

The Enemy Within: The Dichotomy of Hate and Love in *the Secret Agent*

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Abstract

The novelist Joseph Conrad, though from nearly a century ago, has been proclaimed to be one of the greatest writers of the twenty-first century because he gives some very powerful and objective insight as to what might be at the root of terror in the world. In *The Secret Agent*, though Conrad allows the political drama to take up most of the action of the story, it is in the resolution of the domestic front wherein his most valuable lesson lies: that secrecy, oppression and abuse are behind all the ills in society. Winnie, the heroine, is exploited both on physical and emotional levels by her husband, Verloc; she is marginalized and is made to feel worthless, only to retaliate with violence. Just as the anarchists in the story target the "heart" of English society by bombing the Greenwich observatory, Winnie stabs Verloc in the "heart" in retaliation for his abuse. As we comprehend the political events of this story, we cannot help, but associate them with those that have been happening since 9/11 and that is where Conrad's novel becomes useful. Its objectivity and universality teach us a lesson that can be valuable to us today; it teaches us that secrecy, marginalization and injury can only end in tragedy. Those who feel themselves slighted or exploited resort to evil acts out of desperation. This paper will take a descriptive approach rather than a prescriptive approach, including dichotomies that confront people: friend and foe, neighbor and stranger, as well as dichotomies that divide minds: love and hate, empathy and disdain, trust and fear.

Though violence and terror have been present since the beginning of civilization, only recently have they become the focus of attention. Terrorist acts have brought so much tragedy and created such an ambiance of fear all over the world, that it has become essential to try and comprehend the meaning of the word. Politicians, theorists, and writers have been trying to come up with a satisfactory definition of the term, only to realize that it is an elusive and subjective endeavor. Terrorism has been described by an independent source called the International Terrorism and Security Research Center "as both a tactic and a strategy; a crime and a holy duty, a justified reaction to oppression and an inexcusable abomination. "It claims that it all depends "on whose point of view is being represented."¹ The definition of terrorism will also sometimes differ

within the various agencies in one country. The United States Department of Defense's *Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* defined it on April 12, 2001 as: "The calculated use of unlawful violence to inculcate fear, intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious or ideological."² On the other hand, the United States Department of State on April of 2003 defined it in its publication #11038 as the "premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience."³

The fact that the definition of terrorism varies from one agency to the next within one country points to the endless variety of definitions that exist amongst different cultures and nations. Having said that, however, there are some common points which seem to differentiate terrorism from other acts of violence. First, terrorist acts are usually performed by the weaker party in a conflict who mistakenly believes that it is the most effective way to achieve his goals. Second, it is a tactic used in both peace and war. Third, it is unmistakably calculated with a specific target and effect in mind. Its intended purpose is to generate fear; to create an atmosphere of public anxiety that will pressure a government into changing its policies. The United States Terrorism Research Center describes it as "a psychological act conducted for its impact on an audience," that audience who are beyond those victims that are directly involved in it.⁴ Last, but not least, terrorist acts are usually motivated by political, religious or ideological agendas, as it is clear from the above stated definitions.

What needs to be emphasized here is that terrorism in the modern era recognizes no rules, no person, place or object of value is immune. In the period preceding the nineteenth century, terrorists tried to exclude women, the elderly and children from their activities, targeting only those individuals whom they believed. They were either guilty or those who symbolized the force they were fighting against. However, after the nineteenth century, terrorists changed their tactics, deeming it acceptable to kill innocent people; in order to generate great political pressure and thus they will achieve the changes they sought. The direct result is the state of wide spread panic and anxiety that we find in our modern day society.⁵

Since the 9/11 bombings in New York and the 7/7 bombings in London, political pressure has been mounting to a crescendo in order to find a solution to this psychological warfare. Though these attempts are consistent and of a serious nature, they have only been partially successful because the targeted nations, the superpowers, are too involved in the mishap to be able to attempt an objective analysis of it. Their anger at the violence, disaster and deaths inflicted on

civilians, clouds their ability to identify the conditions which made it possible for these terrorists' feelings to fester and sore, until they resorted to kill innocent people. This is to be expected as not much time has elapsed since these atrocious acts have been committed. However, as time is of the essence in preventing further crimes on humanity, it becomes necessary to talk about it with an open mind and to learn from our predecessors who underwent similar experiences as ours.

Joseph Conrad is one such individual who has a lot to say about how terror can reemerge in its new shape in the modern world. His novel *The Secret Agent* written in 1907 reveals many truths about terror and terrorism that are applicable to our present society. John Gray in "A Target for Destructive Ferocity" explains that:

Conrad is our contemporary, because almost alone among nineteenth and twentieth century novelists, he writes of the realities in which we live... Conrad's greatness is that, by an art of enchantment, he brings us back to our actual life. The callow, rationalistic philosophies of the twentieth century, promising world peace and a universal civilization, are poor guides to a time in which war, terror and empire have returned. It falls to a novelist... to enlighten us how to live reasonably in these circumstances.⁶

Gray is but one of many critics who see in Conrad's *The Secret Agent* an opportunity to learn some universal truths about terrorism. Conrad's novel speaks to us today on a convincing basis because its incidents revolve around very similar social and political circumstances as those we have been experiencing since 9/11. Conrad's concerns with the ambiguities of progress and civilization and with the effects of imperial projects on escalating terrorist activities make him "the first great political novelist of the twenty-first century."⁷ As history has proven to be rather cyclical than progressive, he anticipated the return of the age of empire, where the world's great powers revive the imperial projects of the nineteenth century, partly for self-defense and partly for control of natural resources. As in the past, these imperial projects create an atmosphere of prejudice and injustice as a result of which terror starts to seep into people's lives.

Though the political events in *The Secret Agent* seem to take up most of the action of the story, this paper will examine and reveal how it is actually in the unfolding and resolution of the domestic drama that Conrad's message becomes unavoidably clear: secrecy, oppression and abuse are behind all the ills of society. Denude people of their self-respect and self-worthiness and they will become your worst enemies. Winnie, the heroine of the domestic drama, was abused by her husband Verloc, both physically and psychologically, only to

become a woman demonstrating an alarming capacity for committing crime and injury. The secrecy, madness and criminality of the so-called 'terrorists' in the political plot add an extra layer of monstrosity to the abuse that Winnie is exposed to. Winnie's act of violence against Verloc in addition to the failed attempt by the terrorists to blow up the Greenwich Observatory are revealed as desperate attempts by individuals whose misguided judgment and actions have been distorted by their persistent marginalization and oppression.

Winnie's story of entrapment in an asymmetric marriage to Verloc has no surprising elements either! It is the all-familiar story of a woman who allows herself to be psychologically colonized, manipulated and taken advantage of under the mistaken belief that she will eventually be protected and appreciated. Her situation becomes worse as the existing patriarchal society reinforces the myth that the "natural" order of things requires women's passive acceptance of her lot in life. Gerda Lerner in *The Creation of Patriarchy* states that:

For nearly four thousand years women have shaped their lives and acted under the umbrella of patriarchy, specifically a form of patriarchy is described as paternalistic dominance. The term describes the relationship between dominant group, considered superior, and subordinate group, considered inferior, in which the dominance is mitigated by mutual obligations and reciprocal rights. The dominated exchange submission for protection, unpaid labor for maintenance.... The basis for paternalism is an unwritten contract for exchange: economic support and protection are given by the male for subordination in all matters, sexual service, and unpaid domestic service are given by the female. Yet the relationship frequently continues in fact and in law, even when the male partner has defaulted on his obligation.⁸

Winnie's passive subordination to her husband's will is in many ways similar to the diseased relationship that can occur between colonizer and colonized. Chandra Mohanty in "Under Wester Eyes" explains that "colonization almost invariably implies a relation of structural domination, and a suppression –often violent" that is most often the result of "patriarchy."⁹ Once the colonized object starts to accept his "lower ranking in the order of things" he will gradually learn to perpetuate the values and assumptions which are held by the colonizer through a process that is often called "colonizing the mind" where colonized internalizes its logic and speaks its language.¹⁰

When Winnie decided to marry Verloc, her decision was to live according to the concept of paternalistic dominance. She would offer domestic service in exchange for protection and the provision of comfort and security. Though her heart was attached to the butcher boy, she chose Verloc because his "boat" was spacious enough to take her and her family. Having made a decision based on

rational thinking and not on impulsive thought or emotion, Winnie expected her life to be one of balance and harmony. However, Verloc turned out to be more than she bargained for; he not only turned out to be a patriarchal tyrant, but he also added fuel to fire by proving to be the additional practitioner of an ardent style of 'terrorism.'

However, as Winnie's marriage to Verloc unfolds, it becomes quite clear that if Winnie has a motive of marrying to improve her economic and social status in life, Verloc has an even bigger motive in marrying Winnie and accepting her family in his house. He expected great concessions and great concessions she did make. She not only gives up her youth and vitality to live with an indolent man in a crummy house, but she also caters to his every wish and demand without any complaints or reservations. On his infrequent journeys out of the Belgravian square, he seems to make a habit of coming back very late at night and sleeping until noon the next day. Despite Verloc's lack of consideration for his wife's feelings, she shows no disapproval of his actions, and even brings him breakfast in bed the following morning. Having had her mind colonized by Verloc, Winnie has internalized her subordinate status and come to believe that it is her natural place in the order of the universe.

Though Winnie realizes from the beginning of their relationship that there was "no sparkle of any kind on the lazy stream of his life," she did not expect him to be completely inconsiderate and self-engrossed.¹¹ The narrator mentions that "He never offered to take Winnie to theatres as such a nice gentleman ought to have done. His evenings were occupied."¹² As Verloc finds acceptance from Winnie of his selfish nature, he imposes his threatening attitude even more, warning her that she should be "very nice to his political friends,"¹³ Though this ought to have raised some sort of alarm in Winnie, she consents with an "of course."¹⁴

As a selfish driving and inconsiderate man, Verloc finds it very easy to exploit Winnie. Her acceptance of his idiosyncrasies and dominating nature makes her an ideal victim to his evil exploitations. As a weak and submissive woman, Winnie allows Verloc to colonize her, to make use of her for his selfish ends. Irene Boada-Montagut mentions that part of women's exploitation involves the "use value" she has for a man.¹⁵ As such, Winnie's "value" consists of her silent acceptance of his secret life. She not only allows him to enter and exit at all hours, but she also passively participates in not questioning him about his activities. Finding no other way of maintaining her mother and brother, Winnie allows Verloc to take over her life, even her vital sense of self worth in exchange for a paltry sustenance.

As Winnie makes more concessions in her life with Verloc, he has no inhibitions in making her an active participant in his dirty deeds. He actually takes advantage of her good looks and young demeanor, "full bust in a tight bodice, and with broad hips,"¹⁶ to attract men of all ages to his shop. Though some of these men are at times disconcerted that a woman will sell them these shady wares, she becomes an integral part of this dark world that uses women as objects of pleasure. Using his wife as another play thing in the diseased world of the so-called 'terrorists,' Verloc indirectly prostitutes his wife for his own material gain. Winnie's acceptance of this objectification actually entraps her into believing that her self-worth is directly connected to the offering of the services she has to perform as a seller of shady wares. Oblivious to her value as a human being, she confuses her role as a wife with that of an accomplice in Verloc's illegal activities. As her identity becomes directly connected to her less-than-ideal activities, her self-worth deteriorates considerably and she becomes more dependent on Verloc. As this vicious cycle of dependence and marginalization continues, Winnie's vulnerability entraps her in a loveless marriage over which she has no control. The longer she lives with Verloc, the more blind, "powerless," inactive and immune she becomes to her abuse, and the more domineering and overimposing and careless he becomes of her feelings and needs. As this abuse continues, Verloc's actions breed the grounds for Winnie's "violent" transformation from wife and ally to monster and enemy.¹⁷

Winnie's entrapment is also reinforced by a society which encourages patriarchal values and concepts. It defines "femininity" as passivity or submissiveness "even to the extreme of accepting violence."¹⁸ The problem with this definition and with patriarchy in general is that it is under complete "male monopoly."¹⁹ Man defines it, he reinforces its rules and rewards those who adhere to it. Spivak explains saying that it is "not that the women cannot speak as such" but that "everyone else speaks for her, so that she is rewritten continuously as the object of patriarchy or of imperialism."²⁰ Gerda Lerner in her book *The Creation of Patriarchy* states that it is "men's hegemony over the symbol system which is most decisively disadvantaged women. Male hegemony over the symbol took two forms: educational deprivation of women and male monopoly on definition."²¹ As women bought into the myth that they "are marginal to the creation of history and civilization,"²² they participated in the process of their own subordination. Lerner says that "the denial to women of their history has reinforced their acceptance of the ideology of patriarchy and has undermined the individual woman's sense of self-worth."²³

As Verloc's abuse of Winnie continues to become more overpowering, no one, not even Winnie's mother offers her any help. On the contrary, according to her mother "Mr. Verloc was a very nice gentleman." At one point, she even believes that he approached the "ideal" of "gentlemanliness" or "attained it, in fact."²⁴ Winnie's mother finds that her daughter's sacrifices are normal, only because she herself has made great ones. She seems to think that no sacrifice or renunciation is big enough for Stevie. The mother's blindness to her daughter's victimization is part of yet a wider circle of women in the story who are only valued for the services they are able to provide. Michaelis' lady patroness is a valuable asset to Michael is not only financially but also socially. Her high social status and power enable her to dictate to others, even to the assistant commissioner, who otherwise isn't to be meddled with. Yundt is looked after by a woman who loves him and Ossipon lives on the money of women who are happy to support him just to be associated with a handsome man.

Having been born and raised in a patriarchal society such as this, Winnie has no other alternative, but to believe that this is the norm. Gerda Lerner explains that women participate in their own subordination "because they have been psychologically shaped so as to internalize the idea of their own inferiority."²⁵ Just like the colonized perpetuate the power of the colonizer "by them and through them," Winnie aids in her own subordination, always keeping her needs and feelings secondary to her husband's.²⁶ Mill explains this hold that men have over women as:

Men do not want solely the obedience of women, they want their sentiments. All men, except the most brutish, desire to have, in the woman most nearly connected with them, not a slave but a willing one; not a slave merely, but a favorite. They have therefore put everything in practice to enslave their minds.²⁷

Others, such as Irene Boada-Montagut explain this "hold" as a form of "emotional colonization." She says that the emotional ties between a woman and a man "bind her to her unhappy fate." Montagut continues to explain saying that this colonization is reinforced by "feelings of emptiness, confusion, lack of confidence and solitude" which are the direct result of this unbalanced relationship.²⁸

Though Winnie seems to be a woman in control of herself and her emotions, her attitude that "things do not stand much looking into" blinds her to Verloc's selfish and violent nature. Having decided long ago that her goal in life is to protect Stevie, she is unaware of how alienated she is from Verloc or of her own inner hollowness. Though this alienation between Verloc and Winnie can be

attributed to many different factors in their relationship, it is basically their lack of interest in each other's true selves and in their treatment of each other as a means to an end that keeps them estranged. Winnie is in the dark about Verloc's clandestine life partly, because she is too involved with Stevie and partly because Verloc does not think much of Winnie to confide in her. Similarly, Verloc is in the dark about Winnie's feelings for him, because he simply assumes that she must love him. This state of mutual incomprehension and blindness to other people's motives and feelings extends to many others in the story. Verloc's friends are in the dark about his contacts with the embassy and with the police. Vladimir is in the dark about Verloc's relationship with Chief Inspector Heat who in turn keeps his connection with Verloc a secret. The sum total of the characters' blindness about each other not only keeps them apart, physically and emotionally, but it also creates a feeling of emptiness that pervades their lives and engulfs the city as a whole. At different points in the story, Verloc is described as either feeling "terribly empty" or afraid "of facing the darkness and silence" as it seems to cause him "bodily anguish."²⁹ Verloc's state of emptiness or vacancy is represented quite clearly in the name that is given to him as a secret agent 'A'. He is no more than an empty and meaningless triangle.

The hollowness that Winnie experiences, however, far exceeds that of Verloc in that both internal and external causes are working against her. Daleski describes this internal hollowness as an "obsessive self-sacrifice" that causes a loss of self as the "obsessive self-aggrandizement of a Gould or a Nostromo."³⁰ He says that this "moral nihilism," her concern with the ends and indifference to the means to achieve them, makes her blind to her own inner void and ultimately brings about her own destruction. As her senses are numbed, she becomes an easy prey to Verloc's marginalization and selfish ends. Though Verloc's basic vocation within this patriarchal system should have been to give her protection in exchange for obedience, he helps in further exposing her to the harsh and unfriendly elements of the dirty world of the anarchists. Unaware of her victimization, Winnie accepts her lot until her emptiness devours her whole existence and her disintegrating soul is reflected in the "two black holes" that are her eyes.³¹

Irene Boada-Montagut's prediction is that "the unbalanced emotional relationship between wives and husbands can, tragically, evolve into violence" foreshadows Verloc's and Winnie's tragic end.³² Taking for granted that Winnie will sympathize with him, Verloc makes the grave mistake of confessing to her of her brother's accident. Waking up from her stupor, Winnie realizes how little respect and esteem he has for her. His gesture of consoling her by saying "can't be helped" and "Come! This won't bring him back" and shows how

inconsiderate he is of her feelings.³³ As Winnie wakes up to the cruelty in Verloc's nature, she begins to despise herself because she allowed him to take advantage of her. Elaine Showalter defines this condition as:

Self-sacrifice generates bitterness and makes, as Yeats said, a stone of the heart. But beyond the outspoken contempt for male selfishness in this fiction is a much more intense self-hatred. Women gave in and despised themselves for giving in.³⁴

Winnie experiences an intense wave of self-loathing overtaking her as she remembers the sacrifices she made for Verloc and how little he deserved them. At one point, she tells Ossipon, "Seven years - seven years a good wife to him... And he loved me. Oh, yes. He loved me till I sometimes wished myself..."³⁵ Her unfinished sentence shows the extent of her revulsion. She wasn't attracted to him, yet she had forced herself to accept him because of the protection and security he was supposed to offer her. The fact that he turns out to be totally evil and not worth her devotion makes her sacrifices seem worthless and her life to be meaningless.

All the shame, revulsion and degradation that have been built up inside her come out unexpectedly in a desperate attack to stifle her attacker and perhaps vindicate her pride. As Winnie stabs Verloc in the heart, she puts an end to the undue abuse and oppression she has been subjected to for seven years. The fact that Winnie stabs him with the same knife that he had recently used to cut the meat immediately after Stevie's death, directly links Winnie's crime to Verloc's insensitive murder of Stevie. Verloc had abused his position as husband, protector and provider in order to carry out his acts of terrorism. Verloc's function is to protect her, as she protects Stevie, as the police must protect society, but as the whole chain breaks, all is lost. Desperate and infuriated by his cold manner, Winnie turns into a ferocious being that attacks out of a need to avenge her brother and preserve what little dignity she might have left.

John Stuart Mill explains this phenomenon in *His Subjection of Women*. He says:

An active and energetic mind, if it denied liberty, will seek power; refused the command itself, so it will assert its personality by attempting to control others. To allow to any human beings no existence of their own, but what depends on others, is giving for too high a premium on bending others to their purposes. Where liberty cannot be hoped for, and power can, then the power will become the grand object of human desire; those to whom others will not leave the undisturbed management of their own affairs, will compensate themselves, if

they can, by meddling for their own purposes with the affairs of others... Hence... all the evils that flow from it.³⁶

As Winnie was stifled, controlled and denied any sense of identity or dignity, she was forced to become a savage and her husband's become the worst enemy. Aurom Fleishman in *The Secret Agent: A Casebook* states that: "The entire society comes to be seen as a jungle of animal forms obeying the laws of predatory survival. Alien to this world, forced to live in it yet inevitably devoured, men acquire the characters of beasts."³⁷ The resemblance of Winnie's face to her brother as she is about to kill Verloc clearly associates her with these wild animals. The drooping of her lower lip and "slight divergence of the eyes" reveal the extent of Winnie's transformation from docile wife to aggressive adversary. Though Winnie's association with her brother at this critical stage shows Conrad's sympathy for her, in no way does it undermine his message that violence, no matter of what kind or for what purpose, will only lead to tragedy. Winnie's madness at the end of the novel and her subsequent suicide attest to this undeniable truth.

The unfolding of the political plot offers the same message as the domestic drama. As the revolutionaries plot to disrupt the social order for a new way of life, they encroach on people's rights and violate the sanctity of the state that gave them their identity and livelihood. Winnie's act of stabbing Verloc in the 'heart' in retaliation for his recurring abuse becomes symptomatic of the anarchists' act of targeting the 'heart' of English society by bombing the Greenwich Observatory. Though the observatory itself doesn't get damaged, the attempt in itself causes loss of faith in the government and fear of what the future has in hold for them. By targeting science, which is "at the source of their material prosperity," Vladimir and his accomplices succeed in bringing about an atmosphere of "madness" that underscores what they believe to be the "spirit of the age,"³⁸ hence predicting the Conradic equation of future eruptions of terrorism as acts of sheer desperation.

In a similar fashion, the attack of 9/11 on the World Trade Center and the 7/7 bombings in London created an atmosphere of fear and doubt about the development of new technologies and the future, about the progress of humanity in general. It is true that the progress of humanity largely depends on the growth of knowledge; however, since this knowledge is sometimes used to abuse others or to bring human catastrophes, then the question that poses itself is: How good can it be and what can we do to prevent the misfits of the world from abusing it? John Gray in "A Target for Destructive Ferocity" tackles this issue and comes up with an interesting equation. He says:

The core of the belief in progress is that human values and goals converge in parallel with our increasing knowledge. The twentieth century shows the contrary. Human beings use the power of scientific knowledge to assert and defend the values and goals they already have. New technologies can be used to wage war and strengthen tyranny. Science makes possible technologies that power the industrial revolution. In the twentieth century, these technologies were used to implement state terror and genocide on an unprecedented scale. Ethics and politics do not advance in line with the growth of knowledge – not even in the long run.³⁹

Gray's pessimistic attitude regarding the negative impact that the growth of knowledge can have on humanity is also shared by Conrad. Both the political and domestic dramas reveal that consistent marginalization of minorities in the race for globalization only leads to a hollowing out of people and of society in general. As such, these societies become very vulnerable and susceptible to any negative influence. In Winnie's case, her abuser gets so used to taking advantage of her selfless nature and over confident in his role as a patriarch that he transgresses the simple rules of humanity, to the extent that he ends up getting himself killed instead. Similarly, the political events of the story show the British government having become so familiar with its role as a superpower that it has neglected to re-evaluate its strategies and motivations. The terrorists' plots in the story hint at Britain's inability to truly integrate these minorities within the regiments of its society.

Conrad's assessment has made it clearly perceivable that the same scenario prevails in the dealings of the superpowers today. As these superpowers continue to believe that the globalization of world markets is the most appropriate way to achieve universal civilization, they ignore the price that the weaker countries end up paying so as to achieve this so-called 'world peace.' Believing that they have no other choice but to sacrifice their resources and the dignity of their people in this mad dash for globalization, these debilitated countries set in motion a vicious cycle of dependence and hatred towards the powerful states that manifests itself in sporadic acts of violence that are later endorsed and embraced by clandestine organizations with political agendas of their own. As a result, the crux of the situation arises sooner or later, when a weaker state like Conrad's 'Winnie' resorts to striking a knife at the heart of a 'Verloc' again and again as the only act of desperation it has come to know from repeated abuse and suppression! The message here is becoming an integral part of the ordeal of the modern day society: the woes and persecution of one weak individual may in reality trigger a phase of grotesque suffering of the entire community or a nation, and in rebound their anguish may attain a sordid

situation with the repercussions resulting in anarchy and terrorism, and the creation of evil and the enemy.

To sum up, Conrad's political message in *The Secret Agent* takes on a whole new level of meaning and clarity once the domestic drama becomes a reflection of and an extension of the diseased world of the terrorists. Just like the English government should have taken minorities under its wing, families should be safe-havens where vulnerable members should be protected and made to feel equal to their counterparts. The fact that family relationships can sour and turn into a colonizer-colonized scenario where the woman is dominated and victimized, only to violently retaliate, brings the message close to home. 'Oppression' and 'victimization' can exist at any level and if the political world with its nuances appears distant and far too much complicated for us to understand, then the example of Winnie and Verloc will prove how easy it is to fall into that trap. Conrad's genius culminates in not only having been able to carry his political message into his domestic drama, but also in using his domestic scenario to show how political situations can easily fester and become sour.

العدو في الداخل: ازدواجية الكره والحب في "العميل السري"

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ملخص

رواية جوزف كونراد "العميل السري" تندرج تحت موضوع الإرهاب والعنف بجميع أشكاله سواء كان الأسري منه أو السياسي. وفي هذه الرواية تتداخل الأحداث السياسية مع الأسرية لتكشف أن التعرض للاضطهاد والإذلال هو الدافع وراء الكثير من الكره والعدوانية في العالم.

وأنت أحداث 11/9 لتضيف المزيد من الأهمية لهذه الرواية من خلال تشابه الأحداث السياسية التي توحى بخلل في توازن السلطات في الكثير من الدول. ونشير هنا إلى أن ظاهرة الكراهية هي نتاج طبيعي للاستبداد والعنف الذي يمارسه الأقوياء على الضعفاء. وتبين هذه الورقة أن قمع فيرلوك لزوجته ويني هو صورته مصغره من ظاهرة الاضطهاد الموجود في هذا العالم والذي يؤدي بضحاياه إلى اللجوء إلى العنف كملجأ أخير للتخلص من حياة الظلم. كما أن هذه الورقة تتعمق في مفاهيم متناقضة كالحب والكره، الصداقة والعداوة بحثاً عن العوامل الأساسية التي يمكن من خلالها تحقيق السلام والحياة الكريمة.

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Notes

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- 13 Ibid, p 11.
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