitations under which they describe a world alien to them.
The gap between the world of the narrator and that of the hero is primarily produced by different value systems. As exponents of Western civilization, Zeitblom and the language teacher are mostly antagonistic toward Adrian's and Razumov's demonic traits. But, on a more personal and human level, they feel attracted to these men of extraordinary suffering. It is immediately obvious that Zeitblom is emotionally much closer to Adrian than the language teacher is to Razumov. The diary and letters, constituting a large part of *Under Western Eyes*, permit a direct insight into Razumov which often dispenses with the language teacher's presence over long periods of time. But in *Doktor Faustus* only a few, although often key passages, are supposedly based on letters or other first-hand documents. Mann therefore relies heavily on a narrator who can penetrate the hero's mind because he can claim to experience vicariously what the composer contends with. Zeitblom sympathizes with Adrian on an emotional rather than intellectual level and loves the childhood friend more than the uncanny musical genius. This is announced already in the opening section of *Doktor Faustus* where the narrator, unsettled about the nature and morality of genius, feels reassured by the following reflection:

> Letztens und erstens aber—und diese Rechtfertigung war noch immer die gültigste, wenn nicht vor den Menschen, so doch vor Gott: ich habe ihn geliebt—mit Entsetzen und Zärtlichkeit, mit Erbarmen und hingebender Bewunderung—und wenig dabei gefragt, ob er im mindesten mir das Gefühl zurückgab (p. 12).

Mann constantly stresses Zeitblom's ability to sympathize with Adrian's situation. In accordance with the Faust myth, the narrator is a Wagner figure and is perceived as such by Adrian who calls him a "herzlich getreuen Famulus" (p. 657). In the role of Wagner, Zeitblom subordinates his own life almost entirely to Adrian's career. Already during childhood, Zeitblom speaks of Adrian as someone "an dem ich hing, ja dessen Sein, dessen Werden,
dessen Lebensfrage mich im Grunde mehr interessierte als meine eigene" (p. 118). In spite of military duties, a teaching profession, and married life, Zeitblom never actually loses sight of his friend. Like a shadow, the timid humanist follows the daring and defiant composer through every demonic twist of his destiny. Zeitblom's self-effacement is supposed to convince us that his identification with Adrian establishes him as an authoritative commentator. Referring to Adrian's report of the brothel incident, he claims, for instance, that he himself felt the consequences of Esmeralda's touch: "Tagelang spürte ich die Berührung ihres Fleisches auf meiner eigenen Wange und wusste dabei mit Widerwillen, mit Schrecken, dass sie seither auf der seinen brannte" (p. 198). Seeing himself as "Adrians anderes Ich" (p. 595) or "Mundstück" (p. 574), Zeitblom continues to consider himself a substitute for Adrian even after the composer's death. Speaking of the horrors of the Second World War, he remarks:

Es ist mir, als stände und lebte ich für ihn, statt seiner, als träge ich die Last, die seinen Schultern erspart geblieben, kurz, als erwiese ich ihm ein Liebes, indem ich's ihm abnähme zuleben; und diese Vorstellung, so illusorisch, ja närrisch sie sei, tut mir wohl, sie schmeichelt dem stets gehegten Wunsch, ihm zu dienen, zu helfen, ihn zu schützen,--diesem Bedürfnis, dem zu Lebzeiten des Freundes nur so geringsüßige Befriedigung vergönnt war (p. 337).

Zeitblom's devotion to Adrian is in fact so great that he expects nothing in return. Conscious of Adrian's unconcern and disregard for himself, Zeitblom comments on his decision to attend Adrian's theology lessons in the following way:

Ich tat es aus vollkommen freien Stücken, nur aus dem unabweislichen Wunsche, zu hören, was er hörte, zu wissen, was er aufnahm, kurz: auf ihm achtzuhaben,--denn das erschien mir immer höchst notwendig, wenn auch zwecklos (p. 150).

Zeitblom never presumes to influence or even advise the composer. When Adrian expressly asks him if a career in music is advisable, Zeitblom refrains from any active approval or disapproval:
...ich fand es beruhigend in aller freudigen Beunruhigung, mir sagen zu können, dass ich an der Ueberredung keinen Teil gehabt,—höchstens durch ein gewisses fatalistisches Verhalten...ihr allenfalls Sukkurs geleistet hatte (p. 185).

Zeitblom finally justifies his acquiescence in such a one-sided friendship by saying: "Es gibt Menschen, mit denen zu leben nicht leicht, und die zu lassen unmöglich ist" (p. 294). The friend's devotion to Adrian the man and the humanist's frequent hostility to Adrian the composer convince the reader that Zeitblom is a privileged narrator whose reservations about the composer's music tend to emphasize its forbidden nature.

Razumov's diary and letter in Under Western Eyes permit Conrad to maintain a certain distance between the narrator and the hero. The language teacher is always acutely aware of his status as an outsider and essentially passive onlooker. Although interested in Razumov because of his friendship for Natalia, he declares that he has "no comprehension of the Russian character" (p. 4). The emphatic disavowal of familiarity with things Russian is overstated. In spite of a Western background, the narrator has stronger ties with Russia than he cares to admit openly. But he betrays incidentally that he was "born from parents settled in St Petersburg" where he had "acquired the language as a child" (p. 187). And, even after leaving Russia as a child, the language teacher frequented Russian circles in Geneva and has renewed his "acquaintance with the language" (p. 187). Often the language teacher even demonstrates shrewd insights into the situation in Geneva. His grasp of the essence of revolution, for instance, is more accurate than anybody else's. Occasionally, he demonstrates a real insight into Razumov's predicament. He is certainly right to capture Razumov's sleeplessness in the image of "a man who lies unwinking in the dark, angrily passive in the toils of disastrous thoughts" (p. 183). And he further calculates with a "sudden approach to hidden truth" that Razumov's "scorn and impatience" are
related to the "same thing which had kept him over a week, nearly ten days indeed, from coming near Miss Haldin" (p. 197). At the same time the language teacher is, of course, more often than not wrong in his assessment of Razumov. The young Russian's obstinate silence, designed to deceive the world, appears to the narrator as "a favourable trait of character. It was associated with sincerity—in my mind" (p. 173). And, when Natalia's presence reminds Razumov of Haldin, the language teacher misconstrues the Russian's "incipient frown" (p. 179) as a sign that the younger man disapproves of Natalia's association with "this elderly person—this foreigner!" (p. 179). But even though the narrator's Western values limit his understanding of the East, he is also clearly unwilling to comprehend too much. Because of the disturbing and irrational elements he suspects in things Russian, he is frightened and determined to play the role of "silent spectator" (p. 345) and "mute witness" (p. 381). However, he communicates the news about Haldin's death, consents to talk to Razumov in Natalia's name, and helps Natalia locate Razumov. But when Natalia thanks him for his understanding friendship and help, he defensively replies: "I have done little else but look on" (p. 134). Even when the catastrophic events begin to gravitate toward their inevitable conclusion, the language teacher, drawn into them by Natalia, again dissociates himself: "I made up my mind to play my part of helpless spectator to the end" (p. 336). The refusal to participate is at the same time a refusal to see clearly and to know the truth. The natural limitations imposed on the narrator by his background are therefore coupled with a determined effort to take refuge in the cowardly role of the passive spectator.

The language teacher's insistence on dissociating himself from the dramatic action in Under Western Eyes is often interpreted as a sign of ignorance. Critics have argued that the Englishman is insensitive to the tragic implications of what he witnesses. They support this theory especial-
ly with the narrator's behavior after Razumov's confession in Natalia's house. They see the trivial exclamation "That miserable wretch has carried off your veil" (p. 356) as evidence of the narrator's basic blindness. Hay, for instance, contends that the language teacher "seems interested only in the theft" and Secor considers the episode "a brilliant exposure of the narrator's distance from any understanding of the drama he has just recreated for us." It is, however, possible to see this scene in a different light. The narrator is clearly baffled by the moving spectacle of Razumov's confession and, because of his adopted role of spectator, cannot cope adequately with an experience which suddenly forces him to see clearly. Taken unawares by a nightmarish vision, his trivial remark betrays a desire to impose some order or normalcy and to postpone full cognizance of an impossible situation. The language teacher is not insensitive or blind to the tragedy but tries to preserve his sanity and a rational hold on existence. To a certain extent, the narrator's apparent obtuseness to the story he narrates is therefore a self-protective mask.

What sympathy the narrator in Doktor Faustus and Under Western Eyes manifests for Adrian or Razumov is always qualified by his own radically different values. Both novels are therefore characterized by a dichotomy between what one might call the hero's Eastern affinities for the irrational or demonic and the narrator's Western faith in reason or civilized behavior. Each value system is thereby illuminated by the other and the author's ironic attitude tends to undercut both. Indeed, the central dichotomy in both Doktor Faustus and Under Western Eyes permits an ironic vision which Kierkegaard would characterize as cosmic:

Irony in the eminent sense directs itself not against this or that particular existence but against the whole given actuality of a certain time and situation. It is not this or that phenomenon but the totality of existence which it considers sub specie ironicae.
In *Compass of Irony*, D. C. Muecke argues that this type of irony is neither negative nor nihilistic. Growing out of German Romantic theories, cosmic irony has fascinated modern authors, Muecke mentions specifically Thomas Mann, because:

> Romantic irony is not negative; it does not, for example, negate subjectivity by objectivity, the imaginative by the critical, the emotional by the rational....Schlegel's meaning is that irony does not take sides but regards both sides critically.  

Through this type of ironic vision, Mann and Conrad can do justice to the political complexities in *Doktor Faustus* and *Under Western Eyes*. In the two novels, the political alternatives are exposed in both their strengths and their weaknesses. Viewed through the "Western eyes" of the narrators, Adrian's and Razumov's course of action appears unwise, destructive, and morally reprehensible. But, by undercutting the narrators themselves, Mann and Conrad show at the same time the shortcomings of the Western tradition. Through Zeitblom's and the language teacher's gradual awareness of the inadequacy and obsolescence of their own values, the political dilemma in the two novels appears in all its tragic implications.

To speak of a dichotomy between East and West seems appropriate for *Under Western Eyes*, though less accurate for *Doktor Faustus*. However, Mann's rather esoteric view of Germany still imposes or permits this dichotomy. Mann puts historical considerations above geographical ones and maintains that Germany has always maintained an exceptional position between Eastern and Western Europe. The distinction Mann draws between German culture and European civilization in "Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen" manifests itself in the "unsterblich wahre Gegensatz von Musik und Politik, von Deutschtum und Zivilisation." Mann's interpretation of history emphasizes Germany's essentially anti-humanistic tradition. Humanism was a foreign influence in Germany which was unable to break the basically anti-rational dominance of
music. Even the Enlightenment, generally an intellectual and social movement, was in Germany an emotional and religious phenomenon. Contrary to popular opinion, Mann sees the Reformation in the following light:

...und keineswegs erscheint Luthers Werk uns als ein reines Werk der Befreiung im Sinne der Zivilisation und der Aufklärung. Die Reformation als Fortsetzung, Folge oder Erscheinungsform der Renaissance zu nehmen, scheint uns nur sehr bedingungsweise erlaubt: Eine Störung und Unterbrechung, einen Rückfall ins Mittelalter, eine konservative, ja reaktionäre Bewegung in ihr zu sehen ist mindestens in demselben Grade statthaft;...

Mann reverses here the conventional association of protestantism with restrained soberness and catholicism with emotional exuberance. Moreover, in Mann's view of history, Luther's Reformation clearly anticipates Hitler's National Socialism. In Doktor Faustus, professor Kumpf is a Luther caricature who is familiar with the devil. And Zeitblom sees the Reformation in the following unflattering light:

Und meinesgleichen mag sich wohl fragen...ob nicht die Reformatoren eher als rückfällige Typen und Sendlinge des Unglücks zu betrachten sind. Es ist ja wohl kein Zweifel, dass der Menschheit unendliches Blutvergießen und die entsetzlichste Selbstzerfleischung erspart geblieben wäre, wenn Martin Luther die Kirche nicht wiederhergestellt hätte(pp.,119-20).

In Mann's eyes, Germany's history of "regressive progress" clearly distinguishes this country from the other Western nations. A dichotomy between East and West corresponds therefore very much to Mann's own thinking.

The opposition between humanism and the Reformation operates in Doktor Faustus on a symbolic level. The humanist Zeitblom is a catholic who associates himself with the famous catholic humanist Erasmus. Adrian is a protestant and a student of professor Kumpf. What further places him within the protestant tradition is his music because Mann argues: "Die Erziehung der Deutschen zur Musik begann mit Martin Luther." In order to indicate the common temporal and geographical origins of humanism and protestantism in Germany, Mann makes the medieval city of Kaisersaschern the birthplace of
both Zeitblom and Adrian. Historically, humanism was indeed in many ways a parallel movement to protestantism. The humanists partly paved the way for Luther but few leading humanists actually joined protestantism. The disagreement between humanists and protestants grew out of Luther's religious emphasis which was antithetical to the humanists' interest in intellectual, educational, social, and political freedom. Zeitblom refers to these principles of enlightened progress when he calls himself a "Nachfahre der deutschen Humanisten aus der Zeit der 'Briefe der Dunkelmänner'" (p. 10). The "Men of Obscure Letters" reacted, like Luther, against the suppression of the German people by Rome. But although their letters, celebrated as the greatest satire of the time, are directed against the catholic theologians at the University of Cologne, Hutten and Rubianus were not inspired by religious motives but by indignation against the Church's political power and intolerance. Cooperation between the humanists and Luther ended in mutual disillusionment. Mann underlines Zeitblom's humanism above all by the narrator's indifference to religion. At the University of Halle, Zeitblom emphasizes that "die theologische Luft mir nicht gemäss, nicht geheuer war" (p. 118) and explains his alienation there as follows:

Ich fühlte mich zu Halle... ein wenig wie einer meiner wissenschaftlichen Ahnen, Crotus Rubianus, der um 1530 zu Halle Canonicus war, und den Luther nicht anders als 'den Epikurier Crotus' oder auch 'Dr. Kröte, des Cardinals zu Mainz Tellerlecker' nannte (p. 118).

But Zeitblom's humanism is in reality only a modified version of the old spirit of exploration and enlightenment. Generally timid and devoid of curiosity, Zeitblom betrays a fear of the unknown which is antithetical to the true humanist's mind. Adrian insists that the narrator's aversion to his own travels into space and toward the center of the earth is reminiscent of the medieval clergyman's emphasis that man should remain ignorant: "Du siehst, dein Humanismus ist reines Mittelalter" (p. 364). Even the humanistic
traits, which Zeitblom stresses in a self-description, point toward a pale conception of the once energetic European tradition:

Ich bin eine durchaus gemässigte und, ich darf wohl sagen, gesunde, human temperierte, auf das Harmonische und Vernünftige gerichtete Natur, ein Gelehrter und conjuratus des 'Lateinischen Heeres', nicht ohne Beziehung zu den Schönen Künsten...aber ein Musensohn im akademischen Sinne des Wortes...(p. 10).

Zeitblom depicts himself here as the typical modern German scholar who is intelligent but can neither create nor participate actively in life. Proud of his quite mediocre existence, the narrator compares himself at least once favorably with Adrian: "Aber wieviel besser ist es doch, habe ich mir oft gesagt, der Welt Vertrauen einzuflössen, als ihre Leidenschaften zu erregen! Wieviel besser, ihr 'gut', als ihr 'schön' zu erscheinen"(p. 388)! This "goodness," however, is at best self-gratifying and has no power to combat evil or to inspire good. Zeitblom is a helpless spectator who cannot protect his friend and country. Even in small matters, the humanist avoids any decisive action. In the case of the Rodde sisters, he insists on his position "des Dritten, des Vertrauten, des Guten, zu dem, mit dem man darüber sprechen konnte"(p. 442). But he does nothing to prevent the two sisters' tragic fate. Moreover, through his noncommittal mediation between Adrian and Marie Godeau, Zeitblom actually helps to prepare Schwerdtfeger's death. Although Zeitblom's moral position shields him from committing evil, it prevents him also from doing good and from protecting others.

Zeitblom's moral passivity extends also to his political attitudes. The humanist's respect for reason and insistence on tolerance preclude an effective opposition even to anti-humanistic theories. Confronted with Breisacher's absurd but potentially dangerous opinions, the narrator explains:

Aber dem zarter empfindenden Menschen widersteht es, zu stören; es widersteht ihm, mit logischen oder historischen Gegeninnerungen in eine erarbeitete Gedankenordnung einzubrechen, und noch im Anti-Geistigen ehrt und schont er das Geist-
The humanist's strength, his faith in human reason, becomes his weakness when faced with the irrational. Mann's point is that Germany succumbed to Nazism precisely because the country's humanistic forces were too weak. In tolerating the irrational with a blind faith in reason's ultimate triumph, they failed to act when there was still time. Zeitblom's weaknesses are here Mann's own. The popular argument that "Zeitblom ist ja Manns zweites, humanistisches Selbst" is at least substantiated by a clear correspondence between Mann's early opinions in "Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen" and Zeitblom's attitude toward the First World War. What characterizes both "Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen" and Doktor Faustus is the attempt to rationallyize Germany's aggressive policies during the early part of the twentieth-century. Like Mann as a young man, Zeitblom argues, for instance, that "Deutschlands säkulare Stunde geschlagen habe; dass die Geschichte ihre Hand über uns halte; dass nach Spanien, Frankreich, England wir an der Reihe seien, der Welt unseren Stempel aufzudrücken..." (p. 401). The deterministic course of history will thus coerce other nations into voluntary submission. Zeitblom again echoes Mann when he argues to this effect:

Mochten die Völkerschaften dort draussen uns für Rechts- und Friedensstörer, für unerträgliche Lebensfeinde halten,—wir hatten die Mittel, die Welt auf den Kopf zu schlagen, bis sie anderer Meinung über uns wurde und uns nicht nur bewunderte, sondern auch liebte (pp. 401-402).

Both Mann and Zeitblom later changed their historical outlook. But the experience of the First World War anticipates the humanists' failure during the Nazi period. The humanist's fascination with rational and abstract argument clearly induces the usually gentle Zeitblom to advocate war and destruction in 1914. And, although later Zeitblom does not support Nazism, his humanism
immobilizes him and contributes to its own defeat.

The tragic inefficiency of the German humanist is vividly portrayed by Zeitblom's often ignoble and ridiculous attitude toward the Kridwiss circle. Although unnerved by the ideas circulating in Munich, the narrator maintains an uneasy silence. Witnessing the victory of mass myths over parliamentary rule, he consoles himself with the futile hope that the terrifying implications of the fake trial will never materialize:

Obgleich mir unwohl war in der Magengrube, durfte ich nicht den Spielverderber machen und mir von Widerwillen nichts anmerken lassen, sondern musste in die allgemeine Heiterkeit einstimmen, so gut es ging, zumal ja diese nicht ohne weiteres Zustimmung, sondern, wenigstens vorderhand, nur lachend geistesfrohe Erkenntnis des Seienden oder Kommenden bedeutete (p. 488).

Afraid to understand fully what he has witnessed, he takes cowardly refuge in social rules of good behavior. He never voices a determined and convincing protest against the increasingly more persuasive influence of Nazi ideology and, after Hitler seizes power, he prefers hiding to active opposition. Indeed, Zeitblom refuses consistently to comprehend that Germany's greatness has turned completely sour. With the world crumbling around him, he still maintains some faith in Germany's essential genius. Referring to Germany's invention of a new torpedo, he says: "...ich kann eine gewisse Genugtuung nicht unterdrücken über unseren immer regen Erfindungsgeist" (p. 229). He is further proud of a "Robot-Bombe" which appears to him as a "bewunderungswürdiges Kampfmittel, wie nur heilige Not es dem Erfinder-Genius eingeben kann" (p. 448). Zeitblom does not want to admit that Germany has completely betrayed its humanistic past, and he therefore often chooses to be blind to Germany's moral and intellectual depravity.

But towards the end of Doktor Faustus, the collapse of Germany forces Zeitblom to confront reality. Aside from the military defeat, Zeitblom slowly realizes and admits that his own humanistic heritage has outlived its day.
Not only was it helpless in the face of Nazism but the Germany that will emerge after the war will have severed all ties with it. Zeitblom's growing uneasiness about Adrian's music suggests cleverly that the humanist is less and less capable of understanding and appreciating the world mirrored in the music. Zeitblom finally concedes that the "Apocalypse" is "ein Erlebnis, das wohl meiner liebenden Ergebenheit für seinen Urheber zukam, aber eigent lich über meine seelischen Möglichkeiten ging..." (pp. 476-77). The full extent of Zeitblom's alienation from his time and country, and that country's alienation from its own past, is finally revealed when Zeitblom confesses to the "Gefühl, dass eine Epoche sich endigte, die nicht nur das neunzehnte Jahrhundert umfasste, sondern zurückreichte bis zum Ausgang des Mittelalters...kurzum, die Epoche des bürgerlichen Humanismus..." (pp. 468-69). The humanist's situation after the war is precarious and his views are antiquated and superfluous. Zeitblom therefore asks himself sadly:


Zeitblom's inability to understand the new age suggests that his appreciation of Adrian's music and psyche are necessarily limited. His evaluative statements are always colored by his own ironic situation, so that Adrian appears in an ambivalent light. Although Zeitblom often censures Adrian's amorality, his own cowardice and inefficiency tend to undermine his criticism of the composer.

In _Under Western Eyes_, the dichotomy between East and West is both geographical and ideological. Stretching to the east of Europe, Russia's immensity implicitly always contributes to the narrator's inability to understand
the country's enigmatic nature. Ideologically, Russia's long history of
autocracy is obviously antithetical to the language teacher's liberal tra-
dition. The hero's story in both *Doktor Faustus* and *Under Western Eyes* is
thus told by a narrator who is by temperament and tradition very different
from him. The similarity between the two narrators, however, is astonishing
and begins with their rational and scholarly attitude to life. Like Zeitblom,
the language teacher also stresses his own mediocrity: "My physiognomy has
never been expressive, I believe, and as to my years I am not ancient enough
as yet to be strikingly decrepit....I am old, alas, in a brisk, commonplace
way"(p. 143). This modest self-appraisal underlines the language teacher's
role as a passive spectator and suggests that he plays the narrator's part in
much the same way as Zeitblom.

In spite of the language teacher's passivity, the Russian drama comes to
life only through his Western consciousness. In his eyes, Russia is simple
and mystical whereas the West is sophisticated and rational. The narrator
often draws attention to this dichotomy between East and West. Watching Ma-
dame de S- and Peter Ivanovitch pass by in an open carriage, the language
teacher remarks:

But it is a vain enterprise for sophisticated Europe to try and
understand these doings....this quaint display might have pos-
sessed a mystic significance, but to the corrupt frivolity of a
Western mind, like my own, it seemed hardly decent(p. 126).

The narrator is often contemptuous of Russia's mystical and emotional essence.
With a feeling of Western superiority, he observes about Haldin's revolution-
ary zeal: "To us Europeans of the West, all ideas of political plots and con-
spiracies seem childish, crude inventions for the theatre or a novel"(p. 109).
Similarly, he characterizes Natalia's conviction that "something quite dif-
cerent" than a Western type of compromise will come out of Russia as absurdly
Russian: "That propensity of lifting every problem from the plane of the
understandable by means of some sort of mystical expression, is very Russian" (p. 104). What disturbs the narrator's Western sensibilities most, however, is Russia's cynical contempt for life:

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 (p. 104).

The key word "cynicism" is in another context called "the mark of Russian autocracy and of Russian revolt"(p. 67) and obviously represents a summary definition of Russia as such. The Russians in Under Western Eyes, with the possible exception of Haldin, Natalia, and Sophia Antonovna, are indeed all cynics. The revolutionaries are power-hungry opportunists and moral nihilists, whereas the autocrats are scrupulously exploiting Razumov and each other. Mikulin's acceptance of an unjust sentence, for instance, testifies vividly to a scorn for life and to the nihilistic conviction that nothing matters. And Razumov himself, of course, is a cynic whose lack of moral and ideological principles induces him to act as a double agent. Judged from his Western standards, the language teacher's assessment of Russia is undoubtedly right.

But the language teacher's Western sophistication is also a curse. It puts him at a disadvantage for it does not allow him to penetrate the deeper essence of Russia. In his capacity as narrator, he feels therefore compelled to apologize for his shortcomings as an observer of things Russian by saying: "...for this is a Russian story for Western ears, which...are not attuned to certain tones of cynicism and cruelty, of moral negation, and even moral distress already silenced at our end of Europe"(pp. 163-64). Although the language teacher maintains a conscious distance between himself and things Rus-
sian, he is nevertheless disturbed by his lack of understanding. He consequently often regrets his alienation by lamenting that the "Difference of nationality is a terrible obstacle for our complex Western natures" (p. 116). Frustrated by his inadequacy as an observer, he describes himself as "a traveller in a strange country" (p. 169) and a "disregarded Westerner" (p. 329). The world he describes is, in fact, so totally different from his own that he imagines himself "altogether out of it, on another plane" (p. 170). The strange and disturbing discoveries he makes in Geneva often confound him, so that, when he is unexpectedly confronted with Razumov's "expression of a somnambulist," he ruefully admits that "The Westerner in me was discomposed" (p. 317). Indeed, even his most personal relationships are impaired by the difference of nationality. Delivering the sad news about Haldin's death, the language teacher realizes that his Western mind cannot form an exact conception of the tragedy that has afflicted his two friends:

I confess that my very real sympathy had no standpoint....It was, if I may say so, the want of experience....But the grief I had brought to these two ladies had gruesome associations. It had the associations of bombs and gallows—a lurid, Russian colouring which made the complexion of my sympathy uncertain (p. 112).

Communication between East and West always takes place on different wavelengths so that the apparent agreement between the language teacher and Razumov about Russia being "under a curse" (p. 194) does not have the same meaning for both. The language teacher draws attention to the illusory nature of this agreement when he contends that it did not make Razumov "less enigmatical in the least" (p. 194). Although the Western mind can analyze the surface truths of things Russian, it cannot grasp the hidden meanings. This is most vividly brought home when Natalia complains: "The English press is wonderful. Nothing can be kept secret from it, and all the world must hear. Only our Russian news is not always easy to understand" (p. 114). Factual
knowledge, on which Western sophistication prides itself, is in *Under Western Eyes* shown to be quite inadequate. The language teacher's decision to be a mere observer is therefore not only his choice but also imposed on him by circumstances. Aside from his inability to cope with things Russian, he is also helpless and superfluous:

Removed by the difference of age and nationality as if into the sphere of another existence, I produced, even upon myself, the effect of a dumb helpless ghost, of an anxious immaterial thing that could only hover about without the power to protect or guide by as much as a whisper (p. 126).

But, in spite of his shortcomings, the language teacher is an important presence in *Under Western Eyes*. Through him, at least part of Russia's essence can be translated into Western concepts. Obviously cast as a mediator between East and West, he sees himself in this role when he says about the accidental discovery he and Natalia make of a conspiratorial meeting: "I thought that the old, settled Europe had been given in my person attending that Russian girl something like a glimpse behind the scenes" (p. 330). Conrad obviously exploits the language teacher's inevitable limitations to produce a realistic picture of a country whose political situation is extremely complex.

The complexity of the political situation in *Under Western Eyes* is further stressed by the language teacher's gradual realization that his own political tradition is suspect. The narrator's initial feelings of superiority slowly erode until he awakens to the weaknesses of democracy. This awakening manifests itself through an attitude toward Switzerland which is very similar to Razumov's. Struck by the sterility and dullness hovering over Geneva, the narrator observes about a place where Natalia and Razumov are to meet:

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 (p. 175).

Geneva appears to the language teacher as a "town of prosaic virtues and universal hospitality" (p. 336) which is "indifferent and hospitable in its cold, almost scornful, toleration—a respectable town of refuge to which all these sorrows and hopes were nothing" (p. 338). The "desolation of slumbering respectability" (p. 335) is further accentuated by the Swiss couple "whose fate was made secure from the cradle to the grave" (p. 175). The language teacher's criticism of Geneva clearly echoes statements about the levelling effects of democracy in Conrad's letters. Conrad always felt acutely that the price for democracy would be cultural mediocrity. This, however, does not mean that he was contemptuous of liberalism. On the contrary, Conrad is known for his fondness for England's freedom. It must be remembered that Under Western Eyes is a novel about Russia and not about the West. The Western standards are solely evoked in order to illuminate the exceptional nature of Russia. Extremely careful to assess Russia fairly, Conrad consciously stresses the weaknesses of Western liberalism so as to emphasize the strengths of the East.

Western sophistication not only makes it difficult to understand Adrian's or Razumov's world but it also complicates the simple task of communicating through words. Possibly influenced by Nietzsche, both Mann and Conrad were highly sceptical of language. They were not alone in this attitude and at the beginning of the twentieth-century Ferdinand de Saussure verbalized what many writers and thinkers had felt before him. De Saussure argues that "the linguistic sign is arbitrary," that is, that "The bond between the signifier and the signified is arbitrary." It follows from de Saussure's discovery that language can never be but only imitate the reality it denotes. Language is therefore always more or less artificial and the literary work is always
a fiction. Aside from the alien world confronting them, Zeitblom and the
language teacher are also faced with the problem of translating any kind of
experience into words. Convinced that life has higher claims than art, they
deplore the necessity of an artistic medium and disclaim all aesthetic in-
tentions.

Zeitblom is a man who is devoted to life and who despises all artifice.
The necessity of organizing Adrian's life into an artistic composition dis-
tresses him and he therefore prefers the more objective form of the biography
to the novel. He believes that the requisites of art interfere with his
task and falsify his message. Uneasiness and discomfort consequently domi-
nate his attitude to writing:

Für einen Menschen wie mich ist es sehr schwer und mutet ihn
fast wie Frivolität an, zu einem Gegenstand, der ihm lebens-
teuer ist und ihm auf den Nägeln brennt wie dieser, den Stand-
punkt des komponierenden Künstlers einzunehmen und ihn mit
der spielenden Besonnenheit eines solchen zu bewirtschaften
(p. 11).

The same feeling about the indirectness and inauthenticity of art is later
reiterated when Zeitblom fears that his deep love for Adrian might interfere
with aesthetic demands:

Mein Gegenstand steht mir zu nahe. Allzusehr fehlt es hier
wohl überhaupt an dem Gegensatz, dem blossen Unterschied von
Stoff und Gestalter. Habe ich nicht mehr als einmal gesagt,
that das Leben, von dem ich handle, mir näher, teurer, er-
regender war als mein eigenes? Das Nächste, Erregendste,
Eigene ist kein 'Stoff'; es ist die Person—and nicht da-
nach angetan, eine künstlerische Gliederung von ihr zu
empfangen(p. 235).

What disturbs Zeitblom is the need to plan and organize his material. He
yearns for the illusion, popularized by the Romantics, that the work of art
is not created but creates itself. The artist is in the Romantic view only
an inspired tool. But highly self-conscious about his part as artist, Zeit-
blom asks himself if he is "der rechte Mann"(p. 9) and wonders "ob ich mich
zu der hier in Angriff genommenen Aufgabe eigentlich berufen fühlen darf"
The self-doubts and the lack of confidence in art, growing out of Zeitblom's conventional misconceptions about the nature of fiction, are of course used parodically. Hans Eichner points to this when he remarks:

It will be remembered that in the pages of this novel the charge is levelled against the bourgeois work of art that it purports to have come into being of its own accord, to be 'nicht gemacht, sondern entstanden', whereas it is really 'Arbeit, Kunstarbeit zum Zweck des Scheins'.

Zeitblom's timid approach to writing heightens, by contrast, Adrian's daring aesthetic experiments. Where Zeitblom reverts to a lost innocence, Adrian presses forward toward a new innocence that will grow out of heightened self-consciousness.

Zeitblom's hostility toward art reasserts itself throughout Doktor Faustus. He wants to depict life directly and without distortions. Insisting on the biographer's right "die Dinge unmittelbar bei Namen zu nennen" (p. 393), he resorts to the most objective method of presentation possible. Zeitblom does not believe that the truth about Adrian can be discovered from the outside. He wants to give an inner portrait of the composer and to this end he recounts in what way and to what purpose Adrian became familiar with the influences which have shaped him. Ideally, Zeitblom would like to include every detail of Adrian's life. But the task at hand forces him to select his biographical material from the facts surrounding Adrian. The process of selection obviously frustrates the ideal conception of an objective and direct presentation. In spite of this, Zeitblom resists, at least verbally, the temptations of fiction. This resistance is evident when he states emphatically: "Dies ist kein Roman, bei dessen Komposition der Autor die Herzen seiner Personnagen dem Leser indirekt, durch szenische Darstellung erschliesst"(p. 393). Aside from dramatizations, Zeitblom considers narrative omniscience particularly artificial and fraudulent: "Nochmals, ich schreibe keinen Roman und spiele nicht allwissende Autoreneinsicht in die dramatischen
But this hostility toward fiction is not convincing. There is a disturbing discrepancy between Zeitblom's verbal assertions and the actual writing of *Doktor Faustus*. The temptation to equate Zeitblom with Mann as the creator of the novel is, of course, dangerous. *Doktor Faustus* is ultimately written by the author and often his particular narrative technique forces him to compromise his narrator. When Feuerlicht criticizes Zeitblom's unaccounted for knowledge of the content of a letter, he fails to point out that this is not so much Zeitblom's as Mann's shortcoming. Nevertheless, the reader wants to protest against Zeitblom's anti-fiction statements because the text is ostensibly written by the narrator. Moreover, Zeitblom occasionally betrays an explicit concern for aesthetic form. Anticipating the terrifying things to come, for instance, he appeals to the Muses: "Mir ist, als sollte ich Apollon und die Musen anrufen, dass sie mir bei der Mitteilung jenes Geschehnisses die lautersten, schonendsten Worte eingeben mögen" (p. 204). Zeitblom's hostility toward fiction is above all a manifestation of the acute insecurity he experiences toward language and its highly subjective nature.

Zeitblom's frustration with language is undoubtedly caused or at least accentuated by the incomprehensible world he describes. Aside from Zeitblom's emotional alienation, Mann underlines the inadequacy of the humanistic tradition in twentieth-century Germany when he parodies Zeitblom's humanistic style. The narrator's use of artistic conventions, popularized especially by Goethe, creates a tension between form and content which is particularly conducive to parody. According to Nündel, this divergence is indeed the very content of parody: "So wird das gewollte Missverhältnis zwischen Form und Inhalt der eigentliche Inhalt der Parodie." That Goethe's style, the culmination of the humanistic tradition, should be the subject of Mann's parody is, of course, not surprising. This does not mean that Mann did not appre-
ciate Goethe. Tynjanov rightly observes in the essay "Dostoevsky und Gogol: Zur Theorie der Parodie" that parodies of a work "gehen Seite an Seite mit ihrer hohen Wertschätzung." Mann simply indicates that Goethe's world is irrevocably lost. The most interesting discussion of Mann's Goethe parody is perhaps Eichner's "Aspects of Parody in the Works of Thomas Mann." Eichner shows, for instance, that the parodistic intention in *Doktor Faustus* is clear from the beginning:

...the first page is once more designed to bring the parodistic intentions of the novel home to any but the dullest reader: Zeitblom loses himself in a maze of interjections and subsidiary clauses and has to repeat part of his sentence before he can bring it to an end.

The parody is maintained relentlessly throughout the novel. Especially the many references to "artistischer Verfehlung und Unbeherrschtheit" (p. 11), to the "Fehler des Vorgreifens" (p. 14), to an "Abschweifung" (p. 40) and "Unregelmässigkeiten" (p. 41), and to a "'fehlerhaften' Vortragstechnik" (p. 380) are undoubtedly parodistic in intention. Zeitblom's self-conscious use of chapter divisions is, according to Eichner, particularly indicative of the Goethe parody:

Another connexion in which Mann adopts in a spirit of parody Goethe's habit of explicitly commenting on his own methods is the division of his story into chapters. Zeitblom feels that no chapter should exceed a certain length, so as not to tire the reader, but holds that every chapter should be homogeneous in its subject-matter and deal with it completely--conflicting demands which he is quite unable to resolve.

Zeitblom's constant apologies for his inadequacies as a writer serve not only the purpose of parody but often draw attention to apparently insignificant episodes. In one instance, Zeitblom dismisses the observation about Ines' behavior toward Schwerdtfeger as "Quisquilien und Krümel-Abfälle meiner Beobachtung" (p. 397). But the very attempt to make the observation look as if it had been included by mistake alerts the reader to the importance of the sub-plot. Indeed, as Eichner puts it, Zeitblom clearly "protests too much."
Zeitblom's lack of confidence in the linguistic medium is understandable once the portrayal of language in *Doktor Faustus* is analyzed. Usually language is compared to music, and it appears that although it lacks the direct appeal of music, it is better suited for normal communication. The inadequacies of language are particularly prominent when dealing with the non-rational. Zeitblom's difficulties are at their peak when he tries to convey either Adrian's music or demonism. Indeed, Zeitblom agrees with Adrian "dass es in der Musik...Dinge gibt, für die im ganzen Bereich der Sprache beim besten Willen kein wirklich charakterisierendes Beiwort, auch keine Kombination von Beiworten aufzutreiben ist" (p. 213). Similarly, the essence of hell escapes the grasp of words so that even the devil is unable to describe it:

...eigentlich kann man überhaupt und ganz und gar nicht davon reden, weil sich das Eigentliche mit den Worten nicht deckt; man mag viel Worte brauchen und machen, aber allemal sind sie nur stellvertretend, stehen für Namen, die es nicht gibt, können nicht den Anspruch erheben, das zu bezeichnen, was nimmermehr zu bezeichnen und in Worten zu de-nunzieren ist (p. 326).

The example of hell's resistance to linguistic categories demonstrates a truth about language in general. Words are never more than symbolic imitations of objects as such. The act of naming cannot evoke the "Ding an sich" and this is true of a table as much as it is of hell. Zeitblom experiences the inadequacy of language particularly when he fails to convey an exact image of Echo and complains: "Wie viele Schriftsteller vor mir schon mögen die Untauglichkeit der Sprache beseufzt haben, Sichtbarkeit zu erreichen, ein wirklich genaues Bild des Individuellen hervorzubringen" (p. 612)! Zeitblom's complaint indicates, moreover, that, in addition to the arbitrary nature of the linguistic sign, linguistic conventions frustrate the use of words in an original way. The dependence on words imposes therefore a serious limitation on the imagination.
But is music then superior to language? Although the immediacy of music is certainly preferable to the indirectness of language, music is unfortunately ambiguous and vague. Adrian therefore dreams of combining language and music in a "Wort-Ton-Werk" (p. 217) which would be superior to either of its constituent parts. The "Wort-Ton-Werk" is in Adrian's opinion only the reconstruction of an already existing, intimate connexion:

Musik und Sprache...gehörten zusammen, sie seien im Grunde eins, die Sprache Musik, die Musik eine Sprache, und getrennt berufe immer das eine sich auf das andere, ahme das andere nach, bediene sich der Mittel des anderen, gebe immer das eine sich als das Substitut des anderen zu verstehen (p. 217).

It is significant that Adrian's ideal of the "Wort-Ton-Werk" is never successfully realized. In "Dr. Fausti Weheklage," articulate speech is conspicuously lacking and the human voice as such is unnatural and inhuman. Zeitblom describes the echo effect as "das Zurückgeben des Menschenlautes als Natur-laut" (p. 644), draws attention to the replacement of the earlier "Engelskind-Chor" by "Höllengelächter" (p. 645), and portrays the lament as an example "des Ausdrucks in seiner Erst- und Urerscheinung" (p. 647). "Dr. Fausti Weheklage" obviously represents a return to pre-lingual expressions and as such it parallels the Kridwiss circle's contention that modern abstract language ought to return to "den Wortschriften der Urvölker" (p. 490). Zeitblom's reaction to the Kridwiss argument anticipates what "Dr. Fausti Weheklage" ultimately achieves: "Wozu überhaupt Wörter, wozu Schreiben, wozu Sprache? Radikale Sachlichkeit müsste sich an die Dinge halten, an diese allein" (p. 490). Adrian's attempt to merge language and music has thus ended with the unequivocal triumph of inarticulate music for it alone can grasp the "Ding an sich."

Language is not only a problem because it cannot cope with the essence of things but also because it is often not equivocal enough. Its shortcoming is that it misrepresents reality without, however, being able to suggest the
truth ambiguously like music. Adrian tries to circumvent the merciless power of language to expose the truth by resorting to an archaic language whose sound pattern is musical and whose vocabulary is no longer immediately recognized. Archaic language is used whenever Adrian confesses a decisive step towards the demonic. It is therefore prominent in Adrian's letter to Kretschmar about the decision to make music his career, in the letter to Zeitblom about the brothel incident, in the document about the dialogue with the devil, and in the confession delivered at Pfeiffering. Although the archaic language still communicates the intended meaning, its unconventionality minimizes the impact of the terrible disclosures. Related to the use of archaisms is also Adrian's slurred speech. Zeitblom suspects that, although Adrian's speech difficulty is related to his illness, he accentuates it in order to confound his listeners:

...aber andererseits hatte ich zuweilen den Eindruck, dass er sich der Hemmung geradezu bediente, und sich in ihr gefiel, um auf eine gewisse nicht ganz ausgebildete, nur halb zum Verstandenwerden bestimmte Weise, wie aus dem Traume redend, Dinge zu sagen, für die ihm diese Mitteilungsart passend schien (pp. 456-57).

Zeitblom's reaction to Adrian's confession at Pfeiffering. Pained by the shocking admissions, Zeitblom hopes that Adrian will let the piano communicate what is too poignant for words:

Nie hatte ich stärker den Vorteil der Musik, die nichts und alles sagt, vor der Eindeutigkeit des Wortes empfunden, ja, die schützende Unverbindlichkeit der Kunst überhaupt, im
The shortcomings of language in _Doktor Faustus_ are clearly contradictory. Zeitblom is frustrated because words are never what they name and because they name too well what would better remain hidden.

The philologist Zeitblom and the language teacher share an interest in language which is scholarly rather than artistic, and they are both sceptical of fiction. Zeitblom insists that he is an unimaginative biographer and the language teacher protests that he is not a novelist. Already the first sentence of _Under Western Eyes_ introduces the language teacher's preoccupation with the narrative process:

> To begin with I wish to disclaim the possession of those high gifts of imagination and expression which would have enabled my pen to create for the reader the personality of the man who called himself, after the Russian custom, Cyril son of Isidor—Kirillo Sidorovich—Razumov(p. 3).

Although _Under Western Eyes_ is not called a biography, it has many characteristics of this genre. The introductory sentence makes it clear that the story concentrates on the life of a particular young Russian. What differentiates _Doktor Faustus_ and _Under Western Eyes_ is that Zeitblom tells Adrian's life from beginning to end, whereas the language teacher restricts the account of Razumov's life to a relatively short period. But in spite of the limited scope, Razumov's story is recorded in a biographical fashion. The language teacher often uses various kinds of documents and relies otherwise on his or other people's eye-witness accounts. The form of the biography appears best suited to the language teacher's practical and unadventurous attitude to writing. He is consciously maintaining the image of a careful and responsible reporter of facts and says about Razumov: "Even to invent the mere bald facts of his life would have been utterly beyond my powers"(p. 3). The motivation for writing _Under Western Eyes_ has not been dictated by aesthetic
considerations but by inner compulsion. The language teacher specifically insists:

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(p. 100).

In order to give more weight to his bias against fiction, the language teacher constantly draws attention to his deficiencies as a writer. He apologizes, for instance, for a digression(p. 4) and groans under the "difficulty of the task"(p. 66). At the same time he is careful to safeguard himself against charges of artistic liberty. Justifying his knowledge of Madame de S-'s past, he defends himself:

Wonder may be expressed at a man in the position of a teacher of languages knowing all this with such definiteness. A novelist says this and that of his personages, and if only he knows how to say it earnestly enough he may not be questioned upon the inventions of his brain in which his own belief is made sufficiently manifest by a telling phrase, a poetic image, the accent of emotion. Art is great! But I have no art, and not having invented Madame de S-, I feel bound to explain how I came to know so much about her(p. 162).

The fear of being mistaken for an omniscient consciousness is perhaps equalled by the dread of being accused of over-dramatizing events. This explains why he says about the vivid representation of Natalia's visit to the Château Borel: "The above relation is founded on her narrative, which I have not so much dramatized as might be supposed"(p. 161). But, as in the case of Zeitblom, the narrator, who claims to be an enemy of fiction, apparently writes an aesthetically highly successful novel. And, as we have already seen with Doktor Faustus, the narrator should not be confused with the author. It is not the language teacher but Conrad who edits the diary and who dramatizes Razumov's experience of going deaf. Although the discrepancies between the narrator's assertions and the text he writes are undoubtedly disturbing, it
is an unavoidable technical flaw which should not be taken too seriously.

As in *Doktor Faustus*, the narrator's uneasiness about writing betrays the author's scepticism towards language. Conrad's private correspondence abounds in complaints about the opacity and inadequacy of words, and *Under Western Eyes* provides a serious investigation into the nature of language. Conrad is particularly interested in the relationship between political rhetoric and action. In a political context, words are expected to prepare men for effective protest and a decisive involvement towards changing the existing order. But in the Russia of *Under Western Eyes*, words are merely a substitute for action. Among the revolutionaries, only Haldin acts successfully. The others are inactive and even Sophia Antonovna's "true spirit of destructive revolution" is encumbered by "rhetoric, mysticism, and theories" (p. 261). Peter Ivanovitch represents a typical example of the Russian's predilection for empty rhetoric. In a comment about the "chasm between the past and the future" in Russia, he theoretically advocates action: "...whole cartloads of words and theories could never fill that chasm. No meditation was necessary. A sacrifice of many lives could alone..."(p. 212). But we know that Peter Ivanovitch will continue to write and speak without ever following up his theories in a real situation. The revolutionaries' feeble effort to transform rhetoric into action, the plot for an uprising in the Baltic provinces, is an empty gesture which is doomed to fail. The language teacher attributes such inefficiencies to the Russian's strange love of words:

What must remain striking to a teacher of languages is the Russians' 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 an 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(p. 4).
The sound and texture of words is more important to the Russian than their meaning. He uses words to conceal his inability to perform effectively so that messianic rhetoric satisfies his expectations more readily than action. Moreover, the illusion of a better future can be maintained only through rhetoric; any attempt to achieve messianic hopes realistically must always lead to disillusionment. In Russia, rhetoric is a contagious disease.

Razumov's development in *Under Western Eyes* ends with a conversion to rhetoric. As a student, Razumov is a man of few words who believes that success is determined by a steady life of small actions. But, as a blind cripple, he is immobilized and admired for his ability to use words: "He is intelligent. He has ideas...He talks well too" (p. 379). Conrad seems to indicate here that political chaos must perhaps be expected in a country where rhetoric represents a satisfactory substitute for action.

Although in Russia rhetoric is not followed by conclusive action, in *Under Western Eyes* words often have an active power which is either appeasing or disturbing. In an attempt to explain the "mysterious impulse of human nature" (p. 5), which motivated Razumov's diary, the language teacher construes the theory that the Russian was compelled by the "wonderful soothing power in mere words" (p. 5). The narrator also understands that Razumov seeks a measure of peace by talking with Mikulin who "was the only person on earth with whom Razumov could talk, taking the Haldin adventure for granted. And Haldin, when once taken for granted, was no longer a haunting, falsehood-breeding spectre" (p. 304). The articulation of suppressed horrors obviously provides some emotional relief. The same is again emphasized when Razumov, tormented by guilt feelings about the Ziemianitch incident, takes a "savage delight in the loud utterance of that name" (p. 274). But although words can in fact ease the pains of existence, they can also aggravate them. Because of their association with the Haldin episode, words like "betrayal," "suspect," and
"confidence" haunt Razumov. When Haldin, for instance, speaks of his confidence in Razumov, we are told that "This word sealed Razumov's lips as if a hand had been clapped on his mouth" (p. 19). The terrifying power of words, however, is perhaps best illustrated in Razumov's inability to forget the conversation with Haldin: "Every word uttered by Haldin lived in Razumov's memory. They were like haunting shapes; they could not be exorcized" (p. 167). Words not only terrify but are even an incitement to evil. Speaking to Natalia, Razumov explains that the language teacher's favorable characterization of the girl gave him evil ideas: "He talked of you, of your lonely, helpless state, and every word of that friend of yours was egging me on to the unpardonable sin of stealing a soul" (pp. 359-60). Although language may function as a substitute for action, it is nevertheless endowed with various active powers of its own.

The primary function of language, however, is to communicate. In Under Western Eyes, language is often misleading and inadequate. Razumov's astonishing success in Geneva, for instance, is due entirely to the ambiguity of words. He does not have to construct a network of lies because the revolutionaries misconstrue both his words and gestures in his favor. Indeed, Razumov says nothing "that was not strictly true" (p. 71) but encourages the misconceptions about himself either through silence or through double meanings. He is particularly pleased about his successful manipulation of the intelligent Sophia Antonovna: "It gave him a feeling of triumphant pleasure to deceive her out of her own mouth. The epigrammatic saying that speech has been given us for the purpose of concealing our thoughts came into his mind" (p. 261). But the uncertain ground on which his safety rests troubles him, and he mistrusts language which might at any time turn around and betray him. He is in fact unnecessarily worried by the mistaken belief that "he is being mistrusted, when in fact he is only being misunderstood." Razumov's
experience of the ambiguity of words is paralleled by the language teacher's realization that the essence of Russia cannot be captured through language. Language, or rather speech, is a convention which is based on a social agreement about the meaning of given words. But speech is also an individual act and therefore often ignores the linguistic conventions. The inadequacies caused by the conventional nature of language are naturally accentuated when a barrier of nationality intervenes. The language teacher's inability to understand Russia can therefore partly be blamed on the socially and linguistically different conventions operative in the East. Reacting to Natalia's idea of Russia's future, the language teacher says:

I suppose...you will be shocked if I tell you that I haven't understood—I won't say a single word; I've understood all the words....But what can be this era of disembodied concord you are looking forward to(p. 106).

The difficulties of operating within a foreign linguistic convention are the same for other semiotic systems. In Under Western Eyes, Conrad uses gestures and facial expressions in order to demonstrate further the arbitrary nature of all signs. The real significance of Razumov's suspicious behavior and sullen appearance is missed by the revolutionaries and the language teacher because they interpret them according to preconceived, conventional notions. Although Sophia Antonovna perceives that Razumov's violent reaction to Nikita's words "had some meaning," her already formed opinion about Razumov makes it impossible for her to "get at the heart of that outburst"(p. 269). Similarly, the language teacher fails to see the truth because he makes Razumov's behavior conform to his idea of a young Russian revolutionary. Not only language but other means of communication now reveal themselves as deceptive and ambiguous.

But the ambiguity of language is most disturbing to the narrator because it prevents him from giving adequate expression to any kind of insight. Words
are for the language teacher illusions and hence deceptive:

Words, as is well known, are the great foes of reality. I have been for many years a teacher of languages. It is an occupation which at length becomes fatal to whatever share of imagination, observation, and insight an ordinary person may be heir to. To a teacher of languages there comes a time when the world is but a place of many words and man appears a mere talking animal not much more wonderful than a parrot (p. 3).

In the language teacher's view, conventional language cannot help to make us see the unusual and enigmatic but only to make us recognize the usual and known. Secor correctly points to the dilemma which grows out of this for the narrator: "As a professor and grammarian he is locked in by a dependence on words he no longer finds meaning in." The struggle to create a meaning where he perceives none manifests itself in a desperate search for the right word. He substitutes, for instance, "a tumult of thoughts" for "a rush of thoughts" because the latter is "not an adequate image" (p. 24). Self-conscious about his shortcomings, he further mentions that the shocking impact of his words "may be the effect of my crude statement" (p. 25). The problem of expressing the intangible is most apparent when the language teacher states his need for a key-word to Russia. Desirous to render the truth, he believes that he will not succeed "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 (p. 67).

The language teacher is frustrated by the complexity of his task and wishes for a term which could encompass the elusive nature of reality. And, as in Doktor Faustus, language often states too baldly what is painful or disgraceful. The narrator, for instance, apologizes for the reluctance with which he describes Razumov's betrayal of Haldin:

Such reluctance may appear absurd if it were not for the thought that because of the imperfection of language there is always something ungracious (and even disgraceful) in the exhibition of naked truth (p. 293).
In both *Doktor Faustus* and *Under Western Eyes*, language is clearly ambiguous. It communicates inadequately and tends either to conceal or to reveal too blatantly the intended meaning. In both novels, the narrator's limitations must in part be attributed to the deficiencies of the artistic medium.

The narrators in *Doktor Faustus* and *Under Western Eyes* are passive filters through which the nightmarish and irrational experiences of Adrian and Razumov pass. Those Western eyes, limited in their vision, establish a double irony. The judgements of Zeitblom and the language teacher voice about the nightmare they witness are undermined by their own myopia so that all the truths in *Doktor Faustus* and *Under Western Eyes* are qualified. The irrationalism of Adrian and Razumov makes them lose their grip on life and leads them into self-destruction. The narrators, who closely observe how the world loses its reality for the heroes, are themselves dislodged and plunged into doubt about the certitudes of society and the universe. They are compelled to examine their own values and discover that civilization offers only inadequate protection against the nightmare which exists just under the surface. But, unlike Adrian and Razumov, Zeitblom and the language teacher nevertheless continue to put their faith into civilized existence. It alone affords a measure of safety and protects man from thinking about the unthinkable horrors. The insight into the wilder form of experience, however, alerts them to certain dangerous aspects inherent in civilized complacency. They now knowingly perpetrate a vision of the universe they recognize as merely a saving illusion. Through the rational and complacent narrators, *Doktor Faustus* and *Under Western Eyes* obtain a counterbalance to the irrational and demonic heroes. The ambivalent nature of both civilization and the wilder, more primitive culture permits Mann and Conrad to do justice to the complexities and ambiguities surrounding the political situations portrayed in *Doktor Faustus* and *Under Western Eyes*. 
Footnotes


3 Ignace Feuerlicht, "Der Erzähler bei Thomas Mann," The German Quarterly, 43 (1970), 430.


7 Ibid., p. 199.


9 Viswanathan, p. 57.


12 Guerard, p. 251.


14 Mann, Gesammelte Werke, XI, 164.
The relationship between Adrian and Zeitblom corresponds perhaps most to that between Kurtz and Marlow in *Heart of Darkness*. Nevertheless, Razumov and the language teacher are linked together in a similar manner.


Mann, *Gesammelte Werke*, XII, 32.

Ibid., p. 511.

Ibid., p. 319.

An excellent case in point is Hutten who actually joined Luther until he discovered the leader's indifference toward political freedom.

Feuerlicht, p. 420.


Feuerlicht, p. 430.


33 Ibid., p. 46.

34 Ibid.

35 Secor, p. 34.

36 Ibid., p. 30.
Conclusion

One of the main reasons why Conrad appealed to Mann was undoubtedly the fact that Conrad's fiction includes political themes which demonstrate a political orientation Mann could share. In the 1926 introduction to The Secret Agent, written years before Mann considered writing a political novel himself, he was already very conscious of those qualities in Conrad's novels which were later to characterize his own writing and predicament. What Mann stresses about Conrad and The Secret Agent can be applied not only to Conrad's other political novels but also to Mann's own Doktor Faustus. It is a well-known fact—Shaw's assessment of Ibsen provides a telling example—that a critic's opinions frequently reveal more about himself than about the object of his criticism. Indeed, Mann's introduction to The Secret Agent offers an excellent opportunity to summarize the imaginative and political affinities between Mann and Conrad.

The first important point Mann makes about The Secret Agent is that it is "eine antirussische Geschichte, deutlich gesagt; antirussisch in einem sehr britischen Sinn und Geist." Mann seems to suggest that Conrad chose England because he hated Russia, and he hated Russia because he loved the English way of life. Convinced that the change of nationality played an important part in Conrad's artistic development, Mann evaluates its influence as follows:

Was er in Kauf gab, waren Avantägen des Barbarismus, deren Wert er berechnet haben wird. Was er gewann, war Mass, Vernunft, Skepsis, reistiger Freiheitssinn und ein Humor, dessen ausgesprochen angelsächsische Männlichkeit ihn davor bewahrt, jemals ins Bürgerlich-Sentimentale umzuschlagen.

Mann's understanding of Conrad's political position, as well as the publication of "Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen," demonstrates that, in spite of his "non-political" stance, he was deeply aware of politics. The assessment of The Secret Agent shows that he was highly sensitive to the complexity and
ambivalence of Conrad's political vision. Mann senses in Conrad a great love for "englische Freiheit und Zivilisation" and detects, at the same time, a critical attitude toward the adopted country. Moreover, Mann maintains that Conrad could neither completely endorse bourgeois liberalism nor proletarian socialism. The treatment of the revolutionaries in The Secret Agent illustrates his "Skepsis gegen soziale Utopien" and the novel's style betrays Conrad's anti-bourgeois attitude because Mann calls "das Groteske den eigentlich antibürgerlichen Stil." Conrad's dislike of the middle-classes is further evident when he seems to agree with Vladimir and Verloc that "die Mittelschichten verdummt sind." Mann's interpretation of Conrad's hostility to both the middle-classes and the proletariat reflects his own attitude. The following statement clearly characterizes not only Conrad but also Mann himself:

Nichtachtung der Kunst und des eigentlich Geistigen, aber grenzenlose und glaubigste Hochachtung vor der nutzbringenden Wissenschaft: dies empfindet Conrad als bürgerlich; und wenn auch sein Verhältnis zum Proletariat nicht ganz das vorschriftsmässige, rechtgläubige ist, so offenbar darum, weil, auf dem Wege über den Marxismus, die Wissenschaft ja auch Erbe und Fetisch des Proletariats geworden ist—wie denn niemand leugnen wird, dass der Bolschewismus eine streng wissenschaftliche Weltanschauung ist.

Mann's penetrating assessment of Conrad's political temperament obviously grows out of a similar conception of political reality.

What further appeals to Mann is Conrad's ability to maintain his artistic integrity in the face of political questions. He admires Conrad's ultimate dissociation from all political programs and concludes that Conrad's position "zeigt von jener ungebundenen Objektivität, die einzig Sache des klassenlosen Dichters, wenn auch eben nur seine Sache ist, und die sich bei Conrad überall und in allem am befreienden Werke zeigt." This dissociation is not an indication of Conrad's indifference to politics but must be seen as "eine Leidenschaft, denn sie ist Freiheitsliebe." What Mann then admires
most is "der Widerwille eines gar sehr beteiligten Geistes dagegen, in den Gegensätzen erbärmlich hängenzubleiben." Mann understands that for Conrad the alternative the revolutionaries offer is just as inadequate as the "gesunde[ ] Untätigkeit" of bourgeois existence. Mann himself is, of course, conscious of the frustrating and irreconcilable contradictions that thwart all attempts to solve the ills of society politically. He too knows that the incongruities inherent in life mean that every political solution has both its good and its bad consequences. The artist's insight into the nature of reality does not permit him to champion unequivocally any one political system. Mann therefore defends Conrad's right to remain aloof by arguing that his "Dichtertum wird diesen Freiheitssinn davor schützen, mit liberaler Bürgerlichkeit verwechselt zu werden, sein völliger Mangel an Weichlichkeit es bedenklich erscheinen lassen, ihn des Aesthetizismus zu zeihen." The position Mann assigns to Conrad betrays his own ambition to deal realistically with social and political problems without, however, compromising his integrity as an artist.

The affinity Mann felt with Conrad when he wrote the introduction to The Secret Agent manifests itself also in the similarities between Doktor Faustus and Under Western Eyes which have been the subject of this study. The complex vision of a political situation, which Mann admires in the introduction, characterizes both Doktor Faustus and Under Western Eyes. It is achieved primarily by means of the juxtaposition of a demonic hero and a civilized or humanistic narrator. This juxtaposition permits both authors to comment on the strengths and weaknesses of two antithetical political systems. Although Mann and Conrad reveal in their non-fictional writing that their sympathies rest with Western civilization, their novels do not champion the Western way of life in a one-sided way. And, although Conrad leaves no doubt about his dislike for everything Russian in "Autocracy and War," he is far from abso-
lutefully condemning Russia in *Under Western Eyes*. Similarly, Mann's opposition to Nazism, manifesting itself in his non-fictional statements and through his self-exile, transforms itself in *Doktor Faustus* into a historical explanation for the emergence of fascism in Germany. The differences between a personal and a fictional evaluation of Russia or Nazi Germany must be attributed to the power of fiction to transform reality. The German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer, an influence on both Mann and Conrad, argued that only art makes unpleasant experiences, or life as such, bearable. Indeed, art permits the artist to shape and order reality so as to create meaning out of meaninglessness. Mann's inability to understand how Nazism could flourish in his highly cultured Germany compelled him to find or create an explanation and justification. Similarly, Conrad had to come to grips with Russia and the Slavic temperament at large in order to understand himself. The need to understand, however, leads the honest artist into irreconcilable contradictions. But where life cannot cope with contradictions, art can, and it owes its existence to them. The success of *Doktor Faustus* and *Under Western Eyes* must therefore be attributed to the fact that the requirements of fiction dominate over the political imperatives. Mann and Conrad, as great artists, sacrifice a simplistic ideological orientation to the complexities and contradictions of art.
Footnotes

1 Thomas Mann, "Vorwort zu Joseph Conrads Roman Der Geheimagent," Gesammelte Werke (Frankfurt: S. Fischer, 1960), X, 646.

2 Ibid., p. 650.

3 Ibid., p. 648.

4 Ibid., p. 651.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid., p. 653.

8 Ibid., p. 655.

9 Ibid.

10 Ibid.

11 Ibid.

12 Ibid., p. 656.


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