

Blood Relatives

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Article Received: 18/05/2023

Article Revised: 28/06/2023

Article Accepted: 29/06/2023

Published Online: 30/06/2023

DOI:10.47311/IJOES.2023.5.06.180

Abstract:

This paper aims to explore the relationship between The Kafkaesque and the Karamazov conscience and how the linking of the two yields in the various modern methodologies branched under the field of modern cybernetics. The key aspect I shall be covering in this study is how the usage of the words can be manipulated to create artificial networks of the state of existence. For this purpose, I shall read into the characters of The Brothers Karamazov by Dostoevsky, and The Trial by Franz Kafka, and analyze how the subsistence of hierarchical can be controlled through the subconscious and the unconscious by creating illusionary operational spaces. Furthermore, I'll be analyzing the forms of economy that can be generated through this venture upon which I shall conclude my paper. For referential readings, I'll be consulting multiple critiques on Dostoevsky and Kafka respectively which includes published material by writers such as Andre Gide, Joseph Frank, Richard Freeborn, Sigmund Freud, Milan Kundera, and Franz Kempf among others.

Keywords: relationship, modern cybernetics, economy, illusionary.

Fyodor Dostoevsky and Franz Kafka are duly credited as the forefathers of establishing realism as a pessimistic sensory value. While writers from France and England, writing in the 19th century, had used the overall tone of realism in the depiction of society for description's sake, their conclusions entailed a happy or an optimistic ending with no space for subjective pondering or an afterthought no matter how dreary the nature of the subject matter.

Dostoevsky's initial works are written in the essence of Nikolai Gogol, while they lack the acute psychological insight (with the exception of The Double), his attention to magnify even the most banal element in a very natural manner is a

blueprint of his ability to maximize his narrative space. Kafka on the contrary possesses the opposite attribute, one which takes an isolated, alienated viewpoint and spreads it like a manifestation of the plague on the sheet of his narrative, it can be accurately summarized that he lived the majority of his life with a squeamish will, highlighted by an oppressive, totalitarian like relationship he had with his father during which he wasn't able to convey anything of note to his father.

Dostoevsky's relationship with his father was of a different kind. His father was a country doctor, fairly well comfortable in the strata of the Russian society of the time. By the time he was a student at VITU in Saint Petersburg, his interest in engineering faded and he became a voracious reader of world literature, reading entire oeuvres of multiple authors in a very short space of time. Of course, hefty finances were needed to support this gargantuan endeavor. He began requesting his father large sums of money via letters, and his father duly complied until the point of eventual bankruptcy. Dostoevsky continued to request his father for finances which ultimately resulted in a supposed mutiny by the serfs of the Dostoevsky housed wherein they eventually murdered Dostoevsky's father (although, this has never been confirmed by an official alimony, it is widely recognized and acknowledged as the cause behind his death). Dostoevsky's epileptic attacks didn't start until after the demise of his father, in fact it was first experienced upon hearing the news of the death of his father. This consequentially outlined the themes, structures and plot of all his major works starting from *The Humiliated and Insulted* which was published in the year 1861 right until the publication of his final work in 1880 namely the *Brothers Karamazov* which can be as the complete genesis of Modernism in Fiction as it has come to be recognized today.

Dostoevsky in the creation of his characters relies majorly on a dialogical tour de force to reinforce the plot and settings in the active conscience in the directive sense of the exchange. That is to say that all his works can be constructed around the ability of the usage of the tongue. To add to the weighty sense of communication his ability to dramatize the functional activism of his characters places him along side virtuoso dramatists like Dante and Shakespeare. His style of expression effectively brings out the hidden exigencies of the oligarchies' forces of containment forever present under a dominant social norm. The subjective nature of questioning all elements that formulate society as well as the innumerable fears and desires that hinge the framework behind the construction and need for a social conscience is instantly reminiscent of Socrates who famously said ' I can only make the people question'. What further makes Dostoevsky's writings immortal is the uncompromising and unprejudiced manner in which he describes the nature of human suffering, highlighting it as a consequence of a long chain of circumstancing rather than blaming it on a particular idiosyncratic impulse within an individual. Individualism is the very key that unravels all of Dostoevsky's intentions. Dostoevsky's understanding of

individualism is accompanied by the intent of paleo-liberalism which quite possibly his time in prison, where he was even part of a mock execution, but his life was pardoned at the very last minute, and sentenced to jail time and hard labor in Siberia by a decree of Czar himself. Dostoevsky, was utterly displeased by the false promises of Tsar Nicholas I who took over at the helm of Russia in the 1820s, shortly after The Russian Empire decisively defeated The French in 1812, upon propagating falsely that he would lead the nation of Russia to its former glory which it had experienced before the cultural transformation that led to its westernization under the regime of Peter The Great. The Tsarist Regime eventually became lazy as appropriated by Ivan Goncharov's 1859 classic of Russian literature called 'Oblomov'. The term Oblmovism is officially used to describe the preference of extremely momentary hedonistic vices over actions that ensure long term benefit and security. This eerily foreshadowed the manner in which the Czarist regime crumbled like a cookie under the weight of expectation of its own people at the dawn of the twentieth century. Therefore, it can be summarized that Dostoevsky's cast of characters, spread out throughout the list of his works are emblematically prophetic. The list starts as early as Golyadkin, the clerk who serves as the premier character study for the reader and extends right until the little child Ilyusha, a main character from The Brothers Karamazov.

What separates Dostoevsky from the writers of his time is the willingness to fully develop perspectives and viewpoints before presenting a counter argument to the same. The moralizing, didactic tone of portrayal, reflective of the Victorian standard of expression, is completely done away and is replaced with a new kind of polyphonic narrative that shattered the prevailing form social realist tradition beyond recognition. Dostoevsky's shorter works were as compelling as his longer works. 'Notes from the Underground' published in the year 1864, unfolds from the perspective of an unnamed cynical narrator restricted to the confines of a single room. This book can be seen as the birthplace of existentialism. This work did a great deal to promote a work of fictional prose in a restricted space, that of a single room. Walter Kaufman, the famed academic of Nietzsche and existentialism, called it the best existentialist novel of all time. Dostoevsky's follow up to this work and arguably his most popular work, Crime and Punishment was published in the year 1866 and tells the story of a financially destitute student, Rodion Raskolnikov.

Raskolnikov conceives himself to be a modern day version of Napoleon Bonaparte. In an effort to accumulate funds for the benefit of poor yet intellectually gifted students like himself, he plans to murder his landlady as he conceives her to be a burden on the face of the earth. However, the plans go awry as he is spotted killing the woman by her friend and in an effort to minimalise the alarm, Raskolnikov in an impulsive decision, decides to murder her friend too. The rest of the narrative deals

with how Raskolnikov deals with the guilt of the unplanned act of killing. He finally draws to a conclusion that his actions were carried out under the influence of spite and greed. However, what is most notable about the murderer is the degree of willfulness and acceptance of the consequences of his actions in the act of confession. This is in direct contrast to Franz Kafka's Gregor Samsa from his most acclaimed short story *The Metamorphosis*, published in the year 1915. I shall talk about this work in a short while. While Raskolnikov chooses to communicate, albeit with a burdened conscience with various characters throughout the course of the novel ultimately seeking a redemptive exogenesis through the pious spirit of Sonya who acts as his Mary Magdalene and delivers him from the clutches of evil. The narrative concludes by Raskolnikov surrendering to the police authorities and opening *The Bible* to read it in order to seek salvation. Dostoevsky was a devout believer of the Russian Orthodoxy and the name of Raskolnikov is a fine indicative of the same as the word *Raskol* means a schism or split, its figurative meaning is 'to acknowledge the truth'. By naming his principal character Raskolnikov, Dostoevsky wanted to question the decision to split the Russian Orthodox Church.

Nihilism was a growing trend in Russia in the second part of the 19th century and openly questioned the fundamental position of religion. This was spearheaded by the works of novelists like Ivan Turgenev ('*Fathers and Sons*' published in 1862) and Nikolai Chernyshevsky ('*What is to be done*', published in 1863). Chernyshevsky's and Turgenev's writings were influenced by German Romanticism, the *Sturm und Drang* which emphasized on emotional outpouring over the subsistence of logic in anchoring the crux of the intent behind the writings. The works were used to evoke a nostalgia encompassing higher emotional sensibilities over a formless shape of the stream of thought. Dostoevsky sought to undo the damage it caused to aesthetic behind the creation of art. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that Turgenev is often regarded by multiple acclaimed critics of literature as the best pure artist Russia has ever produced.

Dostoevsky's dialogicism is a digression from the aforesaid author's commitment to the utmost degree of absolutism, this draws from the fact that Dostoevsky did not have an exclusive standing in the Russian aristocracy, unlike his other major counterpart, Count Lev Tolstoy who often chose to write in the tradition of Western folklore, especially the influence of Homer on his composition of '*War and Peace*'.

Dostoevsky, however, was primarily writing to meet deadline. Therefore, he did not have the precious time to mull over about superficialities in his work in order to enhance the quality. It is well documented that he made characters as he went along writing and developing the plot as he wrote. The most noteworthy example is

the inclusion of Stravogin in the 1872 publication of his novel by the name of Demons or Devils which led to rewrite the entire novel and pushing back its publication date by a year. The result was an allegorical piece which may be considered a prophetic rendering of all that transpired in the USSR right until its collapse in 1991. No other character exemplifies Dostoevsky's refutation of Nihilism other than Kirilov, Kirilov, the theological figure constructed in the essence of Kant's and Hegel's supposition commits suicide through the need to carry out the action as an empirical need which mirrors Schopenhauer's understanding of pessimism. The bifurcation of Dostoevsky's characters can most sharply be made on the basis of their varying egos. The ego in Dostoevsky's caricatures swings like a pendulum from the Yin and the Yang of sociable behaviorisms. This balance provides the very intricately constructed bridges on which the characters' ideas operate in connection to the extremity of the world in which they operate. The most relevant examples of this case come from three chapters of *The Brothers Karamazov* (published in the year 1880), 'Rebellion', 'The Grand Inquisitor' and 'Ivan meets The Devil', through Ivan Karamazov speaks of various forms of social evils, a feverish examination of the people's approach towards their faith in religious activities and belief in the material world. Ivan's conscience eventually forces him to recognize his folly and he is faced by a doppelganger in the guise of 'Satan' or 'Mephistopheles' (a nod to the popular tale 'Faust'). However, on further critical examination, this can be relegated as an interpretation of Ivan's subconscious state. Dostoevsky's presentation can be seen as the unraveling of the methods of representation of a viewpoint, in summation.

Kafka, on the other hand lived a very timid life. His fractured relationship with his father shines through his style of writing. The fact that the Gregor Samsa's countenance transforms into that of a bug is an indicator of the absence of a spirit or hope within the self. The energy of being is drawn from a social sphere. In doing so the sense of the will in an individual sphere is done away with, thus leaving a being vulnerable to the attacks of the kinds of narrative that superimpose a way of interpretation which acts as a catalyst in harmonizing the dominant way of thought. This was true during the time of Kafka's writing the story as the world was in the middle of the Great War and facing exponential technological advancements and political alterations, the ramifications of which the human psyche of the time was unable to bear. The weight of iron, thus, led to a decay of the various stages of human consciousness ultimately creating an ideological divide between the generations.

Dostoevsky's polysemic approach of dealing with the collapsing Tsarist regime can be seen is limited to a descriptive manner while Kafka's own 'responsibilities' take paramount space within the construct of the narrative. The

generational gap carved an insurmountable and infinite void during the course of the war that the patterns of psychological dysfunction within the futility of the behavior of the human cognition warranted a fragmental survey, which Kafka and Dostoevsky are able to provide from different polar standpoints, while Kafka speaks of the suppressed as is shown in Samsa's desire to escape his sense of responsibility by locking himself and desirous to be squashed under the weight of responsibility, Dostoevsky's characters triumph by showing their poise, acceptance, subjectivity and an understanding in the face of a fate that only mirrors of Camus's Sisyphus.

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