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***Rokas Hasenaitis***

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**The Religious Meaning of Loneliness, Unity, and Communication in the Works of F. Dostoevsky**

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**Scientific Advisor:**

**Evlampiev Igor Ivanovich**

**D. Sc. in Philosophy,**

**Professor,**

**Department of Russian Philosophy and Culture,**

**Institute of Philosophy, Saint-Petersburg State University**

**Reviewer:**

**Kolychev Petr Mikhailovych**

**D. Sc. in Philosophy,**

**Associate Professor,**

**Saint-Petersburg State University of Aerospace Instrumentation**

**Department of Advertising and Modern Communications**

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**ABSTRACT**

The work's major goal is to discover the tools and methods of interpretation that Dostoevsky uses to express themes of loneliness, oneness, and communication. Various books and writings by him are chosen to explore these issues at multiple levels of analysis: theological, intercultural, intertextual, behavioral, and historical. The research is to show how different Dostoevsky works explain the evolution of these aspects in the images and acts of various characters. Dostoevsky expertly juggles complex and difficult philosophical categories and circumstances, and their abundance enriches his treasure chest of reasonings. Diverse books, including Dostoevsky's well-known works and lesser-known texts, consider various ideas and arguments concerning the aspects of loneliness, unity, and communication, enabling larger contexts to be examined and gathered. The research attempts to explain how the issues of communion and oneness are disclosed in various texts, characters, discourses, and thinking models, which in turn give rise to new philosophical methods of reasoning and conceptualizing society.

One of the most important points in Dostoevsky’s thinking is the gradual transformation of society. It is Dostoevsky's developed path to unity, which can be divided into three phases. First is the secession. It is a time for personalities to emerge and rise. Later, the person begins to turn to himself, and trust in his own strength, while realizing its own importance. Finally, some form of unity is getting available. All individuals merge into one, creating the united society of the future. This sequence, articulated in different forms and contexts, seems to develop in the motives of Dostoevsky's thoughts and reflections.

**Key words:** loneliness, communication, unity, religion, society, oneness, Christ, Dostoevsky, Tarkovsky, individualism, society, separation.

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# INTRODUCTION

Philosophical categories such as loneliness, unity, or communication are being always varied in the works of different authors and thinkers. Some of the authors describe them as the basis or starting point of everyone‘s interpersonal development, others see it as derivative formation conditioned by temperament or physiological conditions.

Regardless of the approach that is being followed, in exploring these qualities a highly sensitive and delicate area is entered where a personality‘s propensity for introversion or extroversion, an attitude towards another person, arises. Some people are fond of being alone and for some, communication is a mandatory attribute of their lives.

However, talking about socializing is not the same when we add another significant category – religion. The religious context always changes the meaning and sense of these three definitions – loneliness, unity, and communication – and influences it tremendously.

In this way, religious loneliness is often associated with the need for austerity and devotion to communion with God. Communication can also become a tool for taking and exchanging religious experiences from other people. Unity is also an important aspect for every believer as an indisputable and saving purpose.

The religious context above this question brings some important elements such as the decision of a human being to go into one or another flow; to be more closed and morose, or be more open and sharing to the world.

It is being confirmed by the investigation and analysis that there is a negative correlation between extraversion and religiosity and this fact is consistent for both sexes [[1]](#footnote-1)

Different authors depict these problems in their own ways. The main writer for this analytical work will be F. Dostoevsky because of his peculiar and distinctive outlook on God, religion, to a human as such. Many characters of Dostoevsky have faced similar or identical crisis experiences leading to various conclusions.

The task of this work is to describe how do these three categories: unity, communication, and loneliness differ in the context of two frameworks – religious context and F. Dostoevsky‘s works. Both of these are not separated aspects as Dostoevsky‘s works are strongly oriented to religious narrative and religion is functioning massively in his books.

Characters of Dostoevsky are either suffering, are depressed, or rejoice, but their emotions and often even choices are limited to the mentioned three categories.

Starting with the generalized features of F. Dostoevsky‘s works, eventually, the thesis will concentrate on those texts that are directly analyzing the topic. From „Masha is Laying on The Table“ to „The Dream of a Ridiculous Man“ a reader can meet different portraits and their variations. Characters maneuvering between ascetic loneliness and blissful communion are strongly influenced by the religious context.

The mentioned works are also illustrating the possible and existing transformations of society; and how the modification of the individual human being affects the development of the whole society. Dostoevsky as the writer was interested a lot in a reconfiguration of the order of society depending on one concrete person; in other words how one human being can induce and affect common processes.

The aspect of unity and its pursuit also appears. Dostoevsky analyzes how a unified society, the essence of which is junction, is formed from a society made up of alienated and distant individuals.

These questions and research points will let to analyze the religious context of loneliness, communication, and unity in the works of F. Dostoevsky.

# DOSTOEVSKY‘S LITERATURE CONCEPT

Coming to F. Dostoevsky as a writer there is no doubt or debate that he is strongly philosophical and existentialist. According to some scientific authors, his contribution to the development of existentialist literature was so huge that even separate theories of this science were precisely born in the pages of Dostoevsky‘s texts.

F. Dostoevsky like every great author had analyzed many profound topics in his works and although the spectrum of them was extremely wide, several aspects were the most prominent. Human nature could be mentioned as the axis of Dostoevsky‘s works. The influence of a person‘s nature on his choices, decisions, behavior is a feature of F. Dostoevsky‘s books, which does not allow to doubt the author‘s ingenious talent to reflect empathy, compassion, reflection.

Violence as such and human‘s propensity to criminality is one of these common aspects on the list of Dostoevsky‘s favorite themes. „The earliest and best known existentialist writer on criminality is Fyodor Dostoevsky whose violent characters Smerdiakov, Svidrigailov, and Stavrogin, are enigmas to their fictional counterparts, much as violent American contemporaries are to authorities and the general public. Dostoevsky’s three enigmatic characters are reckless publicity seekers; like aliens in their own land, they habitually deceive, intimidate, and exploit while still considering themselves to be decent individuals.“[[2]](#footnote-2)

Dostoevsky‘s works are sometimes having the element of criticism or sceptical opinion, yet it is so delicate and subtle, unobtrusive and elegant that the final analysis and verdict of the character is left to the reader. What Bogg writes about Dostoevsky‘s characters is an universal feature seen in his works. Seclusion, alienation, a lack of understanding of the role in society are some of the characterizing aspects.

Here another very important question naturally appears. How are loneliness, unity, and communication conceptualized and interpreted in F. Dostoevsky‘s books and in the literature in general as well?

For the sake of having a bigger image and wider vision, it is again needed to quote Richard A. Bogg who is giving a concluded opinion and interpretation based on a few other authors. Control theory, as originally proposed by Hirshi (1969), is at least attuned to the outcomes of socialization, not all of which are successful. A violent individual has not merely failed to bond with conventional society; by his behavior, he mocks the conventions themselves. As noted by Goode (1994), control theorists assume that “deviance is inherently attractive” (p. 86). More recently, Gottfredson and Hirshi (1990) linked such acts to “low self-control” (p. 89). However, there are many benefits of being bonded with one’s fellow citizens, not the least of which is prevention or amelioration of loneliness. Further, given the efforts of families and communities to maximize bonding, why are socialization outcomes so extraordinarily variable?[[3]](#footnote-3)

From this quoted paragraph, it is still obvious that there is no absolute clearness about the possible advantages and disadvantages of being in the centre of socialisation or being isolated. As it is in general not disputed that socialization provides certain benefits, the question still remains open, whether it does not eliminate other natural individual characteristics, does not assimilate and equate our differences.

Socializing means broadly transforming an individual into a social being, instilling gradually different ways of thinking, feeling, and then acting. All these elements are accomplished through a psychosocial process of transmission, but also by assimilating attitudes, values, concepts, or models specific to a group or community, for the formation, adaptation, and social integration of a person.

In terms of defining the concept of socialization, sociologists and psycho-pedagogues have different opinions. Thus H.Wallon (1959) considers that the whole relationship between humans and all forms of emotional communication is a social behavior, and the “term socialization” is improper because the child is born and grows in a social environment. [[4]](#footnote-4)

Although her investigation is quite old, from our point of view, it can still be assumed that the data has not changed in an extreme manner. The older model of the structure of society, closer to Dostoevsky's time, is even more relevant for the development of the thesis.

The human being has since birth a natural and congenital need for communication in one way or another and by its essence, man is a social being undoubtedly. Its existence is only possible in a social environment, in cohabitation with other peers.[[5]](#footnote-5)

As it is not difficult to agree on the inherent human‘s need to communicate further questions should follow the topic about the unity and loneliness demands.

There are much more disputes and discussions beyond these two questions because otherwise than communication which is a less or more clear term, “unity“ and “loneliness“ as such are complicated definitions, the perception of which depends on the individual concept of speaking or describing person.

Anyway, some common points can be found in Dostoevsky‘s outlook and point of view especially according to the fact that he was the supporter of Slavophilism and sympathized with this ideology. First, focusing on unity.

To Sarah Hudspith whose main area of specialism is nineteenth century Russian literature, especially Dostoevsky and Tolstoy did the investigation on Dostoevsky‘s position about unity in a broader context in her book “*Dostoevsky and The Idea of Russianness: A New Perspective on Unity and Brotherhood*“. It is interesting that Dostoevsky‘s position is very close to the Slavophiles one as he is broadening moral and spiritual concerns into an all-encompassing message about Russia as a social derivative and its people.

“By studying Dostoevsky in the context of Slavophilism, we can not only see where he considered the issues of Slavophile thought, but we can also reveal a new coherence and ethos in certain areas of his work that would not at first glance appear to be connected with Slavophilism. In particular, an examination of Dostoevsky in the light of Slavophilism is useful in offering a new perspective on the writer’s concerns with unity and brotherhood, and in my view such an undertaking sets these concerns at the forefront of his world view.“[[6]](#footnote-6)

For taking a deeper look into F. Dostoevsky‘s conception about unity and for a better comprehension of unity as a phenomenon, it is inevitable to compare Dostoevsky‘s ideas with the outlook of two other philosophers – Khomiakov and Kireevsky. “ The notion most important to Slavophile thought, it could be said, is unity: what true unity means and how it may be achieved on a personal, societal and spiritual level. Khomiakov and Kireevsky believed that true unity could only arise organically; it could not be manufactured by man but had to develop freely and naturally. They applied this idea in all aspects of their thought and subscribed to an organic view of creation; they saw all creation as an organism composed of parts, which could not stand separately from the whole and each of which had its own role to play in a collective existence. Within this whole they included human society in all its complexity of organization, and they asserted that it too should develop along organic lines in order to maintain true wholeness and unity. [[7]](#footnote-7)“

“The early Slavic scholars settled on the word sobornyi: sobor expresses the idea of congregation not only in the sense of the visible gathering of many in a given place, but also in the broader sense of the eternal possibility of such a congregation, in other words it expresses the idea of unity in plurality.“*[[8]](#footnote-8)*

“It is useful to situate my work in the range of material that already exists on Dostoevsky’s views on the issues of unity, brotherhood and freedom. Since Dostoevsky followed Khomiakov and Kireevsky’s essentially religious approach to these matters, for general reading on his religious opinions one should consult such standard works as Konstantin Mochulsky and Nikolai Berdiaev’s studies. Mochulsky mentions in passing the Slavophile movement in relation to Dostoevsky; he acknowledges a similarity between his thought and that of Khomiakov, and talks of Dostoevsky’s ‘Slavophile dream of a Christian empire’.“(Hudspith 2004)

Dostoevsky strongly admired Svalophiles‘ ideas and concepts; contributed them by himself. This position is an useful point of resistance for the primary searchings of Dostoevsky‘s thinkings and reasonings on the defined topic.

# DIFFERENT WAYS OF INTERPRETING DOSTOEVSKY

Dostoevsky is undoubtedly one of the most enigmatic and influenial writers, thinkers, public figures not only in Russia but all over the world. Both the derivatives of his philosophical conceptions and, of course, the novels have greatly influenced the further development of philosophical thought and literature.

On the other hand, Dostoevsky‘s mysticism and ignorance of him as a person and author determined the fragmentation of points of view towards him. It is an unequivocally valued figure, and the amplitude and difference of its evaluation positions only prove the scale and influence of Dostoevsky as a person, writer, and philosophical thinker.

Before talking about his specific works and the symbols and ideas reflected in them, it is important to firstly see a diverse picture of him. Different writers and thinkers had discovered and developed a unique and common for them personally approach to Dostoevsky, so an analysis of each of them would help to look into the diversity of Dostoevsky‘s angles.

The main distinguishing points and features of the view to Dostoevsky and the general lines through which conceptual conclusions can be drawn will be singled out through his thoughts about religion and faith adding the way how other thinkers and authors interpret it.

Interestingly, some of these positions are segmented not only by individual concepts but also, for instance, by regions or continents. Few approaches to Dostoevsky have taken more root in Russia while others were prominent and spread in Europe.

Getting to the analysis of those point of views it is visible and mentionable that his religiosity in general and the concept of religion, faith in God, becomes one of the cornerstones between thinkers and scholars.

The professor of *Seattle University* David J. Leigh explains the Dostoevsky phenomenon in the context of the relationship with religion and Orthodox experiences. He observes the dynamics of Dostoevsky‘s religiosity, which has changed significantly over a lifetime and the alterations were constant.

First of all, his mother had a strong belief that in fact set the tone for his upbringing and growth. He was at early days a religious person and it destined the further path and the field of his interests. Dostoevsky soon got involved in some Orthodox practices, groups, communities and that determined his strong interest in religion as a form of faith and conception of belief.

“The more radical wing of this group (including Dostoevsky) was arrested, imprisoned, and threatened with capital punishment in 1849. He faced a firing squad by saying to a skeptical fellow prisoner, “We will be with Christ.” Reprieved at the last moment, Dostoevsky spent four years at a prison labor camp in Omsk and then served five years in the army in Siberia. During this time, he recovered his Orthodox devotion by reading the only book he was allowed in prison, the New Testament.“[[9]](#footnote-9)

From this paragraph two clear and interesting things are obviously seen. His devotion to Christ was difficult to measure and Dostoevsky did not deviate from this faith while his position remained strong. The punishment did not deter his faith but only strengthened it, and this is confirmed by another eloquent fact – that Dostoevsky read only New Testament in exile.

The range of complexity and diversity of Dostoevsky as a person, writer and thinker was enormous, which is the reason why the professor, in analysing Dostoevsky, emphasizes that it is important to break down the different elements first in order to understand Dostoevsky.

“In order to understand Dostoevsky’s life and writing, it is important to consider several factors. The first is that his philosophy and theology are embedded in three types of sources—his notes and essays, his novels, and his practices. The second factor to examine are the influences on his life, such as the practices and beliefs of Russian Orthodoxy, the thought of the Petrashevsky Circle and other reading, the rivalry with Turgenev and Tolstoy, the battle between Russian thought and Western Enlightenment thinkers, the struggle with socialism, and the Slavophile movement. Once his sources and influences are understood, one must try to extrapolate both the philosophy and theology implied in them and in his fiction. Thus, we will explore in his philosophy four areas: Dostoevsky’s Philosophical Humanism, his Philosophical Ethics, his Aesthetics, and his Socio-Political Thought.“[[10]](#footnote-10)

This quote evidents the complexity of Dostoevsky which was partly mentioned before. It is impossible to see only one plan in Dostoevsky as he was humanist, aesthete, interested in Socio-Politics, was working on analysis of ethics and behaviour of people, interested in philosophy and strongly influenced by Slavophile movement. His theological path was variegated too; elements of Gnosticism later started being seen in his works and thoughts but this is a question of interpretation again what shows that many questions provokes a debate talking about Dostoevsky.

Contextual influences are extremely important to grasp while looking into the picture of Dostoevsky‘s works. Almost all or the majority of his works might be linked with some events of periods of his life, by affections of other ideas or conceptions. All these thoughts entwine in one massive network which only in its full seing lets to consider an approach of Dostoevsky to such fundamental things as existence, nature of God, the importance of the Christ, crucifixion and incarnation, the concept and essence of being and finally the role of Christianity and the Church.

For example, “*Brothers Karamazov*“ writing period was strongly influenced by the most iconic Russian thinker of the later nineteenth-century Vladimir Solovyov. Later by reading Dostoevsky scientists accessed to the conclusion that some theocratic ideas of V. Solovyov are being represented in Dostoevsky‘s works.

Dostoevsky had faced many major influences affecting him and was absorbing whole this information and structures mostly given by: Orthodox religion and church, his second wife and his family, monasteries, peasants he encountered, other thinkers, for example, already mentioned Solovyev and the Russian culture itself, of course.

“In his visits to monasteries, he was accompanied by Vladimir Solovyev, the most influential Russian thinker of the later nineteenth-century. Dostoevsky attended his Lectures on Godmanhood in 1878, while writing, Brothers Karamazov, at one of which Leo Tolstoy was present (but not introduced to Dostoevsky, the only time they were in the same room). These lectures affirmed his own emphasis in his greatest novel on the humanity and divinity of Christ and on the importance of the Kingdom of God on earth as well as in heaven.

This religious influence on Dostoevsky came into tension with the Enlightenment and political doctrines of the radical socialists and anarchists that he met during his time in the Petraschevsky Circle. The assumptions of these intelligentia—rationalism, atheism, and socialism–never were persuasive to him, and he continued to argue with them in his journalistic articles and editorial positions throughout his life. In his major fiction, he satirized them, especially in “*Notes from Underground*“, “*Crime and Punishment*“, “*The Possessed*“, and “*Brothers Karamazov*“.[[11]](#footnote-11)

Few statements have to be done according to not only this extract but to a general picture of Dostoevsky‘s activities. He was a supporter of the Kingdom of God idea and its importance. On the other hand, Dostoevsky was not an easy opponent of the debate and did not easily accept rapidly popularising and arising ideas of that time. Moreover, he opposed many of them, even ironically sometimes.

The popularisation of Enlightenment many of which ideas were atheistic and sought to rationalize the world and the concept of its operation and origin were alien for Dostoevsky and he did not hesitate to express it.

His religiousness and connection with God is also being described in the article.

“As Scanlon shows, Dostoevsky rarely uses traditional rational arguments for God’s Existence such as arguments from motion, causality, or levels of being, which were not a significant part of Russian philosophy or Orthodox theology. However, sometimes he uses reasons similar to the traditional argument from design in the universe, as Father Zosima employs in Book 6 of The Brothers Karamazov. More common, according to Scanlon, is Dostoevesky’s employment of an argument from the finite to the infinite or an argument from common consent of humanity or from religious experience, sometimes called “mystical perception“. His fondness for the argument from infinity depends on his understanding of spirit and immateriality as associated with the infinite. In all of these arguments, Dostoevsky does not start from a position of being required to prove the existence of God but uses them in counteracting arguments given by atheists against him. In such arguments, Scanlon asserts that Dostoevsky tried to show others that there must be an ultimate “spiritual principle of the synthesis of being.” When he expands to a more religious concern about a personal God, as in Christianity, he affirms the need for the faith“.[[12]](#footnote-12)

He surely never denied but neither openly declared his own perception of God, according to this paragraph. Basically such terms as “mystical perception“ or “spiritual principle of the synthesis of being“ are general enough to form the impression of curiosity. Dostoevsky‘s faith was enigmatic enough and all the conclusions that can be made are more hypotheses than well known and officially documented facts.

Objects which Dostoevsky is using for his concerns to be declared are very substantial and fundamental, for example, “spirit“, “immateriality“, “finity“, “infinity“ but again it does not define the concrete position about the concept of religion in a strict frame, but rather shows the general trajectory of Dostoevsky‘s thinking. On the contrary, as it is also being said in the paragraph mostly these arguments were used against atheists as a tool of counteraction so it was not used in his personal life or letters but more in the battle or debate field. What gets obvious is the fact that he was a religious person affirming the need for faith and being sure about an ultimate spiritual structure existing.

Dostoevsky‘s biography and his personal insights are undoubtedly very important in the process of analyzing view to this author. However, his novels are equally significant and these concepts will be elaborated much more further in the work but few mentionings are also needed to be articulated.

“Let us now extrapolate from this novel and from his other writings, with the help of other critics, the major theological or spiritual affirmations of Dostoevsky concerning God, Creation, Incarnation, Grace and Sin, Christ, Redemption, and the Christian community. Dostoevsky’s notion of God, as we have noted in our summary of his philosophical affirmations in arguments with atheists, combines a traditional rational notion of a source for the order or design in the universe with a notion of the infinite One. Once we study his notion of the God of Christian faith, we can infer from his Orthodox practices and from the beliefs of Alyosha and Zosima in Brothers Karamazov that he affirmed through faith and religious experience a Trinitarian God who has acted in history as creator, redeemer, and sanctifier. David S. Cunningham has expanded on this belief in Father, Son, and Spirit as shown in passages in this final novel that indicate God to be persons-in-relations, not an isolated deistic God. This is found both in his affirmation of solidarity as a fundamental divine and human virtue, his emphasis on subsistent relations, and his examples of triads throughout the novel. (...)[[13]](#footnote-13)

“The more far-reaching aspect of the divine being in Brothers Karamazov is found in the centrality of Christ in the novel, particularly his role as the image of the invisible God and the Son of God who has become human to redeem humanity and reunite it with the Father and Spirit. This redeemer Christ appears in Alyosha’s first response to Ivan’s arguments against divine justice, a response that describes Christ as “the Being who . . . gave his innocent blood for all and everything”. Without exploring the complex theology of atonement or redemption, Dostoevsky has Alyosha affirm the redemption by Christ as the incarnate Son of God. Rowan Williams has remarked of this passage that it expresses “the characteristically Eastern Christian insight that, by taking human nature, the divine person of the eternal Word transforms that humanity and communicates something of his own capacity and liberty to it . . . Christ is indeed truly human and his humanity is manifest in the effects of his life and works upon human beings now.“[[14]](#footnote-14)

Some general interpretations are met again like a notion about God or the infinity as such. On the other hand, along with these mystical conceptualizations some particularly specific elaborations and explanations emerge as well.

However, another very important aspect of the Trinity appears and becomes a cornerstone for further analysis. It is the Trinitarian God who dominates and functions in Dostoevsky‘s works and conception. That is an extremely important aspect because it is not “an isolated deistic God“ but the concept of the Trinity which is the closest to the writer.

Different scholars and professors find out various angles and spaces of interpretation in Dostoevsky‘s works but that only enriches discussive field and widens its range. Theological assumptions and preconditions make up a large part of the topic in his works, so it is not surprising that many researchers are “catching“ this element as the one to deepen in.

“Malcolm V. Jones has tried to relate the theology of The Brothers Karamazov to the apophatic tradition of Russian monasticism but does not go on to explore the more explicit systematic theology of the monasteries. Rene Girard has added to the religious interpretations of Dostoevsky by interpreting the characters in his final novel by means of Girard’s theory of mimetic desire and Christianity as a way out of a scapegoat theology. Linda Kraeger and Joe Barnhart also have tried to use late twentieth century process theology and its views on atonement as a way to solve problems that Dostoevsky does not raise in the novel. Steven Cassedy eludes the hard theological issues by precluding them in a sociological reading that transfers Dostoevsky’s doubleness and polyphony into the novelist’s or reader’s cultural situation. This maneuver creates a problematic of belief which cannot get beyond the limits set by a Kantian denial of metaphysics and other sources of skepticism.“[[15]](#footnote-15)

But as it was mentioned before and what is also being said at the end of Leigh‘s article that along with religious aspects other ones are going next to them.

“As we have tried to show, however, Dostoevsky used both his complex fiction and his prose diaries and other writing to develop a limited but authentic philosophy and theology that is derived from both his own experience and reflections as a struggling believer in Orthodox Christianity and its relationship to active love in the world.“[[16]](#footnote-16)

If it can be agreed that the approach to the religious element in Dostoevy‘s person and work is more or less elucidated, then it is worth moving forward to another significant component – philosophy. The view through this perspective, ant through philosophy in particular, also encodes a number of points of separation and disagreements.

Decomposition of this subject is most probably already programmed in the very science of philosophy, it is, first of all, a concept of thinking, so if the author himself does not openly reveal it, it is not easy to understand which specific direction he belongs to. On the other hand, it is not always particularly important to know the exact fact of assigning a particular thinker or, in this case, a writer to one concrete group or community of thinkers or philosophers. It becomes more important to understand the flow, dynamics, course, derivatives, and results of his thinking.

Here another philosopher might be introduced to the analysis for further development of Dostoevsky‘s ideas. It is a German thinker Johann Fichte. A hypothesis may be questioned whether Fichte‘s ideas were impactful for Dostoevsky because some coincidences between these thinkers are impossible not to mention. In some of Dostoevsky‘s drafts, notes and works an influence of Fichte is being shown very clearly as some thoughts of this German philosopher are being directly followed.

Fichte is one of the brightest figures in the development of German philosophy and the forming conditions for its continuation. He was a significant personality of the movement known as German idealism and Germanistic philosophy and along with other philosophers such as Schelling, Kant or Hegel situated the preconditions for the formation of the branch of philosophy which is called German one.

German thought and its development was impactful for Dostoevsky as the one tended to ponder and question certain truths. Especially talking about religion, existence, ontology, absolute ideas. Contemplations of Dostoevsky are massively based on minds of many thinkers but foremost Fichte‘s.

Igor Evlampiev and Vladimir Smirnov accentuate the quote in their work: “Christianity is the proof that God may be contained in man. It is the greatest idea and the greatest glory of man that he could attain“. Basically this is a thing readers are learning from “Demons“ or “The Idiot“: Christ came to Earth to show a real image and embodiment of heavinly nature in order that it would not be only an ideal or imaginary perfection.“[[17]](#footnote-17)

“God may be contained in man“ – this phrase is extremely important knowing both Dostoevsky‘s and Fichte‘s developments of thoughts. It is being said that God can be in the form of man, embodied, instead of being only a sacred one. For Dostoevsky, Christ appears as a demonstration of a human's capacity to appear in heavenly splendor (i.e., to reveal the divine origins), which means that he must be understood not as God, but as a man who is no different from all other men.

To some extent, Dostoevsky maintains that humans can reach the ideal, heigh, and absolute of God because Christ is the evidence of this truth. It is widely known that Dostoevsky‘s thoughts received a lot of skepticism in the scientific space of that time elite but some links with Fichte‘s thinking are obvious and becoming only more apparent by delving into the text.

Christ is being seen as an ideal – someone that every man should strive to seek. On the contrary, the mysticism and the aspect of mystified deification disappear in the sense that Christ seems to be approaching us and becoming not only the highest form of matter but also an attainable and achievable ideal.

“Dostoevsky reflects on the appearance of Christ as the emergence of “the ideal of the man in the flesh.“ The fulfillment of this ideal, the making of every man fully Christ-like, is indicated by the concept of Christ's Paradise and is interpreted as “the ultimate goal of mankind“ the reaching of which will transfer mankind to a supernatural, mystic state of absolute life, devoid of all negative attributes of our mundane existence“.[[18]](#footnote-18)

This narrative goes through Dostoevsky‘s shorter texts, notes, works, essays like “*A Writer‘s Diary*“ and “*Notes from Underground*“ and surely appear in his most essential, most important, key novels such as *“Brother Karamazov*“ and “*The Idiot*“, to a certain extent even in “*Demons*“ and “*Crime and Punishment*“ too.

However, the conceptualization of God and Christ‘s role to mankind is not the only aspect that Dostoevsky and Fichte are agreeing on. Another topic where similarities could be seen – the eternity and the element of death.

Fichte did not approach death as a tragedy over dramatically. According to him, death is more an “empirical facade, only an external rupture in the stream of eternal life, which the truly religious person is involved in and distinctly aware of“.[[19]](#footnote-19)

It is incompatible to consider yourself as a very religious person and at the same time be afraid of death or conceptualizing it in the opposite way – Fichte thinks. God is always with us and it will not change after death; there is no need to imagine an extraordinary transformation or transition to another space, area, paradise, kingdom because in essence nothing changes after death – only the form of an earthly being.

“Jesus directly rejects the Jewish and Church-Christian concept of eternal life in the kingdom of heaven, beyond the earthly existence. He states that man is immortal and has eternal life precisely as an earthly life, which empirical death interrupts relatively, not absolutely, i.e., only transforms it from one earthly form to another.“[[20]](#footnote-20)

A similar mindset is specific for Dostoevsky too. Although as it was mentioned talking about his religious insights, Dostoevsky was constantly facing struggles to express his own position at that time regarding the society‘s look. Basically, he had to encode his thoughts and views in characters, choices, writing because strict censorship did not allow him to express his positions completely freely.

“Nevertheless, Dostoevsky expressed his idea of immortality through his characters' thoughts and stories: by connecting their judgments on this topic, one can quite unambiguously reconstruct the writer's views.“[[21]](#footnote-21)

In both *“Demons*“ and “*Crime and Punishment*“ judgments operations testify the lack of separation between the current life and the one that will be after, for instance, it can be called heavenly. The whole eternity is at the moment and the separation is vain and redundant.

Dostoevsky sought to oppose and contradict the official doctrine proclaimed and declared by a church which was stating eternity as a concept after death and explained it being here. This is a clear repetition or, more precisely saying, following Fichte‘s thoughts and traceability of them. Here a special mention of Gnosticism should be made as it was very close to Dostoevsky‘s worldview, and it is well seen in these examples.

“Thus, in his philosophical views, Dostoevsky followed the tradition of German philosophy (Fichte, Schelling, Hegel), which gave a modern elaboration of Gnostic Christianity's principles. Like any developed religious teaching, Gnostic Christianity contains not only a system of essential theoretical principles for explaining man, which gave rise in history to a profound philosophical tradition called mystical pantheism or the philosophy of pan-unity but also a system of myths that were well known and to which the Church fighters against heresies directed their criticism. It seems natural that having accepted Gnostic Christianity in its philosophical expression, Dostoevsky could not wholly bypass and ignore its mythology. As a great artist, he could not fail to understand the enormous power of myth, which sometimes provides a much more visible and accessible expression of some complex religious truths than long philosophical reasoning“[[22]](#footnote-22)

Following Fichte‘s guidelines Dostoevsky developed a distinctive line of thought characterized by both manifestation of Gnostic myth and profound philosophical insights, and to some extent, the rejection or questioning of certain official truths declared by the Orthodox church. Today these theories are known specifically as Dostoevsky‘s but by analising it becomes more clear where their origins are and it leads to German philosophy‘s leaders such as Schelling, Hegel and obviously Fichte.

Western thought as such and German philosophy specifically were influencing Dostoevsky very strongly and it is being expressed through exact images or narratives. Along with the development of Gnostic myth, Dostoevsky‘s texts are signaling Fichte‘s characteristic point of view related to the phenomenon of death as a continuation of eternity rather than of entering it, and of the motif of Christ as a human form of God.

“Like Fichte, Dostoevsky understands Christ as the first person who showed the possibility of revealing God in himself and gaining divine omnipotence and eternal life directly in earthly reality. In this sense, every person can become like Christ. Dostoevsky's main characters walk the path of Christ and show how difficult this path is.“[[23]](#footnote-23)

However, in the same article, one more extremely important position is being submitted. The one was proclaimed by famous Algerian-French philosopher, author, writer, Nobel Prize in Literature laureate Albert Camus.

There is also needed to refer that Dostoevsky‘s influence was enormous not only to Russian culture and philosophy but to Western thinkers as well. For instance, Nietsche, Sartre, Spengler, Camus, and others have mentioned at any stage of their lives that Dostoevsky made a significant contribution to the formation of their thought. Accordingly, it is obvious that they were not indifferent to Dostoevsky either – he was analyzed, discussed and concepts raised by him were questioned by these thinkers.

Thus, it is natural and normal that different impactful philosophers in the west later had their own opinion about Dostoevsky accentuating some of his ideas and denying the others or disagreeing with them. The existentialist side of Camus‘s facade is also extremely striking and bright all the more so as authors like British author and professor Sarah Bakewell are including Camus in this movement as one of the representatives along with prominent thinkers such as Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, Martin Heidegger, or Maurice Merleau-Ponty.

Nevertheless, after reading Bakewell‘s book “At the Existentialist Café“ in which she analyses the development of this philosophical movement, it becomes apparent that even in this company everyone had very different approaches and statements about Dostoevsky concretely and philosophy generally.

Camus‘s relationship with some of them was complicated. He had conflicts with Beauvoir and Sartre because of his desire to make extreme generalisations, rapidly change opinion and passing into philosophical deviations.

Getting back to Dostoevsky Camus again positioned a very exclusive statement but it is also worth mentioning. Working along with his colleague and in some period friend Jean-Paul Sartre on Dostoevsky‘s texts Camus saw the base of atheism and deliberate opposition to Christianity.

Both Sartre and Camus formed their statements building on ateistic existentialism as they defined it. They were declaring finding the basis for this statement in Dostoevsky‘s works too what may be considered as a highly controversial statement, given that Dostoevsky was just accepted by many literary scholars and thinkers on a strongly religious plan and this might be evidenced by his biography also.

In “*The Demons*“ and “*A Writer‘s Diary*“ Camus mentions conscious objection and contradiction to official Christianity and traditions of it.

“Since these characters are portrayed with remarkable penetration and sympathy, showing that Dostoevsky at least partially accepts the truth they proclaim, Camus confidently concludes their author's atheistic convictions.“[[24]](#footnote-24)

On the other hand, Camus‘s confidence about Dostoevsky might be explained through the perspective of their both resemblance. Camus is often considered to be the 20th century Dostoevsky because of his texts, the course of thought, the concept of thinking. He is almost direct heir and carrier of Dostoevsky‘s initiated and unfinished ideas.

There is another interesting text commenting the comparison between these two iconic authors called “*Between Nihilism and Transcendence: Camus's Dialogue with Dostoevsky*“written by philosopher and public speaker, professor of politics and philosophy Sean Illing.

Camus was strongly absorbed by political philosophy and there is no doubt that Dostoevsky was one of the most impactful authors for his development of thoughts. These two authors were strongly engaged through the link of philosophical aspirations, problems of nihilism, absurdity and transcendential world explanations.

As author Sean Illing is writing he can make three declarations about the relation between Camus and Dostoevsky: “First, I claim that Camus's philosophy of revolt is informed in crucial ways by Dostoevsky's accounts of religious transcendence and political nihilism. Second, that Camus's conceptualization of the tension between nihilism and transcendence corresponds to and is personified by the dialogue between Ivan Karamazov and Father Zossima in Dostoevsky's “The Brothers Karamazov“. Finally, that Camus uses his novel The Plague to bridge the moral and metaphysical divide between these two characters. In particular, I argue that Camus offers a distinct vision of revolt in The Plague, which clarifies both the practical implications of revolt and his philosophical rejoinder to Dostoevsky.“[[25]](#footnote-25)

Basically, these are the main ideas that can be mentioned in the works and texts of both authors: revolt and political nihilism as a form of resistance, religious transcendence and mystical aspect in communication, loneliness, and unity, metaphysical dividing and separation. Dostoevsky‘s thoughts and concepts are massively implanted into Camus‘s works letting us to link these two authors as representing partly similar ideas, especially according to political philosophy‘s context.

Therefore, Camus is inserted as one of the authors interpreting and relying on Dostoevsky in his philosophical path. Accordingly, his ideas are strongly opposing to many of current interpreters of Dostoevsky‘s thoughts. On the other hand, it only enriched the discussion about Dostoevsky with a new perspective and mindset, but it does not in any way reject or oppose Dostoevsky‘s ideas as worthless. Saying even more, Camus provides an unique and peculiar look at Dostoevsky‘s thought and work, what only proves how multi-layered and versatile this genius of Russian literature really was.

Talking about different fields of art and culture in general in Russia or the Soviet Union, there are always at least a few impactful persons in every each of these spheres. Russia definitely had great composers, writers, poets, musicians, and filmmakers too. Undoubtedly one of the most famous and talented Russian filmmakers is Andrey Tarkovsky.

It is impossible to talk about Dostoevsky and the different followers of his thought, not mentioning film director Andrei Tarkovsky. One of the most prominent cinema figures not only in the Soviet space but also far beyond its borders formed the concept of continuity of Dostoevsky‘s thought not only in literature but in cinema also.

His personality, aesthetics, stylistics, thoughts, ideas enchanted the society of that time and these spells did not dissipate till this day. Movies of Tarkovsky are still being watched, analyzed, his works are definitely kept in mind until today not only for the generations of the USSR times but for young people in Russia and abroad as well.

The period of his working and living was not very easy, flexible, or suitable for showing all ideas that Tarkovsky had and sought to spread. At the same time these obstacles only helped to elevate his films to a metaphysical level where references and links are not clear and easily visible but intricately hidden, disguised and because of that only more enticing. Tarkovsky‘s works today are admired by a lot of world-famous filmmakers and inspiring them.

Distinguishing and balancing between these two masters of their own fields has never been easy, as every researcher understands and comprehends the origins of Tarkovsky‘s inspirations in Dostoevsky‘s works. The spectrum of Tarkovsky topics is very wide and all of them are related to metaphysics and psychology.

Certain twists and turns of his plots or even specific characters are illustrated based on the literature of Dostoevsky and these are only the primary seedlings of their interface. Tarkovsky conceptually based his storyline on Dostoevsky's works at times, but there were other occasions when specific prototypes were chosen for depicting the character's picture.

For example, Stalker‘s character in the movie called the same “*Stalker*“ film in 1979 is modeled by Mysckhin of “*The Idiot*“. Tarkovsky was even working on the idea to create a movie based on “*The Idiot*“, unfortunately, this thought was not realised. However, the materials of the preliminary work are emained and saved. Sources are testifying how precisely and attentively Tarkovsky worked with the material of Dostoevsky although for Tarkovsky it is always being added that the writers (Stanislaw Lem, Arkady and Boris Strugatsky) were preparatory material as in the creating process he detached himself and plot from the direct text, eliminated references and links to it, changed the conceptualization and main ideas.

By drawing a peculiar plot, Tarkovsky has always been composing a set of riddles for the viewer to solve. As a result, his works are so ambiguously approached – some praise it for originality and depth, while others view it with skepticism and accuse his movies of exaggerated metaphoricity.

Nevertheless, his heritage has stayed important until nowadays. It shows that the aspects that he chose to demonstrate in his movies and the form of doing it were not ephemeral or momentary but rather long-lasting and epical, marking the era.

Moreover, Tarkovsky can hardly be called the director of Soviet times or Soviet epoch. He was not completely a filmmaker of his own time. Not only that, he was misunderstood, poorly accepted and perceived by his generation. The difficult cinematic language he introduced into the cinema creating process was often rejected by ordinary people in Russia and the Soviet Union generally, although he won a number of awards in Europe. Even today we can see how the biggest names in European cinema are following the tracer drawn by Tarkovsky and even using the elements of cinematography already operated in the works of this unique director.

For instance, Danish film director Lars Von Trier in his film “*Melancholia*“ is demonstrating the same picture of Pieter Bruegel the Elder “*The Hunters in the Snow*“ which was shown in Tarkovsky‘s “*Solaris*“. Kris, the main hero of “*Solaris*“, and his wife, Hari, see this painting in the condition of weightlessness. The picture is full of energy, stimulus, action, it is very earthly, strangely dissonant with the staticity of the space station‘s closedness.

In A. Tarkovsky‘s films every detail has a penetrating symbolic meaning and its own purpose, so even this painting becomes the link between Kris and his memories of the past, leading to other painful experiences.

Many links between Tarkovsky and Dostoevsky can be made but what makes it coherent at first sight – symbolism. The use of symbols was a cornerstone for both of them.

Paradoxically, in the absence of absolute creative freedom because of political conditions, Tarkovsky enabled inner freedom that was unrestricted. Unfortunately, his movies, for instance, “*The Mirror*“ had to overcome many ideological and political obstacles of the time. Because of them, the director decided to move to the west expecting more calmness in regard to his job. There Tarkovsky created his last two movies: “*Nostalgia*“ and “*The Sacrifice*“ and that, according to movie critics, were completely different from his previous works.

Concentrating on the common points between Dostoevsky and Tarkovsky, symbolistic meanings must definitely be mentioned. In Dostoevsky‘s and Tarkovsky‘s works details, characters and accents appear not in vain but with a specific symbolic meaning and purpose.

“*The Idiot*“ will be analyzed later in the thesis but reading and interpreting the novel it makes clear that plenty of symbols function in it. From the main character Mysckhin to the painting illustrating Christ in the tomb. The same scheme is observed in the retrospective of Tarkovsky‘s works. As a confession portal, the mirror is like a construct of the border between past and present.

The multi–layeredness that Tarkovsky achieved in his works is hard to compare with the works of any other director, and such depths would hardly be possible to achieve by any other imaginary artistic means and tools. The complexity of cinema language masks and hides the most precious treasure which can be opened only by the most vigilant and attentive spectator.

Tarkovsky himself has repeatedly acknowledged and witnessed the significance of Dostoevsky‘s works, even in his comments, reviews, books, or rare interviews. In his book “*Sculpting in Time*“ Tarkovsky multiple times expresses admiration to Dostoevsky‘s literature language and spiritual substances.

“In a non-developing, constant state of tension, passions reach the highest possible pitch, and manifest themselves more vividly and convincingly than in a gradual process of change. It is this predilection of mine that makes me so fond of Dostoievsky, for me the most interesting characters are outwardly static, but inwardly charged with energy by an overriding passion.(...)

“Look at the finale of Dostoevsky's The Idiot. What overwhelming truth in the characters and circumstances! As Rogozhin and Myshkin, their knees touching, sit there on chairs in that enormous room, they astound us by the combination of an outwardly absurd and senseless mise en scene with the perfect veracity of their own inner state. The refusal to weigh the scene down with obtrusive thoughts is what makes it as compelling as itself. Yet how readily a mise en scene constructed without any obvious idea is regarded as realistic“[[26]](#footnote-26)

Dostoevsky‘s attention to the scenes is emphasized in this paragraph. Each detail has a meaning and a purpose, and all the elements merge into one combination to create a depressing weith of scene.

In general, the spirituality and atmosphere created by Dostoevsky was very close to Tarkovsky. The director was fascinated by how sensitively Dostoevsky portrayed a person‘s spiritual crisis and being in difficult experiences. Spiritual crisis as a very important term signifying continuation of illustrating trauma as a collision that re-transforms a person (Raskolnikov, for instance) which Dostoevsky skillfully developed appear in the book in the regards of praise to Dostoevsky.

“The whole question of avant-garde is peculiar to the twentieth century, to the time when art has steadily been losing its spirituality. The situation is worst in the visual arts, which today are almost totally devoid of spirituality. The accepted view is that this situation reflects the despiritualised state of society. And of course, on the level of simple observation of the tragedy, I agree: that is what it does reflect. But art must transcend as well as observe; its role is to bring spiritual vision to bear on reality: as did Dostoevsky, the first to have given inspired utterance to the incipient disease of the age.“[[27]](#footnote-27)

The book also presents an interesting parallel, which may become an appeal to the already mentioned symbolism. Tarkovsky highlights Dostoevsky‘s ability to feel the pain of Russia and its people; to formulate and represent the anatomy of the traumas faced by the nation.

Dostoevsky took over the language of symbolic literature, followed by Tarkovsky in cinematography, with his subtle nuances and details. This includes not only the objects, the layout of the scene, the behavior, but also another extremely important accent - dialogues. Conversations, dialogues, communication are essential components of Dostoevsky and Tarkovsky and another connection between them.

Language sometimes filled with comparisons, historical references, or sometimes very concise, laconic, synoptical in the works of these artists is an essential axis that marks the relations between the characters and their transformations

“In all my pictures the theme of roots was always of great importance: links with family house, childhood, country. Earth. I always felt it important to establish that I myself belong to a particular tradition, culture, circle of people or ideas.

Of great significance to me are those traditions in Russian culture which have their beginnings in the work of Dostoievsky. Their development in modern Russia is patently incomplete; in fact, they tend to be looked down upon, or even ignored altogether. There are several reasons for this: first their total incompatibility with materialism, and then the fact that the spiritual crisis experienced by all Dostoevsky's characters (which was the inspiration of his work and that of his followers) is also viewed with misgiving.“[[28]](#footnote-28)

Andrei Tarkovsky is a legend of cinematography. His ability to touch necessary aspects, to feel the rhythm of people’s lives and to demonstrate it all on the screen is an undeniable talent.

Together with these qualities of his as a film genius, Tarkovsky bestows another angle on his approach to Dostoevsky as his immediate follower and admirer. The essential elements that connect them are symbolism, details, and sensible dialogues. Dostoevsky‘s symbolism as one of the most characteristic features of his literature is unequivocal.

Finally, there is Bakhtin whose insights about Dostoevsky are probably the most complex and versatile. Mikhail Bakhtin was a twentieth century critic, thinker, philosopher, and scholar whose main fields of operating were literature, its theory, ethics, and the philosophy of language.

He was an active figure in discussions of what literary critic, aesthetics, philosophy, history, anthropology, psychology, sociology should be and was working on the development of them. Accordingly, as Dostoevsky was also strongly developing these spheres by his contribution to the literary world, it is natural that for Bakhtin it was Dostoevsky whom he partly followed, analyzed, and who was one of the milestones for Bakhtin.

As Bakhtin points out, Dostoevsky‘s novels were polyphonic – so multilayered and multicolored that their axis is often difficult to crystallize and dismantle or deconstruct. Bakhtin in Dostoevsky‘s works mentions almost everything that other authors are seeing separately. Dialectical, philosophical, religious aspects find their own role in Dostoevsky‘s texts, according to Bakhtin.

Dostoevsky‘s ability to hear different voices, listen and accord to them, and appreciate different contexts is phenomenal and could be compared to the abilities of another master of literature and philosophy, Dante Alighieri. In his voluminous work of Dostoevsky‘s analysis called “*Problems of Dostoevsky‘s Poetics“ (1963)* Bakhtin states: “Dostoevsky's particular gift for hearing and understanding all voices immediately and simultaneously, a gift whose equal we find only in Dante, also permitted him to create the polyphonic novel. The objective complexity, contradictoriness and multi-voicedness of Dostoevsky's epoch, the position of the declasse intellectual and the social wanderer, his deep biographical and inner participation in the objective multi–levelness of life, and finally his gift for seeing the world in terms of interaction and coexistence – all this prepared the soil in which Dostoevsky‘s polyphonic novel was to grow.“[[29]](#footnote-29)

Many terms that were used or suitable in other paradigms in regard to Dostoevsky‘s literature acquire a clearly visible questionless form in Bakhtin‘s text. In other words, all aspects that were mentioned in the works of other authors and their interpretations of Dostoevsky are linked and shaped in “*Problems of Dostoevsky‘s Poetics*“. Multi–voicedness as an ability to enable different attitudes and beliefs, complexity as variety and abundance of contexts in which Dostoevsky is able to juggle in his texts, contradictoriness as a combination of different objections and multi–levelness as characteristic for Dostoevsky narrative depth.

Another interesting element which Bakhtin elaborated in his work is Dostoevsky‘s relationship with form of the novel and change in the genre as general. As professor of University of Southern Mississippi Natalie N. Griner writes in her analytical work “*Bakhtin‘s Problems of Dostoevsky‘s Poetics and the Ideological Problem of the Brothers Karamazov*“ (2015)[[30]](#footnote-30)

She accentuates that, according to Bakhtin, a lot of literary critics first of all base their insights on the ideological side of Dostoevsky‘s works while he also made a huge contribution for structural innovation in the genre of the novel. And this point of view is truly interesting. Mostly Dostoevsky is known for his ideology and the ways how his literature is functioning in this regard and much more rarely scholars or literary critics highlight Dostoevsky‘s impactfulness in this aspect.

Dostoevsky‘s literature as such was not common for the period. Some of the investigators even explain his works through the different view – they interpret Dostoevsky‘s novels not as literature as such but rather as a pure philosophy just in a written form, illustrating characters and their roles.

The term “pure philosophy“ is often used talking about Dostoevsky. He changed such conceptualization of term literature making it much more deep, analytical, philosophical, and, to some extent, riveting.

Bakhtin opens his discussion of Dostoevsky’s work with a problematic distinction between form and content: “The present book is devoted to problems of Dostoevsky’s poetics,” he writes, “and surveys his work from that viewpoint only”.[[31]](#footnote-31) “Poetics“ is a term that generally refers to the theory of literary form; Bakhtin argues that Dostoevsky’s critics have focused primarily on the ideological problems of his work and have thereby missed his fundamental structural innovation in the genre of the novel. In distinguishing his approach from that of previous critics, Bakhtin seems to define “poetics“ in the strictest sense, suggesting that he will consider the form of Dostoevsky’s work in a way that is entirely independent of its ideological content.

Also, in Griner‘s work we can see few references to Camus‘ position and the analysis of atheism and atheist characters operating in Dostoevsky‘s works.

“According to this interpretation, Dostoevsky subconsciously identifies with the position of his atheist characters, which is why the voice of doubt is so much more powerful than the voice of faith in his work.“ (…) While his final conclusion on the novel is ultimately the contrary of Bakhtin’s, Camus’ analysis of The Brothers is significant to this discussion due to the fundamental similarity between his concept of the absurd work of art and Bakhtin’s concept of the polyphonic novel. Though Camus has been accused of emphasizing the ambiguities of Dostoevsky’s faith in order to use Dostoevsky’s atheist characters as positive symbols of his absurdist philosophy, Camus’ interpretation of The Brothers is an exception. [[32]](#footnote-32)(…) In the case of this novel, at least, Camus explicitly uses Dostoevsky’s atheist characters as positive symbols of his philosophy in opposition to what he considers the intentions of their creator. But in doing so, he continues to consider Dostoevsky’s intentions significant for the interpretation of the novel itself. 14 Although Camus considers Dostoevsky’s intention for The Brothers to be a final affirmation of his faith and reads the ending as the realization of that intention, he too calls Dostoevsky’s faith into question: “It is hard to believe that a novel sufficed to transform into joyful certainty the suffering of a lifetime. (...)[[33]](#footnote-33)Although this appears to be a perfect example of the psychoanalytic approach described by Stoeber, Camus himself does not seem to consider suspicion of Dostoevsky’s faith sufficient reason to argue that it is the atheist who triumphs in Dostoevsky’s novel. Even if the textual unconscious seems strongly in favor of Ivan’s voice, Camus concludes that this fact is ultimately superseded by Dostoevsky’s conscious choice to give Alyosha the final word, which establishes the novel as a defense of the faith.[[34]](#footnote-34)

It is a very thing that even though different authors interpret Dostoevsky by their own mindset and have their own position in the regard of his novels at the same time Bakhtin as a connecting figure can merge various concepts. There is one of the examples where Bakhtin‘s thoughts can find a link with the thoughts of another author.

Bakhtin probably saw Dostoevsky in the most heterogeneous light. He mentioned some certain elements which can be noticed only by a thorough and complex evaluation of the writer‘s works and require a foresight look.

As Grine is concluding in her final chapter: Bakhtin’s theory of polyphony provides a way out of the irreconcilable binary that confines the critical discussion on “*The Brothers*“ by undermining the false dichotomy that lies at its foundation—the reductive idea that the novel must be either a defense of faith or a concession to doubt. By implementing the concept of a polyphonic thesis, however paradoxical the term itself appears, one can advance Bakhtin’s theory to address the ideological problem of “*The Brothers*“ and its corresponding critical conversation. It testifies that Bakhtin‘s approach was the widest in the terms of recognizing Dostoevsky‘s multi-levelness.

As if distancing himself from pre-emptive controversy and provocative debate, Bakhtin manages to penetrate smartly and insightfully the most significant aspects of F. Dostoevsky‘s works. Isolating from the faith-doubt narrative which is common discussing“*The Brothers Karamazov*“ Bakhtin supplies another version “that Dostoevsky’s work is based on a polyphonic thesis that is fundamentally incompatible with the monologic theses entailed by such interpretations.“[[35]](#footnote-35). This implication elevates the debate over Dostoevsky‘s work to unprecedented heights and changes the entire course while at the same enriches the portrait of F. Dostoevsky as an ingenious philosophical and literary figure.

# SLAVOPHILISTIC MOVEMENT

Interestingly enough, the religious context functions very strongly in any analysis of unity, as well as other elements, in the deliberations of Slavophilists. Dostoevsky, as an important successor to the Slavophiles, justifies this rule too within the framework of his thinking.

Mainly three aspects are worth mentioning and singling out. First, unity is described and viewed as an organic, natural, and vital subject rather than a stable or manufactured and influenced mostly by man entity. It must be shaped without any coercion.

Second, it is crucially important not to forget the aspect of religiosity in the general picture of unity as well. What Dostoevsky is also talking about is that unity is primarily intended to unite people who believe in the same confession and profess the same faith.

Finally, unity as the possibility of gathering. The text appeals to the meetings of believers in cathedrals or ‘sobors’ and the confession of the same vows. Unity in this case represents the freedom of assembly or congregation.

Coming to the last aspect of the three forming the line of this investigation – loneliness – requires sensitive and intimate access. Loneliness as such can have and usually has many forms and manifests into different semblances such as sad, introvert, pity, but not all of these emotions necessarily program loneliness as a negative and harmful feeling.

Loneliness is always a multidimensional and multifaceted entity, but never homogenous or predictable, and therefore its analysis requires sensitivity to subtle angles. Dostoevsky genuinely knows how to approach many of these corners and lines with extreme delicacy.

Human loneliness and seclusion are one of the most important themes in Dostoevsky’s work, and looking at the synthesis and context of the three elements, loneliness seems to play a key role in the composition. It is difficult to measure and estimate the interaction of Dostoevsky’s biography with how the topic is conceptualized in his books, but it is clear the heroes of Dostoevsky’s works often face loneliness.

Dostoevsky analyzes the concept of the existential crisis conditioned by loneliness, its depth, and possible consequences in his work “*Petersburg Visions in Verse and Prose*“. For the development of the idea, Dostoevsky depicts the portraits of two officials and their relationship with the environment in the context of outliving an existential crisis.

One of them loses a healthy, rational mind, and the other one also goes crazy, albeit in his own way - he begins to think that he can no longer live in this world, he does not have a right. On the other hand, the experience of such a crisis can also contribute to the positive consequences - the development of personality. These experiences can be useful in changing the worldview, helping to reform it. Like, for example, Procharchin who realized that he is the center of the world and that everything revolves around him like an axis.[[36]](#footnote-36)

This is obviously an important topic in Dostoevsky's work as the author himself had a similar experience. The crisis can manifest itself in very different forms - psychological, physical, metaphysical. This essay will focus on the crisis of criminal responsibility mainly.

The quoted paragraphs provide a deeper insight into Dostoevsky’s own philosophy in prison. The timing of the sentence was significant in several aspects.

Dostoevsky perceived prison, first of all, as an attack not on physical freedom, not on the inviolability of the body, but on the psyche. To break it was such, according to Dostoevsky, it was an essential duty of the prison. And in response, his main duty was to withstand that break.

The experience of imprisonment which is familiar to Dostoevsky himself is described as traumatic because it violates the psychological structure of the person. Arguably the strongest and most shocking of a writer’s experience is the death penalty imposed on him. Sent to the death penalty in 1849, he was taken to the square and already erected on an asphalt. The priest had already accepted his last confession and a rifle was aimed at him when Dostoevsky miraculously escaped the worst fate and was sentenced to 10 years in exile in Siberia.

Obviously Dostoevsky‘s experience of singleness is very personal and sharp. After years of exile, he can widely and deeply talk and write about the hurtful and healing powers of loneliness and the religious manifestations in these processes

As it is written in Paul Roazen reviewed work “ *Reviewed Work:*Dostoevsky: The Years of Ordeal, 1850–59*by Joseph Frank*“: “After the mock execution Dostoevsky gained a new grasp of existence from confrontation with death. The individual, Dostoevsky held, is obliged to uphold his integrity no matter what the outward circumstances might be like. Frank insists that Dostoevsky‘s social science, and in particular his outrage over serfdom in Russia, was allied with religious questionings and probings bout the ultimate meaning of life. Dostoevsky‘s understanding of the tragic dimension to human experience, the way ultimate values inevitably conflict with one another, makes him one of the immortales of Western thought.“[[37]](#footnote-37)

Thus, Dostoevsky‘s relationship with loneliness, as well as other elements: unity and communication; allows to form the first contours of the accents analyzed in this text and to follow further in order to gain a deeper understanding, using already concrete, specified characters, books, storylines.

It is a famous fact that Dostoevsky had exile and imprisonment periods which formed his personality and influenced his mindset strongly. Just after his release from prison, Dostoevsky met Maria Dmitrievna Isaeva in Semipalatinsk. However, by that time she was already married to another man – Alexander Ivanovich Isaev. Dostoevsky is describing the importance of friendship in the letter written to Maria in 1855.[[38]](#footnote-38)

# Chapter One: Structure of Society in F. Dostoevsky‘s Works

## Society Must Merge Into One Substance

Society and its structure have always been a very interesting aspect for most thinkers, philosophers, and authors. Undoubtedly it was a significant element for F. Dostoevsky too. Through different texts of his, it is possible to see various concepts of how the society should function and how it is being built in the eyes of the author.

In 1864, Fyodor Dostoevsky created a text strongly related to his biography, however, it is a very significant, deep, and tough work of his. After the death of his first wife, Dostoevsky wrote a text that is acceptable to be titled by its first words: „*Masha is Laying on the Table*“.

On the night of April 16, 1864, sitting near the coffin of the deceased first wife Maria Dmitrievna (in her first marriage – Isaeva), Dostoevsky wrote in his notebook: “*Masha is Laying on the Table. Will I see Masha? (first verses of this text)*“. Thus, a text which Dostoevsky‘s researchers and literary critics call “*Masha is Laying on the Table*“ was born.

The text, which is comparably short in scope, brings incredible importance both to literary scholars engaged in Dostoevsky‘s research and to philosophers in general.

Maria Dmitrievna Isaeva, the first wife of Dostoevsky, was an extremely dear woman having made a great impact on him both as a creator and as a personality. Because of that, it would be naive to expect that her death would not leave any marks in Dostoevsky‘s works. Before coming to the analysis of this enriching text, it would be worthwhile to look at the time of Dostoevsky‘s early biography that brought him together with Maria.

“**If you only knew how orphaned I now feel! It is just like the time when they arrested me in 1849, put me in prison, and tore me from all that I loved and prized. So very much had I grown to you. I never looked upon our intercourse as an ordinary acquaintanceship, and now, when I no longer have you near me, I begin to understand many things.**I have lived for five years entirely without human relations—quite alone, without a creature to whom I could open my heart. But you two treated me like a brother. I remember that from the very first, I felt at home in your house.

**The mere fact that a woman should treat me in so friendly a way was a great event in my life. For even the best man is often, if I may say so, a block. Woman’s heart, woman’s compassion, woman’s sympathy, the endless kindness of which we have no clear perception, and which, in our obtuseness, we often do not even notice—these are irreplaceable.**“[[39]](#footnote-39)

Dostoevsky feels thankful for both – Maria Dmitrievna and her husband Alexander for accepting and respecting him. This kindness was extremely unexpected to him after a sense of alienation experienced during the decade of exile where he felt, by Dostoevsky‘s own words, without human relations. And it was Maria and Alexander who brought this essential human relationship back to his life.

Hereinafter, Dostoevsky and Maria wed in 1957, almost two years after the quoted letter was written.

“*Masha is Laying on the Table*“ was created after the death of Maria (she died in April 1864). The work contemplates the theme of a perfect future society. According to the author, this perfect structure will be formed and achieved only when society will merge into one substance.

In this way, Dostoevsky seems to be covering two of the elements analyzed in this research. Communication, by turns, is especially important, but the author does not limit the perception of the perfect society only to this matter. Secondly, unity as an irreplaceable element functions in this configuration.

These considerations help to formulate the initial position of Dostoevsky, which will further be elaborated, that perfect structure of society will be created when all people will coalesce into one unit.

It leads us to further analysis which will already be based on the research of other authors. Specifically, Katya Tolstaya, Dean of research at the Faculty of Religion and Theology, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and publisher of texts on Western systematic theology, Eastern Orthodoxy, literature, and hermeneutics.

Masha is laying on the table because of the Orthodox tradition, which is so archaic, looking in the eyes of us, people living nowadays. The tone set by the religious tradition also dictates the further narrative while Dostoevsky talks about dogmatics, truths of religion, portrait of Christ, searchings of his, following by his lead and other subjects.

“Dostoevsky writes about several themes: the immortality of the soul and the possibility of resurrection, the contradiction between egoism and the demand for self-sacrifice in imitation of Christ, the reason for suffering, and the bond between generations. This text (“*Masha is Laying on the Table*“), written in circumstances under which everything a person says may be regarded as a confession, is the most extensive ego-documentary ‘testimony’ to Dostoevsky’s religious insights. It is given a central place in this Part, because as a kind of microcosm it not only contains many elements of Dostoevsky’s dogmatic ideas, but also reflects his doubts. The question is how these two perspectives, existential doubt and dogmatic ideas, are related.“.[[40]](#footnote-40)

Things that the author is mentioning in this fragment are very common for everyone who investigated or at least read Dostoevsky. Some keywords are characteristic for Dostoevsky not even looking to the framework, context, or the exact work. For instance,   
“suffering“, “confession“, “dogmatic“ or “imitation of Christ“. However, as Tolstaya highlights, this text is relating not only to the dogmatism of Dostoevsky or his immovable truths but his doubts and considerations too. Linking of these two outlooks is the colossal question in analyzing “*Masha is Laying on the Table*“.

As the connection of faith and doubt is so bright in this text of Dostoevsky, some standpoints of his are inevitably questioned or at least get closer to the point of reconsideration. However, some of his beliefs stay firm, the author even uses the term “axiomatic“.

“The principal “glass fragments“ in the pattern of his faith are: the existence of God, the immortality of the soul, and the ethical imperative of the commandment “Love thy neighbour“. The doubt is expressed in his need to reason out his religious premises. These premises effectively function as “axiomatic statements“. In my view (author states), it is important that doubt does not lead him (Dostoevsky) to unbelief, but that his doubts appear to confirm his religious premises (the “glass fragments“).“[[41]](#footnote-41)

Axioms of Dostoevsky and his conceptualization of the world are something that definitely deserves attention, however, as here we are meeting his reconsiderations too, it is even more valuable. As Tolstaya writes, by doubting Dostoevsky states and substantiates those truths that appear to be discussed. Doubt is not a bridge to unbelief but a link to confirmation is something mentionable from this paragraph.

“Both paragraphs form a logical whole. The concentration of conclusions is striking. Dostoevsky seems to be proving a theorem, in which he starts from unprovable hypothetical presuppositions as if they were proven axioms. Briefly, these “hypothetical“ axioms are the following:

* there is an ultimate goal for humanity;
* this goal is necessarily attained;
* attainment of this goal is impossible;
* earthly life is development towards this ideal goal;
* earthly life cannot be senseless.“[[42]](#footnote-42)

Dostoevsky’s statements are both: paradoxical and logical at the same time. The author further analyses twists and turns of his thought using extremely complex and difficult to comprehend philosophical categories. The point, however, is that Dostoevsky’s logical deduction is based on subordination to the foundations of his faith.

Faith as an essential base is functioning over the entire structure that Dostoevsky is drawing to the readers of his. There are no concrete schemes but constant questioning is leading to generalizations and conclusions.

Dostoevsky is including the term “*antichrist*“ with the essential feature of them – denying the existence of Christ, arguing for the continuing suffering on Earth. From this section, two new concepts and categories, which are not brand new for Dostoevsky in general, appear suffering and antichrist. “Dostoevsky does not discuss evil but takes suffering as his starting point. By suffering he means specifically the suffering which people cause to each other. The question whether God is responsible for the possibility of such suffering is sidestepped. In fact this question cannot even arise. Suffering is inherent in earthly life in the transitional phase and can be explained by a lack of neigbourly love. In this way, suffering is interpreted as a natural “*given*“ or a kind of ontological law.“[[43]](#footnote-43)

Two aspects out of these considerations deserved to be highlighted. Firstly, suffering is caused mainly by man to man, or at least this concept of suffering becomes the basis of Dostoevsky. Secondly, God is not directly related, as many people are fond to maintain, to the origin of suffering because it is an inseparable, non-segmentable, natural and inevitable part of life.

Further, Dostoevsky accentuates neighbourly love as the sign of eternal life by seeking to love not only separate objects but all creation generally. Again here Dostoevsky gives us a contraposition between two segments, in this case, adjectives: the “*Egoistic*“ is confronted versus the “*Christian*“ or “*Altruistic*“ image.

“The impossibility of loving all creation leads Dostoevsky to conclude that ‘this law is not ideal (…) but (it is the law) of our ideal’. In this extention of the love commandment, too, the opposition ‘ideal law’ versus ‘the law of our ideal’ demands that the Ideal be followed, despite the goal’s unattainability. (…) This confirms the connection of the ‘I’ with the ‘general synthesis’ (God). Though Dostoevsky’s specific conception of creation and fall remains open, it is clear that the entire development of humanity and the coming of Christ serve to heal the breach and the lack of neighbourly love. [[44]](#footnote-44)

Neighborly, friendly, unadulterated love as a peculiar aspect of redemption continues to appear and later in the text in different form. On the opposite for a new category – ‘sin’ – love is submitted as the tool for salvation. One more important statement that Dostoevsky asserts is that man can survive only by believing in Christ. There are no more alternatives to reach the eternal life if not belief. Dostoevsky uses philosophical and theological doctrines and theorems while is actually painting a very complex landscape in which the unquestionable truths and the grain of doubt are being entwined.

Dostoevsky is formulating the principles that a person, which does not want to lose ethical and moral course, should follow. His basic of ethics and logic operates on authority of Christ and faith. It is an interaction of logic and morality which can only both working and functioning together make life possible.

It is also interesting that Dostoevsky positions marriage as an action that repels from humanism and stops process of growth. Even family, although it is law of nature, is unnormal and egoistic condition of a person. However, creating a family as a goal of changing the generations is the highest sanctity. Human has to, Dostoevsky states, in the name of the final ideal uninterruptedly deny this goal which leads to duplication or duality. The family as a declining and ascending aspect emerges as one more paradox of the text.

To conclude, paradoxes and confrontations, even dualism as a constant quality, are a cornerstone and recurring elements in “*Masha is Laying on the Table*“. From the beginning of the text, the thread of Dostoevsky‘s internal opposition develops and evolves by including as much as possibly other factors, objects, aspects.

The theological background is inevitable in all Dostoevsky‘s works and it seems that there cannot be any other scenario. This text is not an exception; by using theoretical, systematic, philosophical and, of course, theological categories F. Dostoevsky speaks about the creation of a perfect structure of society. However, communication as a superficial and external form of communication is an insufficient contribution to this process. The author talks about the necessity of the merging of society into one unit, the inevitability of transformation from the existence of individual objects into one indivisible and non-segmentable matter.

However, the most important aspect that needs to be highlighted is merging. There is no other way to achieve a perfect society than to merge into one unit. Dostoevsky does not talk about the unity of society as a group of subjects who live together beautifully, peacefully, do not bend, and do not harm each other. He accords to much profounder level.

It is an external and prophetic unity that has no essential world-changing power and effect. Dostoevsky seeks to take it to the next level by introducing an element of fusion. Only by becoming one body, we will get into a truly united form. Unity is a fusion into one, first and foremost.

## The Framework of Perfect Society

Another work of Dostoevsky which is talking about the necessity to unite people is called “*Socialism and Christianity*“. By the content and topics, it is similar to the narrative of “*Masha is Laying on the Table*“, however, the tools and means of interpretation differ.

Dostoevsky‘s desire to write about the relationship between socialism and Christianity arose quite early. It is believed that his thoughts on the identities and differences of these two subjects did not let him from the moment Dostoevsky met literary critic Vissarion Belinsky. Dostoevsky also mentions these issues in his work “*Winter Notes on Summer Impressions*“ (1863). In 1864, just finished “*Notes from Underground*“ Dostoevsky started writing an article “*Socialism and Christianity*“. There is no unanimous explanation as to why the article remained incomplete.

The first interesting and conceptual idea is expressed at the very beginning of the text; it is stated that God is the gathering community, masses, collective humanity. Later this thought is being elaborated as the term “civilization“ appears. This definition is being described as a transitional period, time.

The author associates this with the hostility of humans as a person to the supremacy of authority. As an example, Dostoevsky uses Europe where personal development has reached its limits, faith in God there has waned.

It is, according to Dostoevsky, a sick and flawed condition, and this statement is evidenced by two arguments. First: a person loses the idea of God, turns away from this concept. Second: a human cannot find the source of lively life, feels in a bad, destructive way, and is tormented by unclear, sometimes mysterious longing.

Another aspect which Dostoevsky mentions is the contrast between a tendency to go with masses and follow them or, conversely, to maintain own will. Self-will, according to Dostoevsky, is a very paradoxical quality as sometimes a person is getting back to the masses very consciously. Basically, a will as a concept that should make a person think individually and become an individual responsible for his or her own decisions is the reason why strangely enough we are losing the desire to decide voluntarily. “My will is in not having will“ (“*Socialism and Christianity*“).[[45]](#footnote-45)

The contradiction which is already encoded in the title of the text between Socialism and Christianity leads to the element of sacrifice for another person. Especially Dostoevsky accentuates collectivism. Christian, in an ideal way, is ready to give everything for others, not leaving or requiring anything for his or her own fund. Socialists, meanwhile, according to Dostoevsky, cannot comprehend and understand how unpaid and voluntary dedication can be acceptable. They only agree on sacrifice if it is repaid or rewarded.

Dostoevsky also includes a new term to the discussion narrative which is also curious – “*Social Anthill*“. An anthill, the purpose of which is to satisfy the abdomen, is therefore also requiring for certain conditions, raising the obligations of the “ants“. According to the fact that ants are known for their special diligence, and in socialism work is one of the core values, there is also possible to build some connections or form presumptions.

The author defines socialism not as a norm or basic state, but as an extreme, a maximum approach to the limits of human ideal. It is the path to the highest, the most conscious and perfect agreement – self – sacrifice, renunciation.

In the last paragraph of the text, Dostoevsky draws a chronological hierarchy of society structures. Patriarchalism was the first structure, followed by a transitional one – civilization – and finally Christianity became a finite stage of human development.

The development ends, consequently the goal is achieved, logically – it confirms the fact of the existence of a future life. The same as in “*Masha is Laying on the Table*“ Dostoevsky in “*Socialism and Christianity*“ continues to ponder about the isolation of people in modern society and the inevitable need of their unification and “fusion“ in the ideal future society.

## Conclusion

These two texts are inseparable from each other. They operate on different forms, however, their content, context, and concept are very close. Dagnė Beržaitė, one of the main researchers of F. Dostoevsky‘s works in Lithuania and associate professor in the department of Russian philology at Vilnius University, also talks about it.

When all of Dostoevsky‘s literary works are already translated into Lithuanian, these two texts, like, by the way, a large part of his notebook, diaries fragments, literary criticism articles still remain a kind of mystery. On the other hand, these works of the author are quoted and examined all over the world equally and, in certain contexts, even more often than his novels or short stories.

These two important philosophical fragments, considered and written in parallel with the creation of “*Notes from the Underground*“, not only expand the metaphysical object of this short story, present new ways of reading and interpreting it, but also directly, without mediating the text, introduce Dostoevsky‘s thoughts on the universal and, to his mind, the mathematically inevitable path of development of each personality from “universality, patriarchalism through civilization to the ideal of Christ.“

The influence and impact of these works are also proved by the fact that Tatyana Kasatkina, one of the most prominent scholars of Dostoevsky‘s works nowadays and author of one of the two conceptual religious work interpreting strategies, explains the complex and ambiguous conception of the Christian world scattered in separate and heterogeneous fragments of Dostoevsky‘s characters‘ dialogues by operating on these fragments.

The fragment “*Masha is Laying on the Table*“, as well as the thesis for the planned article “*Socialism and Christianity*“, remained unedited, draft, and Dostoevsky wrote them not for publishing, but only for himself. That is why reading, considering, analyzing, and trying to interpret these significant fragments of notes, it is necessary to keep in mind the peculiarity of their lexicon, syntax, graphics, form, the spontaneous impression of capturing thoughts. On the other hand, it makes them more authentic and real.

# Chapter Two: “The Idiot“

## Context of the Novel

If there still could be an argument about the impactfulness of the mentioned Dostoevsky’s works, then no one who is interested in the works of this author would probably dare to dispute the influence of the novel “*The Idiot*“. In this work, Dostoevsky realized ideas and ambitions that he had been maturing for quite long time. It is one of the most effective, influential, brightest, and most famous works of Dostoevsky touching themes of a person’s alienation, social disapproval, inability to maintain some eternal values like beauty and goodness, sublime.

These are just a small part of themes reflected in “*The Idiot*“. The novel can be considered thematically extremely “juicy“ and filled with a multitude of intercultural, intertextual, historical links and contexts. The authentic old Russian spirit is being transmitted very well through long-distance train journeys and people getting now each other in wagons episodes and visuals are being told in the novel. Extensive spatiality, in-depth dialogues, a deep weaving line of philosophical thought – things that make “*The Idiot*“ stand out.

In the novel, Dostoevsky particularly effectively reveals the social levels and hierarchy of Russia at that time. Authenticity can be seen not only on the facade of the novel but also in the deep line – overly mannered dialogues are naturally restored and it allows to better understand all the subtleties of the rhetoric of that time (this quality, by the way, is typical in many of Dostoevsky’s works).

The plot is, on the one hand, understandable and conceivable, but in its essence strongly ideological and unique. Dostoevsky saves many psychological portraits and motives in his mind: the characters maneuver very widely; from the “idiotic“ (in different perspectives and regards) Myschkin to the capricious Aglaya, from the insane Nastasya Filipovna to the passionate Rogozhing or lickspittle Lebedev.

Realizing human relationships, mindset, intrigue, openness, and other things just climb down an incredibly mesmerizing psychological network. A simple dialogue about, say, Switzerland or the death punishment seen in France may, on the one hand, mean nothing, but everything happens, at first glance, beyond empty words, every detail matters here: reaction, face color, eye gaze, smile. All the aspects hide the true opinion and position of a character.

Dostoevsky creates one of the most interesting characters not only in Russian but in worldwide literature too – duke Myschkin. The naivety and purity of his soul do not leave anybody apathetic; it either hints at the riddle, either surprises or even captivates. Paradoxically enough, the word “idiot“ encodes two diametrically opposite meanings; it is either a very stupid person or, possibly, a very intelligent, close to genial. Myschkin, who constantly reveals the most diverse colors of his personality, is balancing between these two directions in the eyes of readers and other characters.

The novel shows how all other characters tend to trust the idiot, revealing their most intimate secrets to him. This kind of idiocy they see as a useful trait that earns sincerity. “Idiocy“ but not “imbecility“ – it is important to highlight. Myschkin really looks incredibly naive, gullible, credulous, simple-hearted but through his open – mindedness he constantly, sometimes even against his own will, gets into inconveniences, toils, and intrigues that he would rather like to avoid.

Because of kindness, honesty, and great philanthropy, the duke was so markedly different from other people around him who were trapped in hypocrisy and greed, bringing these qualities to the forefront. This is one of the main ideas in the analysis of “*The Idiot*“ because it helps to explain why prince Myschkin was an idiot in the eyes of those around him. The prince as the personification of Christian morality and human good becomes the opposite for the entire alienated world; this is a particularly interesting aspect, as it reveals that society tends to marginalize and turn into idiots those people who are different, incomprehensible on the basis of their values.

Compositively, Myschkin is on the axis of the novel and all the other characters, the whole plot revolves around him. The prince lived in a peculiar shell, closed, separated and only when he began to show up and participate in the higher layers of society realized the inhumanity, vices, cruelty that surrounded him. Two more crucial highlights that will be analyzed later in the text are the symbolism of Christian love imbued with Christ-specific sacrifice.

Another element is beauty. “*The Idiot*“ depicts the decay process of beauty; it cannot survive surrounded by hypocrisy, cynicism, selfishness, egoism. Distancing from the portraits of individual characters and looking more broadly, common for Dostoevsky sophistication of text, complex punctuation, and refined sentence construction are noticeable in the text. The “fabric“ of the text is extremely Russian, even russified being more precise. In other words, it is vividly characteristic of the classical canons of Russian literature, saturated with its features.

The text is picturesque, expressive, but not empty-minded, unavailing; it is very skillfully, subtly laid out, structured, using the necessary metaphors, comparisons. Virtuoso adaptation of artistic means is one of the main strengths of “*The Idiot*“. With this book, Dostoevsky creates a brand new psychological mechanism that transcends the tone set by the origins of Romanticism and the emerging trends of literature. The literary weight of the work is felt in the expressiveness of the language, and this is indisputable.

## The Portrait of Mysckhin

Society‘s as a non-monolithic entity topic is also being analyzed in “*The Idiot*“. Mysckhin is forced to face some challenges, for example, communicating with people who are neither close or sensitive to him. Readers see the clash of two different worlds symbolized by various values and behavior. It becomes clear that unity in society is apparently not always possible at all.

One of the most interesting from the philosophical point of view aspects in “*The Idiot*“ is the construct image of Jesus Christ. Especially looking to the Duke Mysckhin it is impossible not to mention those similarities that the character has with Jesus. The work is full of allegories, references and connections that lead to the portrait of Jesus Christ.

Few significant aspects need to be highlighted at the very beginning of this consideration.

* **The overlapping purpose of coming to the Earth.**

Mysckhin wants to provide people help, inspire good principles, set a good example. Looking through the prism of his perception, the Duke tries to reshape and reformate other people‘s behavior. Jesus Christ also saw humanity‘s flaws and tried to minimize or cure them.

* **The element of death.**

Mysckhin, like Christ, perishes not resentfully, without hatred, forgiving for those people who condemned him, in other words, his enemies.

* **Symbolism.**

The episode of the painting “*The Dead Christ*“ is particularly striking. The picture itself seems to become a separate character. According to Mysckhin, reflection on a picture can lead to a loss of faith.

* **Religion.**

Generally talking it is one of the most essential themes in the novel. The author constantly turns to the concept of Christianity. Mysckhin‘s biography contains some hints of the Bible and of Christ‘s suffering as well, indications to his life are mentionable and accentuable.

* **Salvation.**

In the novel, the duke possesses the ability and function of “savior“. For other characters, communication with Mysckhin is like a confession that purifies their souls. Mercy, compassion, the ability to forgive are what other characters learn from the duke.

* **Lev Nikolayevich symbolically fulfills the mission of Jesus Christ.**

Like Christ, the prince tries to help all the people around him, to understand them, and with the help of incredible insight to heal their souls. This mission is also successfully given meaning by the moment of death, marked by the spirit of forgiveness for humanity. Dostoevsky not only created an image of an impeccable good in the person of the duke but also demonstrated the development of all the heroes of the novel who interacted with Mysckhin for the better.

* **Coming back to Russia.**

His return to Russia, St. Petersburg, the city which is full of selfish passions and insidious ambitions, is reminiscent of the “second coming of a Christ“ into a confused, sinful life. Manifestations of messianism can also be seen here. Mysckhin arrives, though not necessarily consciously, to heal the souls poisoned by egoism, to revive the lost faith in the highest, ideal beauty and goodness. By taking part in those people‘s destinies, he must provoke a chain reaction of good, being its main catalyst, to demonstrate the healing power of the great Christian idea.

The novel‘s plot and general idea are latently polemical: Dostoevsky seeks to prove that criticism about the impracticability of the idea of “moral self-improvement“ is absurd. The purity of moral feeling alternating with childish naivery sets the prince apart from other heroes of the book.

These are the most general and introductory points into the concept of Mysckhin as the embodiment of Jesus Christ. These points are the guidelines that should be resisted in order to understand the operation of the portrait of Jesus Christ in the person of the duke. Based on the studies of different authors, it makes it easier to take a closer look at Mysckhin‘s pattern of behavior and thinking and draw the essential parallels with Christianity.

Slavicist Nariman Skakov, associate professor of Slavic languages and literature, in his work “*Dostoevsky‘s Christ and Silence at the Margins of The Idiot*“ analyses some of those parallels by deepening into the lines of Bible and the concept as such.

“*While working on the first drafts of The Idiot in 1867 Dostoevsky sketched out the following dialogue between the male protagonist (the Idiot) and Olga Umetskaya (an early prototype for the character of Nastasya Filippovna): - Death on the cross disconcerts reason. But he has overcome reason too. - What is this – a miracle? - Of course, a miracle, although… - What? - Although there was a terrible cry as well. - What sort of cry? - Eloi! Eloi! - That was the eclipse. - I don't know, but it is a terrible cry. (9: 184)“[[46]](#footnote-46)*

*“Here Dostoevsky alludes to the first part of one of two controversial biblical quotations; the source is either Mark 15:34: “And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, ‘Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?’— which means, ‘My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?’” or Matthew 27:46: “About the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, ‘Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?’—which means, ‘My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*“.[[47]](#footnote-47)

What does it tell and show to the readers? Dostoevsky depicted and operated not only on the separate principles of Christianity or its narrative but also conveyed some cornerstone verses or dialogues through the Bible to his works, specifically “*The Idiot*“.

Also, Skakov mentions the episode of the painting which was already noted among the important points.

“Holbein’s canvas. The sight of it immediately provokes a strong emotion: “Myschkin glanced at it as though recalling something, but he was about to pass through the door without stopping. He felt very depressed and wanted to get out of this house as soon as possible”. Rogozhin, who also shows signs of emotional disturbance, intentionally draws Myshkin’s attention to the painting and, after a brief digression on the history of this particular copy, poses a fatal question, obviously prompted by the content of the painting and thereby drawing Myshkin emotionally into the discussion: “And by the way, Lev Nikolaevich, I’ve long meant to ask you, do you believe in God?” said Rogozhin suddenly, after having gone a few steps. “How strangely you question me and … look at me!” Myschkin could not help observing. “I like looking at that picture,“ Rogozhin muttered after a pause, seeming again to have forgotten his question. “At that picture!“ cried Myshkin, struck by a sudden thought. “At that picture! Why that picture might make some people lose their faith.” “Yes, that goes as well!“ Rogozhin assented unexpectedly. Dostoevsky hints at an intense internal reaction: Myshkin cries out, “struck by a sudden thought.” These typical Dostoevskian markers for non-discursive, intuitive understanding (sudden) are swiftly followed by the equally characteristic abruptness: “Rogozhin assented unexpectedly.” The spiritual doubt raised by the vision of the decaying corpse of the Saviour destabilizes Myschkin and renders his speech intellectually unsteady but emotionally honest. One is not sure whether the Prince confirms or negates the message conveyed by the painting. For him the painting might serve as a denial of transcendence: “that picture might make some people lose their faith.” Apparently, Myschkin is unable to provide a coherent argument that would resolve the mystery of the painting. What is important here, one might suggest using Bakhtin’s terminology, is the Prince’s emotional-volitional stance, which surpasses mere words.“[[48]](#footnote-48)

Hereby the author accesses one of the most significant fulcrum of the view to Christianity in “*The Idiot*“. The picture acts not as inspiring and strengthening faith in God subject, but as sowing doubt, forcing questioning. Myskhin‘s confusion and perplexion can be seen when he mentions the crushed and weakened Jesus – the Savior – who should be omnipotent. As a result, the problem arises that this picture may take away faith.

“These perplexities are further intensified by Myshkin’s “edifying” narratives, which heighten the emotional ambivalence aroused by the painting.“. Filled with ambivalent feelings and emotional contradictions Mysckhin further analyzed the relationship between religion and atheism, as if reconsidering the experience of viewing the painting.“ [[49]](#footnote-49)

“The narratives do not make up a synthesized discourse on faith but rather their combined effect is to undermine any simple binary opposition of negation-affirmation of faith. As Myshkin concludes: “The essence of religious feeling does not come under any sort of reasoning or atheism, and has nothing to do with any crimes or misdemeanours. There is something else here, and there will always be something else—atheism of any hue will never get a grip on it and will always end up speaking off the subject”.[[50]](#footnote-50)

The duke, by this quote, concludes the dialogue about the painting and elevates faith itself, as a concept, above the categories and terms that we are used to operate on. However, author defines the outline that “The Idiot“ tries to follow by describing its structural pattern. “The overall structural pattern of the novel might thus be summarized as an oscillation between intensely verbose but not always sensible speeches and a silent inability to provide a logical and coherent argument in response to the questions posed by “mocking” nature. The same structure is at work in the way Dostoevsky “half-quotes” the New Testament—he literally confines to silence those “frightful” words (“why have you forsaken me?”) and refuses to participate any further in a pointless debate, at least through a verbal medium.“ Dostoevsky balances between meaningful default and sometimes inexhaustible verbosity. As Skakov concludes in the last sentence of the text silence in Dostoevsky’s works is not the absence of words, it is the form of words: “Silence for Dostoevsky is not about leaving something unsaid—it is about saying something by means of the unsaid.“. [[51]](#footnote-51)

Dostoevsky loved to say without a clear and literal saying. Symbols and metaphors in most of the times meant even more in his works than open text.

## Duke Mysckhin as the Embodiment of Jesus Christ

Going further to the analysis of this topic it is important to look through two more important articles about Dostoevsky‘s “*The Idiot*“. One of them is the work of Ludolf Muller (1917-2009) who was German slavist and theologian. He got interested into Russian philosophy and literature in his childhood; resulting of which Muller‘s main work field was the analysis of religious and psychological aspects of the works of F. Dostoevsky, L. Tolstoy, A. Chekhov, M. Bulgakov, B. Pasternak and other Russian writers.

His work *“Image of the Christ in F. Dostoevsky‘s “The Idiot“[[52]](#footnote-52)* adds some important marks to the previously analysed article of Nariman Skakov. However, the main narratives that he is examining in a detail way are the same: the picture which can kill the faith and image of the Christ.

The picture of Hans Holbein the younger is being considered to have a power to change the conceptualization of faith in somebody‘s head or even to delete it. Rohozhin has already lost the belief and Ipolit says that for him the painting brings “strange anxiety“.

It depicts Christ laying in the tomb, with a pierced wound on the side. His eyes and mouth are slightly open, his whole body is horizontal and his thighs are overlaid with white cloth. [[53]](#footnote-53)

Within the framework of the novel, undoubtedly, the picture is very important, but seeking to look further the author searches for a question – what is a portrait of Christ in itself broadly looking. The image of Christ, according to the author, is one of a strongest beings from a metaphysical point of view. Looking to Christ, we rething and relive a system of ethical values.

According to Ipolit, the crucifixion is not proof of God‘s love, but only confirms the fact of the absurdity of the world. The question remains open to Ipolit: whether his gaze on the painting and the concept he sees when looking at the picture coincides with the painter‘s imagination and what role the resurrection play in this process.

And yet – the atheism of the completely unbelieving Ipolit seems to be dwindling when considering these essential questions about the picture and its meaning. On the other hand, if the whole creation of the earth which should be God‘s work is merely “a cursed chaos“, then the categorical imperative of commanding to do good becomes meaningless and no thread tying a man to the Earth (except instinctive and irrational, stimulating the will to live) cannot hinder Ipolit from the decision to end his suffering by committing suicide.

The author also describes the popular leitmotif of Mysckhin coming to the Earth with the same mission as Jesus did. The duke appears in the lives of suffering people fatally and not by an accident to bring faith and light to them. Here it is important to mention Nastasia Filipovna‘s reflections and visions on this topic.

There appear parallels in her consciousness between Mysckhin and the child; she seems to see the prince as a child in several possible senses. Most of the characters in the book agree that Mysckhin did not transform into an adult, he stayed being a child as if the process of adulthood has not taken place in it, the child inside has not died and the pure soul of the child lives in his body dominating and setting the norms of the duke‘s conduct.

The image of Christ is important not only in the context of Mysckhin but also for the framework of the development of other characters as well. For instance, Rogozhin and Ipolit.

Rogozhin loves Nastasia Filipovna usually – not with compassion but with emotional love, this is different from a prince who feels the love as a result of mercy. He even attempts to assassinate Myschkin in order to eliminate his competition and seize Nastasya. Finally, he is only able to possess Nastasya by murdering her. Rogozhin realizes that there is no place for mercy in his love but only for blind and carnal lust. Rogozhin murders because only by doing so he can reach that Nastasia would not stay with anybody else.

Rogozhin and Mysckhin are depicted as antipodes in the novel; Rogozhin is lust, arrogance, the indulgence of carnal desires, sinfulness while Mysckhin is purity, humility, modesty, and kindness. Mysckhin is saintly while Rogozhin can be considered as animal-like, led by instincts. Different characteristics of their temperament also determine a different attitude towards the same woman – Nastasya Filipovna. Mysckhin cherishes warm feelings to her but they do not contain any traces of evil intentions, and Rogozhin‘s feelings are predatory, derived from brutal instincts.

Another example is Ipolit. However, he is figured out in a completely different way. He is described as albeit young but intelligent, mature man whose face is marked captures traces of severe illness. The phthisis left on Ipolit‘s face a constantly irritated, annoyed expression. Ipolit represents a different, radical concept of education that prevailed in Russian spiritual life in the 1860s. In the conditions of a deadly disease, which, ultimately, at the end of the novel destroys him, Ipolit finds himself in a situation where worldview problems in his person acquire a special sharpness.

Ambiguous image of dead Christ is also illustrated in the other article analyzing this topic and written by Igor Evlampiev and Inga Matveeva which is called “The Image of Dead Christ in the Novel “*The Idiot*“ and its painting sources“[[54]](#footnote-54).

The way the Christ is shown in the picture demonstrates Christianity's flaws, goes against the ideal of perfect Christ, and undermines the religion's established beliefs. As a result, Mysckhin's comment regarding the strength of this artwork to destroy a belief carries the message that everyone who takes a closer look at Christianity and begins to question it runs the danger of losing faith.

There are not a lot of people thinking in this questionable way as this theory does not concur with the teaching of the church and the official Christianity, however, both – the author and the main hero of “*The Idiot*“ – are assigned to this small group.

Three elements of Christ’s life are the most important and worth reflection in regard to Goldbein’s painting. Those accents are suffering, death (immortality), and resurrection. However, two of those are very curiously interpreted by Dostoevsky. Immortality and resurrection are these elements that get different meanings and contexts in Dostoevsky’s text.

If usually, a person has two forms of immortality: imperfect – before reaching the ideal,– and perfect – upon reaching this ideal– which outgrows any leads to “synthetic form“. This is exactly what Dostoevsky confirms: Christ came to mankind and a human seeks to retransform himself into Christ as an ideal.

Hence, Jesus rises to eternal life in the image of perfection, which means no longer being the imperfect personality that existed before the crucifixion. Jesus is resurrected as the form of God, the full synthesis of all existential beings. Seen in this sense, the death of an ordinary person does not become perfect or transform into a perfect form because it does not free from separation, maintains the supremacy of the physical finite body over the immortal spirit. In this regard, the painting of Goldbein shows us the death of Christ which does not differ from the death of an imperfect person. This kind of Christ is stuck in his mortal condition, does not experience a mystical transformation, Christ is maintaining the earthly elements and his death does not affect the existing world.

The picture becomes a reason why Ipolit is doubting about the resurrection if even Christ‘s death is so fearsome and undefined as he says. Those people who have been around Christ‘s tomb, according to Ipolit, seeing that fear had to withdraw with almost lost faith and hope, though still carrying with themselves an idea which could never again be removed or cast out of them. Ipolit also raises the question, whether Christ himself, on the eve of his punishment, seeing the image of his next day, would still have decided to die and lie on the cross. Actually, Ipolit‘s thoughts and considerations outcross the space of this concrete painting and go deep into Jesus‘ image into art as general.

In the article on the base of the analysis of the pictorial image of the dead Christ in novel Idiot it is concludes that the novel refers not only to the picture of G. Holbein “The Dead Christ in the Grave”, but To the whole tradition of depicting the dead and alone Christ, and especially Titian’s later work “*Lamentation of Christ (Pieta)*”. Probably, Holbein’s picture attracted the attention of Dostoevsky by the fact that it depicts a dead Christ, who still has signs of life. It is the “inconclusiveness” of Christ’s death that gives rise to doubts in his resurrection, because during this period Dostoevsky understands the resurrection of Christ not as a new existence in the form of an independent person, but as an entry into “general synthesis”, as a merger with all humanity and even with the entire universe.*[[55]](#footnote-55)*

There are no hesitations that the painting is one of the most important aspects in the novel. It plays a huge role in both: forming and defining the characters, at least three of them very strongly – Ipolit, Rogozhin and of course the duke himself. The picture as a strong stimulus draws the guidelines and adds a tremendous contribution into the understanding of conceptualization of the characters‘ thinking, worldview and functioning.

## “Beauty Will Save the World“ Concept

It is a widely known concept mentioned in Dostoevsky‘s “*The Idiot*“ – “*Beauty will save the world*“. Today this phrase is so split and universally used that Dostoevsky‘s name or work is not always necessarily related to it. However, this sentence was expressed in “*The Idiot*“ and it is crucial to understand what is concealed under it.

Beauty as such is an exceptional quality because almost any physical or spiritual thing/ability can be beautiful or, oppositely, ugly. Beauty is used to describe a beautiful person, flower, even city, or anything that is attractive to our eyes. Also, beauty is a spiritual characteristic when either behavior, speech, or a person himself can be beautiful.

Consequently, a lot of doubts and questioning points appear in trying to comprehend what did Dostoevsky have in mind? Which form and *silhouette* of beauty he chose as the one which is leading the characters of “*The Idiot*“.

At this point, the main dilemma appears when figuring out what does Dostoevsky mean by saying “*Beauty will save the world*“. Does he have in mind deeply philosophical thought and beauty symbolizes goodness, purity, kindness or maybe he refers, first of all, to the physical beauty of two women surrounding and tempting him?

These ideas are dualistic since both are reasonable and probable, and many interpreters and students of Dostoevsky's works understand it differently. I. I. Evlampiev in the annational part of his article “*F. M. Dostoevsky‘s thesis “the world will be saved by beauty“ and its religious and cultural origins*“ defines the main problem of this conceptualization and its roots.

“The article proves that the thesis “the world will be saved by beauty”, which is attributed to the protagonist of the novel “*The Idiot*“, Prince Myschkin, implies female beauty. Its meaning is associated with the Gnostic concept of mystical marriage, in which a man and a woman, complementing each other, get the opportunity to reveal through themselves the divine principle that can change the world. According to the Gnostic Gospel of Philip, Mary Magdalene was the mystical wife of Jesus Christ; The article substantiates the hypothesis that it is precisely according to this model that Dostoevsky describes the relationship between Prince Myschkin and Nastasya Filipovna.“[[56]](#footnote-56)

Beauty is a commonly used word in “*The Idiot*“ and not beauty generally but female beauty specifically is functioning as the leading one. Understanding this substantial phrase requires a question which form of beauty influences the duke the most? Mysckhin in his case, as it was also analyzed in this work, is represented in “*The Idiot*“ as someone who fully meets the criteria of the incarnation of Jesus.

However, there is a nuance that also asks deepening – for Dostoevsky the conception of Gnosticism was particularly close. Consequently, it can be concluded that the duke depicted in “*The Idiot*“ (Gnosticism was an important idea in “*Crime and Punishment*“ and other works of Dostoevsky as well) is an exact image of Jesus, but not of Orthodox church; it reflected gnostic concept.

As it is already pointed out that Mysckhin is a duplicate of Christ, then there is an essential necessity to discuss about his love for two women – Aglaya Epanchina and Nastasya Filipovna. For Christ, as he was understood in Orthodox concept, these kind of feelings would be unacceptable. However, in Gnosticism it is fully possible and interpreted in different, more flexible way.

Woman as a figure and wedding as a procedure or feast have a special meaning in Gnosticism. Getting back to “*The Idiot*“ it is obvious that Dostoevsky is drawing the relationship between Mysckhin and Nastasya Filipovna built on the same principles as the relation between Christ and Mary Magdalene. These similarities are based, first of all, on the image of Nastasya – some links as brothel or fornication are similar to those that Mary Magdalene is symbolical for. Finally, it is important to accord the fact that Christ is similar to all other people in Gnosticism so opening God’s spirit for his is possible only through the framework of the wedding.

Dostoevsky clearly defines that Mysckhin and Nastasya Filipovna have to unite on the mystical wedding which would lead to the emergence of a new, omnipotent life. This merge might influence the entire world and its habitants, entire generations, so Nastasya and the duke bring with themselves an enormous responsibility.

Thus, I. Evlampiev furtherly says in his text that Dostoevsky‘s famous phrase “Beauty will save the world“ talks about the beauty of a woman. However, not only the physical beauty but beauty as a sacral conceptualization too – women can bring life. Beauty symbolizes the beauty divine that is hidden in the woman. The opening of this beginning, its release into the world, under the conditions of mystical marriage, can become a decisive factor in the salvation of mankind – not in the instant, but in the long run of course.

There are two very important aspects concluding this topic: first, Nastasya Filipovna might be interpreted as the image or illustration of Mary Magdalene as the mystical wife of Christ. This version might fully exist in Gnosticism and interact with Dostoevsky‘s characters.

The second meaningful element is the relation between Mysckhin and Nastasya. Together, as images and interpretations of Mary Magdalene and Jesus, they are destined for the whole world. Their relationship is predetermined, it is a kind of mission that should successfully save humanity from destruction.

When considering all the elements of this topic, it gets obvious that the problem or question of beauty in F. Dostoevsky‘s works obtain polygonal meanings and vary through different levels of implications. There are distinct ways to explain Dostoevsky‘s conception; it depends on the angle which is chosen for analysis.

Nevertheless, if conclusions about Mysckhin‘s extraordinary and uncommon mission of coming to the Earth have been figured out, then it is an obvious inference that his relationship with Nastasya (an embodiment of a beautiful woman) is also not vain in the perspective of the development of mankind.

## Conclusion

To conclude “*The Idiot*“ topic, the final thing which is important to discuss is the impossibility to make a perfect relationship between characters. Mostly it is being derived from two aspects: the diversity of characters and their duality.

It was already written that Rogozhin and Mysckhin represent two completely different worlds and systems of values; they are symbolizing how unlike worldviews and even generations are interacting or, more precisely, being disorganized. Dostoevsky shows an example of the inability of two people to come into adequate communication because of differences in between.

“Rogozhin, a wealthy merchant, who identifies with the new Russian generation, is a poorly educated man, driven by the uncontrollable force of his sensations and willing to do anything to achieve his goal. Then Dostoyevsky hesitates in his description and writes in these notebooks that he seeks the new tracks “How can the idiot remain the main hero, if another hero is" stronger “than him? A new attempt is to transfer idiocy from one character to another, from Rogozhin to Myschkin. Myschkin would possess both kindness and guilt. Prince Myschkin, a Russian aristocrat, is an ideal man. He returned from a clinic in Switzerland after a long treatment for epilepsy. An orphan of his early age, this childish character is polite and sincere.

Myschkin keeps in his heart the image of the sun, the purity of the mountains and the snow he had seen when he was in Switzerland and which he wants to transfer to the Russia. And, when he falls into the city Petersburg populated by perverts, he passes as an idiot, so he claims to act against the uses of this society. However, the prince is not entirely naïve; He can even be suspicious and ironic about others. Prince Myshkin, is he also double, stirred on one side by his thirst for the ideal of me, and subjected, at the same time, to the desires of his psychic nature? Is this another type of duplication: an internal doubling of two sides?“[[57]](#footnote-57)

Perfect relationship as the purest form of link between two people is possible in different circumstances but the inevitable condition is the probability of understanding each other or at least aspiration to do so. It is impossible between Rogozhin and Mysckhin, they cannot create a perfect relationship among themselves as there is nothing in common. Nastasya Filipovna separates them even more but talking more generally and what the author Svetlana Radtchenko – Draillard highlights in her article – the duke arrives to the land which is full of perverts, hypocrites and liars and this place cannot become absolutely own for him.

Although Russia is homey for Mysckhin but the environment and people that surround him after coming back feel alien and outlandish. A world permeated with vanity, oppressing and disturbing the duke, becomes a threshold that Mysckhin cannot cross. Dostoevsky shows how the depths of human soul goes against the cynicism and deceit.

Clear is set out versus obscure, purity against dirt, good versus evil.

“In this novel of the clear -obscure, the double characters, as “brothers-enemies“ belong to different worlds, but in their unified duality they probably represent, for the writer, a synthesis of their wandering in search of the ideal of the self. Moreover, the entanglement of the intrigues of the double characters (masculine and feminine) gives rise to unexpected spirals. Thus, Prince Myshkin, just by his ideal hero appearance, supports the conflicting actions of the demon who penetrated his soul under a mask of his double, Rogozhin. Prince Myshkin speaks seriously for the first time when he recounts the impressions of a condemned to death – Dostoevsky‘s personal experience. “[[58]](#footnote-58)

The biographical elements of Dostoevsky existing in his works is also an interesting topic which is visible in almost all of his novels. “*The Idiot*“ is not an exception, however, the parallers are being drawn in a delicate and subtle way – through the limit of condemnation and judgment.

Getting back to the characters and their disability to make a perfect relationship a reader is facing different dilemmas and contrapositions in distinct levels of morality and values. By drawing individual portraits of characters, the author seems to define and describe the general outline of the whole course of Russia. In this way, he raises the question of the flaws of the religious and social system in Russia and the potential threats and ways of solving it in the future. As it is characteristic and common for Dostoevsky, the religious concept and contradictions become the conflicting cornerstones and points of argument.

“Ideologically speaking, the novel denounces the ambivalence of the philosophical world view of the Russian society of the time: Liberals and conservatives, Westernises favouring a Europeanisation of Russia and Slavophil’s faithful to the values Orthodox face each other through double characters. For Dostoyevsky, if Russia runs in front of the political danger, it is because it has ruined itself spiritually and only a restoration of moral mind-sets could save it from the catastrophe. In this sense, goodness, faith and guilt are natural to man as long as he has not separated from God. “[[59]](#footnote-59)

However, Dostoevskys‘s text is also a message for future generations encoded in all these aspects and concepts that were already analysed in this work.

Despite this, Dostoyevsky keeps a glimmer of hope in him and addresses to future generations his messianic message: “Beauty is divine! Beauty will save the world! To conclude, the novel “*The Idiot*“, one of Dostoyevsky's most complex novels, goes from the search for the real of life to the comprehension of the final causes, which makes it possible to assert: the values that Dostoyevsky defends are the real values, common to all humanity, to any social order. The value of this immense masterpiece is undoubtedly explained.“[[60]](#footnote-60)

Details which Dostoevsky is talking about are quite tough to accentuate, highlight and articulate. On the other hand, they are simply understandable by analyzing the image of Mysckhin which is embodying the pure values and beauty in himself.

The novel is complex as it is written in the article of Ratchenko-Draillar but its essence and main point are obvious and well-articulated in this last paragraph and works of other authors and scientists. Dostoevsky is questioning the reader about the real in life and makes it tied up along with consequences and final results. Beauty and value are so evidently being shown and assigned to whole humanity that there are left no doubts that Mysckhin is not only a concrete character but a genuine symbol as well.

# Chapter Three: “The Dream of a Ridiculous Man“

## Feeling Alienated in the Society

“I am a ridiculous man“ – by these words, another work of F. Dostoevsky – “*The Dream of a Ridiculous Man*“ is being started. A strange and a bit awkward atmosphere is felt from the first sentences and it is only sharpened within the continuation of the text.

The main hero is telling us a story in the first person so it sounds much more authentic and distinctively. The story begins with the hero‘s confession about his experiences while being in school, university and about a constant feeling of ridiculousness. He admits that there was a time when being ridiculous empoisoned and embittered his life but now it is all different; it changed and now he is reconciled with this fact.

The story gets brightened by an additional character – a lady which catches the hero‘s elbow and being very scared she screams. The storyteller gives us a hint that the girl was so scared because at that moment her mother was dying somewhere but afterward she just caught another man and behaved the same with him.

By whole this flow of events, the hero turns us into a whirlwind of strange events, later introducing where he lives and commemorating a revolver which he plans to use for killing himself already for a long time. At the end of the first part, he claims that only meeting that girl stopped him from suicide today but it is definitely in his plans.

In the second part, the narrator discusses his role of being in society. He raises the question of loneliness in this world. However, according to him, committing suicide would kill the world as well which means the world was created for him alone.

The motive of grave, death, a funeral is particularly important in the text generally. From the atmospheric point of view, the whole hero‘s dream is permeated by tension and anxiety.

There is an interesting aspect that not only do we marvel at the strangeness and uniqueness of the main character but he also contemplates the environment and people in it. This is especially evident in the fourth chapter when a new term or agent “they“ appears.

Although it is not entirely clear who they are, the narrator says a lot about them. Mostly, of course, from its own perspective. “They“ talk about the stars, “they“ are in peace with the Universe, “they“ wandered through the woods and forests, ate fruits of it, drank the milk of the animals, used honey. It is breathtaking how magically and fabulously the mystical derivation “they“ is presented, the reader is screwed into an unreal atmosphere, where the riddles with each sentence of the text only maximize and increase.

The narrator emphasized the power and unbelievability of his dream, its certainty compared to the dryness and shallowness of the words we use, into which it is not even possible to imprint the images of such a dream. Neither his brain nor his heart, according to the hero, were not able to reach the heights of the genuine and unfeigned dream.

He continues to talk about “them“ as a more perfect form of people even creating a magical image or type of “their“ conception. Descriptions as wise, intelligent are being used in order to show how ideal “they“ are in comparison with the main hero and other sinful people. “They“ are different, as if they have attained a more ideal, impeccable form of being.

However, the storyteller admits that he has always loved heartache, grief, troubles but only when it comes to himself, others who are facing it, he regrets. He confesses about praying for forgiveness and crucifixion, unable to commit suicide by himself but longing for suffering. The narrator longed for many things but the most essential of them is unbearable suffering.

Still, all he got was laughter and an attitude to him as an idiot. The story ends when the narrator wakes up from a dream and talks about the experiences felt there.

He admits that he never encountered something similar or analogical but with a dream, he gained a gift of prophecy. The dream opened his eyes – the storyteller understood a sacred truth that people can be good, honest, sincere, beautiful, saving their ability to live on Earth.

This correlates to some extent with the idea of the seedling of goodness in humans discussed in “*The Idiot*“ but this conceptualization will be developed a bit later.

The character claims to lose words after his dream. Words needed for describing what he understood while sleeping. Even knowing that no one will believe him and will regard his words as delusions, the storyteller promises to go to the people and announce these truths about what he has seen in the dream.

To love other people as yourself, according to him, is the most important thing. The text is finished quite hopefully and enthusiastically. It is obvious that the hero believes in people and their metaphysical abilities. Finally, at the very end, he gets back to the beginning and admits to finding that girl which wandered.

## Loneliness and Communication in the Perspective of Absurd

“*The Dream of a Ridiculous Man*“ is one of the most innovative works of F. Dostoevsky balancing in some parts even on the limit of absurdity. However, topics as loneliness and communication both merged by the element of suffering are strongly actualized. Plus, it is worth having in mind that the time when Russia was under harsh spiritual, political, and social issues at the time Dostoevsky created it.

The main character is first of all a suffering, alienated human. Alienation is playing a huge role as it is affecting different points of view. It is important to see how the portrait of the main character is being illustrated and shaped first of all by society. Disability to find a place in society is the main problem which is the growing alienation feeling that the main character faces.

Some resemblances with already a few times mentioned Camus‘ works and conceptualization could be found. The ridiculousness of the narrator is being pointed out. It is being written “he has always been ridiculous, and he has known it“ so basically he admits the absurdity of his own situation. His feeling and situation, however, are very existentialist. The knowledge of destiny and the inability to resist or change it is accepted with dignity and steadfastness.

Humans are the only substances who even being aware of the final fate cannot go against it which makes their existence even more absurd. The thought itself is very existentialist and profound. The narrator is telling that as much as something new he found out and learned, proportionally the more ridiculous he felt. The acquired knowledge only became proof of that.

As history is evolving and developing, indifference is growing only more, the character finds himself alienated from neighbors, friends, strangers, almost everyone around him. Here an unknown girl is appearing and she is playing a crucially important role, while again she is being mentioned at the end of the story. However, the character finds only more shreds of evidence of the absurdity of human existence by observing the environment as the text is continuing.

Loneliness in this story is first of all a consequence of disability to communicate because there is no need to seek unity or communication if everything is so absurd and everyone is condemned. Despair, slough, hopelessness are the emotions that can be seen penetrating into the story and it truly reminds one of the most famous works of A. Camus “*The Myth of Sisyphus*“.

In Camus‘ novel, a man is having a task to push a rock up a hill an infinite number of times. Every time he pushed the stone, it rolled back, and thus he had to repeat the irredeemable work. This is fundamentally engendering existentialist thoughts that were also close to Dostoevsky. The authors seem to ask us, is there any purpose in this world, or whole mankind is marked by a meaningless existence?

On the other hand, although the hero of “*The Dream of Ridiculous Man*“ is accounting for the abilities that Camus‘ described Sysiphus had, Dostoevsky sees the solution or at least is providing a bit of hope. At the end of the story the lightful and hopeful narrative is arising and it means that the ultimate fate should not be taken into consideration so much.

The main character‘s dream as revelation is specifying the absurdity of human existence for the narrator. People portrayed in a dream do not seem to be having a choice, so there we face another interpretation. Loneliness or being in a society, either communicating, is not our conscious and autonomous choice. Notion arises in the text that all aspects of our lives are under the influence of fate which is indisputable.

Nevertheless, Dostoevsky shows that society is not regressing but progressing more likely. Also, the element of doing goodness appears and it can be interpreted as a form of communication. In general, the most important appearing thought is that only by making choices pointless life can be filled with something truly precious. The absurdity of human existence can be beaten, for instance, by creating goodness.

“*The Dream of a Ridiculous Man*“ is developing two contradictory ideas. Human existence is hopeless and full of absurd elements but at the same happiness and meaning can emerge if one seeks to do good for another. Only a conscious decision to behave well with others can raise life to a higher level. By acting so, we are not lonely form – goodness unites and connects different people.

## Religious Side of the Story

In most of Dostoevsky‘s works, the religious plan is having a role. Religious meanings or interfaces are figured in his novels and stories to add some aspects to the storyline, either to enrich the context of the literature work. “*The Dream of a Ridiculous Man*“ is not an exclusion in this regard. The theological background is significant in this story as well and the elaboration of it is very well specified in the publication of Nell Grillart, which is a professor of Ghent university and whose specialization field is Dostoevsky‘s literature and Orthodox spirituality.

He only confirms the fact which was already pointed out in this work. Dostoevsky‘s approach to religiosity in general and especially Orthodoxical has never been absolutely clear. Debate is always spinning around the same axis – did Dostoevsky support and advocate Orthodoxy institution of 19th century Russia, or did he outpace the current context and his religiosity was based on other paradigms?

The framework of the official Orthodox institutional and ideological outlines was drawn out in the 1721‘s Peter The Great‘s Holy Synod statement. However, looking more deeply into the formal institution of the Orthodox church in the 19th century, when Dostoevsky was living, it could be seen that the spiritual authority was strongly lost and the institution as such was highly secularized.

Thus, in Dostoevski’s days, the Russian Church had severely digressed from its original identity. It had grown alienated from its Byzantine-Orthodox roots, in the process of which it had lost its quintessential spirituality. The Church had become a mere handmaiden of the tsar, more concerned with secular topics than with spiritual life. Moreover, it lacked empathy for the suffering of the Russian people; the average parish priest, hardly getting by on the meager wages he received from the state, survived by extorting money from the already impoverished population for their services. In a nutshell, the 19th-century Russian Church had become a mere shadow of the young medieval church, which had fed itself on the rich soil of the Byzantine Orthodox legacy.[[61]](#footnote-61)

Resisting from the image of the church and its position in society at that time, it is possible to look at “*The Dream of Ridiculous Man*“ from this perspective. As Grillart states and what should be obvious to anybody investigating Dostoevsky‘s works, this story is peculiar in the general context of the author‘s ouevre. Although whole literature of Dostoevsky is to some extent mystical, however, “*The Dream of a Ridiculous Man*“ is possible to say might be considered even more metaphysical and transcendential.

World which cannot be described in realistic words in this story is opened. As if wandering between different planets and portals, the main character is tossed and distracted between imagination, dream, and reality. Author of the publication furtherly analyses:

“The story is easily recounted: the ridiculous man is an estranged, misanthropic figure, who exists in the margins of Petersburg life. Claiming an absolute metaphysical void, he is convinced that nothing really matters on earth and decides to shoot himself. However, his suicide is put off by a meeting with a little girl, who desperately cries out to help her dying mother. Having chased away the vulnerable girl, the ridiculous man starts to feel some remorse, a sensation that hinders him from killing himself: for, if the world is really meaningless, why then does he feel this guilt?“.[[62]](#footnote-62)

Emotional palette of the ridiculous man as he is called in the title of the story is being variated very drastically. From suicidal thoughts to acquiring a bit of hope, from being absolute senseless to feeling remorse and sensation. Meeting with a little girl becomes a key event in the story. Estranged and misanthropic figure living or, more accurately, existing in the margins of Petersburg life is a very precise way to describe main character’s conditions of being, however, there is also dynamics and his thoughts are changing too.

It was already discussed but the process of him questioning the meaning of this world is extremely important in the development of the story. The reader can see how his thoughts are changing and acquiring different forms. A ridiculous man is withdrawing from the suicidal idea and finding germs of meaningfulness and significance in his life.

There must be mentioned that “*The Dream of a Ridiculous Man*“ does not avoid theological thoughts and hints. “In the ‘Dream’ Dostoevskij effectively poeticizes a biblical theme, a technique he refines some years later in ‘The Grand Inquisitor’, in which he fictionalizes Christ’s Second Coming. The tale is a mythologization of the Fall: while in Genesis humanity’s Fall is prompted by eating from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, in Dostoevskij’s version the Fall is caused by the lie.“[[63]](#footnote-63)

Since a lot of mysticism appears in this short story, it can be presumed that Dostoevsky was operating on the apophatic approach to God. Apophasis (*in greek. “unsaying“ or “speaking away“*) is based on the principle that God is a mysterious substance. Cataphatic theology is the opposite idea suggesting the mindset that God is fully approachable and understandable for a human – being.

There is no way to rationalize God in an apophatic tradition; human cannot comprehend or understand God in his thinking categories and paradigms. As if the two antipodes these conceptions of God perception offset each other and bring completely different ways to maintain spiritual power.

Another interesting aspect of analysing “*The Dream of a Ridiculous Man*“ accords to seeing how the main character is being portrayed. It is a man put out of fringes, out of margins. Some interfaces can be detected with other Dostoevsky‘s characters, for example, Mysckhin and Raskolnikov.

The portrait of inaudible and misunderstood person resonated with the duke Mysckhin while talking about the society he is feeling offcast and reject as well as Raskolnikov from “*Crime and Punishment*“.

The author states: “The self-proclaimed ridiculous man dwells in the margins of Petersburg society, deliberately refusing to live by its social and moral customs, setting as his ultimate goal to uncover the futility, shallowness and nothingness of conventional life“. The ridiculous man looks more intently and deeply than the rest of society, he is sort of a propher in this regards. Socium‘s margins are his location and residence.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, Dostoevsky used “*The Dream of a Ridiculous Man*“ for few purposes most clearly. He operated on some classical Orthodox doctrines, also, expressed criticism to it and finally everything was united by an unique fable of fantastic story.

“Although in ‘Son smešnogo þeloveka’ no explicit theological doctrines are formulated, the story operationalizes and revives a Christian Logos that was eclipsed in 19th-century ecclesiastical Orthodoxy. In line with his aesthetics of “fantastic realism”, and consistent with the apophatic doctrine that human reason is to be laid down in approaching the divine, Dostoevskij reverts to a “fantastic story” to “formulate” a subtle, but manifest, critique of the contem- 170 Nel Grillaert poraneous Russian Church and to propagate his interpretation of Russian Orthodoxy.“[[64]](#footnote-64)

The text is poeticized and mythologized invoking intercultural and intertextual contexts leading to ancient Greek mythologemas and concrete religious conceptualizations. The story is distinguished by a very strong and vivid metaphysical mission, which, although dominated in Dostoevsky‘s works to some extent before, acquires a substantive meaning in this text.

Dostoevsky created a work that concentrated on sores of a 19th-century church and commonly for him revealed them in a very unexpected light. Many cultural references distinguish this text with an enormous intercontextual enrichment. The operalization of Byzantine and Orthodox traditions, stimulating the suppressed and forgotten paradigms, revitalization of ancient Greek and Russian spirituality, and finally, including existentialist thoughts makes this story extraordinary because of its rich and specific context.

# Chapter Four: The Anatomy of Guilt

## Healing Power of Communication

One more of the works of F. Dostoevsky which inevitably has a big impact on the conceptualization of loneliness, unity, and communication is “*Crime and Punishment*“. It is an iconic literature work that is famous in many different countries and being discussed in different contexts and through various paradigms.

It is a work encompassing many topics, for example, philosophy of crime, the concept of repentance, the realization of guilt. Accordingly, it touches on concepts of loneliness and communication very strongly as the author shows the healing power of being in unity and having someone abreast.

The title already tells us the direction of the work – the concept is going to be oriented to the meanings of crime and punishment. However, these are not the only aspects as in the center of the work there is a human – main character Raskolnikov whose dramatic transformation is being demonstrated.

Raskolnikov is always surrounded by people who are in pain, the majority of whom are destitute. Those people are primarily his mother and sister. Raskolnikov's name comes from the Russian term *raskol*, which means “*split*“ or “*schism*“ and symbolizes the tension between his intellectual explanations for the crime and his moral disgust.

Raskolnikov concludes that there are two types of people in the world: ordinary and extraordinary. The first must live humbly, faithfully, and cannot violate society's and the legal system's rules. The extraordinary, on the other hand, can commit any crime and break any law just because they are extraordinary. Raskolnikov considers himself to be in the same league as Napoleon and Caesar. As a result, he, like them, may thrive and prosper by committing even mass murders.

Although Raskolnikov wants to be Napoleon in terms of untouchability, he has other goals. His goals are primarily noble and prophetic. Raskolnikov sees the wrong direction in which humanity is moving and wants to save people. As a ridiculous man or Mysckhin, Raskolnikov overtakes the rest of society by perceiving more. These three men are connected by the ability to penetrate metaphysical principles, which is both a gift and a curse.  
 Raskolnikov perceives more, he is able to comprehend more profound things, but since he has no specific tools and is sometimes unable to discern the means by which he should act or behave, he must suffer even more. It is a kind of trouble for all three characters: while they make a step forward in the rest of society, they have trouble because they cannot change the course of the process.

The main script line is being oriented to committing a crime and the entire process of self-analysis and repentance following this cruel occurrence. Alyona Ivanovna, a pawnbroker, was assassinated at the start of the story, and she was Raskolnikov's chosen victim. Lizaveta Ivanovna, Alyona's crippled, naive, and subservient sister, is also murdered. Raskolnikov murders her as soon as she enters the room after Raskolnikov has slain Alyona. Raskolnikov did not plan to murder Lizaveta. After the crime, there is a complete breakdown and turmoil within him. This inner conflict is intensified by Sonya's amorous sentiments.

By the way, an insert might be made there that Kafka‘s “*The Trial“* is analyzing very similar topics. In the center of the work, the reader meets the disturbed protagonist – who is condemned for something that is completely not clear. This is somewhat slightly different from Dostoevsky‘s work, but the main motive of inexplicable guilt is very clear in both works.

Joseph K. from Kafka‘s “*The Trial*“ can be a part of the previously mentioned group of characters since he understands and senses more. Society does not regret it above; instead, they become unfavorable, causing them to encounter a violent end.

In general, Dostoevsky questions the aspect of guilt and crime in this work. Can it be personal? His approach could be explained in the terms that guilt and crime are universal, they unite people in some way. Kafka also deals with the same idea in his work. Both authors claim that there is no individual guilt, but that we are all connected by it. The whole society is responsible for a crime and there is no human being without guilt. Guilt eliminates individuality. Guilt, as a phenomenon, takes on a general dimension, affecting the entire population.

“Logically, in his mind, if he is one of the “extraordinary“ people, killing the pawnbroker was “no crime“ and he need not worry about the pangs of conscience. He finds out too late that he is not “extraordinary“. Meanwhile, the conflict is so great within him that he becomes physically ill after the murder for reasons he fails to understand (he is referred to as “feverish“ throughout), even passing out at the police station when called there the day after the murder on the unrelated matter of his unpaid rent.“[[65]](#footnote-65)

However, the author inserts not only Raskolnikov but also the readers, into the discussion. Dostoevsky makes us question whether the true victim is and if we should sympathize with the murdered person or Raskolnikov. Alyona seemed to be a stingy, distrustful, disagreeable lady who was greedily hoarding money. Meanwhile, Raskolnikov develops throughout the novel as a tragic character with whom the reader wants to identify and comprehend his loss and pain. Everything is muddled further by his love for Sonya, the reciprocity of sentiments, and his confession to her. His remorse is plain to observe.

“Even when Raskolnikov finally confesses, he remains unconvinced he has done anything wrong. It is only after a year in prison and the doting love of Sonya, who has moved to Siberia to be close to him, that he finally accepts his guilt and surrenders to the moral sense within him. At least the surface explanation of this development is that it is only through suffering that redemption is possible - a consistent Dostoevskian and Russian theme. On a slightly more abstract level, the lesson is that in a contest between reason and conscience, conscience will win out.“[[66]](#footnote-66)

On the one hand, Raskolnikov appeared to have a financial motivation for committing a crime, and after a lengthy period of time, without even analyzing his misdeeds, he was ultimately compelled to recognize the victory of remorse. Raskolnikov was softened by love, pleasant sensations drove him to reconsider and accept remorse, and the fact that Sonya did not turn away encouraged him.

“*Crime and Punishment*“ may be thoroughly examined on a variety of levels and from a variety of perspectives - literary, ideological, Orthodoxical, philosophical, and psychological. However, focusing on what is the most relevant in the context of this work, we observe a person who is both aware of his crime and unwittingly performs it. Raskolnikov is easy for the reader to relate with since he is similar to us in certain ways. Raskolnikov is sympathetic to a struggling, destitute student in severe need of money.

True, as the narrative progresses, we realize that it is a complicated and perplexing figure. And, in the end, Dostoevsky demonstrates once more that conscience is both man's greatest ally and adversary because it always triumphs in the inner fight of truth. Communication takes on a therapeutic significance in this scenario. In “*Crime and Punishment*“, we observe a great power of communication. When Sonya Marmeladova enters Raskolnikov‘s life, he appears to come back to life, begins to understand the significance, and his persona takes on more sensitive tones. This transition, this metamorphosis, cannot be comprehended in any other method than through the lens of communication.

Another intriguing transformation may be seen in Dostoevsky's beliefs on the unity of society. Conversion is noted as though in “*Masha is Laying on the Table*“ he emphasizes the necessity for all humanity to melt into one substance, eradicating all types of individuality, but in “*The Dream of a Ridiculous Man*“ and “*Crime and Punishment*“ the notion of cohesion emerges from a different perspective.

The aspect of uniqueness is retained in each of these masterpieces. Dostoevsky does not relinquish the principle of togetherness but rather portrays it in a fresh way. Society must unite, yet still, no human being's identification may be forfeited.

It is fascinating to see how the thoughts of the works move, and this reflects a specific jump in Dostoevsky's thoughts as the author. “*Masha is Laying on the Table*“ is an extraordinary, brief, dense, focused work, but “*Crime and Punishment*“ is a voluminous novel, thus it is no surprise that their techniques of expression differ.

The surname of the main character – Raskolnikov – there also has a symbolic meaning. Raskol not only means “*split*“ or “*schism*“ in Russian but it is related to one fundamental occurrence in Russian church history.

The Russian Orthodox Church had a church split in the 1650s, which began in Moscow. Associated with Patriarch Nikon's reform, which attempted to modify the liturgical books of the Moscow press and other rituals to be more in line with contemporary Greek.

This motif impacted the official Orthodox Church's stance at the time, or, to be more specific, divided it into two sections. The official flank, as well as the “*splitters*“. It was a sort of foreshadowing for Protestantism's breakaway. When Luther released his 95 theses in the early 16th century, he had a similar outcome in mind: to reform the church and move it away from clericalism.

Symbolics, a specialty of Dostoevsky‘s, play an important role in the novel. Raskolnikov is perceived to be secluded, distant from the majority. He is the one who introduces new ideas and identities, innovative thoughts as well as the one who sees new repercussions. Raskolnikov, by breaching the structure of common society, proposes an idea of salvation — the hitherto unknown way.

## Inability to Accept Feeling of Togetherness

Another work of F. Dostoevsky supplementing the concept of isolation but even more in an absurd way is one of his earliest written stories “*A Faint Heart*“ (1848). The work is telling about a young man whose ideal of global happiness has such a tremendous hold on him that he cannot accept the personal bliss of marriage to a young, attractive, and faithful girl—thus he goes mad.

He does not see the happiness on a personal level – a man is dreaming about the entire humanity while finally the idea that he could be happy but others would not deprive him of common sense. There have been many diverse sensations throughout history, but the most important one is compassion. The main character empathizes with others, does not pursue personal ambitions, and considers communal, all-encompassing satisfaction.

In terms of sensitivity to society's shortcomings and sorrow for its misery, this work has striking similarities to “The Idiot“ and “Crime and Punishment“. The primary protagonists in all of the pieces are like social observers who witness awful things yet have a deep sense of compassion. They are unable to feel fully joyful as a result of this trait.

It is necessary to examine the script and pictures of all significant characters in order to comprehend the concept and essential meanings of this work. Arkadiy and Vasiliy, two male friends, figure in the core of “*A Faint Heart*“. Vasya was assigned by the office's supervisor to rewrite important papers before the deadline.

Although it may appear ludicrous, this is Dostoevsky's method for transporting us into a mystery whirlwind. Vasily does not have time, both because of his terrible health and because Lizonka, the object of his love, consumes all of his thoughts. He works a lot, but it is becoming excruciatingly difficult for him.

Vasiliy's rising sense of guilt is suffering him only stronger. He recognizes that there is still a lot of unwritten content, but he also realizes that most probably he will fail to accomplish the task. One of the sleepless nights turned out to be catastrophic. When Arkady wakes up, he notices that his closest companion, instead of rewriting the text, just runs a dry pen over paper, and he understands, in horror, that Vasiliy has gone insane.

The ending is dreadful: Vasya is sent to a psychiatric clinic, and Liza marries another, but in her heart, she laments an unfortunate fate.

Vasya, accustomed to humiliation and submission, cannot accept the fact of simple human happiness, which, according to a false belief, he is not worthy. On the one hand, love for the girl inspires him, making him tremble. On the other hand, he is tormented by an inexplicable feeling of guilt before the officer: he has to do urgent work but does not have time, although he paid him in advance.

Vasya's actions are hampered by an inferiority complex that has evolved through time, preventing him from feeling that he has the right to have a nice, normal life without limitations, because it is not his fault that fate has finally changed its face, bringing unanticipated delights. Low self-esteem has disastrous consequences: the hero loses his mind as a result of psychological turmoil. Arkady Ivanovich responds to Yulian Mastakovich's question about why Vasya went insane in words “out of gratitude“. It appears to be a paradox, but Vasya was unable to cope with his own feelings, which raged within him.

Reading a story once again presents the symbolism that is so distinctive to Dostoevsky. Above all, basil represents empathy, purity, commitment, and thankfulness. He never emphasizes personal satisfaction, never brings it to light, and feels undeserving of it, so when faces a glimpse of hope, he loses self-control and common sense. Paradoxically, when other people get ill as a result of an abundance of grief, despair, and tragedy, Vasya becomes insane as it confronts a possible manifestation of enjoyment.

This text, looking through the terms of loneliness, unity, and communication is, first of all, an example of how strong a friendship can be. Although Vasiliy at the end loses his common sense it is obvious that Arkadiy‘s sacrifice for his friend is enormous. He is demonstrating gratuitous and sincere care for a friend.

Also, another side of feelings and relationships in this story is not noble and tempting. Happiness coming closer to Vasiliy, who usually tends to give up his personal feelings, wants, demands, and desires, becomes an impediment. He cannot conceptualize a world in which he would be happy and joyful as for the entire life Vasya was thinking that generous moments are not for him.

Finally, the notebook that Vasiliy has to rewrite becomes only a metaphor. Realizing that he will not be able to complete the task, Vasya goes demented. Nonetheless, it might be inferred that the major cause for his difficulties was contact with prospective bliss, and the job assigned by the official just added to the absurd environment. Dostoevsky mastered the creation of this aura using literary techniques and tools.

## Conclusion

Dostoevsky in both of his works “*Crime and Punishment*“ and “*A Faint Heart*“ demonstrated an incredibly wide range of feelings and experiences. However, the main connection between the main characters of these two works is huge compassion. Ability to observe the environment and feel sorry for its people.

Dostoevsky displayed a staggering spectrum of emotions and experiences in both “*Crime and Punishment*“ and “*A Faint Heart*“. The major thread that unites the main characters of these two novels, and the string that binds Dostoevsky's writings in general, is enormous sensibility and empathy. Special sensitivity to the world and its states and feelings sets Dostoevsky's characters apart from other people. The ability to notice the environment and feel sorry for its inhabitants.

# CONCLUSION

Works of every author are peculiar in operating on some specific topics, talking about exact things, or using concrete tools. Dostoevsky‘s literature justifies this rule. It is extremely rich in the abundance of themes and the development of portraits of characters, as well as the concepts used. After a profound analysis of F. Dostoevsky‘s works, it gets obvious that the author had an incontrovertible talent to grasp the pulse of society, its pain, and the most relevant wounds.

Three elements were specifically important for the thesis. These aspects are unity, communication, and loneliness. All of them Dostoevsky described or illustrated in his literature. Attitudes toward some of these elements have never changed and remained stable, and due to his other perceptions, the author developed and purified position over the literature path.

From “*Masha is Laying on The Table*“ which is accentuating the inevitability of merging into one substance, Dostoevsky smoothly transfers to different conceptualizations demonstrated in „*Crime and Punishment*“ and „*The Dream of a Ridiculous Man*“. The importance of unity found in these works is manifested through the maintenance of individuality, its nurturing.

It is possible to return once again to the main idea and concept expressed by Dostoevsky. Fragmented and divided people form themselves as individuals, and distance appears. Later, society begins to believe in and perceive themselves as important and relevant personalities. Eventually, unity is achieved by merging into one whole, discovering and establishing a metaphysical connection.

Dostoevsky carries this key element through his works, based on different categories. This is his main idea in terms of unity.

The author examines similar concepts in another short text “*Socialism and Christianity*“. In this story the author continues to reflect on the same topic: the isolation of people in modern society and the need for their connection, “merging“ in a future perfect society.

Loneliness, according to Dostoevsky‘s works, can be originated from misunderstanding, different values, mindsets. The duke Mysckhin in “*The Idiot*“does not feel his own the environment in which he appears. Coming with a messianic mission, Mysckhin personified absolute human goodness, in contrast to the sins emanating from other characters.

The hero of “*The Dream of a Ridiculous Man*“ is also a misfit, a person functioning out of the margins of common society. His whole behavior and attitude set him apart from others in a conspicuous way. This process is permeated with themes of human absurdity and meaninglessness in life. Thus, creating allusions with the existentialist Camus‘ mindset and “*The Myth of Sisyphus*“ this work acquire even more colors.

The concept of absurdity is elaborated in “*A Faint Heart*“ too. The main character loses reason because he cannot handle the task that is given by the officer. However, the real reason for his disorder is the approach to happiness. Vasya does not see himself as the one who deserved happiness, especially personal. He accepts it as a collective object and is ravaged by the thought of having a personal approach to it if others remain suffering around him.

However, communication can heal too. Raskolnikov connects to Sonya and this link leads him to purification. It is a mystical connection making Raskolnikov a better human and bringing him to reconciliation with himself which was crucial after committing a crime.

Mystical connection is a definition that can be used in the communication of duke Mysckhin and Nastasya Filipovna as well. Some scholars tend to explain their connection in the terms of religious characters. They are interpreted as saviors of mankind, they came into society to save it. Their amalgamation is a necessary inseparable condition.

Dostoevsky is an extremely profound author. Having survived the facts of a tragic biography, he became an extraordinary writer whose work went beyond the boundaries of ordinary literature and entered into the paradigms of thought.

Many professors and thinkers name Dostoevsky as their authority or the author they followed. His philosophical, sociological, anthropological, aesthetical, ethical, historical, and literary conceptions remain relevant in today‘s society too.

Relying on his works helped to understand how Dostoevsky approaches these three analyzed elements which, like a carcass, form the structural framework of society. Scrupulously elaborated aspects of loneliness, unity, and communication demonstrated the depth of Dostoevsky‘s thought in regard to these conceptualizations.

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