DUALITY AND THE PROBLEM OF MORAL SELF-AWARENESS IN DOSTOEVSKY'S DVOINIK (THE DOUBLE)

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Duality and the Problem of Moral Self-Awareness in Dostoevsky’s Dvoinik (The Double)

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation investigates the problem of duality as it relates to the moral situation of the protagonist of F. M. Dostoevsky’s novella Dvoinik (The Double, 1846). Bearing the cultural and literary heritage as well as contemporary social realities of mid-nineteenth century Russia steadily in mind, I analyse the duality motif in Dvoinik in terms of the protagonist’s self-consciousness [samosoznanie] and moral perceptions. In particular, the moral ideas that underpin his self-definitions are products of what I refer to as moral self-awareness. In the course of my analysis, I interrogate the modulations of moral reasoning in the mind of the protagonist to show how his perceptions and discourse create moral categories, which in turn motivate his contradictory self-definitions and behaviours.

In view of this conflict, I argue that the protagonist’s will to succeed in the civil bureaucratic order of nineteenth-century Petersburg is incompatible with his implicit need to find moral rectitude. Ego-driven motivations provide contrapuntal tensions to exacerbate his experience of inner division. At the same time, his view of himself as a moral being is obscured by mystified understandings of ‘honour’ and ‘chivalry,’ which he has adapted from popular lore and mimicry of the discursive conventions of privileged society. Where social humanism and philosophical Idealism inform the moral issues under examination, their projections through the paired lenses of ego psychology and...
Finally, with reference to Dostoevsky’s notebook drafts, personal correspondence and literary journalism, I examine the author’s plans for revision of Dvoinik in the early 1860s. I view these developments as evidence of the crystallization of Dostoevsky’s idea of the ‘underground type,’ a term he applied to the hero of Dvoinik as prototype after recasting the role in Zapiski iz podpol’ia (Notes from Underground, 1864). In my conclusion, the protagonist of the latter work exhibits greater conscious understanding of the tensions between ego motivations and innate strivings for moral truth; yet he fails, in the end, to overcome the dualistic divide between the rational mind and the transrational pursuit of higher spiritual meaning and purpose.
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This work is dedicated especially to my mom, Karen, my sister, Carrie, and to the memory of my father, Francis Roy Harrison (1941 – 2000).


Translations of other Russian texts are mine except where indicated. For transliteration, I use the system recommended by the Library of Congress, except in the case of common spellings of some Russian names.
**DUALITY AND THE PROBLEM OF MORAL SELF-AWARENESS IN DOSTOEVSKY’S *Dvoïnik (The Double)***

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Overview

Two abiding concerns in the works of Fyodor Dostoevsky are the correlated problems of subjective consciousness and moral agency. The Underground Man has 'heightened awareness' \[usilennoe soznanie\] and has cultivated 'the exalted and beautiful' \[prekrasnoe i vysokoe\] all his life, yet he rails against conventional morality and defends his right to contrary acts of self-assertion. Raskolnikov considers himself an extraordinary man, unbound by the moral constraints of society, yet his conscious life is shattered by the consequences of his moral transgressions. Ivan Karamazov is a rationalist who rejects the notion of God, but he is beleaguered by guilt and fixated on the problems of suffering and moral conscience. These are but a sampling of the moral dilemmas faced by some of Dostoevsky's better known characters. In a wider frame, these problems absorbed nineteenth-century Russian and European thinkers and dominated socio-philosophical notions of the epoch. Notably, G. W. F. Hegel in \textit{Phenomenology of Spirit} (1807) interpreted moral and religious experience as a phenomenon of human consciousness, where God is analogous to self-consciousness or self-knowing; Ludwig Feuerbach argued in \textit{The Essence of Christianity} (1841) that consciousness of God is the moral consciousness of the species; In \textit{The Individual and His Own} or \textit{The Ego and His Own} (1844), Max Stirner posited that Egoism is the ideal
social system, that God in fact is an Egoist, and that Egoism transcends even love. The generation of Russian thinkers of the 1830s and 40s were profoundly influenced by these and other thinkers, especially inasmuch as the aesthetic problem of Russia was related to epistemology. From Kant to Hegel, the relation of ‘mind’ to ‘nature,’ of individual consciousness to external reality, was the basis for the dualistic thinking that dominated Russian intellectual life through these decades. Friedrich Schelling gave the generation a sense of the ‘metaphysical mission of art,’ with the view that nature’s inherent spiritual meaning eluded discursive reason but revealed itself through superior intellectual intuition and the creative arts. Dostoevsky had contact with these ideas through his contemporaries, and in his ardent reading of German Romantic literature, with its strongly metaphysical and Idealist vein, and works of French social Romanticism, which contributed to the formation of Utopian Socialism.

Subject-object duality as a fundamental characteristic of human consciousness and its moral systems is common to many traditions of Western discourse—from Plato’s Allegory of the Cave to Cartesian substance dualism; from Christian and Gnostic accounts of the material and spirit worlds to Kant’s antinomies; from Hegel’s coinage of ‘the Other’ to the depth psychology of Carl Jung and Jacques Lacan. “Je est un autre” is the famous dualist assertion by Arthur Rimbaud, and Friedrich Nietzsche in The Gay

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4 See Frank, *Seeds of Revolt*, pp. 101-112 for a discussion of Dostoevsky’s absorption of ‘the two Romanticisms.’
5 Letter to Paul Demeny, 15 May 1871.
Science declared, “du bist immer ein Anderer.”\textsuperscript{6} Since the twentieth-century advent of postcolonialism, postmodernism and gender studies, the discourse of duality, or alterity, has come to interpenetrate and at the same time integrate an ever-widening field of scholarly disciplines among the social sciences. Finally, modern science bumps up against a pervasive subject-object problem in which perception and evaluation cannot be separated from their object of analysis. Some see the duality at the core of our conscious thought structures to be the chief problem of human life. “Reflection starts by dividing man within himself,” says philosopher Charles Taylor, writing at the close of the twentieth century of the synthesizing power of reflective consciousness and our task as binary creatures to overcome the oppositions that prevent the spiritual goals of life to unite with subjective freedom.\textsuperscript{7} The scope of the present study does not allow for a comprehensive history of the phenomenon of duality, nor could I presume, through any amount of analysis, to resolve the profusion of issues involved in this most fundamental aspect of the human condition. My undertaking is to view the workings of subjective duality as a literary problem treated by Dostoevsky in his novella \textit{Dvoinik (The Double, 1846)}.

‘Doubling’ as a literary trope is related to the Romantic outlook, which Dostoevsky adapted and parodied in much of his early work and continued to exploit in his mature fiction. Numbering among the dichotomies expressed by this duality in the mid-nineteenth century are passion and intellect, heart and mind, rational and irrational, matter and spirit, the natural and supernatural, the fantastic and the real. The self, or sooner, perceptions of self, are divided in perpetual and often devastating struggles

\textsuperscript{6} Die fröhliche Wissenschaft, §307.
between the poles represented in these categories. Broadly conceived, Romantics want to believe they are perfectly one; however, failing to recognize their own doublings, they give credence to only one of the two halves of themselves—generally the ideal and sublime half, while ignoring mundane and sordid realities. In the present study, I investigate these antinomies as they find their expression in Dostoevsky’s Dvoinik. While there are no overtly philosophical or religious arguments in the book, I argue that the novella problematizes themes of moral idealism in the context of secular bureaucratic society where egoism and moral relativism predominate.

Dvoinik was Dostoevsky’s second prose work of novella length, published in 1846 within weeks of his first creation, the epistolary novel Bednye liudi (Poor Folk). It is a multifaceted work that was the object of mixed and often passionately charged reviews from Dostoevsky’s contemporaries. The ambivalent critical response to Dvoinik, ranging from critical acclaim to scorn and outright disparagement, is hardly surprising. The parameters delineating its themes are obscured by a range of complexities—the elaborate, sometimes baffling psychological portrait of the protagonist; tropes and clichés of Romanticism Dostoevsky adapts with seemingly gratuitous élan; his manipulation of conventions of the so-called Natural School; and the appropriation of motifs and stylistic mannerisms of Nikolai Gogol, for which Dostoevsky was even accused of plagiarism. These are important issues and contradictions I will investigate through the course of my analysis.


9 Dvoinik appeared in the Petersburg journal Otechestvennye zapiski (Notes of the Fatherland) on February 1st, 1846.
My primary focus is the hero’s awareness of himself as a moral being. The moral-psychological conflict that afflicts the protagonist is one that challenges his self-perception to the point that it cleaves his consciousness in two. This crisis of identity hinges on his understanding of what it means to be a moral being—an understanding that I will call moral self-awareness. Problems pertaining to the conscious makeup of the hero’s mind and the moral dimension of his quandary have been examined in previous scholarship on Dvoinik, and will be referenced throughout this dissertation. However, these two conceptual rubrics have normally been treated as separate frames of analysis and have never been paired as coefficients of a single literary problem.

Common readings of Dvoinik have emphasized, above all, the grim psychological toll that social and economic degradation take on the novella’s hero, Yakov Petrovich Golyadkin, precipitating his descent into madness. Dostoevsky’s use of a ‘double’ technique, a character and plot device wherein the protagonist encounters a seemingly exact replica of himself, apparently dramatizes internal psychological division brought about by social rejection. Two synopses of Dvoinik will serve as a short introduction to these themes as they play out in the story, while at the same time providing a general summary of characters and plot. The first, representing common interpretations, is found on the free online encyclopaedia Wikipedia.org:

The novella deals with the internal psychological struggle of its main character . . . . The narrator’s tone depicts a man whose life is on the verge of destruction due to the sudden appearance of a literal facsimile of his self. This double attempts to destroy the protagonist’s good name and to claim his position within both his public life in the Russian bureaucracy and within the social circle inhabited by “Golyadkin Senior” (the author’s term for the “original Golyadkin, our hero”). As one continues to read the novella and piece together the various clues, it becomes fairly obvious that the Golyadkin Junior character is merely a pseudo-schizophrenic manifestation of the actual Golyadkin’s less desirable characteristics (a forerunner to the Shadow later proposed by Carl Jung, the classic “it’s all in his head” twist). As such, the novella can be viewed as one of a series of Dostoevsky’s critiques of the self-possessed nature of modernity; in this
particular work it is also a critique of the machinations and manoeuvring of the middle class in its socio-economic strivings.\textsuperscript{10}

The description of \textit{Dvoinik} as a critique of middle-class “socio-economic strivings” and “the self-possessed nature of modernity” is an apt, if too narrow, summation. That the story pivots on a classic “all-in-the-head” twist, however, is an oversimplification, one that follows from the view that the double is merely a schizophrenic manifestation of the hero’s darker side. While the double is clearly an emanation of self, the action never allows one to discount the reality of an autonomously acting adversary whose existence is quite distinct from the hero’s conscious mind. This clear delineation of protagonist and antagonist is essential to the duality trope and its inferences. As I will show, the psychological struggle at the heart of the book has deeper and broader implications than the popular reading above suggests, reaching into the more consequential terrain of moral self-awareness.

The editors of Dostoevsky’s \textit{Polnoe sobranie sochinenii} (Complete Collected Works, hereafter referred to as \textit{PSS}), which can be regarded as an authority on the text, offers the following synopsis of \textit{Dvoinik}:


\textsuperscript{10} Polnoe sobranie sochinenii v 30-i tomakh (Leningrad: Nauka, 1972-85), vol. 1, p. 487.
Already in *Poor Folk*, the young Dostoevsky sketched two social-psychological themes which received further development in *The Double*. These are the theme of the degradation of a person, by the gentry service class, to the point of rags and filth, and on the other hand, the ‘ambition’ of the ‘man-rag,’ debased by society but at the same time not a stranger to the conscious awareness of his personal rights, which frequently appears in the form of unhealthy irascibility and prickliness. Both themes have a deeper psychological reworking in the story of Golyadkin’s madness. Rejected from Klara Olsuf’evna’s heart and from the home of his benefactor Olsufy Ivanovich, Golyadkin suddenly senses the precariousness of his situation, and his traumatized imagination presents him with the possibility of being replaced not only at his place of work, but in his very identity by another, more adroit candidate, resembling him in all ways but differing only in his moral shamelessness.

In this appraisal, Golyadkin, a sort of upgrade of Makar Devushkin, the ‘man-rag’ [chelovek-vetoshka] from Dostoevsky’s earlier novella *Bednye liudi*, is foiled by socio-economic forces but retains an inalienable sense of personal rights that manifests itself as ‘ambition’ [ambitsiia]—the conscious effort to increase his material wealth and improve his social standing in the bureaucratic Petersburg hierarchy. Belief in the efficacy of that pursuit, even as it is frustrated and undermined at every turn, is the failing that provokes Golyadkin’s descent into madness. Suffering rejection in affairs of the heart, scorned by his so-called benefactor, and perceiving a threat to his civil post, Golyadkin ostensibly dreams up the double in fear of losing his identity as affronts to his personal and professional integrity multiply. Effectively, this reading sees the psychological trials of the protagonist as a framework for an experimental literary take on the socio-economic problems featured in writings of the Natural School that dominated Russian literature in the early 1840s. Cast in the tradition of ‘downtrodden’ heroes of the petty civil service class—notable among them Pushkin’s Evgeny from *Mednyi vsadnik* (*The Bronze Horseman*, 1833), Gogol’s Akaky Akakievich of “Shinel” (“The Overcoat,” 1842) and the aforementioned Makar Devushkin—Golyadkin is seen as occupying a slightly more

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12 Golyadkin’s ‘ambitsiia’ itself is problematic—the word has negative connotations in polite Russian society.
evolved offshoot of this genealogy, stirred to ill-conceived rebellion against oppressive social forces but ultimately doomed by his own failures and weakness. Thus, in essence, the two synopses presented here accord with the views of Dostoevsky’s contemporaries, who read Dvoinik in the light of humanitarian themes cast in the vein of social realism. The censure of contemporaries like the renowned critic Vissarion Belinsky show that Dvoinik’s first readers saw it as an idiosyncratic and cryptic aberration on aims of the Natural School Dostoevsky was expected to promote. In Chapter Two below, I discuss these and other controversies related to the reception of Dvoinik with the aim of illuminating reasons why Dostoevsky’s early supporters, who celebrated the success of Bednye liudi, were ambivalent, at best, about his second work.

Approaches to Dvoinik in later criticism have varied widely. Textological studies trace the variety of source texts incorporated by the author and describe the interplay of narrative modes he employed (cf. Bem, Grossman, Passage, Tynianov, Vinogradov); sociocultural analyses investigate Dostoevsky’s position between the Romantic Age and Russia of the 1840’s (cf. Fanger, Frank, Somerwil-Ayrton, Terras); psychological readings recognize a case study of madness and a pioneering work of psychoanalysis (cf. Breger, Kohlberg, Rank, Rosenthal); other approaches foreground metaphysics and the mythopoeic structure of the work, bringing Western cultural myths of ontological dualism and synthesis to light (cf. Anderson, Berdiaev, De Jong, Ivanov, Knapp). No study, however, has given due attention to the problematic discrepancies in the protagonist’s awareness of his moral self. While issues of moral culpability have been thoroughly appraised in the works of Dostoevsky’s post-exile period, the intersection between ego-centred motivations and moral awareness as a focal point of Dvoinik has
gone largely unexamined. Moreover, no study of this vital work of Dostoevsky’s early oeuvre, concerning which the author declared in 1877 that he had “never brought a more serious idea to literature,” has adequately explored the many contradictions it encompasses. Why did the novella jar so grievously with critics who only weeks before its publication had looked to Dostoevsky as the voice of promise of Natural School social realism? Why did Dostoevsky employ a narrative mode comprised largely of antiquated Romantic clichés? Why are the hero’s ambitious strivings treated so ambiguously in the work?

These and other questions I examine in the course of this dissertation uncover some of the formal and thematic problems that make *Dvoinik* the most intricate—and probably one of the least understood—among Dostoevsky’s early works. I propose a rereading of *Dvoinik* that bridges many of the foregoing approaches in the interests of disclosing an underlying thematic unity centred on the ethical situation of the protagonist. Like many of Dostoevsky’s more mature works, *Dvoinik* problematizes the issue of the psychological permutations of egoism as they come to bear on the foundations of a moral society. As I will demonstrate, the chief thematic strains and structural components of *Dvoinik* centre on the hero’s shortcomings with respect to self-knowledge and moral awareness; more than that, the psychological complexities of the narrative locate self-identity at the nexus where egoism and moral sense converge.

The study of moral dilemmas in literature is a complex and problematic undertaking. Critical language and descriptive apparati have themselves undergone intense scrutiny in the last century, and totalizing systems that claim privileged access to the truth cannot presently be considered viable. One takes special caution when

\[13 \textit{PSS} 1:489.\]
approaching literary works from a setting, such as European Russia in the mid-nineteenth century, when a ground of certainty—the universal foundation of an ultimate reality—was assumed and rigorously sought after. This was a bias of Belinsky’s ‘organic’ criticism, which was strongly influenced by German Romantic Idealist thought exemplified in Schelling’s *Naturphilosophie* and the works of one of Dostoevsky’s favourite poets, Friedrich von Schiller. This is not to say that *Dvoinik* or other works of Dostoevsky are orientated around a monologic worldview—that possibility was thoroughly disproved by Mikhail Bakhtin, whose seminal work on Dostoevsky I discuss in Chapter Three. On the contrary, Dostoevsky’s fiction wages a polemical struggle with prevailing attitudes that privileged holistic interpretations of life and the universe. The conceptual bias of many of his contemporaries toward the ‘natural’ and the ‘real’ is overtly problematized in Dostoevsky’s tales of people whose self-perceptions, conceptual understandings and reasoning processes are irreparably fragmented. Likewise, the moral issues posed by Dostoevsky are ones that reflect the contradictions of his age and interrogate its ethical and ontological assumptions.

To study the issues of self-awareness and morality in a work like *Dvoinik* requires a pragmatic perspective that avoids truth claims, whether about the views and intentions of the author, or concerning any underlying reality or ideological ground which the text identifies with and upholds. My approach to *Dvoinik* consists of intertextual framing and textual analysis aimed at interrogating the novella’s dialogic relationship to its cultural context. Situated between Romantic poetics and the emerging realism, the latter of which was given its greatest impetus in the mid-1840s in Russia by purveyors of the Natural

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School, Dostoevsky’s first works appeared at a moment when aesthetic norms and literary conventions were subject to significant reclassifications and revaluations. These shifting trends must be seen as indicative of broad sociocultural changes both in Europe and Tsar Nicholas I’s Russia. Bearing this cultural backdrop steadily in mind, my study of *Dvoinik* describes its representations of duality in terms of the tensions it exploits in regards to subjective consciousness and moral reasoning.

To begin, I will sketch the literary, cultural and intellectual trends that form a backdrop to the themes of *Dvoinik* outlined above.

*Cultural Orientations*

Dostoevsky emerged as a thinker and writer when the problem of Russia’s homogeneous national-historical identity was culminating in a cultural crisis. A century and a half since the founding of St. Petersburg, the Russian experience had evolved into a ferment of competing ideologies. The radical, Westernizing reforms that had revolutionized Russia since the time of Peter the Great were ripe with internal paradoxes. After catalysts such as the Decembrist Rebellion of 1825 and revolutionary unrest in Europe fuelled the increasingly reactionary tenor of the regime of Nicholas I (1825-55), clashes between fresh initiatives for reform and the tsar’s arch conservative doctrine of ‘Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Nationality’ testify to the latent incongruity that made up modern Russia and demonstrated the deep-seated discord that engulfed the country through those years. Moreover, the Russian elite’s lasting cultural infatuation with Western-style

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Enlightenment through the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries ensured that Russia experienced modernity as a condition forced upon it by Western European historical models that offered no constructive role for such an elite.

By the 1830s, the syncretic bases of Russian culture gave way to radical doubt among sectors of the intelligentsia who harshly criticized Russia's history and its national identity. In his famous first "Philosophical Letter," Petr Chaadaev alleged that Russia had no past, no present, and no future, and had contributed nothing to world culture.\(^{16}\) In the following decade, these and other criticisms at the centre of debate had polarized the Russian intelligentsia into rival ideological camps: the Slavophiles, a group of Romantic intellectuals who flourished in the 1840s and 1850s, saw in pre-Petrine Russia the true way of life of their people, and passionately advocated a return to native principles and the expurgation of the 'Western disease'; their opponents, a more diverse group known as Westernizers, ranged from the moderate—who argued that the Western historical path was the model that Russia needed to follow—to the radical, who challenged religion, society, and the entire Russian and European system. The debate between Slavophiles and Westernizers demonstrated that Russia's internal contradictions stemmed from issues of political and cultural identity that were hotly debated in contemporary philosophy. In historian Nicholas Riasanovsky's summation, "Slavophiles and the Westernizers started from similar assumptions of German idealistic philosophy, and indeed engaged in constant debate with each other, but came to different conclusions."\(^{17}\)

\(^{16}\) Chaadaev's *Philosophical Letters*, written in French, circulated as a manuscript beginning in 1829 and were finally published in the Moscow journal *Teleskop* [Telescope] (no. 15), in 1836. The journal, for which Belinsky had written since 1833, was suppressed for publishing Chaadaev's *Letters*.

In view of this context, Michael Holquist discerns that Dostoevsky is modern not because of any particular themes or techniques he uses, but because he writes within a conflict between the modern and the historical.\(^{18}\) Viewing universal problems through the prism of modern challenges including his own nation’s cultural fragmentation, the dominant chord in Dostoevsky’s modernity, I will add, is its tendency to dramatize a search for the unity of being even while questioning its basis. In spite of the disintegration of cultural moulds and the dismantling of entire structures of belief that sustained them, the modern subject looks for a founding core needed only to be regained to restore harmony in the life of individuals and society.\(^{19}\) This outlook can be demonstrated even in Dvoinik, in which the protagonist tries to find a redemptive course in the face of an identity in pieces, with repeated appeals to centralized authority and a normative moral base.

Indeed, the hero of Dvoinik exemplifies a man whose cultural orientations are complicated by the rapid pace of change owing to Western influences that proliferated throughout Russia in the first half of the nineteenth century.\(^{20}\) Cataclysmic events such as the Napoleonic invasion, the ensuing pursuit of Napoleon by the Russian forces into Europe, and the Decembrist rebellion of 1825, combined with the growing impoverishment of the gentry and urban aristocracy, the secularization of Russian culture, and the expansion of the imperial bureaucracy, to upset the equilibrium of Russia’s traditional social makeup. The formation of a syncretic culture in permanent

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\(^{18}\) On Dostoevsky as ‘modern’ see Michael Holquist, Dostoevsky and the Novel (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1986), 33-34.

\(^{19}\) See, for example, Charles Taylor, Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity.

\(^{20}\) The start of western influences in Russia can be traced to a much earlier time. In “Vsgliad na russkiiu literaturu 1846-go goda,” Sobranie sochinenii v deviati tomax (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1976-1982), Belinsky maintains that the character of Russian literature to his day had been determined by the reforms of Peter the Great.
flux not only caused detrimental socio-economic effects, but, what is more, contributed to the erosion of traditional values that would change the face of Russian society itself. Dostoevsky attested to the harsh socio-economic realities of mid-nineteenth-century St. Petersburg in a letter of 20 August, 1844, in which he quotes the French aphorism ‘Chacun pour soi et dieu pour tous’ [Всякий за себя, а бог за всех]. The editors of PSS suggest that in this popular saying, “Dostoevsky saw the ‘social formula’ of bourgeois Europe.” He would refer to the same phrase much later, in Dnevnik pisatel’ia, where he modifies the aphorism to critique the harsh conditions generated by ego-driven civil ethics:

> Вот удивительная пословица, выдуманная людьми, которые успели пожить. С моей стороны, я готов признать все совершенства такого мудрого правила. Но дело в том, что пословицу эту изменили в самом начале ее существования. Всякий за себя, все против тебя, а бог за всех. После этого естественно, что надежда человеку остается весьма плохая.

Here is an astounding aphorism, thought of by people who really managed to live. From my point of view, I am prepared to admit the flawless perfection of such a wise rule. But the problem is, the saying was immediately altered upon its first inception. Everyone for himself, everyone against you, and God for all. After that, naturally, a person’s prospects become extremely bleak.

Dostoevsky bends the implicitly cynical ‘everyone for himself’ into the cutthroat ‘everyone against you,’ reflecting the attitude that ‘God for all’ is not a promise of social unity but a last refuge for the disenfranchised many who are ostracized by the ruthless conditions of society. Similarly, at issue in Dvoinik are the social conventions of group cohesion which promote, paradoxically, not unity but separateness. Exclusion and alienation are its protagonist’s painful reality, while Golyadkin’s feelings of alienation and isolation from the community also fuel his moral tribulations.

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21 PSS 28(i):420.
22 Ibid., 92. My italics.
The world of Russia’s cultured elite encapsulated these dilemmas best. Following a century and a half of Westernization since the reforms of Peter I, and owing particularly to the impact of French culture, by the middle of the nineteenth century, members of the Russian nobility had formed a veritable ideology of cultural refinement. In Russia, the historical function of the dvorianstvo [gentry] was state service, whether military or bureaucratic. The social status of the dvorianstvo, however, created for this segment of Russian society its greatest role, conveyed in the Russian word obshchestvo [society], used here in a narrow sense to mean ‘the polite and fashionable world.’ In his book Fiction and Society in the Age of Pushkin: Ideology, Institutions and Narrative, William Mills Todd III describes the power of language and other forms of cultural expression to operate as elaborate systems of social interaction in stratified nineteenth-century Petersburg. Developing a concept of the ‘ideology of talk,’ Todd incorporates a range of discursive conventions such as salon-style witticisms, epigrams, and Gallicisms that defined one’s membership in ‘polite society.’ The multifarious ways in which polite society is both a social organization and an ideology of the cultural conventions of post-Petrine Russia are described in terms of the norms and behaviours encoded in cultured manners that indicated one’s inclusion in the dominant group. Members were separated from non-members, in the main, through their Western-style education, their cosmopolitanism, honour and taste. Thus, a cohesive bond for society members was maintained through a set of obligatory cultural refinements—strict codes of fashion, linguistic usage, gestures and manners. On the other hand, if social grace, salon-style discourse and a perfect cravat guaranteed one’s acceptance in the community, the self-

serving theatricality of polite society and its conventional ethics also blurred the boundaries between the aesthetic and the moral: “Polite society became an arbiter not only of aesthetic and social form, but of personal existence (the harmonious individual, the honnête homme, later the dandy) and of morality (civility, friendship, social harmony).”\(^{24}\) If the ideology of talk was, in an ideal sense, an operative of social harmony, it also created potential for this behavioural norm to encourage falsehood, imposture, and unchecked passion: “The light fictionality of sociable talk yields to Nozdrev’s outrageous lies and to Chichikov’s macabre scheme. Manners here constitute but a fragile barrier against—and simultaneously a mask for—the chaos and power of the passions, which brook no amelioration.”\(^{25}\) An even more substantial consequence, one that is an important antecedent of the issues in \textit{Dvoinik}, was the fact that “the ideology of polite society seemed to impose a fragmentation of the personality upon its members that prevented them from becoming unified subjects.”\(^{26}\)

Todd’s study examines three monumental works of nineteenth-century Russian fiction that mimic the world of Russia’s elite: \textit{Evgeny Onegin} (\textit{Eugene Onegin}, 1823-1831), \textit{Geroi nashego vremeni} (\textit{A Hero of Our Time}, 1840) and \textit{Mertvye dushi} (\textit{Dead Souls}, 1842). Pushkin, Lermontov and Gogol, respectively, satirize the pretension and the exclusiveness of either Petersburg society or a provincial society that is aping the Petersburg norms. “Unbridled fashion—our tyrant,” proclaimed Pushkin in \textit{Evgeny Onegin} (5:42), and all three writers mocked the reign supreme of fashion and taste with their satires of Russian society. In Todd’s conclusion, this approach to character, measuring it according to socially proscribed behavioural norms, “not only fragmented

\(^{24}\) Ibid., 3-4.
\(^{25}\) Ibid., 6.
\(^{26}\) Ibid., 33.
the social subject but also precluded examination of the inner life, to say nothing of the depths of the psyche as more recent periods have come to know them." Self-examination of the inner life, the life of the soul, remained a matter of privacy that could not be expressed in any form of writing. The novels of Pushkin, Lermontov and Gogol are marked by a conspicuous absence of psychological self-examination, yet on the other hand, intense passages of psychological examination are increasingly prevalent in the private letters of intellectuals of the 1830s and 1840s. However, analysis of the inner life was still limited in these correspondences, usually restricted to moralistic generalities and discrete, passing emotions. Russian literature of this epoch seemed to stand on the brink of a cultural transformation that was not quite ripe for development. “The ability to account for an essential inner self remained largely beyond the limits of language and culture. Belinsky, a leader of the first intellectual generation to follow this one, would insightfully remark that ‘with us the personality [lichnost'] is just beginning to break out of its shell.”

Dostoevsky famously engaged in and depicted the intense psychological self-examinations alluded to here, also building the personality from the fragmented inner life of the modern subject. But his choice of protagonist is not the society gentleman of Pushkin or Lermontov, nor the picaresque entrepreneur modelled by Gogol’s Chichikov. He engages the social ethics of the privileged classes indirectly through a portrait of the ‘little man’ chinovnik [government official], a common motif in popular fiction of the 1830s and 40s and a frequent presence in ethnographic sketches of the Natural School. Dostoevsky’s adaptation of the chinovnik genre is a topic of further discussion in Chapter Two, below. First, it is vital to examine the Romantic motifs and stylistic influences that

27 Ibid., 37.
contributed to the theme of the bifurcated self which Dostoevsky brought to the stylized portrait of his *chinovnik* hero. The host of literary styles and genres that can be detected as probable influences on Dostoevsky's early writing has been extensively researched.\(^{28}\) My summary will highlight those which, to my mind, demonstrate Dostoevsky's fascination with duality as a prevailing component of the process of developing moral self-awareness.

**Romantic Poetics and the Doppelgänger Motif**

As a child, Dostoevsky experienced literature with profound, direct and intense pathos. Later in life he would reminisce, "I used to spend the long winter evenings before going to bed listening (for I could not yet read), agape with ecstasy and terror, as my parents read aloud to me from the novels of Ann Radcliffe. Then I would rave deliriously about them in my sleep."\(^{29}\) In Leonid Grossman's apt summation, adventure tales and Gothic horror novels (Scott, Radcliffe, Louissa, Maturin, De Quincey, Hoffmann) showed the young Dostoevsky that in the age of reason of Voltaire and Derzhavin there existed attempts to break through the conventions of rationality to reveal the wonderful and terrible otherworld of irrationality.\(^{30}\) It has also been recorded that one of Dostoevsky's earliest experiences with the exhilaration of storytelling came courtesy of his Bible tutor. Andrei Dostoevsky recalled that the first book he and his brothers were given for reading lessons was a collection of tales from the Old and New Testaments, and that the deacon


\(^{29}\) Quoted in Frank, *Seeds of Revolt*, 55.

who came to tutor them was an animated storyteller with whom the boys were duly fascinated. He read and sermonized to the Dostoevsky boys with such religious fervour and dramatic zest that he couldn’t help forming a deep impression on the highly susceptible future author Fyodor Mikhailovich. The writer later informed his younger brother with great nostalgic enthusiasm that he had found a copy of the same edition of the childhood reader the deacon had used in his lessons with the boys. These illustrations from Dostoevsky’s childhood suggest that Dostoevsky experienced the written word, which had such profound meaning for the boy and would continue to bewitch the artist, in a twofold manner: as viscerally engaging dramatic flights of imagination, and as revelation of the divine word of Truth.

Andrei also reports family readings and discussion of Nikolai Karamzin, and Dostoevsky would later confirm, “I grew up on Karamzin.” Karamzin’s influence is important to the discussion of Dvoinik not only because his “Bednaia Liza” (“Poor Liza,” 1792) is a founding text of sentimentalism which, to some extent, Dvoinik adapts and parodies; his 12-volume Istoriia gosudarstva Rossiiskogo (History of the Russian State), with its strong defence of autocratic power in maintaining Russian unity, is also an important source. The question of civil authority and rebellion is paramount in the History, while patriarchal authority is a constant preoccupation also for the hero of Dvoinik. In these parallels with Karamzin, it is important to bear in mind, however, that

31 Andrei Dostoevsky, Vospominaniiia (Moscow: Agraf, 1999), 65.
32 Ibid., 69.
33 Letter of 2 December, 1870. Qtd. in Frank, Seeds of Revolt, 56. Karamzin’s travels reported in Letters were taken during the early stages of the French Revolution. While the author admired the progress the Revolution inspired in Europe, he expressed a sense of foreboding and eventually dismay and disillusion that propagate the notion, important to Russian thought in the 19th Century, that Europe was a doomed and dying civilization. This would become an important theme throughout Dostoevsky’s own works. Of Karamzin’s works Andrei mentions, in particular, both History of the Russian State which his brother “read and reread,” and Letters of a Russian Traveller.
Dostoevsky should not be perceived as promoting a conservative ideology. Rather, the moral basis of society is interrogated in *Dvoinik*. In particular, depictions of secular authority, which I examine in Chapter Three, are treated as forces which contribute to the protagonist's misconstrued self-definitions rather than purveyors of stable moral truths.

The Gothic horror novel is a genre that deserves special mention as a pre-eminent example of how Romantic poetics engaged the task of probing a human nature that is divided by good and evil. In the complex psychological drama of Gothic fiction, the discord between human passion and civil ethics is foregrounded in sensational dramas of sometimes heroic proportions. In particular, the post-revolutionary obsession with freedom that was depicted in British Gothic fiction might suggest that “even before Napoleon, the Gothic hero wished to be Napoleon.”

Generally, Gothic novels measure the nature of human social organization and its value systems against the dimensions of the problem of evil. According to the ethical formula usually applied in the Gothic mode, evil does not exist in human nature, but is often a perceptual consequence of fabricated morality and ethics. “Whenever natural impulses act against social law,” Simpson observes, “or when human nature is conditioned or repressed, the possibility of perceiving ‘evil’ is created.” Thus, the concept of sin and the question of evil at the centre of Gothic themes and plot structure are treated in terms of the discord between human passions and the social laws that are meant to govern them. Humankind’s innocence in the face of nature is for the most part upheld, and is coupled with a parallel reliance upon fate and religion. Both the egoistic passion that rules *Dvoinik’s* Golyadkin

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35 Ibid.
36 Ibid., 95.
and the morally suspect mores of society he constantly condemns are indicative of this ideological framing indigenous to the Gothic mode.

In adolescence, Dostoevsky absorbed and internalized the literatures of a broader category of European Romanticism. Parisian boulevard literature, known also as French roman feuilleton (written by popular writers such as Frederick Sulié, Eugene Sue and Paul de Kock) gave him colourful scenes of contemporary urban life dressed in all the trappings of this somewhat ‘sensationalist’ prose. The future author would spice his stories with grand doses of intrigue, scandal, catastrophes and cliff-hangers. In his native country, Russian historical novels of the 1830s adapted the trends of European Romanticism to the Russian context. Dostoevsky read such Russian imitators of Scott as M. N. Zagoskin, I. I. Lazhechnikov and K. P. Masalsky, showing his interest in this brand of contemporary Romantic nationalism. Honoré de Balzac, Victor Hugo and George Sand can be singled out in particular as writers who dramatized for Dostoevsky the moral conflicts of an age increasingly subject to material interests, and who offered socialist and Christian moral alternatives in their stead. Owing in large part to these writers, and to visions of social harmony promoted by French Utopian Socialism and Saint-Simonian New Christianity—movements current among leftist thinkers in Europe in the 1840s and absorbed eagerly in Russia—by the time Dostoevsky was writing his earliest manuscripts, his Christianity was strongly social humanitarian in orientation. Furthermore, German Romantic Idealism in philosophy, art and aesthetics was another

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37 Originally a kind of supplement attached to the political portion of French newspapers, the feuilleton consisted chiefly of non-political news and gossip, literature and art criticism, a chronicle of the fashions, and epigrams, charades and other literary trifles. The roman feuilleton carried these conventions over into novel format, incorporating ethnographic sketches of contemporary urban life. Influenced by the French, the feuilleton became a popular genre in Russia's 19th-century literary journals. Dostoevsky wrote several feuilletons of his own in 1847—see my discussion in Chapter Four.

38 Andrei Dostoevsky, 69-70.

39 See Fanger, Dostoevsky and Romantic Realism; Frank, Seeds of Revolt.
strain of influence that proliferated among Russian intellectuals in the 1830s and 40s and made strong impressions on the budding writer. Its traces in Dostoevsky’s thought and writing have been studied in some depth. Frank identifies an indoctrinating experience of Idealist philosophy as the greatest formative influence on Dostoevsky’s first experiments in writing. Growing up in the first half of the nineteenth century, Dostoevsky (b. 1821) inherited both the Enlightenment love for science and reason and the Romantic quest for man’s relation to the world of the supernatural or transcendent—the Absolute Idea. The precise intellectual climate created in Russia by the stirring momentum of literary and socio-philosophical trends siphoning in from Western Europe through its poets and philosophers is what Joseph Frank calls the “starting point (and departure point)” of Dostoevsky’s own debut writing in the 1840s. It should be noted, however, that Dostoevsky’s ‘indoctrination’ with Idealist philosophy cannot be attributed to his close study of particular texts. Rather, Dostoevsky’s environment was saturated with these ‘ideas in the air.’

Dostoevsky was well versed in the foregoing literary trends and was conversant with each of their discourses. They gave him an abundance of heroes, episodes, conflicts and intrigues he would process and adapt, handling each of the elements with his characteristic exuberance and perfervid vitality. Leonid Grossman explains how Dostoevsky was trained in classical perfection of form when first hearkening to his muse; but learning from his predecessors and from the free, unfettered form of Romantic novels—owing, moreover, to the exigencies of the publishing trade and the necessity of catering to public taste—his writing style came to centre on ‘zanimatel’nost’.

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40 Frank, Seeds of Revolt, 64.
[approximately, ‘captivation’] as an artistic principle.\textsuperscript{41} Driven by his own zest for *zanimatel’nost*, Dostoevsky wrung the salient tensions out of each of the genres he handled and learned to modulate the emotional intensity in his characters and stories.

In particular, in *Dvoinik* Dostoevsky exploits the *Doppelgänger* motif, a familiar literary device in Romantic literature. The hero’s repeated confrontations with his double place the conflict of inner division at the centre of both the novel’s action and its thematic concerns. The motif highlights the anxiety that betokens a contradiction between one’s inner sense of freedom and the external circumstance of subjection to necessity. ‘Doubling,’ however, is a much older literary practice than this particular application would suggest. Laurence Porter argues that doubling is the generative principle of narrative: when a protagonist experiences desire towards an external object which he believes will complete him, the division between subject and object gives rise to a quest for reunion with the object. This is the basis of narrative action, in which the protagonist plays the dual role of performer and observer. By the time Romantics exploit the trope, doubling comes to exemplify the cultural flux that occasioned deep probing for personal identity. Radical changes in social, political and religious institutions subverted the stable foundation upon which the personality had previously been formed. Moreover, the non-rational was perceived as a force that contributed to the shaping of current events as well as personal experience. Consequently, “This phenomenon encouraged and sanctioned the literary exploration of non-rational modes of perception, with the viewpoint we now call depth psychology. [ . . . ] To the doubling of narrative subject and object, and to the reduplication of narrative line, nineteenth-century literature characteristically added the

\textsuperscript{41} Grossman, *Poetika Dostoevskogo*, 10-12.
doubling of individual characters in order to portray inner conflicts, to depict a \textit{d\textsuperscript{e}calage} between a character’s conscious and unconscious mind."\textsuperscript{42}

Examples of the ‘double technique’ which would have been very familiar to Dostoevsky and his readers are found in such German Romantics as Adelbert von Chamisso and E. T. A. Hoffmann, and in their Russian counterparts Aleksandr Veltman, Ivan Lazhechnikov and Nikolai Gogol, all of whom Andrei Dostoevsky reports having numbered among his older brother’s favourite authors as a youth.\textsuperscript{43} Dostoevsky was particularly impressed with the tales of E. T. A. Hoffmann, perhaps the best known author to exploit the \textit{Doppelg\textsuperscript{a}nger} idea. Ample research on the topic confirms the profound influence the German writer had on Dostoevsky, exercising a deep and pervading force not only in his earliest works where intertextual references are most abundant, but through his entire literary output.\textsuperscript{44} Surprisingly for someone as literate as Dostoevsky, his obsession with Hoffmann came as somewhat of an anachronism, since


\textsuperscript{43} Andrei Dostoevsky, 69-70. Another source that is likely to have piqued Dostoevsky’s interest in the double motif is a review of the book \textit{Prakticheskaia meditsina} (Practical Medicine, Moscow, Spring 1845) by I. E. Diad’kovsky that appeared in September of the same year in \textit{Notes of the Fatherland: «Prakticheskaia meditsina. Rassuzhdienie [...] Yustina Diad’kovskogo», Otechestvennye zapiski} No. 9. Otd. VI. C. 8. The Russian doctor and philosopher Diad’kovsky was an acquaintance of Dostoevsky’s father. A biography written by a pupil Lebedev had described how the doctor’s double had appeared to him, and this review in the popular left wing journal expresses doubt concerning the real possibility of the phenomenon (for discussion see \textit{Letopis’ zhizni i tvorchestva F. M. Dostoevskogo v 3-x t., 1821-1881. T 1: 1821-1864. SPb, Akademicheskii proekt, 1993, C 97-98, 100). It is probable that Diad’kovsky’s book and this review were known to Dostoevsky and that the story of Dr. Diad’kovsky’s personal double appearing before him provided an added stimulus to Dostoevsky’s interest in using the double motif as the narrative framework for his novella of 1846 (Ibid., 98). Lermontov’s unfinished work “Shtoss” published in the almanac \textit{Vchera i segodnia} (Yesterday and Today) of V. A. Sologub (April 1845. Bk 1, p. 70-71) may also have influenced the themes of \textit{Dvoinik} (Ibid., 95).

the 'Hoffmann craze' reached its peak in Russia in the late 1830s. The first translations of Hoffmann began appearing in Russia in 1822, the year of the writer's death, and in 1825 the first Russian imitation of Hoffmann's manner appeared in the story "Lafertovskaia makovnitsa" ("The Poppy-Seed-Cake Woman of the Lafertov Quarter") by the nobleman Perovsky who wrote under the penname Antony Pogorelsky. His 1828 collection of stories called *Dvoinik, ili Moi vechera v Malorossii* (*The Double, or My Evenings in Little Russia*), which I discuss in the following chapter, is credited with coining the term 'dvoinik' in the Russian language to render the German 'Doppelgänger' or 'Doppeltgänger'.

Hoffmannism was soon to become all the rage in Russian Romanticism, taking hold primarily in the early 1830s. But already with Gogol's 1836 story "Nos" ("The Nose"), an ironic parody of the Doppelgänger motif, the trend was on its way out, attested also by a rapid decline in translations of Hoffmann in popular Russian journals after 1841. Prince V. F. Odoevsky's *Russkie nochi* (*Russian Nights*) of 1844 included stories that had already appeared in individual printings and signals the end of Hoffmannism as a centrepiece of popular Russian Romanticism. Dostoevsky's resuscitation of its conventions in his own *Dvoinik* of 1846 earned him the censure of Belinsky, the same critic who had praised the excellence of Pushkin's Hoffmannesque "Pikovaia dama" ("The Queen of Spades," 1834). Literary modes had changed considerably, and Natural School realism was now the favoured style. Yet it is impossible to see Dostoevsky as a writer who was simply behind the times once one considers that *Dvoinik* incorporates much more into its narrative fabric than Hoffmannian

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46 Passage, 6.
supernaturalism. The clever miscellany of interwoven narrative modes combines the heroic romance and adventure novel, Romantic sentimentalism, urban Gothic horror, and French boulevard literature, as noted above. But Dostoevsky’s insistence on making the Doppelgänger a centrepiece of his work should give us pause.

As evidence of Dostoevsky’s attraction, in his formative years, to the paired ideas of madness and doubles, I would cite his pronouncement in the postscript of a letter to his brother Mikhail of 9 August 1838: “У меня есть проект: сделатьсь сумасшедшим. Пусть люди беятся, пусть лечат, пусть делают умным.” [I have a plan: to become a madman. Let people get furious and put me under treatment, let them make me reasonable.] His peculiar enthusiasm “to become a madman” comes from reading Hoffmann’s Der Magnetiseur, whose protagonist Alban scorns the moral precepts he considers to be outdated and oppressive. “Ужасно видеть человека,” writes Fyodor Mikhailovich, “у которого во власти непостижимое, человека, который не знает, что делать ему, играет игрушкой, которая есть—бог!”47 [It is terrifying to find a man who has the inconceivable in his power, who does not know what to do, who plays with a toy that is—God!] Dostoevsky’s enthusiasm for the mad Alban, and at the same time, his horror at the implications of the latter’s rebellion are the kernels of ideas that come to fruition in Dostoevsky’s mature writing. The issues expressed here are dilemmas that will resonate throughout his oeuvre: what are the implications of the extraordinary power humans wield by the strength of an ideologically-tuned mind and reckless passion (cf. Nikolai Stavrogin)? Can one discover the foundation of moral action by means of the reasoning faculties alone (cf. the Underground Man, Ivan Karamazov)? Does an

individual have the right to transgress the ethical strictures of society to serve his own ends, on his own terms (cf. Raskolnikov)? At the core of these dilemmas is a question of the balance between human intellect and the passions.

In a letter written shortly thereafter, on 31 October 1838, Dostoevsky responds to his brother’s alleged notion that in order to think more, you have to feel less. He calls it a rash formula and emotional raving: “Что ты хочешь сказать словом знать? Познать природу, душу, бога, любовь... Это познается сердцем, а не умом.” [What do you mean by the word to know? An understanding of nature, the human soul, God, love—that comes from the heart, not from the mind.] He elaborates:

Проводник мысли сквозь бренную оболочку в состав души есть ум. Ум—способность материальная... душа же, или дух, живет мыслью, которую нашептывает ей сердце... Мышль зарождается в душе. Ум—орудие, машина, движимая огнем душевным... Притом (2-я статья) ум человека, увлекшись в область знаний, действует независимо от чувства, следовательно, от сердца. Ежели же цель познания будет любовь и природа, тут открывается чистое поле сердцу...

It is reason that conducts thought through the frail membrane into the soul. Reason is a material faculty—the soul or spirit lives by the idea that is whispered to it by the heart—An idea is born in the soul. Reason is the instrument, the machine that is set in motion by the fire of the soul—And so (this is the second point) human reason when it strays into the domain of knowledge operates independently of feeling, that is, of the heart. But if the goal is to understand love and nature, then a clear field is open to the heart...

The primacy of thought over feeling in his brother’s schemata demonstrates a rationalist and empiricist point of view that had characterized Enlightenment thought and found its fullest expression in Kant. Some of Dostoevsky’s characters rail against the view—there is perhaps no greater apotheosis of the resistance to rational empiricism than the Underground Man’s hostile objection, “два раза два четыре есть уже не жизнь, господа, а начало смерти.”49 [two times two makes four is no longer life, gentlemen,

48 PSS 28(i):54-55; Selected Letters, 10. Italics are in the original.
49 PSS 5:118-119.
but the beginning of death.] The Underground Man is aware that he is probably perceived as a madman for his irrational attitudes. Similarly, Dostoevsky’s distinction between heart and mind, which privileges feeling over the material faculty of reason, accords with his aforementioned pronouncement that he identifies with the mad Alban. It is not that he considers insanity a virtue, but that he recognizes that a society which functions on rational systems to the exclusion of feeling ignores a fundamental constituent of humanity—which is its complex inner emotional life. In a mechanistic universe, feeling is superfluous, and overly-sentient beings must be mad.

The idea that nature, the soul, God and love are understood not by the mind but by the heart belongs to the Romantic disposition, in whose realm madmen abound. Romantic discourse that evoked notions of the sublime, the irrational, the otherworldly and the supernatural carried a special appeal for Dostoevsky as a young man. Frank notes the aspiring writer’s tendency, whenever he is called to represent his inner life, to employ the categories of Romantic metaphysics and to cast personal problems into cosmic and world-embracing terms. In the same letter as that quoted above, one notices the marked Romantic flavour of the sixteen-year-old Dostoevsky’s imagery and analogies:

Я ношусь в какой-то холодной, полярной атмосфере, куда не заползал луч солнечный . . . Я давно не испытывал взрывов вдохновенья . . . зato часто бывало и в таком состоянии, как, помнится, Шильонский узник после смерти братьев в темнице . . . Не залетит ко мне райская птичка поэзии, не согреет охлаждой души .

I am drifting around in some cold, polar atmosphere where no ray of sunshine has crept . . . It is long since I have experienced any burst of inspiration . . . on the other hand, I often find myself in the same state as the prisoner of Chillon, remember, after the death of his brothers in the dungeon . . . No heavenly bird of poetry will ever fly in to visit me and warm my soul that has grown cold.

50 Frank, Seeds of Revolt, 103-104. For a detailed examination of Dostoevsky as a Romantic writer see also Donald Fanger, Romantic Realism.
In the same exalted discourse, Dostoevsky muses in this letter over the dichotomy between the realm of spirit and the physical plane:

Если бы мы были духи, мы бы жили, носились в сфере той мысли, над которой носится душа наша, когда хочет разгадать ее. Мы же прах, люди должны разгадывать, но не могут обнять вдруг мысль.

If we were spirits we would live and soar in the sphere of that thought over which our soul hovers when it wishes to fathom it. But since we are dust, men, we have to comprehend it, but we cannot embrace it all at once.

Dostoevsky’s language shows that his understanding of human self-awareness involves a leap into the transcendental realm. Man’s understanding of the phenomena of the universe and the full awareness of his own nature are curtailed by the material conditions of his material manifestation. Therefore, human aspirations naturally aim for that higher awareness that reason—a material faculty—is incapable of grasping. The satisfaction of gaining the self-knowledge for which we yearn, sadly, is just out of reach. This tragic situation is the foundation of Romantic poetics.

Although many themes of the Romantic Age had reached their saturation point by the time Dostoevsky began writing in the mid-1840s, his early works show him testing contradictions, outlined above, that were as yet unresolved. Chief among them is the disparity between personal aims of transcendence and real-world contingencies that pull Romantic heroes into isolation, disillusionment and despair. I will therefore conclude my preface to the social and moral issues at the core of Dvoinik with reference to a vital contextual marker that found expression in Dostoevsky’s manipulation of the Doppelgänger motif—that of the Romantic divided self.

52 Ibid., 53-54.
In response to perceptions of cultural collapse and spiritual decline, notions of the self took on unprecedented dimensions of meaning in the art and literature of the Romantic Age. The rapidly escalating pace of sociocultural change brought pressures from industrialization and urbanization, the expansion of the bureaucratic state apparatus and the burgeoning mercantile economy. The increasing secularization of art and culture together with the passing of traditional mores and values from social practices—not to mention the stark realities of daily life in the modernizing world—led writers and artists to depict the debasement of human dignity, with the individual as a focal point. The composite individual personality became a primary preoccupation, the object of scrutiny and analysis in science and philosophy and the subject of a broad class of artistic and literary expression. The aspirations of the individual in search of higher forms of self-knowledge and spiritual development on the one hand came up against the concomitant drive in mass society, on the other, to perfect functional models of social organization through utilitarian ethics and mercantile interests.

As the child and product of the age, the morally itinerant Romantic protagonist experiences an irreconcilable opposition between the inner self and the outside world from which he feels alienated and disinherited. Where Romanticism reflected cultural collapse characterized by a fundamental insecurity, the self alone seemed to offer a measure of security—but the deeper it was probed, the more the probing subject succumbed to doubt. Feeling alone in a hostile world rather than part of an integrated and organic whole, the individual relied increasingly on self-examination but found that introspection led further into isolation, disillusionment and despair. Accordingly, dualism
and internal division are fundamental to Romantic malaise as much as secure unity in the
great chain of being and meaning was characteristic of the eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{53}

The discordant interplay of egoism and moral sense are elemental in the cultural
ethos of Romanticism. A hostile, alien reality devoid of values and resistant to efforts at
achieving personal fulfilment and happiness precipitated a flight into fantasy to escape
the external world and recreate the world of harmony within one’s own imaginings.\textsuperscript{54} The
acknowledgement that “the structures made by man for man” were “not really adequate
to man” constituted the essential motivation of later Romanticism and gave the impetus
to its literature of lost illusions. The implications for creative literature are expressed by
Alex de Jong in \textit{Dostoevsky and the Age of Intensity}: “The malaise creates a mode of
consciousness rather than a state of mind, colouring an outlook in such a way that it
becomes impossible placidly to accept the here and now. This fundamental sense of
ontological unease lies at the heart of the more desperate aspects of the literature of the
age . . . .”\textsuperscript{55} The new individualism of Romanticism created a sense of opposition of the
self to the rest of the world, from which it felt traumatically cut off. Yet, as De Jong
recognizes, Romantic Age despair, while causing alienation and estrangement and
prompting mental escape, also brought about a mode of consciousness that gave thrust to
tрансendental strivings. Internal division is fundamental to Romantic malaise, but even
as it gives expression to uncertainty and disenchantment, it operates as a catalyst in the
quest to reconcile the goals of the individual with society, and to discover fundamental
ontological truths:

\textsuperscript{53} Alex De Jong, \textit{Dostoevsky and the Age of Intensity} (London: Secker & Warburg, 1975), 15-16,
25.
\textsuperscript{54} Ibid., 22-23.
\textsuperscript{55} Ibid., 29.
The sense of being disunited is a key characteristic of the age. It is usually associated with self-d disgust and disgust with the world at large. This disgusted sense of schizoid division is perhaps the most important of all Romanticism’s reflections of its sense of the inadequacies of its reality. It provides the motivation for the most serious and ambitious of all the aspirations of Romanticism: the restoration of unity, harmony and synthesis.\textsuperscript{56}

Flights of fancy born of Romantic despair with its accompanying sense of inner division combined in Dostoevsky’s work to form a metaphysical striving that represented humanity’s relation to a world of supernatural or transcendent forces. The problem of moral self-awareness in these terms is one of apprehending one’s true interests as an autonomous being independently of one’s worldly desires and affectations.

\textit{Synopsis}

Using the double motif as a narrative strategy in \textit{Dvoinik}, Dostoevsky problematized the socio-ethical ideas he encountered in the favourite literature of his youth and in fiction and criticism among his contemporaries. The moral question of the individual in society is plotted on a matrix with two axes: the good-evil dichotomy and the dynamics of subject-other intersubjectivity. At their point of intersection rests the delicate balance of psychic harmony and personal identity.

In Chapter Two, I review some of the literary antecedents that contributed to these thematic and formal concerns of \textit{Dvoinik}. To begin, I focus on three works which combine Romantic poetics with realism while incorporating a strongly accented theme of dual consciousness. Secondly, I investigate literary trends contemporary to Dostoevsky’s debut work that had some bearing on critical perceptions of \textit{Dvoinik}. Chief among them are \textit{chinovnik} tales and the Natural School, which thrived under the tutelage of Vissarion

\textsuperscript{56} Ibid., 25.
Belinsky. Finally, I discuss some of the critical responses to *Dvoinik* in terms of the contemporary biases that informed them. In my findings, the struggle for a consolidation of Russian realism in the early 1840s was rife with contradictions with which Dostoevsky’s work is actively engaged.

In Chapter Three, I use close textual analysis to corroborate my thesis that a moral idea underlies the complex thematic and narrative tendencies that constitute *Dvoinik*. I examine situations and dialogue—particularly the protagonist’s cryptic sanctimonious pronouncements about fraudulence and blandishment, etiquette and chivalry—which suggest that his web of social and psychological crises point to a problem of moral self-awareness. Moreover, the question is to what degree Golyadkin holds any insight into his moral nature and his psychological travails. If his predicament involves finding his rightful place in society and understanding its ethical basis, Golyadkin himself is scarcely aware of that. This problem of deficient self-awareness brings the moral question around to match up with the issue of conscious polarity. Where social and philosophical idealism inform the moral problem, projections of the same through the lens of ego psychology and myth underscore the critical yet gravely problematic role of subjective moral reasoning. A certain idealism the hero projects indicates the presence of at least a primitive moral awareness. Yet his instinct for transcendental striving is frustrated, owing to his bifurcated moral nature. Ultimately, this hindrance to an integrated personality is cast as a problem of obstructed self-knowledge vis-à-vis the moral identity of the individual in society.

In Chapter Four, I consider some of the projections of the ideas Dostoevsky first modelled in *Dvoinik*. In “Peterburgskaia letopis’” (“Petersburg Chronicle”), a collection
of satirical journal pieces Dostoevsky published in 1847, his ideas on egoism are
developed and pushed to further-reaching conclusions. Secondly, from 1861 to 1866, he
endeavoured to revise and reissue Dvoinik. While the redaction published in 1866
differed little from the original publication, Dostoevsky’s extant notes for revision show
plans for a considerable reworking of the text that brings key issues and themes to light.
In particular, Golyadkin was to be given greater intellectual complexity as his moral
situation was updated for the socio-political context of the 1860s. His exposure to ideas
like utilitarian materialism and socialism, as well as his involvement in the revolutionary
underground, would present more complex dilemmas to try his moral self-awareness.
Finally, I discuss corollaries between these planned revisions and Zapiski iz podpol’ia
(Notes from Underground, 1864), a work into which Dostoevsky appears to have
funnelled his ideas for Dvoinik instead of revising the same. The updated hero from
Underground displays a greater conscious understanding of his ethical dilemmas. At the
same time, his awareness of their agonizing complexity emphasizes the still impassable
divide between the rational reasoning mind and the passionate force of the ego.
CHAPTER 2
LITERARY ANTECEDENTS AND CRITICAL RESPONSES

Heart and Mind: Pogorelsky, Veltman, Odoevsky

For the sake of contextual grounding to aid in my analysis of Dvoinik, I turn first to several works that appeared roughly between the early 1830s and 1840, on the cusp of Russian Romanticism and the advent of Russian realism. They are Antony Pogorelsky’s Dvoinik, ili moi vechera v Malorossii (The Double, or My Evenings in Little Russia, 1828), A. F. Veltman’s Serdtse i dumka (Heart and Mind, 1838), and Prince V. F. Odoevsky’s Gothic tales “Sil’fida” (“The Sylph,” 1837), and “Kosmorama” (“The Cosmorama,” 1840). Doubles figure prominently in these works, in each case according to its own unique formula. Common to all of them is the struggle between heart and mind coupled with issues of social and moral concern.

Pogorelsky debuted with the Hoffmanesque “Lafertovskaia makovnitsa” (“The Poppyseed-Cake-Woman of the Lafertov Quarter”) which was incorporated into the cycle of stories Dvoinik, ili moi vechera v Malorossii in 1828. The several stories making up this collection are told alternately by the narrator Antony and his alter ego, who is called simply The Double. Antony and his double trade tales that centre on themes relating to the foibles of human passion, and then, in conversation, evaluate each others’ narratives in dialogues about the discord between passion and intellect. This metanarrative framework allows Pogorelsky to expose the ironies implicit in the analysis of heart and mind. For one, The Double is presented as a staunch rationalist, a mentor who lectures

1 “Lafertovskaia makovnitsa” appeared in Novosti literatury (The Literary News) in 1825.
Antony with quasi-scientific analysis of human nature. The Double cautions against excessive belief in the supernatural, despite his own ostensibly fantastic nature, so that his skepticism serves as a foil to the more credulous Antony.\(^2\) One finds parallels in the meeting of Ivan Karamazov with his own *Doppelgänger*, except that the rational materialist double in Dostoevsky’s last novel is blackened by many degrees as an egoist and a devil. In Pogorelsky, The Double is a harmless and convivial companion, but one who acts as a catalyst to lead the protagonist toward self-examination.

The conflict of passion and intellect is best represented in Pogorelsky’s story, “Pagubnye posledstviia neobuzdannogo voobrazheniia” (“The Pernicious Effects of an Unbridled Imagination”) and the dialogue which follows it. Narrated by The Double, this tale sees a Russian count fall passionately in love with a sinister Spanish professor’s daughter, who turns out to be a papermaché wind-up doll. After being deceived into marrying the automaton, in the melodramatic denouement the count goes raving mad as the professor smashes her to pieces before his eyes, shouting, “Here is your wife!”\(^3\) To Antony’s incredulous queries on whether a man can really fall in love with a doll, The Double references Pygmalion and numerous legendary creators of lifelike automatons. He also remarks, “Взгляните на свет: сколько встретите вы кукол обоего пола, которые совершенно ничего иного не делают и делать не умеют, как только гуляют по улицам, пляшут на балах, приседают и улыбаются. Несмотря на то, частенько в них влюбляются и даже иногда предпочитают их людям, неравненно


\(^3\) The story is near in theme to Hoffmann’s “Sandman,” which also deals with the tragic love of a sensitive young man, endowed with a powerful imagination, towards a doll constructed by a skilful mechanic. Pogorelsky’s story lacks Hoffmann’s depth and originality, and the author was accused of misunderstanding Hoffmann. See Sobel, 14.
[Look at the world; how many dolls of both sexes are you bound to meet, who do nothing and can do nothing but walk in the streets, dance at balls, courtsey and smile? In spite of all this, people very often fall in love with them and sometimes even give them preference over others who are much more deserving!] The Russian count, and by this general analogy, anyone sharing the same weakness, is faulted for falling prey to an ‘unbridled imagination,’ or unchecked passion.

The ensuing discussion between the two narrative voices focuses on the constant struggle for supremacy between the intellect and passions. The Double teaches Antony the anatomy of intellect, along with its spiritual properties and their inversions created by vice and weakness. The virtues (magnanimity, firmness, decisiveness, good nature, compassion, etc.) do not overpower the intellect, while the vices (malice, envy, pride, vengefulness, self-content, arrogance, etc.) can and do lead it in the wrong directions. The Double defines intellect as the amalgam of several categories: common sense, perspicacity, quick understanding, profundity of thought, foresight, clarity, tact, wit, cunning, and social sense (esprit de société). These are compared to the vices, which are depicted in diagrams to show how they offset the balance of the qualities of intellect. The Double’s main thrust is that one can be considered clever, yet commit unforgivable follies. Meanwhile, envy, self-love, arrogance and stubbornness can easily pass for intelligence because learning, cunning and sharpness fool inattentive and lazy people—who make up most of the population.

The other stories and dialogic episodes in Pogorelsky’s collection contribute similar arguments for the cultivation of virtue and reason as a bulwark against human

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5 Pogorelsky, 87-101.
folly. Although the literary merit of Pogorelsky’s work is mediocre at best, his narratives are demonstrative of the clash between Romantic poetics and the spirit of rational empiricism that had come to dominate intellectual inquiry in the early mid-century. The Double’s postulates notwithstanding, the problem of human consciousness and moral awareness still remained shrouded in mystery. The human mind and man’s spiritual abilities are a great enigma, he explains, because the Almighty deigned to delimit human understanding of abstract matters by a sharp boundary. When Dostoevsky takes on these problems in Dvoinik, he exploits the Doppelgänger motif in such a way as to accent the subjective experience of bumping up against that margin. Golyadkin’s double wreaks his havoc just beyond the threshold of the hero’s conscious awareness. Unwilling to see his double as an emanation of self, Golyadkin is unable to hold a rational debate with his twin as Pogorelsky’s Antony does.

The one instance when he communes with his phantom clone in Chapter VII, Golyadkin Sr. (as the protagonist is called) is moved by Junior’s (the double’s) tearful story of slander at the hands of enemies, of losing his civil post and having to walk to Petersburg and live on the streets. Won over by his guest’s ingratiating manner, Golyadkin experiences compassion and a whole array of noble sentiments. Now “acting as someone’s protector,” and “at last doing good,” he is light-hearted and joyful. Partial to his interlocutor’s sentimental discourse, he dreams of exalted Schillerian brotherhood and offers reconciliation with his prodigal other self. “А ты не смущайся и не ропши на то, что вот между нами такое странное теперь обстоятельство: роптать, брат, грешно; это природа! А мать-природа щедра, вот что, брат Яша! Любя тебя,
братски любя тебя, говорю." [It's no good worrying or grumbling about this strange thing between us. It's a sin to grumble, my friend. It's Nature! And Mother Nature is generous, Yasha! I'm saying this because of my affection, my brotherly affection for you.] Punchdrunk and overcome with emotion, the two Golyadkins' bonding reaches maudlin heights when the double pens the epigram,

Если ты меня забудешь,
Не забуду я тебя;
В жизни может всё случиться,
Не забудь и ты меня!  

If me thou ever shouldst forget,
I'll remember thee;
Much in life may happen yet,
But remember me!

The entire episode betrays Golyadkin's partiality for exalted feeling, his fantasy to embody all that is exalted and beautiful, the prekrasnoe i vysokoe. His elevated disposition even carries over to his relations with his servant Petrushka, with whom he is usually condescending and derisive: "... чтоб и ты был спокоен и счастлив. Вот мы теперь все счастливы, так чтоб и ты был спокоен и счастлив. А теперь спокойной ночи желаю тебе. Усни, Петруша, усни." [I want you to be happy and easy in your mind. We're all happy now, and you should be happy and contented too. And now I wish you good night. Get some sleep, Petrusha, get some sleep.] Golyadkin is predisposed to this harmonious convergence with his shadow self when the bond matches his inner fantasy of elevated moral sentiment—which for Golyadkin has the character of a lofty passion, an intoxication. He gets so carried away in his fervour of gentility that he soon is overcome with doubt and remorse. «Расходился ж я, — думал он, — ведь вот теперь

7 PSS 1:157; Bird, 111.
8 PSS 1:159; Bird, 114.
шумит в голове и я пьян; и не удержался, дурачина ты этакая! и вздору с три короба намолол да еще хитрить, подлец, собирался. Конечно, прощение и забвение обид есть первейшая добротель, но всё ж оно плохо! вот оно как!»"9 ['I let myself go,' he thought, 'and now my brain’s fuddled, and I’m drunk. I didn’t keep a grip on myself. What a fool I am! I talked a string of nonsense when I meant to be cunning. To forgive and forget is the first of all virtues, of course, but it’s bad all the same! It is!'] In later incidents, when Golyadkin’s double plays the opportunist scamp and daemon saboteur, there is no question of brotherly communion. Golyadkin wishes to make his way in society and to be recognized for gallantry, not roguery. His passion for the former makes him blind to the truth of his complicity with the shadow self who uses subterfuge and flattery while touting the ideals of chivalry. Rather than allowing virtue and reason to bring his flaws to light, as Antony’s double coaches, Golyadkin perpetuates a pattern of folly and anguish in the internal division of his personality by repeatedly intoning the self-shielding mantra, “It has nothing to do with me.”

Finishing his work on Bednye liudi, Fyodor Mikhailovich wrote to his brother Mikhail, "Читал ли ты «Емеля» Вельтмана, в послед<ней> «Б<библиотеке> д<ля> чт<ения>» – что за прелесть."10 [Have you read Emelya of Veltman in the last Library for Reading? – what a charming thing!] The story he refers to is a tale by A. F. Veltman, who enjoyed wide popularity in Russia in the 1830s and 40s publishing novels and short stories of the historical, adventure, fantastic and utopian genres. He also wrote scholarly works on Russian and Scandinavian histories and the mythologies of Slavic tribes. Although many are written in florid Romantic style, Veltman’s works were not coloured

9 PSS 1:159; Bird, 115-16.
10 Letter of 4 May, 1845, PSS 1:110.
by the Byronesque tendencies of contemporaries like Bestuzhev-Marlinsky. Many of his works are, in fact, Romantic parodies. He was not interested in either German Idealist philosophy or the social concerns of the Natural School, but rather, his worldview comes across as simple and clear, like that of a folktale, where good and evil are clearly delineated.\(^{11}\)

Doubles found in Veltman’s stories and novels often form integral components of their structural and thematic organization. In _Lunatik (The Lunatic)_ the protagonist suffers from a personality split wherein he commits crimes while in a somnambulistic state.\(^{12}\) A double of a more folkloric cast features in Veltman’s _Serdise i dumka: Prikliuchenie (Heart and Mind: An Adventure, 1838)_ , which Andrei Dostoevsky numbered among his brother Fyodor’s best loved books.\(^{13}\) This novel exhibits a vanity fair of provincial society, which is held under the sway of the town’s resident devil, or ‘unclean spirit’ [nechistyj dukh], whose craft is to stir up intrigues and exacerbate the townspeople’s vices. One of his specialties is provoking envy, pride and dissembling among gentlemen of rank. In the Colonel’s ear he whispers, “Каков поручик-то! он и знать не хочет начальничьих приказаний”\(^{14}\) [What kind of lieutenant is he! He doesn’t want to follow the chief’s orders]; and to the lieutenant, who has fallen out of favour with the Colonel, he advises, “... стоит только пожаловаться батальонному командиру, сказать, что он знать не хочет батальонных командиров.”\(^{15}\) [... all you’ve got to do is complain to the battalion commander that he doesn’t want to listen to the batallion

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\(^{12}\) Ibid., 13.

\(^{13}\) _Vospominania_, 69-70.

\(^{14}\) A. F. Veltman, _Serdise i dumka_ (Moskva: Sovetskaia Rossiia, 1986), 35.

\(^{15}\) Ibid., 36.
commanders.] Generally, Nelyogyky or ‘Uneasy,’ as the devil is called, specializes in stirring peoples’ passions and upsetting their peace of mind:

Явится ли в ком-нибудь слепая вера, он поселял сомнение; сойдетесь ли кто с кем-нибудь по чувствам, он внушал подозрение; настанет ли тишина в душе и сердце, он тотчас нагонит облачко, которое разрастется в невзгодье; и везде, где только таится искорка под пеплом, он ее раздует, — везде нашушукает, везде наплетет, все смутит, разстроит.16

In anyone in whom blind faith appeared, he sowed doubt; if anyone united with another in common feeling, he aroused suspicion; where quiet came to someone’s heart and soul, he immediately overshadowed it with cloudlets that grow in adversity; and any place where sparks showed under the ashes, he fanned the flames — he whispered gossip and spread rumours everywhere, he confused and upset everything.

Nelyogyky, moreover, is a plot device, an antagonist who motivates behaviours and then recedes into the background. His favourite game is stirring passions and ensnaring people in tangled affairs of the heart. Under his influence, all the town officials, numbering six, fall in love with and seek the hand in marriage of the heroine, Zoya Romanovna. In contrast to this banal world of petty bureaucrats who are slaves to their passion but embarrassingly inept in the art of love, the transcendence of art is upheld by the seventh suitor, the poet Porfiry, who is exempt from Nelyogyky’s sinister art because “… Поэта, живущего всегда в воздушном пространстве, он не считал под своим ведением.”17

[The Poet, who lived always in the airy plane, he didn’t consider to be under his control.]

Veltman’s text moves fluidly through the ‘real’ world and the imaginary in a Romantic style rejected in the 1840’s as completely out-of-date and sneered upon by Belinsky as stilted and far-fetched distortions of real-world concerns.18 Dostoevsky’s fascination with Veltman anticipates his own appropriation of Romantic motifs that would earn him the censure of Belinsky and other contemporaries. To be expected, one

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16 Ibid., 35.
17 Veltman, 83.
18 Frank, Seeds of Revolt, 179.
finds parallels in the two authors’ adaptation of the mode. Veltman parodies the conventions of Romanticism for use in his satire of society mores. But his satire is playful, humorous, and void of acrimony. Nelyogky is personified pride, passion and ambition that nearly everyone in Veltman’s world shares. However, the unclean spirit, together with a witch who acts as his helpmate in Part Three, are more like comic jesters than hostile minions of the Enemy. They toy with human passions and fate like classical gods or mischievous sprites and other stock villains of Russian folklore. They are not an integral part of the consciousness of their unwary victims, but rather external forces that tamper with the balance of heart and mind. In Dostoevsky, Golyadkin’s double also cajoles and minces about like a playful spirit who personifies the protagonist’s vices; however, the essential difference in this comparison is that Golyadkin’s double most certainly is an emanation of his psyche—not an external force, but a rejected component of ego, which he has not consciously integrated. There is humour in the machinations of Golyadkin’s double, but it is less innocuous than Veltman’s, closer in kind to the ‘laughter through tears’ of Nikolai Gogol.

The epigraph to Dostoevsky’s first novella *Bednye liudi* is taken from Prince V. F. Odoevsky’s “Zhivoi mertvets” (“The Living Corpse”), a story published in *Otechestvennye zapiski* (Notes of the Fatherland; hereafter abbreviated OZ) as part of the collection *Russkie nochi* (Russian Nights, 1844). A diversely-talented artist, intellectual and philanthropist, Odoevsky authored literary, musical, journalistic and educational writings. He also co-edited several journals, including Pushkin’s *Sovremmenik* and A. A. Kraevsky’s OZ. His best-known stories were published in these and other popular journals, and most were collected in 1844 in one of either *Russkie nochi* or *Sochineniia*
kniazia V. F. Odoevskogo (The Works of Prince V. F. Odoevsky), both issued in that year. Dostoevsky makes scant reference to Odoevsky in his letters, but his familiarity with the tales of the co-editor of OZ, in which Dvoënìk was first published, is certain.\(^{19}\)

In youth, a member of the Society of Lovers of Wisdom [Obshchestvo liubomudrov], and relative of the poet and Decembrist A. I. Odoevsky, Vladimir Fyodorovich was well-connected in liberal circles of Russia and Europe, and was also host of a famous Petersburg salon attended by all the literary luminaries of the capital. His works include realist prose and societal tales, but his literary output is dominated by Gothic fiction, anti-utopian fantasy and science fiction. His extraordinary range of activity and penchant for esoteric and occult philosophy prompted Count F. V. Rostopchin to hail him with the jocular title, “алхимико-музыко-философско-
фантастическое сиятельство”\(^{20}\) [an alchemical-musical-philosophical-fantastical eminence]. In the main, the philosophical-romantic tales of Odoevsky were, in the words of Frank, “the literary quintessence of the Romantic Schellingian spirit of the Russian 1830’s.”\(^{21}\) “Sil’fida” and “Kosmorama,” in particular, showcase the writer’s penchant for supernatural and mystical content while featuring the motifs of madness and doubles. “Sil’fida” combines alchemy and cabbala from the writings and ideas of Paracelsus and Monfacon de Villars—sources common also to E. T. A. Hoffman.\(^{22}\) The subtitle of “Sil’fida”—“From the Notes of a Reasonable Man”—is ironic in that the reasonable man relates the tale of an acquaintance who allegedly loses his faculty of

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\(^{19}\) There are brief mentions of Odoevsky in Dostoevsky’s letters of 16 Nov, 1845, in which he claims that Vladimir Fyodorovich was begging him (amid the hype surrounding the success of Bednyë liudi) for a visit (PSS 28(i):115), and 1 February, 1846, when he refers to alleged plans of Odoevsky and V. A. Sollogub to write separate articles on Bednyë liudi (neither of which appeared). Ibid, 117.

\(^{20}\) Quoted in Kuleshov, 22.

\(^{21}\) Frank, Seeds of Revolt, 179.

reason. The hero’s dabbling in cabbalistic books takes him on an increasingly precipitous path into the otherworldly and irrational. A sylph he discovers finally leads him to an alternative reality of “the soul of the soul” where “poetry is truth” and time and space have no bearing. His discoveries are made in contrast to the absorbing egoism and vice he encounters in the provincial town of the story’s setting, as bad, he complains, as the ambitious dissembling he knew in the capitals. Egoism comprises their whole make-up—cheating somebody over a purchase, winning an unjust lawsuit and taking bribes are all considered to be the acts of an intelligent man; currying favour with someone from whom some benefit may be gained is the duty of a well-bred man.23

Correlated with the protagonist’s critique of egoism in society is his own journey of transcendent self-discovery. The irrational is a door to the transcendent where truth is a moral and aesthetic quality. The sylph, a guardian angel who awaits the moment to deliver him from the bonds of gross matter, enables him to see the faults of the rational world, which sates itself on material comforts and thrives on private gains made at the expense of others. She leads him beyond the veil of the apparent to a new world inhabited by crowds of elemental spirit beings who exist in a domain of light. Here “the soul of the soul” transcends human thought, which sits on an elevated throne, linked to the world by golden chains. This independent domain transcends “sublime nature” itself—“dead nature”—before which the poet habitually prostrates himself in vain. “... смотри, здесь жизнь поэта—святъня! здесь поэзия—истина! здесь договаривается все недосказанное поэтом; здесь его земные страдания превращаются в неизмеримый

23 V. F. Odoevsky, Povesti i rasskazy (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel’stvo khudozhestvennoi literatury, 1959), 275.
ряд наслаждений..."

Here everything left unsaid by the poet is said; here his earthly sufferings are transformed into an immeasurable series of ecstasies... In the denouement of the story, discovered in the thrall of his visions, Vladimir is diagnosed with a nervous disorder attended by hallucinations and *demonomania* as a result of staying in the country alone without any amusements, and reading "all kinds of rubbish." Subjected to treatment and brought to his senses, he resents the intervention; his forced recovery is a kind of lobotomy that has robbed him of contact with the higher, more authentic world introduced to him by the sylph. He offers the analogy of expensive physics instruments which do not fit into an improperly made but beautiful case; the instruments are ground down to fit into the case, meanwhile rendered unoperational and worthless.

'You are very pleased that you have, what you call, cured me; that is to say, blunted my perceptions, covered them with some impenetrable shell, made them dead to any world except your box... Wonderful! The instrument fits, but it is wrecked: it had been made for a different purpose... Now, when in the midst of the daily round I can feel my abdominal cavity expanding by the hour and my head subsiding into animalistic sleep, I recall with despair that time when, in your opinion, I was in a state of madness, when a charming creature flew down to me from the invisible world, when it opened to me sacraments which now I cannot even express, but which were comprehensible to me... where is that happiness? Give it back to me!'


25 Odoevsky, 293; Cornwell 58.
Even poetry is no consolation—it is pigeon-holed, along with all the other arts; they are enclosed in boxes of their own. Yet the Schellingian vision of art as a key to the 'other world' is upheld as Vladimir complains of losing his chance to discover an art that is neither poetry, nor music, nor painting: “А может быть, я художник такого искусства, которое еще не существует, [. . .] которое, может быть, теперь замрет на тысячу веков: найди мне его! может быть, оно утешит меня в потере моего прежнего мира!”26 [But perhaps I am the practitioner of a kind of art that does not yet exist, [. . .] that will die now, perhaps, for a hundred millennia: find it for me! Perhaps it will console me for the loss of my former world!]

The sylph and the ‘other world’ are Vladimir’s double of sorts—they whirl in his consciousness as intimations of another reality attainable by the higher Self, whose essence is cramped, stifled and denied by the ‘reasonable’ material world. The sylph is an otherworldly muse who instructs the poet in the soul’s vision of love and eternal life of the spirit. The authorial confession at the end of the tale, in which the editor confesses to having understood nothing of the story, undercuts the protagonist’s visions but invites the reader to validate them on his or her own terms.

“Kosmorama” is an extraordinary tale of demonic doubles and grotesque phantasmagoria that evince an alternative reality of a different sort—one where the force of evil is personified. It is the author’s most overt depiction of the concept of dualism (dvoemirie), which he had studied in mystical thinkers such as Jacob Böhme, John Pordage, Swedenborg and Saint-Martin.27 Dualism is central to Gnosticism, the tenets of which these thinkers represented, promoting the view that the differentiation between

26 Odoevsky, 293; Cornwell, 58-59.
God and humanity was required in order for creation to evolve to a new state of redeemed harmony.

The hero/narrator of “Kosmorama,” Vladimir Petrovich is a reluctant witness to the struggle between good and evil owing to special powers of clairvoyance he gains through the use of a toy gifted to him as a boy, called a *cosmorama*. The slide-viewer box, also known as a stereoscope, used a dual-magnification mechanism to give the pictures inside a 3-D-like appearance. The mystical powers of his cosmorama allow Vladimir to see peoples’ doubles, who communicate to him the authentic realities that lie below the surface of their conscious awareness. For example, when his family physician and confidant Doctor Bin, the giver of the toy, shows alarm at Vladimir Petrovich’s insinuations about the extraordinary things he sees, the doctor’s double in the cosmorama warns him:

«Не верь ему, – говорил сей последний, – или, лучше сказать, не верь мне в твоём мире. Там я сам не знаю, что делаю, но здесь я понимаю мои поступки, которые в вашем мире представляются в виде невольных побуждений. Там я подарил тебе игрушку, сам не зная для чего, но здесь я имел в виду предостеречь твоего дядю и моего благодетеля от несчастья, которое грозило всему вашему семейству.»

‘Don’t believe him, – said the latter, – or, to put it in a better way, don’t believe me in your world. There I don’t know myself what I do, but here I understand my actions which, in your world, are presented in the form of unconscious motivation. There I gave you a toy, without myself knowing why, but here I had the intention of forewarning your uncle – and my benefactor – of the unhappiness which was threatening all your family.

Vladimir Petrovich’s privileged gnosis provided by the cosmorama reveals to him the dual aspect of truth which is hidden from the uninitiated:

«Злополучный счастливец! Ты – ты можешь всё видеть – всё, без покрышки, без звёздной пелены, которая для меня самого там непроницаема. Мои мысли я должен передавать себе посредством сцепления мелочных обстоятельств жизни,

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Vladimir’s occult knowledge, however, puts him in a dangerous position. The plot of “Kosmorama” centres on his affair with the wife of a count whose double, which Vladimir sees, inhabits the count like a demonic possession. The count’s double accompanies him through life as an evil guardian monster:

I saw Count B. at different ages of his life.... I saw how, above his mother’s bed-head, at the moment of his birth, hideous monsters were writhing about, greeting the newly-born with wild joy. Here was his upbringing: a vile monster came between him and his tutor—whispering to the one and to the other confiding thoughts of egoism, nonbelief, callousness and pride. Now the appearance of the young man in society: the same vile monstrosity directs his behaviour, instils in him a subtle sharpness, caution and treachery, arranging certain success for him....

The count’s double also aids him in slandering honest men and taking over their possessions, seducing women, ruining his opponents at cards, murdering in duels, covering the traces of his crimes and generally enjoying the reputation of an honest and upright citizen.

The moral significance of “Kosmorama” is plain to see. Like a photographic negative of “Sil’fida,” wherein the protagonist had witnessed the ‘higher Self,—the plane of the exalted and beautiful—in this instance the arcane other world is the realm of

29 Ibid. Italics are in the original.
30 Kosmorama, 30; Trans. Cornwell, 114.
veiled motivations that betray the base and evil side of human nature. The protagonist accesses its mysteries through an apparatus, a window to the dualistic world. In both stories, then, an intermediary repairs the disconnect between the conscious and unconscious mind, showing the potential for heightened awareness of self. Odoevsky’s prose experiments with literary representations of *dvoemirie* in this manner—an experimentation in form which must be seen as the leading significance of the stories. Odoevsky’s biographer discerns that the writer was more concerned with the psychological potential of modes of thought and their artistic application than in the intrinsic worth of what he recognized as eccentric beliefs. This is confirmed by a note written by Odoevsky in the 1840’s: “Böhme, Swedenborg, Saint-Martin were, in relation to their time, what Alexander Dumas, Eugene Sue and others are now: talent, imagination, some sort of an unconscious striving, hints seductive to man, inexplicit concepts, beyond which is revealed an apparently deep and [illegible] love for people – beyond that – phantasmagoria.”

*Dvoemirie* is also present in other stories of Odoevsky such as the unfinished “Segelian’, ili Don-Kikhot XIX stoletii: Skazka dla starykh detei” (“Segelian, A Don Quixote of the XIXth Century: A Fairy-tale for Old Children,” 1833), wherein spirits and devils play out the drama of good fighting evil. Segelian is an angel expelled from Paradise along with Lucifer, but he takes too keen an interest in humans and begins fighting for the good on their behalf. His immersion in bureaucratic philanthropy was seen as an updating of Quixotry, reading philanthropy as ‘the chivalry of our time.’ Don Quixote was the first great ‘high madman,’ a moral crusader whose own irrational

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31 Cornwell, *Odoevsky: His Life and Times*, 110.
32 Ibid., 64.
behaviour tore the veil of pretence at the outset of the Age of Humanism. Dostoevsky also adapts and parodies the adventures of Cervantes’s picaro, bringing the quixotic motif to a bureaucratic setting. In fact, *Dvoinik* shares other remarkable parallels with Odoevsky’s stories of madness, doubles, and alternative realities. In its combination of the elements of Romantic poetics with a protagonist of common bureaucratic stock, *Dvoinik* depicts the ego struggle which underlies the surface reality of social behavioural norms. Dostoevsky’s hero may not be a ‘fallen spirit’ of the stature of Segeliel, nor is his double as black and ignominious as Count B.; Golyadkin is, however, a subject whose conscious awareness is traumatized by the experience of perceiving the dualistic makeup of self, the *dvoemirie* that separates the socially constructed ego from the higher Self.

The ambiguous success of Odoevsky’s fantastic tales lends insight to the shifting alliances of a critical readership that had come to reject abstract idealism in favour of naturalistic depiction. I discuss Belinsky’s critique of Odoevsky in the following section to preface the hybrid aesthetics of Dostoevsky’s own experiments in literary form. First, I will note that Dostoevsky’s work of combining the bureaucratic setting of Natural School realism with the Romantic fantastic was preceded also by K. S. Aksakov, who wrote his first well-known work in verse, *Zhizn’ chinovnika: Misterii v trekh periodakh* (*The Life of a Bureaucrat: A Mystery Play in Three Periods*), in 1843. The ‘mystery play’ combines the psychological portrait of its *chinovnik* protagonist with elements of vaudevillesque romantic-fantastic. A showcase for Aksakov’s skills in writing theatrical verse, this satiric work achieved tremendous popularity when it circulated widely in manuscript form in Moscow and beyond. Although it is unknown whether Dostoevsky
read the work, it seems likely. The important fact is that realism of the Natural School variety showed a degree of flexibility at this point in time that Dostoevsky would manipulate for his own narrative plan. Like Aksakov, Dostoevsky undertook to counterpose the popular sentimental and philanthropic take on the life of a civil service bureaucrat with elements of the Romantic fantastic. The combination shows the tension between Dostoevsky’s predilection for Romantic metaphysical idealism and his concern for the real-world social issues favoured by his readers and critics representing the Natural School. Specifically, in the famous “Vision of the Neva” episode, Dostoevsky dramatizes the vital moment when he discovered the hybrid approach he would employ to bridge the Romantic metaphysical and sentimental naturalism. The significance of the vision as a personal epiphany for the author is corroborated by his recounting it in three places—the 1848 short story “Slaboe serdtse” (“A Weak Heart”), the 1861 feuilleton “Peterburgskie snovidenia v stikhakh i v proze” (“Petersburg Visions in Verse and Prose”), and in the novel Podrostok (A Raw Youth, 1875). After an outpouring of descriptive details of steam rising over the frozen river and smoke issuing from the rooftops, which evoke a phantasmagorical image of an ethereal Petersburg, the feuilletonist describes how his Romantic proclivities made way for a particular combination of sensibilities:

КаKая-то странная мысль вдруг зашеvелелисв во мне. Я вздрогнул, и сердце мое как будто облилось в это мгновение горячим ключом крови, вдруг вскипевшей от прилива могущественного, но доселе незнакомого мне ощущения. Я как будто что-то понял в эту минуту, до сих пор только шеvелившееся во мне, но еще не

33 Aksakov attempted to have “Zhizn’ chinovnika” published in 1846, but it was rejected by the censorship and did not appear in print until 1861 in Alexander Herzen’s Russkaia potaenniaia literature XIX stoletiia (The Secret Literature of Nineteenth-Century Russia, 1861). Dictionary of Literary Biography, Vol. 277: Russian Literature in the Age of Realism, edited by Alyssa Dinega Gillespie (Detroit: Gale, 2003), p. 5.

34 For further discussion on two of these uses of “The Vision of the Neva,” see Frank, Seeds of Revolt, 133-4.
Some strange thought suddenly stirred in me. I shuddered, and my heart was as if flooded with a hot rush of blood that boiled up suddenly from the surge of a powerful but hitherto unknown sensation. I seemed to have understood something in that minute which had till then only been stirring in me, but was still uninterpreted; it was as if my eyes had been opened to something new, to a completely new world, unfamiliar to me and known only by certain obscure rumours, by certain mysterious signs.

The transcendent moment is identified as one of artistic transformation which leads on to the merging of Romantic sensibilities with the sentimental naturalism of Belinsky and the Natural School:

Всё это были странные, чудные фигуры, вполне прозаические, вовсе не Дон Карлосы и Позы, а вполне титулярные советники и в то же время как будто какие-то фантастические титулярные советники [. . .] . . .какое-то титулярное сердце, чистое и чистое, нравственное и преданное начальству, а вместе с ним какая-то девочка, оскорблённая и грустная, и глубоко разорвала мне сердце всю их история.

They were strange, wonderful figures, entirely prosaic, not at all Don Carloses or Posas, just titular councillors, and yet, at the same time, fantastic titular councillors [. . .] . . .some titular heart, honourable and pure, moral and devoted to the authorities, and together with him some young girl, humiliated and sorrowing, and all their story tore deeply at my heart.

In this formula, Dostoevsky relates the discovery of his methodology for *Bednye liudi* and its mock-sentimental hero Makar Devushkin. The “obscure rumours” and “mysterious signs” of the vision are the hieroglyphics of a new brand of realism which incorporated the heroic and fantastic modes in representations of entirely prosaic figures of the Russian bureaucracy. His “fantastic titular councillor” finds a truer form in Golyadkin, whose mock-heroic adventures, more overtly than those of his precursor, challenge contemporary representations of *chinovniki* and the evolving conventions of realism. In order to appreciate the implications of Golyadkin’s breaking of the mould,

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35 *PSS* 19:69.
36 *PSS* 19:71.
and to establish the literary context for the reception of *Dvoinik* in 1846, I turn now to the advent of the Natural School and the half-decade period of the consolidation of Russian Realism that generated aesthetic norms for the early to mid 1840s.

**Otechestvennye zapiski and the Consolidation of Russian Realism**

The primary organ for the promotion and development of Russian realism, *Otechestvennye zapiski* (*OZ*) played a pivotal role in shaping the methods, aims and trajectories of this most important outcropping of Russian literature of the 1840s.\(^{37}\) *OZ* published literature and criticism in connection with the achievements of progressive thought in Russia and Western Europe, tying together their various literary and intellectual trends. In the main, it merged the three premier veins of Russian literature of the time—realism, *naturalizm*\(^{38}\) and Romanticism. On the other hand, tensions in the journal’s editorship, spurred on by Belinsky’s forceful polemics, made realism’s compromise with Romanticism increasingly untenable until it eventually came to edge out Romanticism as a viable contemporary aesthetic.

The role of *OZ* in the consolidation of Russian realism and its inner evolution as a literary method is difficult to overestimate. The first years of *OZ* bear witness to the journal’s considerable contribution to the flourishing of a new era of Russian prose. 1839 and ’40 saw the publication of Lermontov’s first instalments of *Geroi nashego vremeni*. Along with the prose debuts of major authors Herzen and Nekrasov, many notable works

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\(^{38}\) The Russian *naturalizm* is not to be confused with “naturalism,” an outgrowth of late-19\(^{th}\)-century realism found in Émile Zola and others whose blunt, often pessimistic sketches criticized the harshness and dark, sordid realities of urban life while aiming to uncover their social and environmental causes.
of the journal's first years of publication make up a representative collection of the best Russian realism of the 1840s.\(^{39}\)

In its earliest period, OZ was noted for its eclecticism under the redactorship of Kraevsky and Odoevsky.\(^{40}\) In statements defining the aims of the journal made in the announcements for its release in January 1839, Kraevsky promised an eclectic venue for the general advancement of Russian society:

Цель «Отечественных записок» — споспешествовать, сколько дозволяют силы, русскому просвещению по всем его отраслям, передавая отечественной публике все, что только может встретиться в литературе и в жизни замечательного и приятного <...>. На этом основании «Отечественные записки» должны сделаться и сделаются журналом энциклопедическим в полном значении этого слова.\(^{41}\)

The aim of Notes of the Fatherland is to advance, as far as lies in its power, Russian enlightenment in all its outcroppings, giving the national public everything remarkable and pleasing that can be met in life and literature. [. . .] On this foundation, Notes of the Fatherland must make up and do make up an encyclopaedic journal in the full sense of the word.

The omission of programmatic statements and other endorsements showed that the journal owed no loyalties to existing literary parties. On the contrary, the terseness of the manifesto coupled with Kraevsky’s efforts to recruit a large and diverse pool of contributors of predominantly liberal persuasions effectively challenged the existing triumvirate of reactionary publicists who had monopolized Russian literary journalism—


\(^{40}\) Ibid., 20-21.

\(^{41}\) Literaturnye pribavleniia (The Literary Supplement), 1838, No. 43. Quoted in Kuleshov, 17. Italics are in the original.
F. V. Bulgarin, N. I. Grech and O. I. Senkovsky. One of the goals of the journal was to confront the didactic naturalism of Bulgarin along with N. Polevoy, who had attempted to discredit the Natural School with representations of the worst vices and vulgarities of the merchant class in satirical works such as *Schast’e luchshe bogatyrestva* (*Happiness Beats Heroics*, 1846).\(^{42}\) Ultimately, *OZ* would defeat the didactic style of *naturalism* that shared a reactionary agenda with conservative Romanticism to dilute the focus of progressive realist literature of the 1840s.\(^{43}\)

In 1839-40, a struggle for influence over Kraevsky led to the crystallization of *OZ*’s direction and structure, allowing Belinsky to control its program as well as gain unrivalled power as Russia’s chief critic and literary authority. His position challenged the eclecticism of the journal’s founding principle and alienated Odoevsky, whose own vision for the journal had been recorded in his notebook as, “Желание дать пристанище всем мнениям без различия партий. . .” [The desire to give refuge to all opinions without distinction of parties. . .]. To make the journal’s independent stance clear from the outset, he intends, “начать первый номер письмом от редакции для читателя, где известить отличие «Отечественных записок» от других журналов.” [to begin the first number with a letter from the editor to the reader, informing how *OZ* differs from other journals.] Those critical differences were principally to avoid argumentative and polemical stances, and to embrace opposing points of view.\(^{44}\) Once Belinsky took up the post of chief critic he introduced those very elements in his pugilistic critical articles, whereupon a major change in the direction of the journal took place, signalled by his “*Rech’ o kritike*” (“Discourse on Criticism”). A falling-out between Belinsky and

\(^{42}\) Kuleshov, 34.

\(^{43}\) Ibid., 37.

\(^{44}\) Quoted in Kuleshov, 23.
Odoevsky ensued when the latter’s stories and articles collided with the critic’s own aims. Belinsky frowned upon the antiquated Schellingian outlook of the ‘Lover of Wisdom,’ who viewed the world, in the words of P. N. Sakulin, “глазами идеалиста, и не социального мыслителя.” [with the eyes of an idealist, and not a social thinker.]

Odoevsky’s Gothic tales and occult writings on somnambulism and stoloverchenie [twirling tables at a séance] particularly rankled with the critic. Belinsky singled out Odoevsky’s ‘best tales’—“Brigadir” (“Brigadier”), “Bal” (“The Ball”) and “Nasmeshka mertvetsa” (“The Corpse’s Sneer”)—for their successfully balanced expression of indignation against petty selfishness along with elevated feeling and noble aspirations.

Their primary aim, as Belinsky defined it in the 1844 article “Sochineniia kniazia V. F. Odoevskogo” (“The Works of Prince V. F. Odoevsky”), reflected the critic’s vision for the Natural School program:

Их цель—пробудить в сиящей душе отвращение к мертвой действительности, к пошлой prose жизни и святую тоску по той высокой действительности, идеал которой заключается в смелом, исполненном жизни сознании человеческого достоинства. Но, кроме того, важное преимущество этих пьес составляет их близкое, живое соотношение к обществу.

Their purpose is to waken in the slumbering soul an aversion to dead reality, to the vulgar prose of life, and sacred melancholy for that high reality, the ideal of which lies in the brave consciousness, full of life, of human dignity. But, besides that, an important advantage of these plays is their close, living relationship to society.

On the other hand, Belinsky strongly criticized Odoevsky’s “Sil’fida,” “Salamandra” (“The Salamander,” 1841) and other short works for their Romantic excesses. When his prose conforms to the conventions of realism, Belinsky observes, Odoevsky’s talent is captivating and his ideas intelligent and profound. However, as soon as the writer resorts to mystical and fantastically-nuanced prosody, he confuses and alienates the reader:

45 Quoted in Kuleshov, 24.
... such devices for the excitation of readers’ interest became obsolete long ago and no longer act upon anyone. Now the attention of the crowd can be engaged only with the consciously reasonable, only the reasonably real. Wizardry and visions of people with nervous agitation belong to the realm of medicine, not art.

More specifically, Belinsky criticized “Sil’fida” for its supernatural preoccupations. The hero is appealing in his sensitivity to human strivings and to life, but he loses our sympathy as soon as he starts seeing magical sylphs in a jar of water. The author evidently wished to depict the ideal of the ‘high madman,’ for whom the secrets of life are discernable to his inner vision—but, again, the time when madmen were respected had passed, irretrievably, with the enlightenment of Europe.48 Odoevsky’s tales represented the growing obsolescence of the fantastic, the supernatural and otherworldly, in the new age of naturalistic realism.

In 1844 Odoevsky complained in a letter to Kraevsky of Belinsky’s criticism of his stories. He pleaded with the staff of OZ, “Терпимость, господа, терпимость!”49 [Tolerance, gentlemen, tolerance!] But by this point the success of the journal depended on Belinsky, and under his influence, OZ redefined its aims and operations. Belinsky demanded deistvitel’nost’ ['reality'] in all written materials—in the communication of facts, thought and feeling. By very definition, he equated art with the depiction of the ‘real’: “Искусство есть воспроизведение действительности; следовательно, его задача не поправляться и не прикращивать жизнь, а показывать ее так, как она есть

47 Ibid., 118.
48 Ibid, 117-118.
49 Kuleshov, 24.
Art is the reproduction of reality; consequently, its aim is not to correct or to dress up life, but to show it as it truly is.] Odoevsky’s protest was unlikely to sway the critic. Belinsky’s ideas had been tested by an arduous struggle to reconcile his own ideological position with contemporary reality. He was famous for his vacillating philosophical stands. After ardent enthusiasm and then bitter disillusionment with subjective Idealism in the mid-1830s, he rejected Schiller-esque ‘abstract heroism’ in favour of ‘reconciliation with reality’—a philosophical position he read into Hegel which advocated that all of ‘reality’ is rational and just. Finally, disillusioned once again, he settled on a new individualism which recognized actuality while denying its rationality.

By the early 1840s, Belinsky saw the individual as the voice of universal humanity, evolving through the irrational quagmire of reality by means of the individual’s rational application of moral purpose. Lermontov’s *Geroi nashego vremeni* and then Gogol’s *Mertvye dushi* had impressed upon Belinsky the possibility, at long last, of a national literature that could depict Russian reality as it is, that could emancipate Russia from reliance on foreign models and finally lead the Russian people in progress and enlightenment. Odoevsky’s flaw was that his fantastic tales diverted one’s attention from reality and the moral enlightenment of the nation in favour of the individual pursuit of transcendent ideals—an egocentric idealism that Belinsky had come to see as fantasy and escapism. The new literature demanded a closer attunement with reality, a goal which had come to the fore in a new style that came to be known as the Natural School.

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The term ‘Natural School’ was first used only in January 1846 by Bulgarin in a feuilleton of Severnaia pchela, but its first mature manifestation was considered by Belinsky and others to have been Nekrasov’s Fiziologiia Peterburga (A Physiology of Petersburg) published in the previous year. Natural School writing, composed mainly in the genres of fiziológicheski ocherk [physiological sketch] and also povest’ [short narrative], took its cues from European, predominantly French, literature of social realism. It focused on the common person, whose experiences are treated in humanitarian themes that evoke sympathy for the less fortunate and criticize stifling social conditions. Apollon Grigoriev dubbed the new manner ‘Sentimental Naturalism,’ referring to its roots in Sentimentalism, which was adapted earlier in the century from Western Europe to the Russian context, most significantly by Karamzin. Karamzin’s short stories combined sentimentalism with a humanitarian social theme and foreshadowed the philanthropic social realism of the Natural School of the 1840s. Yet a large step separated Karamzin’s sentimentalism from the Natural School. In Belinsky’s estimation, Karamzin definitively freed Russian literature from the influence of Lomonosov, but had not fully freed it of rhetoric and made it national—that achievement had been accomplished in large part by Pushkin.52 It was the freedom from rhetoric and the idealization of reality which Belinsky saw precisely to be the purpose of literature, and the merit of the Natural School:

В отношении к литературе, как к искусству, поэзии, творчеству, влияние Карамзина теперь совершенно изчезло, не оставив никаких следов. В этом отношении литература наша всего ближе к той зрелости и возможностям, речь о которых начала мы эту статью. Так называемую натуральную школу нельзя

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In regards to literature as an art, as poetry, as creation, the influence of Karamzin has now completely disappeared, leaving no traces. In this respect, our literature is that much closer to its maturity and ripening, the idea with which we began this article. The so-called natural school cannot be accused of rhetoric, in the sense of the willing or unwilling distortion of reality, the false idealization of life.

Belinsky’s criticism of Dostoevsky’s fantastic method, which I analyse further below, was based in that distortion of reality he mentions here.

The Natural School gained wide recognition with Belinsky and Nekrasov’s joint publication *Fiziologiia Peterburga* in 1845. The anthology was inspired by French collections of sketches such as *Les Français peints par eux-mêmes, Les enfants peints par eux-mêmes*; and in Russia by Bashutsky’s *Panorama Sankt Peterburga* (*Panorama of St. Petersburg*). Faddei Bulgarin, editor of the popular journal *Severnaia pchela*, sneered at this type of writing because the picture it painted of social realities was not very flattering. He coined the term ‘Natural School,’ which he meant pejoratively, but it was later accepted by the school’s proponents. The term is used variously in Belinsky’s articles to refer to 1) a periodization, denoting the pre-eminence of the works of Gogol from the mid 1830s through the 40s; 2) new literary processes associated with *Mertvie Dushi* and “Shinel”; 3) the ascendancy of a new school of ideas promoted by *OZ*.

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53 Ibid., 190.
54 *Fiziologiia Peterburga* consisted of Belinsky’s own “Peterburg i Moskva” (“Petersburg and Moscow”), Nekrasov’s “Peterburgskie ugli” (“Petersburg Nooks”) and “Chinovnik” (“The Government Clerk”), as well as sketches such as Grigorovich’s “Peterburgskie sharmanshchiiki” (“Petersburg Hurdy-gurdy Men”), Grebenka’s “Peterburgskaia storona” (“The Petersburg Side”) and, writing under the pseudonym V. Lugansky, Vladimir Dal’s “Peterburgskii dvornik” (“The Petersburg Yardkeeper”).
55 *Severnaia pchela*, 1846, № 22, 26 January, p. 86. See Belinsky, *Sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 8, p. 668, note 4, for a detailed discussion of the origin of the term ‘Natural School.’
Belinsky answered to the critique that Natural School writers tended to focus too excessively on uncovering negative social realities, emphasizing the potential of art to depict true and authentic reality without rhetorical colouring:

The possibility of such an accusation only shows that the natural school, despite its enormous successes, has appeared only recently, so that people have not yet gotten used to it, and among us there are still many of the Karamzinian persuasion, who are consoled by rhetoric and upset by the truth. Of course, it cannot be that all charges against the natural school are wrong, and that it is right in all respects. But if its predominant negative tendency is its one-sided extremity, in this there is also goodness and utility: the propensity for verisimilar representation of the negative aspects of life gives the possibility to the same people or their successors, in time, to represent the positive sides of life with verisimilitude, not putting them on a pedestal, not exaggerating, in a word, without idealizing them rhetorically.

Belinsky argues that literature must shed its artifice, its rhetoric, and its false idealization of reality. He writes in the same piece that it is not in individual talents but, in a broader sense, in aesthetic trends and modes of writing themselves that nature finds its true expression. While talented writers have always existed, historically, in Belinsky’s estimation, they had tended to dress up nature and idealize reality: they “represented the non-existing, wrote of the non-occurring, and only now are they reproducing life and reality in their true form.”

No journal had done more than OZ, and no critic more than Vissarion Belinsky to usher in the age of Russian realism. Yet the early 1840s must be seen as a period of

58 Ibid.
gradual development, which saw the trends that would become realism emerge out of existing and commingling forms. The Romantic period of Panaev and Herzen had already passed. On the other hand, in the early days of the journal, writers who combined Romanticism with realism like Lermontov and Odoevsky had coexisted with naturalist writers (pisateli-naturalisty) such as V. I. Dal and Ia. P. Butkov, and writers who brought naturalism to full fruition in works of the purely realist vein by Nekrasov, Grigorovich and others.\textsuperscript{59} One of the chief literary forms in which the Natural School gained its pre-eminence was the chinovnik tale—the genre adapted by Dostoevsky for his own distinctive hybrid creations. While Dostoevsky’s first works seemed to correspond with Belinsky’s aims for art to serve contemporary society, their excessive Romantic flair rankled with the critic. My next task is to make a brief survey of the chinovnik genre before showing how Dostoevsky combined the conventions of Romanticism with the emerging realism and discussing the significance of his departures from Belinsky and the Natural School.

**Chinovnik Tales**

*Chinovnik* tales were hugely popular in the mid-1840s. An estimated 150 stories between 1842 and 1850, many of them distinctly influenced by Gogol, made the tale of the government clerk a genre of its own.\textsuperscript{60} A critic in the popular journal *Sankt-Peterburgskie vedomosti* (*St. Petersburg Gazette*) wrote in 1847 that, “недостаток молодой литературы состоит не в том, что она пишет о чиновниках, а в том, что она ничего

\textsuperscript{59} Kuleshov, 33.
\textsuperscript{60} A. G. Tseitlin, *Povesti o bednom chinovnike Dostoevskogo* (Moscow, 1923), 8.
[The problem with our recent literature is not that it writes about chinovniki, but that it writes about nothing else.] The motifs and images in Gogol’s representations of the daily life of the civil service clerk were nothing new to readers and critics, but it was the mastery of their development that made such an astonishing impression on the public. He modelled the psychological impact of chancellery life on his woeful protagonists, canonized especially in Poprishchin from “Zapiski sumashedshego” (“Notes of a Madman,” 1835) and Akaky Akakievich of “Shinel’.”

After Gogol, the genre widely dispersed, peaking around 1845 and 1846 but surviving into the 1860s. Besides Gogol’s chinovniki, whom I discuss below, Dostoevsky’s portrait of this character type bears comparison with other contemporary descriptions of the petty clerk. Both Gogol and Dostoevsky acknowledged a predecessor in Pushkin, whose Mednyi vsadnik provided a model for the ‘fantastic city’ of Petersburg, and who depicted, in this work and in several short stories, common-man heroes who are effectively cogs in the state system that victimizes them. Besides the obvious influence of Pushkin, other works deserving special mention are Vladimir Dal’s “Bedovik,” (“Poor Chap,” 1839) and Vladimir Sollogub’s “Istoriia dvukh kalosh” (“The Story of Two Galoshes,” 1839), both of which drew Belinsky’s favourable attention.

In Belinsky’s estimation, “Bedovik” depicted “. . .так много человеческого и, преимущественно, русского сердца. . . Характер героя ее—чудо.” [ . . .so much humanity and, predominantly, Russian heart. . . The character of its hero is wonderful.] Dal’s ‘poor chap’ Evsei Stakheevich Lirov is a weak and unfortunate man who is

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61 Quoted. in Tseitlin, 8.
62 The topic of Pushkin’s influence on Gogol and Dostoevsky is a broad one that has been well documented. See more on Mednyi vsadnik in relation to Dvoinek in my Chapter Three section, “Moral Authority of the ‘Fathers’”.
endowed, however, with a good heart and noble intentions. His most distinguishing feature is his considerable inner complexity owing to his consciousness of the disconnect between his many virtues and the external circumstances which consistently undermine his progress through life. He is quiet, modest, honest and hard-working, as well as 'noble' and 'good.' What is more, his crowning virtue is not condemning others for their lack of similar qualities: “Он сам был честен, благороден, добр, но он никогда не искал этих свойств и качеств в других, никогда не удивлялся, если находил противное.” He himself was honest, noble and good, but he never searched for these properties and qualities in others, never was surprised if he found the contrary.] Moreover, in internal monologue, Lirov contemplates the senselessness of provincial bureaucratic customs such as obligatory Sunday visits or nameday celebrations. Much like his successor Golyadkin, Lirov finds the conventions of bureaucratic society to be so much affectation and posturing. Other parallels abound, like a particular incident after he prepares a difficult report and expects appreciation and 'frank relations' from his supervisor: “... ваше прев-во, позвольте мне объясниться; отношения мои к вашему прев-ству всегда были доселе самые откровенные; я имел счастье пользоваться...” [. . . your Excell-, allow me to explain; my relations to your Ex-llency have always thus far been the frankest; I have had the pleasure to make use of... ] But he receives only the gruff retort, “- Какие отношения, сударь, - спросил губернатор, приподняв густые брови на целый вершок, - какие, сударь, отношения? Я думаю, рапортъ! ...” [“What relations, sir,” asked the governor, raising his thick eyebrows an entire inch, “sir, what relations? I think, reports! . .”] In the following chapter, I discuss Golyadkin’s own

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65 Ibid., 20.
66 Ibid., 32. Italics are added.
complicated relations with his office superiors, from whom he expects greater respect and
candour. Unlike Golyadkin, however, Lirov always maintains a humble and submissive
demeanor, and usually resigns himself to the whims of fate.

As a chinovnik, his heightened self-consciousness puts Lirov in a class of his own.
His most extraordinary characteristic is that he is given to reflective self-analysis and
fatalistic ruminations. He ponders, “what is fate?” and “what is the soul?” Yet this type of
self-reflective awareness does not serve him well. Unable to function effectively in the
bureaucratic culture which is so distasteful to him, Lirov goes undervalued and neglected.

Indicative of his social ineptitude, in the cyclical tale of the poor chap’s misadventures,
he journeys from his provincial town of Manilov toward Moscow and/or St. Petersburg—
through a serious of mishaps and turnabouts, he never makes it to either destination.
Instead, he travels from station to station, back and forth between them. What, besides
this cyclical inertia, holds him back? This Hamlet of the Russian bureaucracy finds his
adversary in fate itself:

. . . бедного Евсея преследовала, казалось, с давних времён какая-то невидимая
вражья сила. Евсей так к этому привык, что никогда беде своей не удивлялся,
никогда не равнял себя в этом отношении с прочими людьми, считал себя каким-то
пасынком природы и с покорностью подставляя повинную свою мечу и секре: но

67 Ibid., 31.
тогда меч и секра его щадили и дело принимало обыкновенно более смешной, забавный оборот. Есть же такие бедовики-неудачи на свете!68

. . . poor Evsei was pursued, it seemed, since long ago by some invisible enemy force. Evsei was so used to this that he was never surprised at this misfortune of his, never compared himself in this respect with other people, but considered himself some stepson of nature and compliantly surrendered his guilt to the sword and crown: but then sword and crown protected him and the matter usually assumed a more ridiculous, more amusing turnabout. There are such poor unfortunates in the world!

Apart from numerous lyrical outpourings bewailing his fate, Lirov is resigned to the fact that he is destined never to succeed in the ruthless bureaucratic world, but instead to serve as an ‘edifying example’ to others to accept their suffering and drink their cup of bitterness.69 A heart-rending tale of injustice, inhumanity and patient long-suffering, “Bedovik” combines national character with moral edification in an exemplary formula befitting the Natural School. Like many Natural School portraits, however, Dal’s protagonist appears very one-dimensional—his virtues of humility do not allow him to act against his social subjugation, nor even to harbour secret resentments. His extreme self-consciousness is the less ‘realistic’ for its one-sidedness. In comparison, Dostoevsky’s Golyadkin will take on entirely new dimensions of psychological realism wherein the protagonist’s experiences of injustice and resentment trigger a moral rebellion that takes place on the threshold of his conscious mind. Pushing the boundaries of convention, Dostoevsky’s realism takes the one-dimensional bedovik to a new dimension where his introspection is translated onto a dual plane.

“Istoriia dvukh kalosh,” by Vladimir Sollogub, appeared in the first issue of OZ in 1839 and earned the approval of Belinsky. The galoshes in the story’s title figure symbolically. It is a tale, in the sentimental vein, of a disenchanted artist who seeks purity and transcendence in art and love but clashes with the fickle, self-seeking world of high

68 Ibid., 31.
69 Ibid., 62.
society. Galoshes represent the discrepancy of values in high and low society. The narrator pronounces: whereas gloves are a measure of aristocratic refinement and adorn the most precious of limbs at society balls, galoshes are treated with disdain, abandoned in cloakrooms and relegated to the domain of lowly government officials: "О бедных калошах никто не говорит, или изредка замолвит о них стыдливое словечко бедный чиновник на ухо его товарищу, подняв шинель и шагая по грязи. . ." [Nobody talks about poor galoshes, or occasionally a poor chinovnik will whisper a shameful little word about them in the ear of his companion while raising his overcoat and trudging through the mud. . .] Likely an allusion to this very popular story, Golyadkin loses first one and then the second of his galoshes in a dreadful downpour before coming face-to-face with his double on Izmailovsky bridge. In light of Sollogub's story, the motif of the orphaned galoshes would seem symbolic.

The symbolism is extended through Sollogub’s own tale as the protagonist learns the virtues of humility and compassion while coming to recognize that his commitment to the purity of art should not preclude his respect for common people. The pianist Karl Schulz is given a snuffbox in recognition of his talent by a simple cobbler, the fashioner of the galoshes in the story’s title. The galoshes were given to him in exchange for playing at a birthday party for the cobbler’s wife before the humble company of common tradespeople. The snuffbox comes to symbolize for him the transcendence of pure, unspoiled art, after he had resented the degradation of having to play for a cobbler’s wife but found that the simple company recognized and appreciated his talent. The contrast with fickle society is compounded when a stranger, introducing himself proudly as a Court Counsellor [Nadvornyi sovetnik—7th of the 14 ranks of the civil service], asks for a

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70 Sollogub, 39.
pinch of snuff and expresses indignation at Schulz’s refusal: “Странно! Неучтиво!
Очень неучтиво! Князь Борис Петрович, граф Андрей Ильич, князь Василий
Андреевич мне сами всегда говорят: «Любезный! Не хочешь ли моего? . . .»”

[Strange! Uncivil! Very uncivil! Prince Boris Petrovich, Count Andrei Il’ich and Prince
Vasily Andreevich themselves ask me all the time: ‘My good man, would you like some
of mine?’] The Court Counsellor Fedorenko and Karl Schulz actually trade roles of
usurper in this tale. Vain, self-satisfied and unscrupulous, Fedorenko represents the
ambitious breed of *chinovnik* who models the behaviour of Golyadkin’s double in
*Dvoinik*. Entangled in some affair of professional misconduct, he had escaped trial by
passing the blame onto an associate and forthwith retired with sizeable gains. On the
other hand, Fedorenko is duped by Schulz, who visits his adversary’s wife Henrietta
when Fedorenko is engaged at cards. After these visits, Fedorenko often finds his high-
quality galoshes have been replaced with a pair of poorly-made, old, worn-out ones. The
symbolic galoshes announce the cuckolding at the same time as they punctuate Schulz’s
triumph over fickle society, which is represented here by the ambitious Fedorenko.

The themes of “Istoriia dvukh kalosh” revolve around the vanities and deceits of
high society, as well as the pitfalls of false idealism. The villainous Fedorenko is married
to Henrietta under the patronage of Princess G., who affects nobility by patronizing the
arts or practising philanthropy, depending on what is fashionable at any given time.
Henrietta becomes a ‘victim’ of society: “. . .меня бросили, беззащитную, в пропасть
большого света, где владычествуют притворство и эгоизм. Притворство и эгоизм
погубили меня.”

[. . .I was cast, defenseless, into the abyss of society, where pretence

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71 Ibid., 67.
72 Ibid., 72.
and egoism reign. Pretence and egoism have ruined me.] Karl Schulz, of modest birth but haunted by the exalted pursuit of pure art, learns to moderate his self-seeking passion in deference to the purity of a humble life. Like Dal’s “Bedovik,” Sollogub’s naturalistic tale serves the paired aims of depicting national character while exemplifying its moral lapses and its merits.

In comparison, what distinguishes Gogol’s chinovnik tales is their implicit accent on a usurper motif. The samozvanets [usurper/pretender/impostor] had provided a popular motif in Russian lore since the legendary Time of Troubles (1598-1613) when three pretenders called the ‘False Dmitrys’ made claim to the Russian throne, alleging to be Tsarevich Dmitry, the youngest son of Ivan the Terrible. The story became an obsession in Russian historical memory and captivated popular imagination in literary works from the seventeenth-century baroque Povest’ o Savve Grudisyne (The Tale of Savva Grudisyn) to A. P. Sumarokov’s neoclassical tragedy Dmitry samozvanets (Dmitry the Imposter, 1771) and Karamzin’s treatment in his History of Boris Godunov as another usurper. Finally, Pushkin’s 1825 drama Boris Godunov explicitly implicated Godunov in the murder of Tsarevich Dmitry, and was later adapted in many forms, notably by the composer Modest Mussorgsky in his opera of the same title.

In Gogol, the chinovnik is a usurper unto himself—that is, divided by the cognitive dissonance between social self and ideal self. First, the rapid mental demise of Poprishchin (of “Zapiski sumasshedshego”) recorded in his increasingly fragmented diary shows him crossing the line beyond which a false reality eclipses the dissonant and

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73 The Time of Troubles comprised the interregnum years between the death of the last of the Moscow Rurikids, Tsar Feodor Ivanovich in 1598, and the establishment of the Romanov Dynasty in 1613. The real Dmitry had died under uncertain circumstances (possibly murdered) in 1591 at the age of seven.

74 Boris Godunov was brother-in-law and advisor to Tsar Fyodor Ivanovich, serving as regent (1584-1598) and later elected Tsar (1598-1605) by a Great National Assembly.
disjointed self. The case of Poprishchin, who imagines himself a suitor to his department chief’s daughter, intercepts letters from her pugnacious poodle and ultimately fancies himself to be the King of Spain, is an obvious source for Dostoevsky’s Golyadkin, who also deludes himself into believing that he is courting his boss’s daughter, and that he receives letters from her asking him to arrange their secret elopement. Another source is the ambitious Collegiate Assessor Kovalyov (who calls himself Major) in Gogol’s “Nos.” His double is his own runaway nose that escapes from his face and parades about as a high-ranking official. But Dostoevsky’s early heroes probably bear their greatest resemblance to his predecessor’s puppet-like Akaky Akakievich Bashmachkin. In “Shinel’” Gogol created an archetype whose ghost would haunt all of succeeding Russian literature.

The *chinovnik* Bashmachkin is a dedicated copyist who takes special relish in his work, although his only reward is to be harassed by the younger clerks in his department who tease him about his threadbare overcoat. When he commissions a new one from his eccentric tailor Petrovich, the cloak becomes a symbol of his acceptance in the ranks of society as much as a confirmation of his personal dignity and moral integrity. His office superiors even throw a party in his honour, and the usually solitary Akaky Akakievich feels out of place but validated once and for all by the new achievement of status his overcoat has bought him. His newly found security, however, is stripped from him before he has the chance to exploit it, when thugs steal his coat as he passes through a dark empty square on his way home from the party. The demonic atmosphere of urban Petersburg depicted here and in other stories of Gogol is a part of the legacy Gogol inherited from Pushkin and handed down to Dostoevsky. Just as, in the end,
Bashmachkin himself haunts the city seeking overcoats and justice, the city’s history and its many ghosts seem to haunt the lives of succeeding generations of characters throughout Russian literature. "Shine" ends in Akaky’s tragicomic fight to enlist the help of police to retrieve his coat, which brings him into confrontation with a high-ranking official (dubbed a certain ‘Very Important Person’) who scolds him for his unpolished manners, impudence, and other serious breaches of conduct. Thus, Bashmachkin’s overcoat proves to be a false remedy for his unprivileged status that makes him vulnerable to censure from a culture where rank and protocol rule and the ‘little man’ is but a pest in the system. His reliance on an outward symbol to mask feelings of social inadequacy, as well as his failed appeal for justice to the authorities, prefigure important motifs in Dvoinik, which I discuss further below.

Gogol’s satires on the mores of society are complemented by their development in Dostoevsky’s chinovnik tales. References to Gogol are abundant, and sometimes made explicit. Makar Devushkin of Bednye liudi, for example, alludes to the actual story of Akaky Akakievich, complaining that it is unjust, and that the Very Important Person should have been kind and sympathetic to him. Devushkin, like Akaky Akakievich, is a cowed and self-denigrating copyclerk who, like Akaky, is nevertheless punctilious and proud of his work—except that Makar is several degrees more self-conscious and self-critical. We have the privilege of reading Devushkin’s letters to his damsel-in-the-tower Varvara Alekseevna, in which, at one point, he defends his calling as a copyist, insisting that he copies very important papers even if he has been called a chinovnik rat. Even though he has no sense of style and therefore did not opt for active service, he writes to

her from the heart, without affectation. I highlight these points in order to emphasize the
fact that Devushkin defines himself vis-à-vis the strictures of society, believing that his
honesty and integrity are sufficient guarantors of his personal dignity. He alludes to
“Shinel’” in his letter of the 8th of July, after extolling his own virtues as an honourable
citizen and devoted servant of the authorities with thirty years of irreproachable service.
He admonishes Varvara for sending him such an “ill-intentioned” [zlonamerennaia]
book, wondering, “Что мне за это шинель кто-нибудь из читателей сделает, что ли?
Сапоги, что ли, новые купить?” [What, so because of this overcoat is some reader or
other supposed to go out and do something for me? Buy me a pair of boots or
something?] He proposes an alternate ending to the story that would be more just:

А лучше всего было бы не оставлять его умирать, беднягу, а сделать бы так, чтобы
шинель его отыскалась, чтобы тут генерал, узнавши подробнее об его
dобродетелях, перепросил бы его в свою канцелярию, повысил чином и дал бы
хороший оклад жалованья . . .

It would have been better if they hadn't left him to die, the poor fellow, but rather had
sought out his coat, and if the general, having discovered more of his virtues, had invited
him to join his chancellery had raised his rank and given him a good salary in wages . . .

Through these words of Devushkin, Dostoevsky parodies the critics of Natural School
realism, implying that a story like “Shinel’” was inimical because it depicted the ugly
sides of urban life without a counterbalance of reaffirmation. But Devushkin’s chief
concern with the story is more specifically an expression of moral outrage: he is appalled
that the injustice suffered by its protagonist went unremedied and his aspirations
unredeemed.

Moral vindication is, in fact, Devushkin’s constant preoccupation, culminating in
the battle to defend his ‘Romantic’ honour by protecting Varvara from the wealthy and

76 PSS 1:63.
exploitative merchant Bykov. His story does not end in the triumphant manner he would have liked to have seen as the outcome of Bashmachkin’s travail, though, because the despondent Devushkin winds up in the humiliating position of helping Varvara choose fabrics for her bridal suite in her marriage to the usurper Bykov (the first in Dostoevsky’s line). Also, curiously, we have the story of Devushkin’s destitute neighbour Gorshkov, who, hopelessly impoverished, with an ailing wife and children, presents an interesting twist on Akakievich. He is unjustly implicated by an unscrupulous merchant in some bit of chicanery but eventually is fully exonerated by the courts, thereby, unlike Bashmachkin, finding justice. However, in the end, Gorshkov succumbs to the strain of this final struggle for dignity in a life of abject poverty, and he dies on the very eve of his vindication, crying, “честь моя, честь, доброе имя, дети мои” [My honour, my honour, my good name, my children], to which another neighbour replies, “Что, батюшка, честь, когда нечего есть; деньги, батюшка, деньги главное; вот за что бога благодарить!” [What is honour, old man, when you’ve got nothing to eat! The money, old man, the money is the important thing; that’s what you should be thanking God for.] Ultimately, the concerns for moral rectitude, decency, honour and justice that underpin Bednye liudi prefigure the more intricate handling of moral problems and ambiguities in Dvoinik. What is more, Dostoevsky exploited the double motif as a ruling trope to an even greater extent than Gogol had in the madman Poprishchin or Major Kovalyov and his Nose. In Dvoinik, the divisive inner conflict provides the setting for a more consequential (even if more ironically attenuated) lament of social inequality aggravated by the dissonance between visions of personal heroism and distressingly prosaic civil realities.

77 Devushkin’s letter of September 18th. PSS 1:97-98.
Before Dostoevsky took up the task, satirical depictions of the typical *chinovnik* continued to be a popular mainstay of Russian letters of the mid-1840s. Among the best known is the poet and publicist Nikolai Nekrasov’s caricature in the poem “Chinovnik” of 1844. In the year before *Dvoinik*’s appearance, Belinsky lampooned the stock *chinovnik* in “Peterburg i Moskva” (“Petersburg and Moscow”) from the collection of physiological sketches *Fiziologiia Peterburga*. Belinsky’s *chinovnik* modelled himself after the cultural ideals of high society like those described by Todd above, creating a pseudo-identity of presumptuous social refinement. In Petersburg, Belinsky explains, the world of high society is an engaging concern of the bourgeoisie, who try to imitate it as much as possible. The real *beau-monde*, an insulated *terra incognita*, laughs tolerantly at its posturings:

People from all layers of the middle class, from the upper to the lower, with strained attention pick up on the foreign and, to them, incomprehensible babble of high society, and make their own sense of the scattered words and phrases that fall on their ears. [ . . . ] In a word, they trouble themselves so much over the world of high society, that you would think they could not breathe without it. [ . . . ] Of course, the real high society would only laugh benevolently if it knew of these countless pretensions to close relations with it.

One will recognize the scattered words and phrases of society babble in Dostoevsky’s characters too, and not only in Devushkin and Golyadkin with their talk of honour and chivalry, their fumbled aphorisms and comically epigrammatic speech, but also in the various servants and lackeys who appear throughout Dostoevsky’s novels. Golyadkin’s morose servant Petrushka, who leaves his master because “decent people don’t come in

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78 *Fiziologiia Peterburga*, 57.
doubles,” is one example. The rest of Belinsky’s entry on chinovniki might be describing Golyadkin himself:

Хороший тон, это—точка помещательства для петербургского жителя. Последний чиновник, получающий не более семисот рублей жалованья, ради хорошего тона отпускает при случае искаженную французскую фразу—единственную, какую удалось ему затвердить из «Самоучителя»; из хорошего тона он одевается всегда у порядочного портного и носит на руках хотя и засаленные, но и желтые перчатки. Девицы даже низших классов ужасно любят ввернуть в безграмотной русской записи безграмотную французскую фразу,—и если вам понадобится писать к такой девице, то ничем вы ей так не полстите, как смешением нижегородского с французским.79

Khoroshii ton [bon ton]—is what drives the inhabitant of Petersburg crazy. The very lowest chinovnik, earning barely 700 roubles a year, is willing, for the sake of khoroshii ton, to scatter bad French phrases at any convenient moment, whichever ones he has managed to memorize from the Teach Yourself books. For khoroshii ton he dresses only from the best tailor, and wears only yellow gloves, however soiled. The girls, even of the lowest classes, terribly love to twist illiterate French phrases into an illiterate Russian note, and if it is necessary for you to write to such a girl, there is no better way to gratify her than with a mixture of your street talk and French.

These depictions demonstrate how the behavioural norms of the upper classes trickled down to the service class of chinovniki. Westernized St. Petersburg enjoyed a special status where, as Belinsky goes on to indicate, chinovniki were unabashed about their ambitions and pursued them relentlessly because society life in the capital carried such alluring promise. Golyadkin emerges from this very stock; yet, as I have begun to demonstrate, Dostoevsky’s clerks exhibit new dimensions of the chinovnik protagonist. For one, they show greater breadth of character than could be found in the typical chinovniki represented in Belinsky’s sketch or in the tales of Dal, Sollogub or Gogol. Furthermore, the moral issues facing the protagonist of Dvoinik are more deeply probed—their origins in the practice of mimicry of the privileged class, which Nekrasov and Belinsky had merely satirized, are dramatized in a degree of psychological realism that none of Dostoevsky’s predecessors had approached. Golyadkin is distinguished

79 Ibid., 58.
primarily in the way that he grapples, more than any of Gogol’s characters had, with his own motivations both to conform and at the same time to rebel against the scripted norms and behaviours of his social milieu. As mentioned, the motif of doubling implicit in the chinovniki of Gogol appears more explicitly in Dostoevsky. The problem of the usurper comes to define a complex issue of fluctuating self-definition that accompanies the destabilizing cultural realities outlined in my Introduction, above.

While Dvoinik shared numerous commonalities with Natural School aims, its unique modes of representation made it a target for critics. While grounded in the tradition of chinovnik tales, Dvoinik made departures from the genre and innovations in realism that were both applauded and berated by critical readers. This ambivalent reception of the work does much toward illuminating the literary problems of the contemporary context in which it appeared, and therefore makes up the next topic of my analysis.

The Natural School Critique of Dvoinik

Dostoevsky’s first work, the epistolary novel Bednye liudi, was a resounding success with readers and critics who saw the author as the new herald of Natural School social realism. The story of the young writer’s virtually overnight leap to stardom in May 1845 is well known. Even before its publication, Bednye liudi was a rally cry for writers and critics gathered under the Natural School banner. An ecstatic Nikolai Nekrasov, Russian poet and publisher of Sovremennik (The Contemporary), hailed Dostoevsky as a ‘new Gogol.’ The renowned critic Vissarion Belinsky, though initially sceptical (retorting to Nekrasov,
“for you, Gogols pop up like mushrooms”), was also deeply impressed after reading the manuscript.80

Although favourable praise of Bednye liudi was not unmitigated, Dostoevsky was lauded, in the main, as a new writer aligned with current literary tendencies advocated by Belinsky under the Natural School banner. But Belinsky’s estimation of Dvoinik was decidedly more ambivalent than his endorsement of Bednye liudi. Recounting a reading of Dvoinik given by the author in Belinsky’s home, Pavel Annenkov described Belinsky’s mixed feelings for the work. Sharing his own views on its merits, Annenkov also notes the preconceptions and misgivings harboured by Russia’s pre-eminent critic that cannot have failed to bias his reading of Dostoevsky. Belinsky apparently insisted on Dostoevsky’s need to gain the facility for transmitting his thoughts, freed from encumbrances of locution. Belinsky was unable to get used to the author’s predilection at the time for an indistinct manner of storytelling, returning again and again to the same expressions, repeating and rephrasing them ad infinitum, which he attributed to the youth and inexperience of the writer who had not yet overcome the obstacles related to language and form. Annenkov, on the other hand, is sure that Belinsky was mistaken, that Dostoevsky was no novice, but a fully-formed artist who possessed a deep-rooted aptitude for writing, despite the fact that it seemed to emerge already in his very first work.81

80 Pavel Annenkov described Belinsky’s first impressions of Dostoevsky’s writing in “Zamechatel’noe desiatiletie, 1838-1848” (“An Extraordinary Decade, 1838-1848”). Typical of the view seeing Dostoevsky as the new promise of Natural School poetics, Annenkov himself mused: “Подумайте, это первая попытка у нас социального романа и сделанная притом так, как делают обыкновенно художники, то есть не подозревая и сами, что у них выходит.” [Imagine, this is the first attempt at a social novel we have had, and done as artists usually do, themselves not even suspecting what they have accomplished.] 36. 81 “Zamechatel’noe desiatiletie” (“An Extraordinary Decade”), in F. M. Dostoevskii v russkoi kritike. Sbornik statei (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1956), p. 37. Annenkov’s italics.
Harsher criticisms from other quarters would follow the actual publication of *Dvoinik* by reviewers far less ambivalent or diplomatic than Belinsky. In a particularly scathing review in *Severnaia pchela*, L. V. Brant complained of the monotony and wordiness of the tale, calling it a lifeless, drawn-out and deadly boring story and referring to Dostoevsky as a young person who poorly understands art. A pan like this might have been expected from a reactionary paper like *Severnaia pchela*, which was not especially known for its critical acumen. Yet Apollon Grigor’ev, a respected poet and critic, and later an influential figure among Dostoevsky’s friends and supporters, is no more forgiving than Brant:

*Двойник [...]* сочинение патологическое, терапевтическое, но несколько не литературное: это история сумасшествия, разанализированного, правда, до крайности, но тем не менее отвратительного, как труп. [...] Достоевский до того углубился в анализ чиновнической жизни, что скучная, наглая действительность начинает уже принимать для него форму бреда, близкого к сумасшествию.

The Double [...] is a pathological work, a therapeutic, but in no way a literary work: it is the story of madness, analyzed, it is true, to the extreme, but nonetheless revolting, like a corpse. [...] Dostoevsky has so mired himself in analysis of the life of the government clerk that the boring, impertinent reality begins to take on the form of delirium very close to madness.

In all, *Dvoinik*’s prolixity, its idiosyncratic language, and the abundant use of the fantastic were viewed as stylistic flaws by critics expecting confirmation of Dostoevsky’s prophesied leading place among social realist writers. Belinsky initially defended the

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82 February 28, 1846: "Нельзя представить себе ничего бесцветнее, однообразнее, скучнее длинного, бесконечно растянутого, смертельно утомительного рассказа о незаметных приключениях господина Голядкина." [...] Нет конца многословию, тяжелому, досадному, наледающему, повторениям, переписывам одной и той же мысли, одних и тех же слов, очень понравившихся автору. Искренне сожалею о молодом, так ложно понимающем искусство и, очевидно, сбитом с толку литературною 'котериою' из видов своих выдающе его за гения." [One cannot imagine anything more colourless, uniform, long, endlessly drawn out and deadly boring than the story of the uninteresting 'adventures of Mr. Golyadkin.' [...] There is no end to the wordiness, to the heavy, vexing, tiring, repetitive paraphrasing of one and the same thought, and the same words, very much favoured by the author. We sincerely sympathize with the young man who has such a poor understanding of art, and is obviously confused by the literary 'coterie' who take him for a genius.] *PSS* 1:490.

83 *PSS* 1:491.
novel from attacks of this nature, maintaining that many would consider it a glorious and brilliant thing even to *finish* one’s literary career with such a work, and describing *Dvoinik*’s prolixity as “богатство” and “чрезмерная плодовитость еще не созревшая.” Even when acknowledging its flaws, Belinsky thought highly of the work: “Двойник» носит на себе отпечаток таланта огромного и сильного, но еще молодого и неопытного: отсюда все его недостатки, но отсюда же и все его достоинства.” [Dvoinik carries the stamp of a great and strong, but still young and inexperienced talent: its faults arise from here, but from the same place come its merits.] However, when the dust had settled, the admirer and promoter of the author of *Bednye liudi* later qualified his initial enthusiasm for Dostoevsky’s work:

Все, что в «Бедных людях» было извинительными для первого опыта недостатками, в «Двойнике» явилось чудовищными недостатками, и это все заключается в одном: в неумении слишком богатого силами таланта определять разумную меру и границы художественному развитию задуманной им идеи.

Every deficiency in *Poor Folk* that was pardonable for a first work appeared to be a monstrous error in *The Double*, and this all stems from one cause: the inability of too rich a talent to define a reasonable measure for the artistic development of his idea and to know its boundaries.

Belinsky does not entirely dismiss the novel, conceding that it might be interesting to literary connoisseurs and scholars, if not to the general public. He judges that while Golyadkin is bravely conceptualized, the author had gotten too carried away with the idea of his hero and had lacked the restraint to rein him in. Consequently, the novel is too long and grows tiresome. Drawing a comparison with Gogol, Belinsky contends that whereas Gogol had also deeply and enthusiastically characterized Khlestakov, so much so in fact

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84 *Otechestvennye zapiski*, March 1946; PSS 1:490.
85 PSS 1:490.
that there was enough material for ten comedies, he had applied the requisite artistic measure. *Revizor* (The Inspector General, 1836), Belinsky implies, is therefore much more successful than *Dvoinik*.\(^87\)

If Belinsky shared others’ critical opinions of the prolixity [*rastiamutost*] and oddness of the language in *Dvoinik*, he would prove to be even more unsatisfied with the fantastic elements in Dostoevsky’s writing, which he considered to be misleading representations of reality and therefore not in keeping with the aims of literature:

> Но в «Двойнике» есть еще и другой существенный недостаток: это его фантастический колорит. Фантастическое в наше время может иметь место только в домах умалишенных, а не в литературе, и находится в заведовании врачей, а не поэтов.\(^88\)

But in *The Double* there is yet another substantial shortcoming: its fantastic coloration. The fantastic in our time has a place only in the madhouse, and not in literature, and it requires the expertise of doctors, not of writers.

Belinsky’s assessments of works after *Dvoinik* were even less tolerant of the fantastic: in regards to “Gospodin Prokharchin” (“Mr. Prokharchin,” 1846), he complained about its “fanciful, mannered, indistinct feeling, as if it were some kind of true, but strange and confused incidence, and not a literary creation.”\(^89\) Concerning “Khoziaika” (“The

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\(^87\) Ibid, 212-214. Faced with similar criticism after the release of *Bednye liudi*, Dostoevsky countered the critique that his writing was too wordy and gratuitously long in the February 1st, 1846 letter to his brother Mikhail: “They find my novel drawn out, when it doesn’t contain one unnecessary word” (Frank and Goldstein, *Selected Letters*, 36).

\(^88\) Belinsky, “Vzgliad na russkuiu literaturu 1846-go goda,” 213.

\(^89\) “В [Двойнике] сверкают яркие искры большого таланта, но они сверкают в такой густой темноте, что их свет ничего не дает рассмотреть читателю . . . Сколько нам кажется, не вдохновение, не свободное и нравственное творчество породило эту странную повесть, а что-то вроде . . . как бы это сказать?—не то умничанья, не то претензии . . . Может быть, мы ошибаемся, но почему же бы в таком случае быть ей такою вычурною, манерною, непонятною, как будто бы это было какое-нибудь истинное, но странное и запутанное происшествие, а не поэтическое создание? В искусстве не должно быть ничего темного и непонятного . . .” [Bright sparks of a large talent sparkle in *The Double*, but they sparkle in such a thick darkness that their light gives nothing for the reader to examine . . . It seems to us that not inspiration, not free and naive creation gave birth to this strange narrative, but something like . . . how can one say?—either showing off, or pretension . . . We could be mistaken, but why does it seem so fanciful, affected, incomprehensible, as if it were a seemingly true, but strange and intricate incident, and not poetic creation? In art there must not be anything dark and incomprehensible.] Belinsky, “Vzgliad na russkuiu literaturu 1846-go goda,” 33.
Landlady,” 1847), Belinsky wondered if it were surprising at all that “what came out is something monstrous,” adding that “there is not one simple or living word or phrase: all of it is stylized, drawn out, stilted, counterfeit and false.” Belinsky and other proponents of the Natural School criticized Dostoevsky’s use of the fantastic in this manner precisely because it is ‘unnatural,’ featuring just the kind of Romantic poetics they were trying to supplant. So why did Dostoevsky so adamantly retain the style? Many have contributed to our understanding of this problem. Donald Fanger estimates that just as Dostoevsky takes the pathetic Gogolian material of “Shinel’” and humanizes it in Bednye liudi, in Dvoinik, he appropriates Gogol’s fantastic mode from “Zapiski sumasshedshego,” “Nos” (both primary sources for the double motif), and Mertvye dushi—and ‘rationalizes it.’ Joseph Frank correctly reads Dostoevsky’s avowal that he had not been successful with the form of Dvoinik to mean that he had not properly handled its fantastic aspects, the “uncertain oscillation between the psychic and the supernatural”—that it had been in a sense too fantastic and had alienated its readers. After all, as Frank notes, “The double as an emanation of Golyadkin’s delirium is perfectly explicable; the double as an actually existing mirror-image of Golyadkin, with the identical name, is troubling and

90 “Что это такое— злоупотребление или бедность таланта, который хочет подняться не по силам и потому биться идти обыкновенным путем и ищет себе какой-то небывалой дороги? Не знаем; нам только показалось, что автор хотел попытаться понять Marlinского с Гофманом, подбоявши сюда немного юмора в новейшем роде и сильно натеревши все это лаком Русской народности. Удивительно ли, что выше что-то чудовищное, напоминающее теперь фантастические рассказы Тита Космократова, забавлявших ими публику в 20-х годах именного столетия. Во всей этой повести нет ни одного простого и живого слова или выражения: все изыскано, натянуто, на ходулях, подделно и фальшиво.” [What is this— abuse or the poverty of talent, which wants to rise beyond its own powers and therefore fears to go by the usual path, but searches for itself some unprecedented route? We do not know; it only seemed us that the author wanted to attempt to reconcile Marlinsky with Hoffman, after blending in a little humour in the newest manner and rubbing all of this with the varnish of Russian national character. Is it at all surprising that what came out is something monstrous, resembling the now fantastic stories of Titus Kosmokratov, which amused the public in the 20’s of the present century. In this entire narrative there is not one simple and living word or expression: all of it is stylized, drawn out, stilted, counterfeit and false.] “Vzgliad na russkuiu literaturu 1846-go goda,” 35.
mysterious.” I venture to argue that these troubling and disturbing aspects of Dostoevsky’s fantastic realism—forcing the reader to suspend disbelief and engage in the author’s psychodramas—are actually the key to understanding Dvoinik. It relies on its fantastic coloration to heighten the contrast between Golyadkin’s righteous indignation—which consumes him when he sees his double usurping his role at the ministry—and his complications with moral self-awareness.

According to Tsvetan Todorov’s critical work on the subject, when ‘fantastic’ is used to describe a literary convention, it implies a world where both the reader and character(s) are taken unawares by events that do not accord with natural laws: “The fantastic is that hesitation experienced by a person who knows only the laws of nature, confronting an apparently supernatural event.” Dvoinik, which exploits its fantastic makeup for this very purpose, goes curiously unmentioned by Todorov. But Todorov says Dostoevsky belongs more to the genre of the uncanny, where events, however shocking, disturbing or improbable-sounding, may be accounted for by the laws of nature. It may be that Dostoevsky brings his book closer to the uncanny in the 1866 revision. Indeed, much of Dostoevsky’s later work seems to be dominated by the uncanny rather than the fantastic and supernatural. Rational explanations for events are virtually never omitted in the late Dostoevsky, even if they do not always appear where they might normally be expected, or if explanations come in the form of the acknowledgement of coincidence. In the 1860s, after a profusion of criticism maintaining that the fantastic elements in Dvoinik were too impenetrable, the author diminished the

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91 Frank, Seeds of Revolt, 311.
93 Todorov, 46.
fantastic by having Golyadkin escorted off to a madhouse in the end. This confirms the psychological reading, where the emanation of the hero’s double is ascribed to his insanity. Yet this also confirms the fact, to my mind, that the fantastic narrative style employed consistently by Dostoevsky in the 1840s had distorted representations of ‘reality’ in order to undercut the very conventions of naturalism themselves. The ‘madness’ of the hero is only ostensibly validated. The righteous indignation that consumes Golyadkin when his double usurps his role at the ministry presents a problem of consciousness—that of self-awareness and moral sense—that could not be adequately broached using naturalistic conventions of mimesis.

The historical use of doubles as a literary device confirms this analysis. Legend and early genres of lore had treated the devil as the instrument of divine justice or as the ‘braggart folktale trickster.’ In the nineteenth century, doubles came to be used widely in literature across Europe, often in different roles and for a variety of purposes, making it difficult to impose a uniform interpretation on all their uses as literary devices. A commonality that most share, however, is that the double represents a suppressed aspect of personality, which is revealed to the protagonist by degrees as a result of conflict and confrontation with the Doppelgänger. In Laurence Porter’s thesis, the particular kind of doubling in which the devil is raisonneur and confidant to a human being, which he finds in Goethe’s Faust, Flaubert’s Tentation de saint Antoine and Dostoevsky’s Brat’ia Karamazovy (The Brothers Karamazov, 1880), shows that “their devils represent an impetus, ultimately constructive, to self-awareness.”

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94 Porter, 318.
95 Porter, 319.
The Doppelgänger motif in Dvoinik presents a similar challenge. The antagonist is an ego projection who mirrors the protagonist’s flaws. Interaction with the double is a chance for Golyadkin to achieve greater self-awareness, particularly with respect to conscience and moral action. Moral self-awareness is an issue for Golyadkin because unconscious drives determine many of his behaviours—particularly ones that he would regard as falsity, pretence and moral transgression in others. This feature of the text is a topic of analysis in my next chapter. I pause at present to note that the morning after the first meeting with his double, Golyadkin signals a marginal awareness of his unconscious projection, even if the insight is cloaked in paranoia. He admits that he always knew something like this was being prepared: “... господин Голядкин уже давным-давно знал, что у них там что-то приготовляется, что у них там есть кто-то другой.”96 [. . . Mr. Golyadkin had known for ages that they were cooking something up, and that there was someone else in with them.] The revelatory moment shows a degree of awareness of the process of ego-splitting that had culminated in the fantastic events of the night before; however, the process is externalized, attributed to the machinations of deadly enemies. This can be compared to the catastrophic finale when the sum of Golyadkin’s fears reach a climax—as he is carted off to a madhouse, his last recorded thought is “Увы! он это давно уже предчувствовал!”97 [Alas! He had felt this coming for a long time!] That he had known it would happen points to the problem of suppressed awareness. The fact that he externalizes the problem—judging all along that his enemies were preparing something to defeat him—signifies that Golyadkin is not prepared to recognize that the challenge to his moral conscience and personal integrity is an internal struggle. In the

96 PSS 1:144; Bird, 83-84.
97 PSS 1:229; Bird, 254.
rational practice of self-justification, Golyadkin chooses not to recognize the irrational confrontation of self with self.

If Dvoinik was unsuccessful because it just wasn’t believable enough, it is nevertheless clear that its fantastic elements served Dostoevsky in ways that went unnoticed in all the critical fury. While Belinsky may have been a shrewd judge of literature, the preeminent critic of his day and Dostoevsky’s sometime mentor, one suspects in hindsight that he missed the nascent phase of a winning stylistic formula. More recent critical judgment has acknowledged the connection between Dostoevsky’s use of the fantastic and the ontological problems posed by his works. Malcolm Jones recognized that fantastic realism “is about the intersubjective experience of reality and the elusiveness of a much sought-after, universal Truth.”98 Frank sees in Dostoevsky’s method, as it develops in later works, a synthesis of the rationalism and enlightenment of the Western intelligentsia with the unconscious moral forces of the narod [Russian folk]. The synthesis is a foundation for the social-moral philosophy he would later develop as pochvenichestvo ['Native soil conservatism'].99 In the next sections I discuss alternative critical approaches—both contemporaneous with Dostoevsky and of more recent vintage—that assess Dvoinik favorably and help prepare the ground for my argument that Golyadkin’s challenges in self-awareness are instrumental in shaping and defining his moral feelings.

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Valerian Maikov and Mikhail Saltykov-Shchedrin: ‘Analysis’ and ‘Contradiction’

Dostoevsky’s own misgivings about his association with the Belinsky pleiad surfaced quickly in the wake of the critical tide. In a letter written in September 1846, in which he raises doubts about Belinsky, Dostoevsky speaks exultantly of a new circle of acquaintances, “sensible and intelligent people, with hearts of gold, of nobility and character,” who “cured me by their company,” leading Frank to infer that the security Dostoevsky found in his new milieu undoubtedly helped him “to weather the perturbations brought on by rejection from [Belinsky].”\footnote{Frank, \textit{Seeds of Revolt}, 200.} Leonid Grossman also observed that joining a close circle of like-minded individuals must have been a welcome relief to Dostoevsky after the vicissitudes of fame following his literary debut of \textit{Bednye liudi} and \textit{Dvoinik} earlier the same year, and the strained relations he began to suffer with Belinsky’s group.\footnote{L. P. Grossman, \textit{Dostoevskii} (Moscow: Molodaia gvardiia, 1965), 88.}

Dostoevsky’s new friends were a tight circle who gathered at the home of Aleksei Beketov, Dostoevsky’s former classmate at the Academy of Engineers, to discuss social, political and literary problems. Among the company were the poet Apollon Nikolaevich Maikov and his younger brother Valerian Nikolaevich Maikov.\footnote{Ibid., 88-93.} The latter, two years younger than Dostoevsky but already a budding young critic for \textit{OZ}, was to become an important contact for Dostoevsky and a defender and ally when other critics had begun to deride him for his idiosyncrasies of style. He was also one of the most perceptive of the early commentators to write on Dostoevsky’s first works.
In his brief tenure as critic for OZ between 1845 and his untimely death in 1847, Maikov showed remarkable talent and acumen for such a young person. Dostoevsky admired Maikov’s contribution to Russian criticism and lamented the loss of such a promising talent. He later recorded, in Dnevnik pisatel’ia (Diary of a Writer, 1876-1877):

After Belinsky, Valerian Nikolaevitch Maikov filled the office of critic for Notes of the Fatherland. Valerian Maikov took to the job ardently, brilliantly, with conviction and the first passion of youth. But he wasn’t afforded the chance to have his say. He died in the first year of his appointment. This fine person showed great promise, and it may well be that we lost a great deal when he died.

In addition to critiques he gave the writer’s short novels in articles of broader scope for OZ, Maikov had been preparing a monograph, shortly before he died in 1847, exclusively on Dostoevsky’s works. It was to be the first of its kind, and one regrets that the accidental death of the young critic prevented its completion. Maikov would likely have become one of the great readers and interpreters of Dostoevsky.

A rare apologist for Dvoinik, Valerian Maikov defended Dostoevsky against some of the abovementioned critical attacks. In a summary of the rise and fall of Dostoevsky’s precocious debut, Maikov recalls that after the manuscript of Bednye liudi had made such a powerful impression on the biggest names in Russian criticism, the published work was expected to be the apotheosis of Russian literature. It could not possibly have lived up to

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103 Maikov drowned in a pond outside of Petersburg two months before his 24th birthday.
104 PSS 18:70-71. Dostoevsky’s italics. I will also note that it was Valerian Nikolaevich who introduced Dostoevsky to his physician, lifelong friend and confidante, Dr. Stepan Yanovsky. Furthermore, after the brothers Beketov left Petersburg in 1847, Maikov introduced Dostoevsky to the literary salon of his father, the famous artist and scholar Nikolai Apollonovich Maikov (ibid).
105 Ibid.
such hopes and consequently met with criticism for its smallest faults. Moreover, Maikov perceives that critics reacted negatively mainly to Dostoevsky’s “unique mode of representing reality,” so that critics who maligned Bednye liudi on these grounds would inevitably skewer Dvoinik. Maikov, on the contrary, defends this characteristic of the writing: “А между тем этот приём (в изображении действительности), может быть, и составляет главное достоинство произведений г. Достоевского.” [In fact, this technique (in his representation of reality) is perhaps the most important quality of the works of Dostoevsky.] The original style that earlier naysayers had found objectionable was for Maikov a strength of the writing. What is more, Maikov was one of the first to absolve Dostoevsky of accusations that he shamelessly imitated Gogol. He distinguishes the work of the two writers, saying that Gogol was above all a social poet, while Dostoevsky was more a psychological one. This is no revelation to today’s readers; the distinction does, however, suggest that Belinsky and others who had had hopes that Dostoevsky would be the next Gogol had read Bednye liudi and Dvoinik with mistaken emphasis. Maikov concludes that Dvoinik’s lack of success says little about its true value and that in it, the author’s talent for acute psychological analysis ripens significantly. Maikov values the tale’s social and moral-psychological analysis highly, admiring Dostoevsky’s depiction of the effects of human society upon the individual personality.

In the very year of Dostoevsky’s literary debut, in his article “Nechto o russkoi literature v 1846 godu” (“On Russian Literature in 1846”), Maikov had detected a

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107 Ibid.
108 “Собрание сочинений Гоголя можно решительно назвать ‘художественною статистикой России.’” [The works of Gogol may decisively be called an ‘artistic demographic of Russia.’] Ibid., 180.
109 Ibid., 181-182.
110 PSS 1:492-493.
transitional period in the nation’s literature, when the idea [mysl’] animating the period showed signs of being exhausted, and the parties carrying the spirit of the epoch had begun to disperse. If critics had been put off by the ‘newness’ of Dostoevsky’s manner, his original method of depicting reality [izobrazhenie deistvitel’nosti] was for Maikov one of the most valuable features of his writing:

In *The Double*, Dostoevsky’s manner and his love for psychological analysis is expressed in all its fullness and originality. In this work, he has penetrated the human soul so deeply, looked so fearlessly and passionately into the secret machinations of human feeling, thought and action, that the impression produced by reading *The Double* can be compared only to the impression of an inquisitive person penetrating the chemical composition of matter. Strange! What could be more positive, it would seem, than a scientific view of the most elementary components of reality? And yet, the picture of the world illuminated by this view always appears to a person as if it were shrouded in some kind of mystical light.

For Maikov, analysis in literature and criticism underlies his definitions of art and aesthetics and is also the aim of his own investigations into art, literature and social problems in Russia and Europe. One finds in the narrative of *Dvoikin*, however, no diagnoses or prognoses. So how does analysis come into play?

In the abovementioned critique, Maikov highlights Dostoevsky’s ability to carry out vigorous analysis in the way he explores the spectrum of human psychology and represents it in aesthetic form. In *Dvoikin* there is only presentation and description to follow the process of Golyadkin’s ‘mental breakdown’; but it is evidence and description

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112 Ibid., 182.
that Maikov saw to be missing from the big critics who make generalizations based on a false sense of authority. The tyranny of Belinsky was discussed in this context, when Maikov warns: "... доказать одну истину нельзя без того, чтобы не доказать и целого ряда истины, из которого она взята — или, лучше сказать, объяснение частного предполагает объяснение общего."[113] [To prove one truth is impossible without proving a whole series of truths from which it is derived—or better, interpreting the particular must be predicated on an interpretation of the general.] Ultimately, the depth of Dostoevsky's socio-psychological character analysis affirmed Maikov's way of distinguishing the artistic idea from the merely didactic: "Позиция включается в том, что она может быть не только понята, но и прочувствована."[114] [The true sign of an artistic idea resides in its ability to be not only understood, but also felt.]

According to recent scholarship by M. C. Makeev, a new critical school was advanced by Valerian Maikov, Dostoevsky and their contemporary, the writer M. E. Saltykov-Schedrin, which stood in opposition to Natural School poetics and criticism. [115] Dostoevsky and Shchedrin are stylistically connected with the traditions of the Natural School in their interest in the social plight of the 'little man.' They depart from Natural School aesthetics in forcing their characters to ruminate over their social condition—to the point of doubting the fundamental stability of the universe. Dostoevsky's 'new man'

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[113] "Kratkoe nachertanie istorii russkoi literatury," in Literaturnaia kritika, 76.
[114] Ibid.
[115] M. C. Makeev, "Saltykov-Shchedrin, Valerian Maikov i Dostoevskii v 1840-e gg.: nesostoyavshiasia literaturnaia shkola," Vestnik Moskovskogo universiteta, Ser. 9, No. 2 (Moscow: Filologiiia, 2001). M. E. Saltykov-Shchedrin (1826-1889) was a journalist and novelist of liberal and even radical sympathies. Countering Makeev's thesis to some degree, Shchedrin was one of the first to attack Zapiski iz podpol'ia in his review in Sovremennik in May of 1864. In his satirical attack, he considered the Underground Man to be too fantastic a character and dismissed him as the product of a troubled mind and as irrelevant to the human condition.
looks with anxiety and horror at the world around him and tries to struggle with the threat it poses to his identity. The hero’s fault lies in his own doubt. Rational egoism proves to be his undoing in the face of the irrational and of perceived contradictions in reality, which undermine his belief in the rational order of the world. His catastrophe is the vengeance of the universe on the doubting rational mind. Makeev sees Maikov, Dostoevsky and Saltykov-Shchedrin as interpreters of the overlapping friction between the rational and irrational, whereas their contemporaries were not sophisticated enough to discern such enormous contradictions. The extremely unstable and corrosive inner tensions inherent in man’s nature and mental perceptions opened a new literary plane, one that would indicate the flaws of rational humanism and the naïve presumptions of Utopian Socialists, both subject to the impotence, disillusionment and despair of the falsely reasoning mind.

In the latter half of the 1840s, Dostoevsky and Saltykov-Shchedrin were the major authors publishing in OZ during the period of its most divisive conflicts among its editorial staff and the shifting directions of its theoretical and ideological bases. The contrasting works of these two authors represented the inner contradictions of the journal at this time. Strongly influenced by Belinsky and Valerian Maikov, Saltykov-Shchedrin became a regular contributor to OZ and provided many reviews for the journal. His short novels Protivorechiia (Contradictions, 1847) and Zaputannoe delo (A Mix-up, 1848) deal with the intrinsic problems of the contemporary hero of Russian literature in their philosophical and socialist content, characteristic of the end of the 1840s. They reflect the

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116 Makeev sees the same characteristic in Saltykov-Shchedrin’s “Zaputannoe delo” (“A Mix-up”) and “Protivorechiia” (“Contradictions”).
117 Makeev, 33.
sum of crises of the ideological search of their heroes, attempting to solve the ‘contradictions’ and ‘mix-ups’ of their day.\textsuperscript{118}

In *Protivorechiia*, the hero Nagibin grapples with contradictions in the problems of love and morality. He voices a critical position against Utopianism and left Hegelianism, reflecting the author’s parting of ways with the Petrashevsky circle.\textsuperscript{119} His relentless theorizing leads him around an endless circle of contradictions, like a serpent chasing its tail. Regardless of his precise understanding of the very contradictions that assail him, he is helpless to disentangle himself from their grasp. He is powerless in the trap of self-conscious reflection that continually doubles back on himself with the centripetal force of inertia, and it saps his strength and joy for living. His doubt and the unassailable contradictions which he defines as “the unnatural struggle of life and reason” cause him to reject and negate all that illumines life—all the while anticipating the tragic consequence: “...но ты отвернулся от нее, ты проклял все, что носило на себе печать жизни, ты создал себе свой особый мир, который наполнил порождениями своего мнительного рассудка, и заперся от всех с этими холодными, мертвыми призраками; ты всю жизнь свою исповедовал одну только доктрину, доктрину смерти.”\textsuperscript{120} [...but you turned away from it, you cursed everything which bore the stamp of life, you created for yourself your special world, which you filled with the creations of your over-anxious reason, and locked yourself away from everyone with these cold, dead spectres; all your life you professed one doctrine alone, the doctrine of death.] Ironically, Nagibin’s penchant for abstract theorizing results from the very instinct to avoid illusion

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{118} Kuleshov, 222-224.
\item \textsuperscript{119} Ibid., 227. Dostoevsky’s own association with the circle of Mikhail Petrashevsky, in which writers and intellectuals discussed Western philosophy, earned him arrest and exile in 1849.
\item \textsuperscript{120} M. E. Saltykov-Schedrin, *Protivorechiia*, in *Sobranie sochinenii v 20-i tomakh* (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, vol. 1, 1965), 131.
\end{itemize}
and falsity that he endorses here. Although he wishes, through conscious reasoning, to ward off disenchantment and suffering, his reason is the author of his own misery. His intellectual conjectures carry him through a twisting labyrinth of thesis and antithesis, an emotional razor’s edge of exultation and despair resembling Belinsky’s own ideological path that saw him embrace and forthwith reject Hegelian dialectics.

The ‘unnatural struggle of life and reason,’ for the unhappy hero of Protivorechiia, is the untenable contradiction that inhibits the harmonious integration of the thinking self with modern life:

This divergence of theory and practice, of life and ideal most often appear necessary in transitional epochs, when a person, tormented and deceived by so many centuries of illusion, untrustingly looks at his own feelings, seeks to determine their consequences, their future, in order not again to be made a victim of error and not to doom himself again to long suffering. This is an unnatural position, if you will, since man in this case lives only by one side of his organism—yes, in the abnormal in-between it is not possible to demand the whole, harmonious manifestation of human activity.

The chief duality of life, for Nagibin, is the divide between theory and practice, between specious idealism and real life—a contradiction which he lives out in full awareness of the disgrace it occasions in his personal life. Bound up in the mental loop of his reasoning, Nagibin convinces himself that freedom consists of bowing to ‘necessity’ [neobkhodimost’]—a position that is refuted by the consequences of inert inaction that it forces him into. The Hegelian phase of ‘reconciliation with reality,’ that gave Belinsky ideological refuge for some time, is rephrased here in Nagibin’s philosophy. The plot is

121 Ibid., 98.
driven by the response to his stubborn philosophizing by his betrothed Tatyana, who calls his ‘necessity’ mere cowardice. She consigns herself to marrying another suitor, ostensibly bowing to the law of necessity. Aping his theories, she proposes that we all must live as marionettes without soul, without will, without feeling. How easy to live, she proffers, if all one must do is smother all the sparks of feeling that arise inside, smother one’s consciousness of living and one’s reason altogether, to live like an automaton. Later, the deleterious hyper-rationality of Nagibin finds parallels in the psychosomatic distortions of some of Dostoevsky’s own character creations, most notably the Underground Man with his ‘heightened awareness.’ The problem for Golyadkin differs by degree of exposition. Dostoevsky’s first specimen of the ‘underground type’ lacks the mental sophistication to ruminate over the contradiction between the ideal and the actual, but instead experiences it as a cognitive-emotional rupture. Presentation and description, as Maikov observed, are the devices by which Dostoevsky first tackled the literary problem of representing actuality as it stands at variance with heightened sensitivity to idealistic inner strivings. Saltykov-Shchedrin takes a more didactic line than Dostoevsky had in the 1840s, as Protivorechiia consists of arduous philosophical monologues wherein Nagibin works out his intricate rational formulae.

Likewise, the hero of Zaputannooy delo exercises reason to work out specific social problems. Michulin follows in the Natural School tradition of the rebellion of the ‘little man’ against the inhibiting institutional constraints of the monarchical system. Like Evsei Stakheevich, Akaky Akakievich, Makar Devushkin and other heroes of their ilk, Michulin reiterates the motifs of the psychology of the daily life, living conditions, mores, habits and speech of the Petersburg service class. The primary concern is the
defeat of their dreams of happiness. One might say the rebellion motif in Zaputannoe delo achieves a fuller development than in comparable stories of the same tradition—among which, apart from those already mentioned, are Panaev’s “Doč’ chinovnogo cheloveka” (“The Chinovnik’s Daughter”), Grebenka’s “Doktor”, and Turgenev’s “Andrei Kolosov”—all of which portray the habits and behaviours of the rebelling raznochinenets [low- or non-ranking citizen]. Saltykov-Shchedrin’s exceptional talent lay in revealing how the raznochinenets thinks—how, by means of his thought, he defines himself outside of the system. In the end, Michulin, who dies from the bitter sense of injustice suffered by the unprivileged classes, might rightly be compared to Golyadkin, whose own bitter rebellion results in mental disintegration and anguished ruin. On the other hand, the methodology employed by Dostoevsky, again, is one that defied the conventions of realism that Saltykov-Shchedrin’s works uphold. While sharing thematically in the social problems and their contradictions illustrated in the naturalistic works of his contemporaries, Dostoevsky’s own creations take a very different tack. His ‘analysis’ takes the inherent ‘contradictions’ at their root in a demonstratively visceral breakdown of reason and idealism alike. The issues themselves are heightened by Golyadkin’s circumscribed awareness of their threat to his self-understanding and his grasp of the moral organization of society.

Other Critical Approaches

If some criticisms of Dvoinik’s distortions of ‘reality’ can be met with arguments like those of Maikov’s and Makeev’s, for Dostoevsky’s artistic purposes the stylistic

122 Kuleshov, 227-228.
idiosyncrasies that drew such disparagement can also be understood in the light of investigations that concentrate on other nuances of the writing. A large body of scholarship, from Grossman’s *Poetika Dostoevskogo* to Victor Terras’s *The Young Dostoevsky*, proves that Dostoevsky’s early works feature stylization and parody not only of Gogol, but also of a number of other literary modes. Failure to understand the complexity of Dostoevsky’s parodic scaffolding would have naturally led critics off the trail of his new analytic approach.

Terras calls the author’s hybrid technique “theme and variations,” arguing that the young Dostoevsky presented a sentimental or Romantic theme along with a character and setting from the Natural School, and sought a form to fit such a synthesis. The result, in Terras’s conclusion, is a travesty of the Romantic theme and a response to intriguing ideas in Gogol’s work. *Bednye liudi*, for example, is both a travesty of the sentimental epistolary love story—a “serious travesty” which establishes the Romantic theme in drab everyday reality—and also a “serious parody” of themes from Gogol. In particular, Dostoevsky replaces the ardent young lover of Romantic and sentimental novels with a timid, middle-aged man, and he swaps the intellectual rebel for a dim-witted philistine. At the same time, he wages a polemic against Gogol’s “Shinel’,” reinventing his predecessor’s poor clerk hero, casting a Titular Counsellor in the role of a genuine sentimental lover. Both seek the object of their love in vain, but Dostoevsky’s hero, Terras argues, is more distinctly individual—he has his own thoughts and ways of seeing things and can express them. Moreover, he loves a real person rather than an inanimate object. Terras concludes that a moral emerges from Dostoevsky’s version of the story that is absent in Gogol: even the lowliest of men, like the dimwitted Akaky Akakievich, can
and do love as truly and profoundly as the fiery, brilliant romantic heroes of Goethe or Rousseau.\(^{123}\)

Similarly, Dvoinik, Terras argues, is a serious parody of both Romantic motifs and themes from Gogol. He sees that the work is a response to and comment on not only “Nos” (as the formalist critic Alfred Bem had argued), but also on “Zapiski sumasshedshego,” and, moreover, that the work goes much further than sublimating Gogol’s stories. While both authors borrow the Doppelgänger motif from Romantic literature, particularly from E. T. A. Hoffmann, in Dostoevsky the Doppelgänger complex is a symptom rather than a cause of Golyadkin’s downfall. Moreover, in Dostoevsky’s writing the theme is darker and more serious. The disintegration of Golyadkin’s personality stands for an important and universal socio-economic phenomenon, developed in a grey everyday setting in order to emphasize that it is an instance of ordinary experience.\(^{124}\)

Again, according to Terras, Dostoevsky takes the Gogolian idea further by making his story a parody of the genteel adventure novel.\(^{125}\) The narrator imitates a narrator of the adventure novel, referring to Golyadkin as “my hero” and “our hero,” calling trivial events “adventures,” and calling himself “the modest narrator of this most veracious story.” Originally, before its reissue in 1866, Dvoinik had used chapter subtitles like those in a picaresque tale, reporting ridiculous trivialities in a tone of mock solemnity (also linking Dvoinik to Don Quixote—see my discussion in Chapter Four). Moreover, epithets describing Romantic heroes are applied to the very prosaic Misters Golyadkin Senior and Junior. Martial phraseology is used to recount the activities of the hero, such

\(^{123}\) Terras, 14-18.  
\(^{124}\) Ibid., 21.  
\(^{125}\) Ibid., 23-24.
as these descriptions of his feeble efforts to pull himself together: “Mr. Golyadkin saw clearly that the time had come for a bold stroke, the time of putting his enemies to shame,” and “far from being afraid of his enemies, he was quite prepared to challenge them all to the most decisive battles.”\textsuperscript{126} These parodic elements invite ironic comparisons between Golyadkin and the swashbuckling adventure novel heroes and picaros. In his own imagination, Golyadkin is a hero of the stature of Dumas’s d’Artagnan; but in the end he succumbs every time to a crippled will and submissive nature. As the situation grows more desperate and events take turns of ever greater absurdity, the despondent hero vacillates between resolving to finish off his foes in a single triumphant stroke and falling helplessly into a fearful paralysis.

What prevents him from undertaking any of the bold and heroic acts he envisions? Golyadkin fails to realize his Romantic aspirations primarily because of the ethical tensions he is facing—ones that I will feature in my analysis in the following chapters. The Romantic hero is a man (almost always) of action, decision, and certainty, whereas Golyadkin’s ‘actions’ are almost all hesitant, timid, self-doubting (and therefore unsuccessful). Another critic, A. Kovacs, has attributed the roots of Golyadkin’s division to neuro-physiological causes on the one hand (i.e., madness) and socio-ethical reasons on the other. The double is seen as the man Golyadkin could become, but for his values, which are defined in the negative to stress their opposition to the values of popular society: he is not an intriguer, he does not wear a mask, he does not betray others, etc. The double is the projection of his diseased imagination, taking on the character of one unafraid to carry out Golyadkin’s ambitions, even at the expense of compromising his values. In essence, Golyadkin is a man endowed with true humanity trying to hold onto

\textsuperscript{126} Quoted in Terras, 23.
his dignity and honour, but not much of it is left. In striving to live 'humanely' while also saving his money and aspiring to gain entry into a higher stratum of society, he has nonetheless lost what is essential to his humanity:

Гибель человека в чиновнике уже давно начался . . . Мелкий чиновник честно накопил деньги, чтобы иметь возможность жить «по-человеческий», но пока он копил их, шли не только годы, уходили и энергия, и здоровье; растеряны были и сила духа, и человеческие ценности. Этот процесс—результат образа жизни, социальных условий русского общества того времени. Ведь и психическое заболевание героя связано с беспросветной жизнью—без отдыха, без развлечений, без театра, без друзей, т.е. без удовлетворения важнейших человеческих потребностей. 127

The demise of the man in the civil servant began long ago. The petty bureaucrat saved his money honestly in order to have the chance to live 'humanely,' but as he saved, not only the years, but also his health and energy passed; the strength of his spirit was spent, as well as his human values. This process was the result of a way of life, of the social conditions of Russian society of that time. Thus is the psychic instability of the hero connected with his barren life—without rest or diversion, the theatre or friendships, that is, without the satisfaction of the most important human needs.

Kovacs concludes that Golyadkin's undoing is weakness—a character flaw he cannot overcome. Golyadkin is a type, characterizing the weak individual. He tries to satisfy his ambition through dishonest means [lozhnym putem], like crashing the party through the back entrance, or 'black staircase' [chernaia lestnitsa] as it is known in Russian—both to assert his oppressed self and further to reconcile the principles of true humanity [podlinnaia chelovechnost'] with the hypocritical 'wolfish values' [volch'ia moral'] that prevail in the public arena. What Kovacs and others fail to address, however, is this: Why does Golyadkin cling to a morality that has no bearing in his present society? Where does his moral sense come from and how is it applied? A man of true humanity he is called, who upholds basic human values. But at the same time he is attracted to notions of wealth, honour, dignity and status as defined by a social system that he simultaneously

condemns as false, corrupt and hypocritical. What can we glean from this about that system, and about Golyadkin himself, who seeks in it self-definition and self-justification by means of a complex and in many ways self-conceived moral framing? It is to these questions that I now turn, keeping the historical, literary and critical background to the novel in mind.
CHAPTER 3

MORALITY, MASKS AND Duplicity

Golyadkin’s Dual Self-Perception

In my Introduction I explored Romanticism’s account of the self as a complex inner space afflicted with the perception of internal divisions brought on by disillusionment, despair, and displaced moral grounding. Variations on this conflict also inform the narrative frame of Dvoinik, to which I now turn. The protagonist’s complex motivations in this tale conflict with the mores of civil society, whose moral order is founded on the self-interested pursuit of rank and privilege, and moderated by the dictates of fashion and decorum. Frustrated in his efforts to succeed in this milieu, Golyadkin criticizes its pretensions, which he takes to defining as dishonourable falsehoods. Grasping for ideals in a morally defunct bureaucratic society, he appeals to the relics of honour and nobility from a mythologized Golden Age of chivalry. His reverence for authority (conjured according to his own idealized notions) is indicative of a dual attempt to identify with the dominant social group and to gain validation from those he would like to believe are the bearers and protectors of fixed moral truths.

Is Golyadkin aware that his disenchantment results from the contradiction that sees him longing to integrate with the very society he accuses? Does he not generate a value system of justifications to compensate for his own failings and perceived inferiority—that motivating force for value construction that Nietzsche would later call ressentiment? By way of answering, my analysis below will concentrate on the fact that Golyadkin’s resentment at the experience of alienation from his social milieu indicts
society for its loss of moral grounding while it simultaneously implicates the protagonist himself for the flawed subjective idealism in his moral reasoning. He wants his connection to society, his acceptance and success in the social sphere, to be rooted in a firm moral structure. One aspect of self—the autonomously acting double, Golyadkin Jr.—finds success and validation in the bureaucratic culture, but he is a ‘wretch,’ a ‘scoundrel,’ a ‘villain’; he steals Golyadkin Sr.’s work and passes it off as his own; he lies, cheats, and whispers flattery in the ears of his colleagues and superiors. The psychic mechanism of projection onto an externally perceived adversary is employed to distance himself from these behaviours so as to label them with moral valuations. Others among Golyadkin’s office colleagues are painted with the same brush, such as Vladimir Semyonovich, his rival for the affections of Klara Olsuf’evna, who allegedly has ulterior motives, while only he, Golyadkin, is “acting openly and above board.”1 His double’s and his colleagues’ pursuit of ambition at the expense of others is not only disreputable, but in Golyadkin’s eyes, dishonourable and morally suspect. Like Vladimir Dal’s bedovik, the ostensibly ‘real’ Golyadkin does not successfully integrate in the bureaucratic milieu, but feels himself to be morally superior. Yet his sanctimonious pronouncements reveal an underlying hypocrisy that show him attempting to come to terms with his feelings of envy and resentment. His awareness of this conflict is at best peripheral, which is illustrated by his repeated claims to moral superiority while denouncing the morally repugnant behaviours that he apparently enacts through the rejected shadow personality.

1 PSS 1:120.
The moral conflict of Golyadkin’s complicity in the social behaviours he reviles is the problem I will explore in order to illuminate Dostoevsky’s literary challenge to portray the wayward course of subjective moral reasoning. Specifically, the contradictions that occasion the hero’s psychic division—the mental and physical cleft of self into two distinct entities—stems from the interplay of contradictory exercises of self-imaging. In part, he aspires to replicate a society gentleman according to his understanding of the scripted, socially-sanctioned roles of that designation. He is obsessively concerned with projecting an image of khoroshii ton (bon ton)—due ease, affability and savoir faire, along with the appropriate accoutrements of fashion, social grace and cultural refinement. These are ambitions typical of literary representations of chinovniki, who were satirized in the popular literary genres described in my previous chapter, above. Akin to Gogol’s Major Kovalyov, or the government clerks of Belinsky’s “Moskva i Peterburg” and Nekrasov’s satirical poem “Chinovniki,” Golyadkin’s aspirations amount to a transparent pose that betrays his base motives of envy, pride and self-gratification. On the other hand, when Golyadkin is moved to excoriate the outward show of social refinement, which he criticizes as the mask of false pretension, he defines the second face of his personal ideal. He enumerates his own virtues that prove, to his mind, his own moral integrity: he does not wear a mask, he does not lie and intrigue, he does not kow-tow and flatter, he does not embellish his speech. Curiously, each of these things represents the very sort of dissembling behaviour Golyadkin is guilty of in the various ways he affects sophistication and good breeding—a fact which he refuses to acknowledge, except by projection of those characteristics onto the materialized phantasm of his double. Overall, the narrative exploits the tensions between codified
social ethics and the protagonist’s strivings for self-validation through a quasi-traditional, subjective value structure that justifies his position vis-à-vis the social domain. As I demonstrate these contradictions in specific passages from Dvoinik, the purpose of my focussed analysis of Golyadkin’s dual self-perception is to reveal that his motivations are complicated by his shortcomings with respect to self-knowledge and moral awareness.

Golyadkin, to be sure, is no moral crusader. Little of his moral reasoning is a conscious process that he understands, while the psychological complexities that characterize his fluctuating self-definitions locate the nexus of identity at the point where egoism and moral sense converge. It is not an explicitly moral quest that the novella describes, but rather ambiguities in the hero’s moral perceptions, themselves lacking clear definition or resolution. His practice of self-definition is a cognitive-emotional experience of foraging for moral truths using conditioned habits of moral reasoning. In portraying the appearance of and competition with the double, Dostoevsky is showing what is going on in Golyadkin’s psyche as his contradictory intuitions and yearnings jar him into something we might, indeed, describe as psychosis (imagining and conversing with the double). Of course, using his method of fantastic realism, Dostoevsky does not let us read it this way straightforwardly—the reader cannot tell whether Golyadkin Jr. is real or imaginary because in the story he seems to interact with others who find nothing unusual about the fact that he is a replica of Golyadkin Sr. Even so, if the actual process of (unsuccessfully) reconciling these two components of Golyadkin’s inner self takes place subconsciously, as if in a dream, then the higher-level but fractured personality of the protagonist does not learn anything that coalesces into the self-understanding of an integrated personality. His occluded self-awareness is the root problem Golyadkin faces,
demonstrated by his inability to articulate the maze of conflicting values in which he is lost. The labyrinthine rationalizations to which he so often appeals show evidence of the blockages to self-understanding caused by collisions of conscious and unconscious drives.

The aggregate of problems inherent in Golyadkin's contradictory self-perceptions are established at the outset of the tale, when the protagonist's first impulse upon getting out of bed is to observe himself in the mirror. An analogy can be made to the same device used in Dostoevsky's first chinovnik tale; as Mikhail Bakhtin notes, Dostoevsky had also forced Makar Devushkin to perceive and define himself in the mirror. In the famous scene, standing before the General when his jacket button springs off and rolls along the floor, Devushkin catches a glimpse of himself in the mirror and sees exactly what Gogol had described as the appearance of Akaky Akakievich—but with a degree of consciousness unknown to his predecessor: "". . .функцию зеркала выполняет и постоянная мучительная рефлексия героев над своей наружностью, а для Голядкина—его Двойник.""2 [. . .the constant agonizing reflection of the heroes on their external appearance is the function, for them, of the mirror; for Golyadkin, it is his double.] It is curious that Bakhtin makes no mention of the opening of Dvoinik in the context of his analysis of the mirror. Presaging the distorted mirror through which Golyadkin views himself in his double, the opening scene of the novella establishes the tenor of the entire drama by showing the hero create self-definition by means of a self-reflexive gaze in the mirror.

2 М. М. Bakhtin, Problemy poetiki Dostoevskogo (Moskva: Sovetskii pisatel', 1963), note 1, p. 64; Translation by Caryl Emerson in Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics, edited and translated by Caryl Emerson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), note 1, p. 76.
The symbolic connotations of this event are established in juxtaposition with the destabilizing vacillation between waking life and the fluid reality of dreams:

Minutes two, in fact, he lay motionless in bed, like a man as yet uncertain whether he is awake or still asleep, whether all at present going on about him is reality or a continuation of his disordered dreams.

For two minutes or so he lay motionless in bed, like a man as yet uncertain whether he is awake or still asleep, whether all at present going on about him is reality or a continuation of his disordered dreams.

The feeling is familiar to every reader, but here the blurring of boundaries between normal physical reality and dream or fantasy is more than a conventional point of reference: it foreshadows a state of mind that will come to dominate Golyadkin’s fluctuating self-perceptions. The destabilizing effect demonstrated in this moment of uncertainty undermines the veracity of the protagonist’s perceptions and prefigures the psychic flux that will come to pervade his world and obscure the reflections by which he finds self-definition. What is more, gaps in the temporal, spatial and textual unity of the text as a whole are witness to the fragmentation that compromises the protagonist’s unified sense of self.

Golyadkin’s thoughts upon waking alternate between the drab reality of his surroundings and intimations of some vaguely perceived other reality that elevates his mood and motivates his actions. The first of the two is painfully disappointing:

Наконец, серый осенний день, мутный и грязный, так сердито и с такой кислой гримасой заглянул к нему сквозь тусклое окно в комнату, что господин Голядкин никаким уже образом не мог более сомневаться, что он находится не в тридцатом царстве каком-нибудь, а в городе Петербурге, в столице, в Шестилавочной улице, в четвертом этаже одного весьма большого, капитального дома, в собственной квартире своей.4

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3 *PSS* 1:109; Bird, 11.
4 *PSS* 1:109; Bird 11-12.
And then the foul, murky, grey autumnal day peered in at him through the dirty panes with such a sour, ill-tempered grimace, that Mr. Golyadkin had no longer any possible ground for doubting that he lay, not in some distant fairy realm, but in his own rooms on the fourth floor of a large tenement house in Shestilavochnaia Street, in the capital city of St. Petersburg.

The weather's personified grimace expresses the hero's irrepressible gloom to find himself in his own unremarkable flat, which is described earlier in the passage as small, dusty, grimy and sooty. He is in the Russian capital St. Petersburg, famous for its inclement weather and unmistakeable symbol, since Pushkin's *Mednyi vsadnik* (1833) and Gogol's Petersburg grotesques (1835), of both the unassailable might of the Russian autocratic state and the oppressive civil service bureaucracy that supports it. Golyadkin is not a wealthy, high-placed gentleman who might enjoy the privileges of society life in the capital; rather, as the first sentence informs, he occupies the middling civil service rank of Titular Councillor. His gloomy impressions upon waking and his impulse to roll over and go back to sleep reveal the primary shade of Golyadkin's attitude toward his everyday reality: he wishes he could escape this dreary life. This incident of the figural and literal dawning of reality say something important about the protagonist and anticipate his place in the action to come. The narrative sees Golyadkin elaborating a 'fantasy persona,' where its underlying motivations are adumbrated in his disappointment with the drab reality of his domestic circumstances and his low station in the social hierarchy.

The fantasy persona is invoked immediately following this initial waking scene. Golyadkin's dejected attitude is reversed in an instant when he is spurred to action by some 'thought' [*mysl*'], which causes him to bound out of bed and run over to peer into the mirror. Even if we as readers are not privileged to know what the idea is, its relation to the disconnect between reality and fantasy as they act upon the perception of self is
confirmed by the inconsistency separating what Golyadkin sees in the mirror from the
effect it produces:

Хотя отразившаяся в зеркале заспанная, подслеповатая и довольно оплешивевшая
фигура была именно такого незначительного свойства, что с первого взгляда не
останавливалась на себе решительно ничего исключительного внимания, но, по-
видимому, обладатель ее остался совершенно доволен всем тем, что увидел в
зеркале.5

Although the sleepy, weak-sighted and rather bald image reflected was of so insignificant
a character as to be certain of commanding no great attention at a first glance, its
possessor, evidently, remained well pleased with all that he beheld in the mirror.

The information supplied by the narrator conveys a drab and unprepossessing image; yet
Golyadkin is pleased by what he sees. There is evidently something in this mirror
projection that we do not see, and it relates to the thought that had roused the protagonist
from his bed. The chain of events to follow begins to disclose the complex web of
motivations behind this example of idealized self-perception. Golyadkin’s actions and
behaviours in the narrative to come show that he has taken it into his mind to effect a
social coup of sorts—a personal transformation to raise his status from that of a lowly
civil clerk to a man of dignity, rank and status.

Indications show that Golyadkin’s designs are driven by self-gratifying aims. As
he counts a modest sum of banknotes with covetous self-congratulation, the language of
the passage suggests that his motivations are egotistical in nature:

Семьсот пятьдесят рублей ассигнациями!—кончил он наконец полушепотом.—
Семьсот пятьдесят рублей... знатная сумма! Это приятная сумма—продолжал он
dрожащим, немного расслабленным от удовольствия голосом, сжимая пачку в
руках и улыбаясь значительно—это весьма приятная сумма!6

“Seven hundred fifty paper roubles!” he finally said in a half-whisper. “Seven hundred
fifty roubles... a considerable sum! That’s a nice sum indeed,” he continued in a

5 PSS 1:109-110; Bird, 12.
6 PSS 1:110.
trembling voice, slightly enfeebled with pleasure, squeezing the packet of money in his hands and smiling importantly—"It's a very nice sum!"

The emotion-laden descriptors such as "trembling" and "weakening with pleasure" underscore the avaricious delight his savings afford him. What is more, the precious sum stirs his pride and kindles his hopes for social mobility: it not only raises his status above the average man of his social station, but has put him on a par with any respectable gentleman: "Хоть кому приятная сумма! Желал бы видеть теперь человека, для которого эта сумма была бы ничтожной суммою? Такая сумма может далеко повести человека." [Anyone would consider that a nice sum. I'd like to see the man for whom it wouldn't be a sizeable sum of money. That kind of money could take a man far.]

Furthermore, Golyadkin's self-centred attitudes are confirmed by the condescending and abusive attitude he directs against his servant Petrushka. He demands from the latter the proper form of address befitting a gentleman:

— И сапоги принесли?
— И сапоги принесли.
— Болван! Не можешь сказать принесли-с.

— And have the boots arrived?
— The boots have arrived.
— Blockhead! Can't you say the boots have arrived, sir.

Moreover, he makes accusations that are supercilious and petty: "Эта бестия ни за грош готова продать человека, а тем более барина—подумал он про себя—и продал, непременно продал, пари готов держать, что ни за копейку продал." [‘That beast would betray a man for a penny, especially his master,’ he thought to himself. ‘And he has. I’m willing to bet on it, he’s betrayed me for a farthing.’] Attitudes such as these betray the vain and selfish motivations behind Golyadkin’s adoption of the codes of

7 Ibid.
8 PSS 1:111.
social sophistication. These base motives prove to be problematic when, in the face of frustrated ambition and the failure of his aims to be perceived as a man of noble deportment, he takes recourse in defining himself as one who scorns pride, arrogance, and villainy of all sorts.

Demonstrations of the contradictions inherent in Golyadkin’s idealized self-image begin to multiply. Chance meetings with office colleagues and superiors show the transparency of Golyadkin’s posture and set the stage for an unveiling of deeper and more serious self-deceptions. This is demonstrated most explicitly in an episode in which Golyadkin finds himself face-to-face, through the carriage window, with his office chief Andrei Filippovich:

‘Поклониться иль нет? Отозваться иль нет? Признаться иль нет?—думал в неописанной тоске наш герой,—или прикинуться, что не я, а кто-то другой, разительно схожий со мною, и смотреть как ни в чем не бывало? Именно не я, не я, да и только!—говорил господин Голядкин, снимая шляпу перед Андреем Филипповичем и не сводя с него глаз.

‘Shall I bow? Shall I make some response? Shall I admit it’s me, or shan’t I?’ thought our hero in indescribable anguish. ‘Or shall I pretend it’s not me, but someone extraordinarily like me, and just look as if nothing had happened? It really isn’t me, it isn’t me, and that’s all there is to it,’ said Mr. Golyadkin, raising his hat to Andrei Filippovich and not taking his eyes off him.

Golyadkin is unpleasantly conscience-stricken, and moreover, caught in an inert state of indecision. He does not know how to react in order to maintain the persona that, under scrutiny, is unmasked as much to himself as to his onlookers. He has suddenly been discovered in a lie and cannot decide whether to stand firm or to relent and identify himself. But there is more to it: it really isn’t him, as it occurs to Golyadkin in his panic. Who is or isn’t it? Who is the ‘real’ Golyadkin, if there is such a thing? Does he mean that he is not the Titular Counsellor whom they know from the bureau, or that he is not

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9 PSS 1:113; Bird, 19.
the man he fears they see—an average *chinovnik* with vulgar pretensions of status and respectability? No definite answers emerges from Golyadkin’s statement alone. However, the implications of the challenge to his identity are clear: when Golyadkin’s office superiors recognize that he is affecting a persona, the incident forces a confrontation with his own self-perception. They have recognized him in a position that is inconsistent with the rank and status to which he belongs, but he is reluctant to limit his self-perception to the status ascribed to him by the normative standard of the civil hierarchy. Vaccilating between definitions of self created *by* him and *for* him, he takes recourse in assuming a new, ad hoc persona that is neither one nor the other: it simply *isn’t* him. Golyadkin proves capable of slipping free, at least to his own mind, of conventional expectations—whether his own or others’—that do not accord with his idealized vision of self. By denying personal involvement outright, Golyadkin demonstrates his willingness to reject one or another facet of self to suit the requirement of the moment. This is the first of a number of precipitating incidents where the internal conflict produced by fluctuating notions of self will lead to the decisive personality split that invokes Golyadkin’s double.

Other clues further expose the duplicity in Golyadkin’s character as he alternates between positions of striving to project a persona of refinement and noble bearing, and then deigning to condemn those very characteristics in others as so many affectations. By ‘duplicity,’ I mean the aspect of Golyadkin’s dual self-perception that is based in deceit, as he attempts to convince himself and others that his principles and good breeding place him above a low-ranking *chinovnik*. He engages in self-deception frequently to compensate for humiliating social inadequacies. Following the awkward confrontation through the carriage window, for example, Golyadkin resumes the image-building that he
had begun. Though he resents his own cowardice, in accordance with the notion of self he aspires to, he defines the interaction as an opportunity where he might have shown his nobility of character:

‘Дурак я был, что не отозвался—подумал он наконец—следовало бы просто на смелую ногу и с откровенностю, не лишенною благородства: дескать, так и так, Андрей Филиппович, тоже приглашен на обед, да и только!’

‘I was a fool not to respond’, he thought finally. ‘I ought simply to have spoken up boldly, been frank and open about it, not without a show of nobility. “There it is, Andrei Filippovich, I’ve been asked to dinner as well!”’

Golyadkin laments his failure, at the critical moment, to show strength, candour and, above all, nobility—in short, the qualities he would need to match his aspirations to belong to the drawing rooms, card tables and ballrooms of his office superiors’ respected milieu. Claiming to have been invited to the auspicious dinner party of his office chief and so-called benefactor Olsufy Ivanovich Berendeev, he would like to pose as an equal to any of his bureau associates, if only by virtue of his noble deportment.

The foregoing scene illustrates that Golyadkin’s efforts to build an image of status and respectability are undermined by his failure to master the social conventions that would demonstrate his good breeding. Further examples will bear out the fact that Golyadkin’s crisis of identity resides in a self-deception that pivots on the same issue. When in interaction with others he recognizes his lack of khoroshii ton, he resorts to defending lofty ideals by which he claims to abide, invoking a set of values that ostensibly transcend the false pretensions of social sophistication. Before proceeding, I will pause to stress the importance of language in this process. Insofar as his rehearsal of

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10 PSS 1:113; Bird, 19. Italics added.
self-defining behaviours and attitudes is largely a discursive practice, the codes of good breeding he subscribes to hinge upon the language he invokes to reference them.

The power of language to define and regulate social interactions in a stratified society such as nineteenth-century Petersburg has been demonstrated by William Todd III, whose *Fiction and Society in the Age of Pushkin* I referenced in my Introduction. Todd views ‘polite society’ as both a social organization and an ideology of the cultural conventions of secular high society in post-Petrine Russia. These conventions were encoded in cultured manners, or refinement of the social graces, which indicated one’s inclusion in the dominant group. The codes were governed especially by behavioural norms and the ‘ideology of talk,’ which incorporated a range of discursive conventions such as salon-style witticisms, epigrams, and Gallicisms that defined the membership of polite society. Todd describes the prescriptive customs of language use, the social rituals and heightened psychological self-awareness that constituted the group dynamics of the exclusive enclave of privileged Russians. Its members were separated from non-members, in the main, by enlightenment (Western-style education), cosmopolitanism, honour and taste. Thus, a cohesive bond for society members was maintained through a set of obligatory cultural refinements based primarily on strict codes of fashion, linguistic usage, gestures and manners.

The persona Golyadkin envisions for himself is modelled on similar scripted conventions. An effective illustration is provided by the narrator’s elaborate mock-heroic description of the feast at the Berendeev home. As the narrator describes the dinner party with exaggerated eloquence, emphasizing the scripted etiquette and decorum of the

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11 Todd, 31-33.
participants, his perspective merges with the outlook of the protagonist, who is a marginal onlooker from the back staircase. The convergence of the narrator’s voice with that of the protagonist is a narrative feature that has received a great deal of attention in the scholarship on Dvoinik. Bakhtin writes that the narrator mimics Golyadkin’s words and thoughts, mocking and teasing him with his own dual-voiced conscious tendency. In fact, “. . .получается впечатление, что рассказ диалогически обращен к самому Голядкину, звучит в его собственных ушах, как дразнящий его голос другого, как голос его двойника, хотя формально рассказ обращен к читателю.”12 [. . . one gets the impression that the narration is dialogically addressed to Golyadkin himself, it rings in Golyadkin’s own ears as another’s voice taunting him, as the voice of his double, although formally the narration is addressed to the reader.] Bakhtin demonstrates how, in certain scenes, the narrator ridicules and provokes Golyadkin by using expressions, turns of phrase and other speech mannerisms to which the hero is partial, thus mocking him with his own language. The phrases “it was nothing at all,” “it didn’t concern him” and “he went his own way” are some that Golyadkin repeats to himself time and again throughout the tale to explain and justify the absurd circumstances he continually finds himself in, and to bolster his failing courage. However, Golyadkin’s words and thoughts are comically incongruent with a situation such as hiding in the back room trying to pluck up the courage to enter the party. Interwoven here with the narrator’s discourse, they acquire an additional rhetorical and ironic effect, ridiculing the hero and his belief that he can justify his compromising situation to himself or to any chance observer. In this

instance, Golyadkin even mocks himself, calling himself a fool and deriding his own name.

The narrator’s mock-heroic descriptions of the dinner party communicate Golyadkin’s attitude of admiration and veneration toward the guests and proceedings, but with an ironic sneer. Key words and concepts are repeatedly phrased to define the attributes of the illustrious guests: prilichie [decency, propriety, decorum], or variations of the word, is repeated in the passage numerous times. Vkus and obrazovannost’ [taste and education] are cited to emphasize the participants’ aesthetic and intellectual sophistication, while liubeznost’ [courtesy, kindness] and otkrovennost’ [candor, frankness] stress their virtues and social grace. For the gentlemen, rank and good name are stressed as indicators of their belonging to this elite gathering. Furthermore, the distinguished merits of these men, “глубоко проникнутых чувством изящного и чувством собственного достоинства,” are elegance and a sense of personal dignity. The celebration itself is repeatedly referred to as torzhestvennyi and vysokotorzhestvennyi [solemn and exceedingly solemn], and its guests are presented as exalted figures who, because of their superior cultured manners, are even greater than their customary rank and status would indicate: “В свою очередь Андрей Филиппович в это торжественное мгновение вовсе не походил на коллежского советника и начальника отделения в одном департаменте, — нет, он казался чем-то другим . . . я не знаю только, чем именно, но не коллежским советником. Он был выше!” [In turn, Andrei Filippovich at this solemn moment did not at all resemble a collegiate adviser and the chief of his departmental branch, — no, he seemed to be something else . . . I do not know what
exactly, but not a collegiate adviser. He was higher!] What is more, the virtues of those present are cited as evidence of how moral upright­ness elevates a person: “... как иногда торжествует добродетель над неблагонамеренностью, вольнодумством, пороком и завистью!” [. . . how sometimes virtue triumphs over disloyalty, free-thinking, vice and envy.] Demonstrating these points with particu­lar salience is the youth, whose grace and virtue allegedly make him appear more like an elder than a youth [который более похож на старца, чем на юношу]. He is an example of the heights of perfection to which good manners can lead a person [до такой-то высокой степени может благонравие довести человека!] Further exhibiting their cultural refinement, the company speaks only in the highest tone, mainly in French, while the men permit themselves a few informal breaches of tone, in Russian, only over their pipes: “... только в трубоч­ной позволявших себе некоторые любезные отступления от языка высшего тона, некоторые фразы дружеской и любезной короткости.” [. . . only in the smoking room permitting themselves a few polite digressions from language of the highest tone, a few phrases of cordial and courteous familiarity.]

The elevated proceedings are compared, by ironic juxtaposition, to Golyadkin, whose “adventures” are “curious in their own way.” The satirical tone of the narrator satirizes both the eminent figures in the passage cited above and Golyadkin’s own trepidations before their importance. He had been able to get as far as the stairs and landing because “everyone else had.” Yet he “dared not” go further—not, as the narrator assures us, because he could not, but because he “did not want to.” As usual he was “quite alright and going his own way.” The narrative voice overlaps here with Golyadkin’s, mimicking the latter’s pet phrases and his justifications for being excluded
from the party. The target of the satire, in this case, is Golyadkin’s penchant for dreaming up moral justifications for his behaviour. For instance, he weighs his morally suspect dilemma—to be an uninvited interloper and intruder—by citing a proverb: “... всё, дескать, придет своим чередом, если выждать есть сметка” [all comes in due season to him who wisely waits]; and by alluding to the Jesuitical maxim that “все средства годящимися, лишь бы цель могла быть достигнута” [all means are justified, provided the end is attained.] The narrator snickers that it is an apt phrase for someone waiting nearly three hours on a cold, dark landing for a happy ending to his troubles. This irony reinforces our sense that Golyadkin’s fragile ego does not allow him to admit that the elect company, described with such pathos and veneration through the veil of his own rhetorically-coloured fantasy, did not include him. When he finally plucks up the courage to enter the residence and join the party, his disastrous breaches of decorum and public humiliation show that his real crime is exactly that which he has tried to mask—he is an outsider who lacks rank, name, and other indicators of status. Above all, he has not mastered the conventions of etiquette required to be a member of this exclusive group.

The contradictions inherent in Golyadkin’s pose are anticipated in the moral ambiguities fostered by the behavioural ideology defined by Todd. As Golyadkin frequently refers to the practice of wearing masks—condemning those who do, and claiming that he does not—he evidently senses the implicit danger that his impersonation of cultivated manners is a front to cover egotistical motives. Instead of owning up to this fundamental duplicity, however, he denounces it in others while defending his own virtues.

14 PSS 1:131-132; Bird, 58.
15 See pp. 15-17, above.
Viewing the Self as ‘Other’

The question of self-awareness is alluded to in numerous episodes in which Golyadkin feels pangs of conscience, inklings of déjà vu, nervous agitation, or simply the presentiment that something is amiss. His constant fear of imposture is triggered by the tremor of awareness that the stable and cohesive definition of self to which he subscribes does not consistently match his inner makeup. His layered dimensions of ego are uncovered repeatedly in episodes that undermine his unified sense of self. In conjunction with his avowal in the letter to (the imaginary) Provincial Secretary Vakhrameev in Chapter IX that “. . . идеи мои, выше распространенные насчет своих мест, чисто нравственные”¹⁶ [. . .my ideas, set forth above, on knowing one’s own place are purely moral], these intuitions pair his uneasiness with the suspicion of his own suspect motives.

The shopping expedition in Chapter III is one example. Golyadkin changes a large note into smaller ones, wishing to make his wallet appear fatter, but after he prices out many items, he spends only a ruble and a half on a pair of gloves and a bottle of perfume. He soon tires of the game when its pretense begins to strike him as unconscionable:

Наконец всё это, кажется, сильно стало надоедать самому господину Голядкину. Даже, и бог знает по какому случаю, стали его терзать ни с того ни с сего утразыния совести. Ни за что бы не согласился он теперь встретиться, например, с Андреем Филипповичем или хоть с Крестьянин Ивановичем.¹⁷

At last Mr. Golyadkin seemed to grow sick of it all, and even began, heaven knows why, to be troubled by pangs of conscience. Nothing on earth would have induced him to meet Andrei Filippovich or even Krest’ian Ivanovich for instance.

¹⁶ PSS 1:184; Bird, 165.
¹⁷ PSS 1:108; Bird, 40.
Earlier, his willingness to incur the expenses for a hired carriage and rented livery for his servant are indicative of the same *poshlost’* [bourgeois vulgarity] that had motivated this attempt to masquerade his wealth. Golyadkin’s name itself suggests ‘poverty’; the root combines ‘naked,’ ‘poverty-stricken,’ and ‘utter weakness.’ Along with his attempts to cover up his poverty with the show of wealth and refinement, Golyadkin’s obsession with masks and enemies becomes an important motif amongst adamant claims that it is his enemy, not he, who is guilty of masquerading himself. He repeatedly scorns “those who wear masks in public” while ignoring his own hypocritical posturings. His enemies, he claims in the Chapter II interview with Dr. Rutenspitz, have conspired “to kill him morally” by spreading scandalous rumours of his dishonourable conduct. Yet in the light of duplicitous behaviour that he projects onto his double, it is obvious that the hero’s own guilt inspires his fear of the consequences of moral misconduct. After the shopping expedition, his pangs of conscience in the scene quoted above evince the fact that presentiments below the threshold of conscious awareness implicate him in his own hypocrisy. Moreover, the text is loaded with references to the protagonist’s recoiling into a semi-conscious state when confronting these distressing moments of self-knowledge. For instance, when his attempts to affect a persona of discernment and social refinement are thwarted, “Чувствовал он себя весьма дурно, а голову свою в полнейшем разбросе и в хаосе.” [He felt extremely unwell, and his head seemed in a state of utmost disorder and chaos.] Or when he is ejected from the Berendeevs’ party after bungling an attempt to invite Klara Olsuf’evna to dance, he is rendered nearly oblivious

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18 See Somerwil-Ayrton 108, note 16 for an etymology of the name ‘Golyadkin.’
19 PSS 1:121.
20 PSS 1:128; Bird, 50.
by the humiliating experience: "Наконец, он почувствовал, что на него надевают шинель, что ему нахлобучили на глаза шляпу; что, наконец, он почувствовал себя в сенях, в темноте и на холоде, наконец и на лестнице. Наконец, он споткнулся, ему казалось, что он падает в бездну."\[He felt himself being put into his overcoat, and his hat being rammed down over his eyes. He became aware of the cold dark landing and the stairs. Finally he tripped, and seemed to be falling into an abyss.\] In the following Chapter V, he wishes to hide and escape from himself, to annihilate himself and return to dust. This leads to the precipitous moment of meeting his double, when confrontation with self brings to light a subliminal awareness—that which he had foreseen: "Все предчувствия господина Голядкина сбылись совершенно. Всё, чего опасался он и что предугадывал, совершилось теперь навсегда."\[All Mr. Golyadkin’s worst premonitions were fully realised. Everything he had dreaded and foreseen had now become fact.\]

When the double finally appears and Golyadkin recognizes himself as another, he inhabits a paired identity whose bifurcation has been the result of the processes of contradictory self-perception and cognitive labelling. While occupying different physical space and acting independently of one another, the two selves are perceived manifestations of independent attitudes. Throughout the remainder of the story, the two Golyadkins are treated as separate individuals and there is no doubt cast upon the fact that Golyadkin has indeed met an external manifestation of himself. The authenticity of the double is never called into question. All secondary characters acknowledge the presence of both Golyadkins, and apart from finding their extraordinary similarity to be

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21 *PSS* 1:137; Bird, 70.
22 *PSS* 1:143; Bird, 82.
highly unusual, do not consider it incredible that the original Golyadkin should have a
perfect double. Although we are given to understand that the double has emerged from
Mr. Golyadkin himself, as it were splitting off from him, the double is treated as a
separate acting agent, a separate character who mimics and mocks the original hero. The
perspectives of the two Golyadkins no longer merge in a way that is ambiguous at the
linguistic level. The conflict of a divided consciousness is carried to the extreme and is
played out on a stage covered with the veil of plausibility. Yet Golyadkin continues to
create the double using cognitive labelling. His practice of maligning the double is the
means by which Golyadkin creates the other self, to distinguish it from his ‘authentic’
morally upright self. Merging with the narrative voice, the language he uses to defame
the immoral usurper grows more comically ironic with each repetition of the same
disparaging epithets and adjectives:

This time someone he knew passed by. It was the rascal, the intriguer, the degenerate—
flourishing past with his usual quick horrible little steps, and throwing out his feet as if he
were getting ready to give someone a kick. “Scoundrel!” our hero muttered to himself.

He is careful to distinguish himself from the nefarious identity thief as he prepares this
plea for liberation from the “ungodly” impersonator:

"He’s one man, your Excellency, and I am another. He’s one individual, and I’m my own
man. Indeed I am, your Excellency, indeed I am," I’ll say, just like that. I’ll say, ‘I can’t

\[23\text{ PSS 1:192; Bird, 180-181.}\\
\[24\text{ PSS 1:213; Bird, 221-222.}\\
resemble him; replace him, order him to be replaced, I beg you, and put an end to the ungodly and unwarranted impersonation, that it may not serve as a precedent for others, your Excellency.'

From the start, Golyadkin's liminal awareness of self had come in the form of premonition, the manifestation of those forebodings mentioned above. It was both an external event, an evil that he feared would befall him, and at the same time a muffled intention, a willed catharsis.

Mr. Golyadkin knew, felt and was quite convinced, that some new evil would befall him on the way, and that some fresh unpleasantness would burst upon him; that there would be, for instance, another meeting with the stranger. Oddly enough he even wanted this to happen, considering it inevitable and only asking that the whole thing might be gotten over with as quickly as possible, and that he might know where he stood. Only let it be soon!

The originator of his own phantom self, Golyadkin is aware of this connection only through premonitions and fears. Nonetheless, his peripheral awareness suggests the terrifying possibility of something 'to be gotten over with quickly.' His recognition of self is immanent, and yet it persists in being his chief conflict.

Mikhail Bakhtin defined the problem of self-consciousness [*samosoznanie*] as the dominant principle of Dostoevsky's characterizations. Even in the early period of his writing, Dostoevsky is depicting not the poor government clerk of the Gogolian socio-characterological profile, but the *self-consciousness* of the poor clerk. His social position, habits, appearance and other objective sociological qualities become the object of the hero's own introspection, the subject of his self-consciousness. At a time when a

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25 PSS 1:142; Bird 80.
26 See Chapter Two of *Problemy poetiki Dostoevskogo*. 
protagonist’s consciousness would normally have been an element of his reality, an objective feature of his characterization, in Dostoevsky all of reality becomes an element of the character’s self-consciousness. Even the author’s representation becomes a function of that self-consciousness, such that “В кругозоре же автора как предмет видения и изображения остается это чистое самосознание в его целом.”[27] [In the author’s field of vision, as an object of his visualization and representation, there remains only pure self-consciousness in its totality.] Bakhtin calls self-consciousness a new form for visualizing a human being in art, in which self-consciousness is the dominant in the construction of a character’s image. Everything is directed toward the character himself, to whom every experience is felt as a polemic addressed toward him, every spoken word, by himself and by others, is discourse about him.[28] This solipsistic character dynamic is an open-ended formula that resists objectification and determinacy.

The implications of Bakhtin’s thesis are fundamental to the analysis of Golyadkin’s bifurcated consciousness in Dvoinik. Seeing the self as ‘another,’ as Golyadkin does, is symptomatic of the process of forming one’s own consciousness from competing systems of values, and indeed, competing centres of consciousness which are ideologically incompatible. Where discursive practices are the formulaic bases of conscious understanding, both within the plurality of voices in society, and in the single unmerged consciousness of many personae, like those of Golyadkin, the awareness of one’s own consciousness involves confrontation with one’s values as they emerge in the tension between one’s self-concepts, and one’s position in the social milieu. These paired characterizations dramatize the internal contradictions within the protagonist.

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[27] Bakhtin, 63; Emerson, 48.
[28] Bakhtin, 64.
According to Bakhtin, each character voice represents a conscious mode of understanding with its own system of values. ‘Multi-voicedness’ [mногоголосост’], otherwise defined as ‘a plurality of unmerged consciousnesses’ [mнозгественност’ nesliiannykh soznani] is the uniquely characteristic mode of disunited consciousness in Dostoevsky’s polyphonic novel. In other words, individual characters, or divergent voices inhabiting a single character, represent the plurality of consciousness-centres that cannot be reduced to a single ideological common denominator.  

Thus, self-awareness in Bednye liudi’s Makar Devushkin and Dvoink’s Golyadkin is dialogic and polemical, presented as the clashing of disparate voices ringing in the protagonists’ conscious minds. Nearly every utterance of Devushkin is made in dialogue with an indeterminate other—a response to anticipated rejoinders from a contrary external party. His self-awareness is “penetrated by someone else’s awareness of him”; his self-utterances are “injected with someone else’s words about him.” The intersection of two voices creates a speech profile and psychological orientation which demonstrate an attitude inextricably bound with the perceived attitude of the other’s consciousness of him. Golyadkin’s speech is also coloured by the influence of alien discourse, but this interrelationship is differently motivated. Golyadkin seeks, first of all, to simulate independence from the voice of the other (“He’s on his own, he’s all right”), secondly, to hide from and elude it (“After all, he’s just like everyone else, he’s nothing special, just like everyone else”), and third, when those attempts fail, to subordinate himself through submissive assimilation of the other (“If it comes to that, then he can do that too, why not, what’s to

29 Bakhtin, 22; Emerson, 17.
30 See Chapter 5 of Problemy poetiki Dostoevskogo.
Moreover, no part of the work is aligned with the point of view of a non-participating 'third person,' nor with an objective authorial voice, so that dialogic opposition becomes a constant thematic and structural principle around which the work is organized. As a result, Bakhtin maintains, the reader is forced into complicity: "...это взаимодействие не дает созерцающему опоры для объективации всего события по обычному монологическому типу (сюжетно, лирически или познавательно), делает, следовательно, и созерцающего участником." [... this interaction provides no support for the viewer who would objectify an entire event according to some monologic category (thematically, lyrically or cognitively)—and this consequently makes the viewer also a participant.]

To consider *Dvoinik* as textually organized around the multi-levelled and contradictory facets of Golyadkin's conscious mind—its 'multi-voicedness'—provides a perspective on the work beyond the confusing hieroglyphics of its narrated events. There are enough non sequiturs in the work to justify charges of aesthetic inadequacies. But if we consider the novel's dominant organizational feature to be the intersecting patterns of thought represented by the two Golyadkins, then certain structural principles become available to us that illumine Dostoevsky's method of composition. This reading offers a dynamic display of mutually exclusive yet intertwining reality models. Golyadkin Sr. operates under the assumption that he and his world are part of a higher plane of ideal meaning—what Yury Lotman terms a 'metatext.'

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31 Bakhtin, 280-284; Emerson, 209-212.
32 Bakhtin, 23-24; Emerson, 18.
what the transcendent is and how he fits into it. His conception of the divine order is best represented in the Chapter VI conversation with the clerk Anton Antonovich:

Да что же вы-то так интересуетесь этим? Говорю вам: вы не смущайтесь. Это всё временное отчасти. Что ж? ведь вы сторона; это уж так сам господь бог устроил, это уж его воля была, и роптать на это грешно. На этом его премудрость видна. А вы же тут, Яков Петрович, сколько я понимаю, не виноваты нисколько. Мало ли чудес есть на свете! Мать-природа щедра; а с вас за это ответа не спросят, отвечать за это не будете.34

But why are you so concerned about it? Don’t worry, that’s what I say. It’ll all pass. What does it matter? It’s no affair of yours. It’s God’s doing, it’s His will, and to grumble at that is a sin. His infinite wisdom is apparent in this, and you, Yakov Petrovich, so far as I can gather, are in no way to blame. The world is full of wonders! Mother Nature is generous. But you won’t be asked to answer for it. You won’t have to answer for it.

Parroting some of Golyadkin’s pet phrases (“It’ll all pass”; “It’s no affair of yours”; “You are in no way to blame”) and justifying events in the same way the hero is fond of doing, Anton Antonovich is likely yet another projection of his psyche. Here the element of divine will and providence are referenced more overtly than anywhere else in the text—however, they are shot through with irony as Anton Antonovich mentions Siamese twins in the same breath, who “earn good money” from their aberrative condition. His intended reassurances fully undercut the gravity of the inner division Golyadkin himself experiences.

Golyadkin is no metaphysician. What he seeks is the cognitive-emotional experience of a harmonious merger between rival facets of self, a private version of holistic accord in conformity with the higher principles he repeatedly names. In occasional lapses of idealism, Golyadkin allows himself to wish for reconciliation with his antagonist, whereby a ‘friendship’ might be born, “...крепкая, жаркая дружба, еще более широкая, чем вчерашняя дружба, так что эта дружба совершенно могла бы затмить, наконец, неприятность довольно неблагопристойного сходства двух лиц,

34 PSS 1:149; Bird 94-95.
так, что оба титулярные советника были бы крайне как рады и прожили бы, наконец, до ста лет и т.д."  

.a firm, warm friendship on a broader basis than that of the preceding evening—a friendship that might finally have so eclipsed the unpleasantness of the rather improper resemblance between them, that both would have known unbounded delight and lived to be a hundred, and so on.] On the other hand, the double, Golyadkin Jr., has patently utilitarian instincts uninterested in communion with principled ideals of self. In Anton Antonovich’s summary, Junior makes his place in society not by touting his morals, as Senior does, but by conforming to the operational codes of civil society:

. . .говорят, что достаточно объяснился, резоны представлял; говорит, что вот, дескать, так и так, ваше превосходительство, и что нет состояния, а желаю служить и особенно под вашим лестным начальством. . .ну и там всё, что следует, знаете ли, ловко всё выразил. Умный человек, должно быть. Ну, разумеется, явился с рекомендацией; без нее ведь нельзя. . .

...they say he gave an adequate account of himself. Stated his case: ‘Such and such, and such and such, your Excellency. I’ve no fortune, I’d like to serve, and would be especially proud to do so under you. ’ Well, everything as it should be, you know. Put it all very nicely. Must be a clever fellow. Came with a recommendation, of course. Can’t do much without one, you know.

This version of Golyadkin is more individualized and can translate his behaviour and self-concept into the objective terms of established bureaucratic and social hierarchies. The world does not present a personalized whole to him but a series of opportunities to manipulate external conditions for private gain.

But for the dialogic nature of their interactions described by Bakhtin, Golyadkin’s autonomous conscious centres might progress towards synthesis. The independence of their voices, however, precludes the discovery of the elusive formula with which Golyadkin might be able to calibrate his psychological experience of the world in a way.

35 PSS 1:168; Bird, 133.
36 PSS 1:150; Bird, 95.
that could lead him out of his predicament. That kind of harmonious synthesis would be atypical of the principle of ‘doubling’ as it would develop in Dostoevsky’s later work. If the meeting with one’s personal double that is featured in Dvoinik is to be considered a template for later instances of the same character doubling in works like *Prestuplenie i nakazanie* and *Brat’ia Karamazovy*, it must be seen that Dostoevsky’s art depicts the coexistence and interaction of objective contradictions of the epoch, which are given expression in the internal contradictions of a single character or in his many reflections. Bakhtin does not regard these oppositions as stages in the evolution of a unified spirit, but as the simultaneous coexistence of discordant elements. The interrelationships of characters cannot be reduced to thesis, antithesis, synthesis because the unified, dialectically evolving spirit, in Hegelian terms, gives rise to a philosophical monologue, which is alien to Dostoevsky’s works. His novels present the oppositions of diversely ranging conscious centres, none of which is cancelled out dialectically, none of which merges in the unity of an evolving spirit.\(^{37}\)

Yet something in the interaction between the discordant voices in *Dvoinik* points toward an interactive relationship of personal awareness that functions apart from the dialectical equation. The ‘other self,’ Golyadkin Jr., adapts to the cultural values that are the mainstay of the bureaucratic Petersburg society to which Golyadkin Sr. belongs—but which Golyadkin Sr. finds morally reprehensible. It is the domain of his enemies, those of base calumny, envy, and malevolence, who “погибнут не иначе, как от собственной неблагопристойности и развращенности сердца.”\(^ {38}\) [will come to destruction solely through their own impropriety and the depravity of their hearts.] Through the comical

\(^{37}\) Bakhtin, 35-44; Emerson, 26-32.

\(^{38}\) *PSS* 1:184; Bird, 164.
labyrinth of the hero’s accusations and recriminations, it is obvious that his frustration, anger, fear, pride and indignation are all provoked by feelings of envy and resentment, which add up to an affront to his sense of dignity and moral worth. The frustration of his ego drives, in this way, is the catalyst that provokes the rising awareness within him of an instinct for moral reasoning that has the potential—at tragically unrealized in the story—to synthesize his core elements into an autonomous, self-possessed being. His conflict demonstrates how we create ‘the other’ through marginalization and villainization in order to define ourselves.

**Golyadkin’s Confession**

Golyadkin’s spontaneous visit to his doctor Krest’ian Ivanovich Rutenspitz illustrates my point. In his elliptical confession to the baffled doctor, Golyadkin criticizes the mores of polite society as mere pretensions of honour, as the insidious donning of masks and the practice of deception. His egocentric perception of his lot in society comes out in expressing the self-righteous conviction that he is thwarted by the inequalities of stratified Petersburg civil society. But as it becomes apparent, he is sooner implicating his own habit of self-deception than exposing flaws in society.

The problem of Golyadkin’s ‘illness’ plays out in the dramatic confession in which the eventual bifurcation of the protagonist’s personality is foreshadowed, and the various motivations for his mystifying behaviour are established. If the ‘clinical’ explanation for Golyadkin’s personality disorder is reinforced by the various unmaskings and disclosures in this episode, his consultation with Dr. Rutenspitz develops into
something more than a dalliance with clinical psychiatry. Its confessionary tone invokes more vital concerns that put the issues of moral self-awareness at stake.

Hesitating before the doctor’s office door, the hero is concerned with presenting the proper expression of savoir faire: “Остановившись, герой наш поспешил придать своей физиономии приличный, развязный, не без некоторой любезности вид . . .”

[Standing before the door, our hero lost no time in assuming a countenance of due ease and a certain affability . . .] However, entering to meet the doctor, Golyadkin is totally unprepared to adhere to the scripted rules of social propriety. He has not mastered the social norms required of him for acceptance in polite society and is acutely aware of the fact:

... не приготовив первой фразы, бывшей для него в таких случаях настоящим камнем преткновения, сконфузился препорядочно, что-то пробормотал—впрочем, кажется, извинение—и, не зная, что далее делать, взял стул и сел. Но, вспомнив, что уселись без приглашения, тотчас же почувствовал свое неприличие и поспешил поправить ошибку свою в незнании света и хорошего тона, немедленно встав с занятого им без приглашения места.

... having failed to prepare the opening sentence, which was the real stumbling-block for him at such times, he grew dreadfully confused, muttered something that might have been an apology, then, being at a loss what to do next, took a chair and sat down. Suddenly recollecting that he had not been invited to do so, and sensing the impropriety of his action, he made haste to rectify this breach of social etiquette and bon ton by immediately rising from the seat he had so unceremoniously taken.

Golyadkin has broken the code of khoroshii ton, and is painfully aware that it puts him at a social disadvantage. He reacts to his own breach of conduct and the awkward exchange that ensues with a defensive, prideful disclaimer of cultivated manners and polite phrases. His sensitive reaction is evidence that Golyadkin is caught between his pretensions to status and the underlying sense that his ‘authentic self’ lies outside the rigid norms that

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39 PSS 1:114; Bird, 21.
40 PSS 1:114; Bird, 22-23.
such a status prescribes. The interview that follows with the doctor is an ironic unmasking of his posturing and duplicity, which provokes the emergence of the personality Golyadkin deems to be the ‘real’ self, the modest, hard-working servant of the authorities, the long-suffering, morally compromised victim of sabotage and intrigue.

In order to save face, after the first uncomfortable minutes with Krest’ian Ivanovich, he adopts a fierce expression—the same “annihilating stare” he had used after the embarrassing confrontation in the carriage, meant to “grind his enemies to dust.” This time the meaning and purpose of the expression is given clearer definition by the narrator:

Сверх того, этот взгляд вполне выражал независимость господина Голядкина, то есть говорил ясно, что господин Голядкин совсем ничего, что он сам по себе, как и все, и что его изба во всяком случае с краю.41

It was, moreover, a look that gave full expression to Mr. Golyadkin’s independence, making it clear that he had nothing to worry about, that he went his own way like anyone else, and had in any case nothing to do with what concerned other people.

Here Golyadkin shows a pose of independence—a strong front, a base upon which to build his image. As in the incidents cited above, the pose is a mask adopted to compensate for his sense of social inadequacy. His intimations of superiority cover up the awareness that his own claims to social refinement are mere pretensions. He shows himself to lack the self-possession even to handle a simple interaction with the doctor. Furthermore, his definitions of his own values are lost in the obscurity of his blustering pronouncements. He speaks in stock phrases that come off sounding inflated and stilted. As if searching to communicate some inner moral aspiration, but with only a hackneyed lexicon to draw from, he endeavours to profess the values that he subscribes to. Losing eloquence and composure, like Devushkin in Bednye liudi, who aspired to be a writer but

41 PSS 1:115; Bird, 23.
repeatedly confessed to having no sense of style [slog ne imeiu], Golyadkin affects a self-effacing posture that implicitly repudiates the affectations of society. That is, his affectation, ironically, is to denounce affectation:

'Да-с, Крестьян Иванович. Я, Крестьян Иванович, хоть и смиренный человек, как я уже вам, кажется, имел честь объяснить, но дорога моя отдельно идет, Крестьян Иванович. Путь жизни широк... Я хочу... я хочу, Крестьян Иванович, сказать этим... Извините меня, Крестьян Иванович, я не мастер красно говорить. [. . . ] В этом отношении я, Крестьян Иванович, не так, как другие—прибавил он с какою-то особенною улыбкою—и много говорить не умею придавать слогу красоту не училися. Зато я, Крестьян Иванович, действую; зато я действую, Крестьян Иванович!'

'Yes, Krest’ian Ivanovich. Although I, Krest’ian Ivanovich, as I believe I have already had the honour of explaining, am a quiet sort of person, my path is separate from other people’s, Krest’ian Ivanovich. The road of life is a broad one... What I mean, what I mean to say, Krest’ian Ivanovich, is... Forgive me, Krest’ian Ivanovich, I have no gift for fine phrases. [. . . ] In this respect, Krest’ian Ivanovich, I am not as other people,’ he added with a peculiar sort of smile. ‘I’m no great talker. I haven’t learnt to embellish what I say. But to make up for it, Krest’ian Ivanovich, I’m a man of action, a man of action, Krest’ian Ivanovich.’

Lacking an educated vocabulary to define his beliefs, Golyadkin can’t find the words to express his grievances convincingly. Increasingly uneasy, he makes an issue of the separation he feels from his fellow citizens as weightier insecurities are revealed. Starting out with an officious tone (“I have had the honour of explaining”), he finds himself grasping for words to make his case until, unsatisfied with the neat little idiom he had tried, he goes on the defensive. Now he is in dialogue with himself in the heteroglosic manner so familiar in Dostoevsky, and the masks continue to fall.

Isolation and lack of privilege have given Golyadkin an outsider’s perspective. He knows that he lacks the cultural refinement, the savoir faire that he conflates with the values he would need in order to succeed in society.

‘. . . я, Крестьян Иванович, люблю спокойствие, а не светский шум. Там у них, я говорю, в большом свете, Крестьян Иванович, нужно уметь паркеты лощить

'Peace is what I like, Krest'ian Ivanovich, not the tumult of society. [ . . . ] With most people—in society, I mean, Krest'ian Ivanovich—you have to know how to bow and scrape.' (Here Mr. Golyadkin scraped the floor a bit with his feet.) 'That's expected of you in society. You're asked to make puns,too, if you please, pay perfumed compliments, that's what's expected of you.'

His own professed values are simplicity, modesty and candour:

'А я этому не учился, Крестьян Иванович—хитростям этим всем я не учился; некогда было. Я человек простой, незатейливый, и блеска наружного нет во мне. В этом, Крестьян Иванович, я полагаю оружие; я кладу его, говоря в этом смысле.'

'But I haven't learnt to do this, Krest'ian Ivanovich—I haven't learnt all these cunning ways, I've had no time for them. I'm a plain and simple man. There's no outward show about me. On this point, Krest'ian Ivanovich, I lay down my arms—or to continue the metaphor, I surrender.'

He goes on to defend his simple ways, proclaiming that he is a "man of action" [зато я действую] and "my own man" [я сам по себе]. Acutely self-conscious while facing Krest'ian Ivanovich, he thus affects a sense of pride in his moral purpose, but considering the pretence involved in this pose, his self-righteousness rings hollow. Golyadkin's duplicity simultaneously exposes his pretensions and conceals them from his authentic self. In order to be the man of dignity and pride he purports to be, Golyadkin must, then, come to an awareness of an authentic personal identity—one that is predicated on a system of values that exists apart from his ego-driven aspirations to succeed in society. Like Belinsky's chinovniki, he has performed the charade of putting on airs, showing khoroshii ton to boost his image and social status. The carriage, the rented livery for Petrushka, and the shopping spree, are demonstrations of his bourgeois pretensions. In all, the ambiguities in his character expose both the vulnerable and self-deprecating

\[\text{43 PSS 1:116; Bird, 26.}\]
\[\text{44 PSS 1:116; Bird, 26.}\]
victim of injustice and fate, and the duplicitous schemer with dubious aims and unattainable romantic aspirations.

Dostoevsky's hero is increasingly aware that his ostentatious display of wealth and success is a mask that covers his nakedly insubstantial personal integrity encoded in his name (as above). Unable to maintain the deception after the humiliating face-off with Andrei Filippovich in the carriage and his inept fumbling before Dr. Rutenspitz whom he had sought, to all appearances, for an affirmation of his pride—Golyadkin buckles and begins making an elliptical confession. In an effusion of guilt and pride, and a feeble attempt at self-affirmation wherein he debunks the social order and its affectations, Golyadkin attempts to define and defend something that is precious to him—an intrinsic honour and dignity that society has ostensibly usurped from him. Now that sufficient catalysts have exacerbated Golyadkin's already divided identity, he continues the process of unmasking himself by means of confession to an authority figure of official status, such as his doctor would qualify as being: "... но ведь доктор, как говорят, что духовник—скрываться было бы глупо ..."45 [... after all, a doctor is, as they say, a sort of priest—*to hide anything* would be senseless ...] To hide anything from Herr Doctor would be senseless, so Golyadkin persists in this confessional mode, with its own peculiar melodramatic vein, unmasking himself further—even if confession is only another of his self-deceiving façades. For the time being, he finds remedy in claiming his "little man" status:

'Мне, Крестьян Иванович, от вас скрывать нечего. Человек я маленький, сами вы знаете; но, к счастью моему, не жалею о том, что я маленький человек. Даже напротив, Крестьян Иванович, и, чтоб всё сказать, я даже горжусь тем, что не большой человек, а маленький.'46

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45 *PSS* 1:113. My italics.
'I have nothing to conceal from you, Krest’ian Ivanovich. I am a little man, you know that yourself. But fortunately I have no regrets about being a little man. Quite the contrary, Krest’ian Ivanovich, and to be completely frank, I’m even proud of being a little man and not a big one.'

Much as he had in the carriage, when backed into a corner Golyadkin casts aside the cloak of pretence and here goes so far as to claim to be proud of being a little man. But can that be the truth? To be sure, we have seen that Golyadkin is guilty on all counts when it comes to putting on airs. His pretensions are many, and his disclaimer of obsessive concern with the rules of decorum—mastery of which would make him a ‘big man’—is evidence of more self-deception here. This exhibit of submission to the simple life and his precious values is surely another posture.

A cryptic confession of his own hypocritical rancour shows that his conscience is not entirely clean, either—that he, too, is guilty of donning a mask to disguise his envy and malice. This is evident when, in further conversation with Dr. Rutenspitz, Golyadkin discloses that he perceives hostilities directed towards him from alleged enemies: “У меня есть враги, Крестьян Иванович, у меня есть враги, у меня есть злые враги, которые меня погубить поклялись.”47 [I have enemies, Krest’ian Ivanovich, I have enemies. I have wicked enemies who have sworn to destroy me . . .] Amid further mystifying intimations, Golyadkin complains of gossip and slander regarding his associations with a certain German kitchen maid whom he is rumoured to have engaged in marriage in lieu of paying debts owed her for room and board. He protests that the allegations were only invented to defame him: “Да, Крестьян Иванович, чтоб убить человека, и нравственно убить человека. Распустили они . . .”48 [Yes, Krest’ian

47 PSS 1:118; Bird, 30.
48 PSS 1:121; Bird, 35.
Ivanovich, to destroy someone morally. They put out a rumour . . .] However, it also comes out that his paranoia is likely correlated with his jealousy over another colleague’s promotion, that of Vladimir Semyonovich, who is in fact betrothed to the object of Golyadkin’s affections—his unattainable ‘overcoat,’ to stretch the analogy—Klara Olsuf’evna, daughter of his sometime benefactor, Civil Counsellor Berendeev. Behind another mask, alleging that he is discussing the affairs of “a close friend,” he gives an account of the congratulations he bestowed upon his rival Vladimir Semyonovich:

‘Да-с, один из моих близких знакомых поздравил с чином, с получением асессорского чина, другого весьма близкого тоже знакомого, и вдобрадок приятеля, как говорится, случайного друга. Этак к слову пришлось. Чувствительно, дескать, говорит, рад случаю привести вам, Владимир Семенович, мое поздравление, искреннее мое поздравление в получение чина. И тем более рад, что нынче, как всему свету известно, вывелись бабушки, которые ворожат.—Тут господин Голядин плутовски кивнул головой и, прищурясь, посмотрел на Крестьян Иванович.

‘Yes, a certain intimate acquaintance of mine was congratulating another very intimate acquaintance, who was, moreover, a close friend of mine, “a bosom friend” as the saying is, on his promotion to the rank of Assessor. The way he chanced to put it was: “I’m heartily glad of this opportunity of offering you my congratulations, my sincere congratulations, Vladimir Semyonovich, on your promotion—the more so since nowadays, as all the world knows, those who push their favourites are no more.”’ Here Mr. Golyadkin wagged his head roguishly and squinted at Krest’ian Ivanovich.

If Golyadkin is trying to imply that nepotism and partisanship are at play here, it is all too apparent that the real antagonism is that the office favourite Vladimir Semyonovich has won the status and esteem desperately craved by Golyadkin, and he even gets the girl:

“Да что мне, Крестьян Иванович, что он асессором сделал? Мне-то что тут? Да жениться хочет, когда еще молоко, с позволения сказать, на губах не обошло.”

[But what does it matter to me his being made an assessor? Is that any business of mine?

And there he is wanting to get married and his mother’s milk still wet on his lips . . .] To

49 PSS 1:120; Bird, 33. Italics are in the original.
50 PSS 1:120; Bird, 33.
clinch the matter, Golyadkin goes on to imply that his rival’s intentions to marry Klara Olsuf’evna arise from impure motives (while his aim, of course, is true):

‘... и обращаюсь к Кларе Олсуфьєвне (дело-то было третьего дня у Олсуфьї Ивановича),—а она только что романе пропела чувствительный,—говорю, дескать, “чувствительно пропеть вы романы изволили, да только слушают-то вас не от чистого сердца». И намекаю тем ясно, понимаете, Крест’ян Иванович, намекаю тем ясно, что ищут-то теперь не в ней, а подалыше.’

‘... I turned to Klara Olsuf’evna, who’d just been singing a tender ballad—all this was the day before yesterday at Olsufy Ivanovich’s—and I said: “Your singing is full of tenderness, but those who listen haven’t got pure hearts.” I gave a clear hint there, you see, Krest’ian Ivanovich, a clear hint, so that they didn’t take it as referring to her, but looked further afield.’

He reports having made even more explicit and brazen statements to Klara Olsuf’evna’s father, allegedly telling Berendeev to “open his eyes” and “take care,” and that “I am acting openly and above board.”

Why is he telling all of this to the incredulous doctor? Did he really have the gumption to say all those things to his office colleagues and superiors? One suspects he is embellishing the story to appear more impressive in the doctor’s eyes and in his own.

Whatever the case, Golyadkin’s tone becomes increasingly sanctimonious the more he tries to assuage his crippling self-doubt and define some moral ground:

‘Не интригант—и этим тоже горжусь. Действую не втихомолку, а открыто, без хитростей, и хотя бы мог вредить в свою очередь, и очень бы мог, и даже знаю, над кем и как это сделать, Крест’ян Иванович, но не хочу замарать себя и в этом смысле умываю руки. В этом смысле, говорю, я их умываю, Крест’ян Иванович!’

‘Not being an intriguer—that’s something else I’m proud of. I don’t do things on the sly, but openly, without a lot of tricks, and though I could do my share of harm, and do it very well too, and though I even know whom to harm and how to do it, I don’t sully myself with these things, I wash my hands of them, Doctor. I wash my hands of them, Krest’ian Ivanovich!’

51 PSS 1:120; Bird, 34.
52 Ibid.
53 PSS 1:117; Bird, 28.
Moreover, Golyadkin’s experience of social alienation has fed his preoccupation with ‘masks’ which, repeated so many times, comes to indicate the core of the problem:

‘Полуслов не люблю; мизерных двуличностей не жалую; клевetoю и сплетней гнушаюсь. Маску надеваю лишь в маскарад, а не хожу с нею перед людьми каждый день.’

‘I don’t like half words here and there, miserable double-dealing I can’t stand, slander and gossip I abominate. The only time I put on a mask is when I’m going to a masquerade, I don’t wear one in front of people every day.’

Golyadkin’s invocation of the mask metaphor further underscores his inability—or perhaps refusal—to see in himself the hypocrisy he decries in others. The doctor’s advice to Golyadkin—to “change his character” by getting out in society more often and engaging with others—misses the point. Worse, he takes the doctor’s remarks as an indictment of his social status and an offence to his honour, which he is moved to defend. He is eager to confirm to the doctor that he is “just like everyone else,” [как и все], adding further that he is a man of means with an official post, can visit the theatre when he likes, has his own servant, and as the narrator casually underscores later in the passage (imitating Golyadkin’s own voice), is on par with any other respectable gentleman. But at that point Golyadkin falters, showing again that each time he confirms this superego identity, he reveals a chink in the armour. He is unsure of himself and checks for the doctor’s response:

Хотя господин Голядкин проговорил всё это донельзя отчетливо, ясно, с уверенностью, взвешивая слова и рассчитывая на вернейший эффект, но между тем с беспокойством, с большим беспокойством, с крайним беспокойством смотрел теперь на Крестьяна Ивановича. Теперь он обратился весь в зреи и робко, с досадным, тоскливым нетерпением ожидал ответа Крестьяна Ивановича.

54 Ibid. Golyadkin repeats the same moral platitudes about masks and double dealing in Chapter III, upon meeting a pair of colleagues in a restaurant (PSS 1:124), and later again to the office clerk Anton Antonovich (see my discussion below).
55 PSS 1:115; Bird, 24.
56 PSS 1:117.
Although Mr. Golyadkin had spoken throughout with the utmost clarity, precision and assurance, weighing his words and relying on those calculated to produce the best effect, he was beginning to look at Krest’ian Ivanovich with uneasiness, with great uneasiness, with extreme uneasiness. He was now all attention, timidly awaiting Krest’ian Ivanovich’s reply with a sick uneasy feeling of impatience.

Such exaggerated emphasis on Golyadkin’s anxiety—demonstrating the repetition and prolixity for which contemporary critics reprimanded the author—underscores the awful tension that exists between Golyadkin’s professed values and his duplicity. For all his posturing as a virtuous and hard-done-by victim of intrigue and slander, his holier-than-thou effigies mask his own ethically suspect behaviours. In denying that he dons masks, Golyadkin puts one on. Yet there is a peculiar authenticity in the protagonist’s pitiable plea that shows a man longing to discern the hard moral facts to justify his (to him, unfair) position. He may be unable to identify his own duplicity for what it is, but he nevertheless serves as a voice to unmask the moral emptiness of his status-seeking contemporaries. In his various exhibitions of status and noble deportment he tries to project an image that he equates with moral righteousness—not for the sake of righteousness, evidently, but because such an image commands respect and guarantees privilege and entitlement. Ironically, the mask that disguises Golyadkin’s petty jealousy and envy is the same that he dons to prove his moral superiority, and herein lies his fundamental duplicity.

Golyadkin’s self-abasement before the doctor is therefore a kind of effacement of his ego. On one level, Golyadkin’s confession is an attempt to justify the pride and envy that consume him—to defend his own unscrupulous behaviour and assuage a guilty conscience. He in fact longs to participate in the high society he condemns. On another level, at the core of his confession is the ineradicable sense of personal worth that he equates with all that is good, authentic and honourable. True nobility, to Golyadkin’s
mind, is incompatible with deception. It infuriates him that it is a mask—a mere fiction!—that mediates the interrelations between people and excludes him from their company. But the doctor does little to resolve his doubt, trying instead to take his leave and be rid of further annoyance. In fact, the doctor fails to understand Golyadkin’s plea, or even to recognize that there is a plea being made here: Golyadkin has turned to the doctor in search of a defender of moral rectitude to back his faltering ethical code—or to confirm whether indeed it is even expedient to possess such a thing. In secular society, there is no moral authority to turn to, so Golyadkin appeals to the closest representative he can find. In an age where life in the world is understood in predominantly material terms, doctors are guardians of health in body and spirit. In this instance, the patient’s total physical, psychic and moral condition is a blend of self-pity, fear and conscience. The end of his confession finds him trembling, enervated and unsure.

While he was speaking, a peculiar change came over Mr. Golyadkin. His grey eyes flashed with strange fire, his lips trembled, all his muscles and features twitched and disarranged themselves. His whole body shook violently. Having followed his first impulse in arresting Krest’ian Ivanovitch’s hand, Mr. Golyadkin now stood stock-still as though lacking self-assurance, and awaiting inspiration for further action.

Seeking assurance in the doctor, Golyadkin receives none and is left hanging, alone, to confront the unresolved conflict between his professional and ethical strivings. His confession has given the reader a wider understanding of his complex motivations, while leaving Golyadkin himself to wrestle in existential agony with conflicting perceptions of his inner identity. In the following section, I demonstrate Golyadkin’s further attempts to

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57 PSS 1:118; Bird, 29.
seek personal and moral affirmation in figures of authority, and discuss additional corollaries of this dimension of his obstructed moral self-awareness.

*Moral Authority of the ‘Fathers’*

Golyadkin’s frequent references to ‘chivalry’ and his avowal that he looks upon his bureau chief ‘as a father’ brings the question of civil and moral authority to the fore. First, a handful of antecedents of the 1820s and 1830s come to mind, which broach the topic of authority and rebellion, as *Dvoinik* does, by way of interlacing reality, dream and fantasy. A common theme linking works of this class was ambivalence toward authority, which, in some cases, modeled dualistic characterizations. After Mikhail Zagoskin’s enormously popular *Yury Miloslavsky* in 1829, Veltman reconfigured the traditions of historical narrative to combine folklore, myth and legend in *Koshchei bessmertnyi* (*Koshchei the Immortal, 1833*) and *Svetoslavich, vrazhii pitomets* (*Svetoslavich, the Enemy Ward, 1835*). The absurdities of the world take the form of fairytale situations in the consciousness of Veltman’s heroes. Other works by Veltman deal in dual and bifurcated identities. In *Predki Kalimerosa: Aleksandr Filippovich Makedonsky* (*The Ancestors of Kalimeros: Alexander, Son of Philip of Macedon, 1836*), a Moldavian captain is the descendant of both Alexander the Great and Napoleon Bonaparte. In a modified version entitled *General Kalomeros* (1840), the hero is at one and the same time

58 M. N. Zagoskin, *Yury Miloslavsky, ili russkie v 1612 godu* (Moscow: Khudozhestvenniaa literature, 1967). Zagoskin’s historical novel depicted Russia during the legendary Time of Troubles and was much loved by writers and critics, among them Pushkin, Krylov, Belinsky, and Dostoevsky himself. *Yury Miloslavsky* was hailed as the first real depiction of the Russian people and Zagoskin—as Russia’s own Walter Scott.


60 The name “Kalimeros” is the literal Greek translation of the name Bonaparte. The name is spelled differently in the 1840 tale, mentioned next. Ibid., 13.
Napoleon himself and the unknown General Kalomeros, who falls in love with a common Russian girl and dreams of an idyllic domestic life. Separation from naturally occurring reality and the experience of inner division are utilized by Veltman in these cases to portray the psychologically complex organization of his heroes’ conscious minds.\(^61\) Parallels with *Dvoinik* are apparent in Kalomeros’s ambitions and his dreams of the idyllic life. A closer equivalence emerges in Dostoevsky’s proposed revisions (see Chapter Four, below) in which Napoleon is mentioned in connection with Golyadkin’s political ambitions.

The theme of authority in *Dvoinik* resonates especially strongly with themes of authority and persecution in Pushkin’s *Mednyi vsadnik*. Pushkin’s method of engaging and combining complex social problems with inner emotional conflicts is one that Dostoevsky interprets in his own work. By means of the distortion of conventional perspectives and the disorientation of the customary, both writers depict the ambiguity of moral problems in narrative. Suggestive of historical narratives such as the Decembrist uprising, the revolt of Pushkin’s ‘little man’ hero Evgeny is a “futile and even insane action, an unplanned and spontaneous expression of impotent fury directed at and punished by the symbolic cause of the revolt”—which he sees in Étienne Falconet’s famous equestrian statue of Peter the Great.\(^62\) To Pushkin in the 1830s, madness represented a kind of freedom, “a chance to express what could not be expressed in ‘sane’ society.”\(^63\) His poem evinces an awareness of the connection between opposition to the state and madness when vulnerability and frustration combine with elemental passion to meet with implacable reality. The elemental passions of Evgeny’s rebellion, linked to

\(^{61}\) Ibid., 13-14.
\(^{62}\) Gutsche, 37.
\(^{63}\) Ibid., 41.
demonic, life-threatening forces, are the same elemental forces that destroy the city. They cause his madness as they tempt him into a confrontation with the state, and ultimately they lead him to death. The undercurrent of fatalism running throughout suggests that all humans are subject to those same forces.\textsuperscript{64} In all, Pushkin’s work undermines simplistic notions about universal morality and temporal authority, speaking to the complexity of the human conflict as well as its tragic unresolvability.\textsuperscript{65}

A curious correspondence within the theme of authority also links Dostoevsky’s novella directly to Russian folkloric tradition. The bureau chief Olsufy Ivanovich Berendeev, to whom Golyadkin turns with desperate entreaties for mercy and protection, shares a name with Tsar Berendei of Russian fairytales. Berendei also figures in an 1831 retelling of the legend by the poet V. A. Zhukovsky, whose poem is referenced, moreover, in Veltman’s \textit{Serdtse i dumka}.\textsuperscript{66} Golyadkin unconsciously identifies himself with Ivan Tsarevich, son of the folkloric Tsar Berendei. His preoccupation with his rightful status as the inheritor of noble tradition is reinforced by his repeated appeals to Berendeev, in whom he sees a benefactor and father figure. His dream of courting His Excellency’s daughter is further indication that he fancies himself the rightful heir to the tsar/bureau chief’s legacy.

A spontaneous stopover for an interview with ‘His Excellency’ Olsufy Ivanovich Berendeev recalls the scene with Dr. Rutenspitz, thus framing the narrative with these

\textsuperscript{64} Ibid., 29.
appeals to figures of authority. Golyadkin Sr.'s undoing is well under way, and he
desperately solicits the bureau chief’s protection. But when Golyadkin finally finds
himself before the boss, Berendeev barely acknowledges him and shortly has him
removed from the premises. Throughout the brief interview that takes place, Golyadkin is
even less articulate than in previous encounters. With Dr. Rutenspitz he had been able to
express himself, however haltingly, to give some form to his moral sensibilities. Here, he
insists on wanting to explain himself but never gets around to offering anything of
substance. Our best indication of his intentions comes earlier—hoping to win
Berendeev’s confidence by appealing to a code of honour and patriarchal protection,
Golyadkin had been rehearsing the encounter in his mind:

‘Нет, я вот как сделаю: отправлюсь, паду к ногам, если можно, униженно буду
испрашивать. Дескать, так и так; в ваши руки судьбу предаю, в руки начальства;
дескать, ваше превосходительство, защитите и облагодетельствуйте человека; так и
так, дескать, вот то-то и то-то, противозаконный поступок; не погубите, принимаю
вас за отца, не оставьте ... амбицию, честь, имя и фамилию спасите ... и от злодея,
развращенного человека спасите ...’ [...] ‘Принимаю вас за отца...’

No. This is what I’ll do. I’ll go and throw myself at his feet, if I can, and make humble
entreaties. ‘Such and such,’ I’ll say, ‘I put my fate into your hands, into the hands of my
superiors. Protect me, your Excellency, show me your support. This and that and such
and such a thing is an unlawful act,’ I’ll say. ‘Don’t ruin me. I look upon you as a father.
Don’t forsake me. Rescue my ambition, my dignity, name and honour ... Deliver me
from a depraved villain.’ [...] ‘I look upon you as a father...’

Golyadkin imagines he can turn to the highest source of honour and justice he knows, the
head of his department—analogously, the tsar of ancient lore—believing that if he could
only plead his case, the just and benevolent authorities will surely see the wrong he has
suffered and redeem him. Thus his notion of society and its moral foundation is one in
which he has the natural right to the backing of traditional patriarchal authority in a
feudal-type relationship.

67 PSS 1:213-214; Bird 221-222.
This outdated social ideal that Golyadkin subscribes to is reinforced in several instances in which Golyadkin appeals to his vaguely-conceived chivalrous code:

‘Я думал, рыцарское, ваше превосходительство ... Что здесь, дескать, рыцарское, и начальника за отца принимаю ... дескать, так и так, защитите, сле ... слезно м ... молю, и что такие дви ... движения долж ... но по ... по ... поощрять ... ’

‘I thought it chivalrous, your Excellency. There’s chivalry about it, I thought. And I look upon my departmental head as I would a father ... I mean, what I mean is, protect me, I b-b-beg you with t-t-tears in my eyes ... s-s-such action m-must b-b-be encouraged ... ’

Curiously, Golyadkin refers to this anachronistic notion of chivalry on several occasions. His sentiments are learned from popular Romantic tales of knighthly exploits and Quixotic adventures. To Golyadkin, his rights and privileges, including patronage from the overlord and protection from dangerous foes, are the natural and just reward for faithful service, and for knowing (and keeping) his place. For him, moral righteousness is tied to noble status and patriarchal familial ties. At stake in the whole debacle for Golyadkin are, as they are for Devushkin and other chinovnik heroes, his honour and his good name.

Golyadkin is looking for justice in the moral authority of the ‘fathers,’ which translates, in the prosaic world of the chancellery, to his superiors at the bureau. The problem is there is no justice or nobility in the social order to which he longs for admission. Golyadkin’s is a case of tragic disillusionment as his naïve heroic vision of self stirs the underlying conflict between his moral idealism and his ego-centred drive for social status. A low-ranking civil service clerk in bureaucratic Petersburg, he enjoys few privileges and has little hope of attaining any significantly higher rank or status, let alone ‘honour’ (as he perceives it). He jealously guards his faith in the patriarchal social order, believing that nobility of purpose should prove his legitimacy. Assuming that he belongs

68 PSS 1:216; Bird, 226.
Golyadkin clings to his idealized notions and stubbornly defends the values and privileges he believes he deserves by rightful inheritance. The bare facts of his tragic position are laid plain to Golyadkin himself when, after his audience with Berendeev, he is unceremoniously escorted from his benefactor’s home and finds himself sitting in the damp yard near a woodpile, ruminating that “конечно, об испанских серенадах и о шелковых лестницах ничего уже было думать. . .” [there was no question now of even thinking about Spanish serenades and silken ladders. . .] Golyadkin has found no support for his lofty ideals, his all-too-transparent Romantic visions. Ostracized from a community to membership in which he has aspired, thus finally denied the wealth and status that he believes his good character deserves, and in the face of humiliation and defeat, his appeals to a defunct moral authority and an obsolete moral code have failed outright.

When Golyadkin turns to an abstract social authority, the father figure he sees in His Excellency, he hopes to find the sort of loving paternal authority, a pledge of submission to which brings safety and security. Obedience to such a secular authority is a refuge for Golyadkin, yet one that does not protect him, nor satisfy his inner longings. Is there a higher moral authority to which he can appeal? On a couple of occasions, we actually find Golyadkin attempting to situate his planned entreaties to the bureaucratic authorities within the divine framework:

‘Я пропускал, как выше объяснил, ту идею, Антон Антонович, что вот промысл божий создал двух совершенно подобных, а благодарительное начальство, видя промысл божий, приютили двух близнецов. Это хорошо, Антон Антонович. Вы

69 On Dostoevsky’s adamant claims to his own family’s legal noble status, and the importance it had for him, see Frank, Seeds of Revolt, 6-10.
70 PSS 1:219.
Golyadkin is certain that his dual self is recognized and shielded not only by the civil authorities, but by the highest authority of divine Providence. His rationalization seeks legitimacy even for the duplicitous phantom self. What then prevents Golyadkin from falling under the protection of his superiors? Why instead does his double succeed, through subterfuge and innuendo, in both winning the favour of the bureau chief and at the same time impugning the original Golyadkin’s work and character? Golyadkin Sr.’s inability to recognize his own duplicity and his willingness to compromise his values, which are in evidence again in the exchange with his supervisor Anton Antonovich, from which the quotation above is taken, have sealed his fate in a system that rewards those who practise supercilious double-dealing and ‘wear masks’ in their interpersonal transactions. The cruel irony is that Golyadkin, while harbouring ambitions that force him to misrepresent his motives to himself, never learns to play the game of ingratiating with others that his double has mastered with consummate self-possession. Meanwhile, Providence and the benevolent fathers seem to favour the latter son.

In the final accounting, Golyadkin’s appeal to the ‘moral’ authority of Berendeev turns out to be as futile and fatuous as his confession to the doctor. Golyadkin’s own integrity, by the evidence of his disintegrating speech, has only deteriorated as a result of his trusting in an invalid external source of moral rectitude. His futile appeals to authority having failed, Golyadkin has lost his last chance at redemption. His tattered moral

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71 PSS 1:198; Bird, 192.
sensibility chafed raw by the increasingly brazen encroachment of Golyadkin Jr. into his presumed sanctuary from harm, the protection of the authority figure to whom he has, in his mind, remained loyal, falls away completely. The result is his final desperate appearance at the home of his would-be lover, at which his descent into madness culminates with the humiliating carriage ride to institutionalization.

In René Girard’s view, Golyadkin’s complex pathology is a neurosis that confuses the desire for autonomy and self-exaltation with submission and self-effacement. David Gasperetti’s notion of Dvoinik as a ‘self-effacing narrative’ presents a similar argument. Girard draws on theories of clinical psychology which maintain that the modern subject’s resentment of models, who are at the same time rivals, can develop into an idolatrous obsession. The all-powerful model is an obstacle to the individual’s strivings to attain a whole, unified self; thus the compensatory veneration of this model is a key to the ‘double’ complex. This complex involves humble resignation to the rival/enemy, meanwhile sharing the object of his desire. Evgeny’s identification with the statue of Peter before the flood brings about his tragic loss can be seen as an analogous instance. The feeling of identification that relieves anxiety about inner conflicts can also provide a defence against the feeling of “socially impermissible hostility toward an authority figure who is both resented and feared.”

Girard demonstrates the workings of this pathology in several of Dostoevsky’s works from Belye nochi and Khoziaika to Unizhenny i oskorblennye (The Insulted and Injured, 1861), Igrok (The Gambler, 1866), Vechniyi muzh (The Eternal Husband, 1870), Podrostok, and Brat’ia Karamazov. But it is in Zapiski iz podpol’ia and Dvoinik, “two efforts to express

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73 Gutsche, 30.
the same truth,” where the “underground psychology” is developed in its purest form. In
_Dvoinik_, Golyadkin subsumes the Other in his self-perception, and that is the start of his
personal disintegration: “This proud man believes he is one in his solitary dream, but in
failure he divides in two and becomes a contemptible person and a contemptuous
observer of the human scene. He becomes Other to himself. The failure constrains him to
take up against himself the part of the Other who reveals to him his own nothingness.”
74 Like the Underground Man, who had endeavoured to foster the _prekrasnoe i vysokoe_, the
Romantic subject wishes to perceive himself as a unified being who exists in the exalted
space of ideal self. The mundane order of sordid realities is an unwanted intrusion. The
dominant order—a situation from which there is no way out—is the object Golyadkin
both resists and strives to subsume in order to overcome it. Girard’s Other is not merely a
dominating personality here, but the entire social order which the protagonist
simultaneously submits to and condemns.

Shortly before the denouement of _Dvoinik_, a climax is reached in a dream
sequence—an early instance of what would come to be so powerful a narrative tool in the
later Dostoevsky—wherein a proliferation of doubles evinces the ineluctable
fragmentation of Golyadkin’s self-perception. He first imagines himself in the company
of the elect, celebrated for their breeding and wit, among whom he earns distinction for
his own amiability and charm. But inevitably “a person notorious for his evil intentions
and brutish impulses” appears, eclipses the triumph of Golyadkin Sr., and demonstrates
that he is not the real one at all but a fraud; that he, the double, is the real one. Golyadkin
Sr. is not what he seems and consequently has no right to enter the society of well-bred,

74 Girard, _Deceit, Desire and the Novel_, 60.
well-intentioned people. The devastated Golyadkin splits into dozens as if shattered by the fatal blow to his integrity:

He noMHH ce6a, B CTbme H B OTnaaHHH, 6pocHJica norH6uiHH H coBepmeHHO cnpaBeAJiHBHH rocno^HH Tojia^KHH Kyua rna3a rnaflaT, Ha BOJIIO cyp,b6u, Ky#a 6M He BHHecno; HO c KaxjuuM maroM ero, c KaacflbiM yaapoM Horn B rpaHHT TpoTyapa, BbicKaKHBano, KaK 6y^TO H3-noa 3eMJiH, no TaKOMy ace TOHHO, coBepmeHHO no,z;o6HOMy H OTBpaTHTejibHOMy pa3Bpam,eHHOCTHio cepflua rocno^HHy TojiaflKHHy. H Bee 3TH coBepmeHHO noflo6Hbie nycKajincb TOT^ac xe no noaBJieHHH cBoeM 6eacaTb O/IHH 3a ApyrHM H flJiHHHOK) uenbio, KaK BepeHHna ryceH, TaHyjincb H KOBbmajia 3a rocno^HHOM ronaflKHHbiM-CTapuiHM, TaK HTO HeKyfla 6HJIO y6eacaTb OT coBepmeHHO no,ao6Hbix,—TaK MTO HapoflHJiacb HaKOHeu CTpauiHaa 6e3^Ha coBepmeHHO noflo6Hbix,—TaK HTO Bca CTOJiHua 3anpyflHjiacb HaKOHeu coBepmeHHO no,no6HbiMH, H nojnmeHCKHii cnyHCHTejib, BHjia TaKOBoe HapymeHHe npHjiH^na, npHHy>Kj(eH SbiJi B3aTb 3-THX Bcex coBepmeHHO nolo6Hbix 3a uiHBopoT H noaca^HTb B onyHHBmyioca y Hero noa 6OKOM 6y,zncy.

Out of his mind with shame and despair, the ruined but rightful Mr. Golyadkin fled blindly wherever fate might lead. But as often as his foot-falls rang upon the granite pavement, an exact image of Golyadkin the depraved and abominable, would spring up as if out of the ground. And each of these exact images would come waddling along behind the next in a long procession, like a gaggle of geese, after Golyadkin Sr. Escape was impossible. In the end there sprang up so fearful a multitude of exact images that the whole capital was blocked with them, and a police officer, perceiving this breach of decorum, was obliged to grab the lot by the scruff of the neck and fling them into a police-box that happened to be near at hand . . .

This episode affords a fine illustration of what Malcolm Jones has called Dostoevsky’s “fascination with an infinitely multi-layered reality . . .” The repercussions of that fatal dissolution of conscious unity are given the greatest attention here: Golyadkin and his gaggle of doubles attract the attention of a policeman who apprehends him/them for disturbing the peace. Apparently it is such a serious breach of conduct for a man to be divided in himself that he threatens even to compromise the security of the capital—an emblem of the state and the hegemony of order, justice and morality. A challenge to the monolithic, monotheistic, and homogeneous whole of society, Golyadkin’s divisive crisis

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75 PSS 1:185; Bird 168.
76 PSS 1:186-187; Bird 170-171.
77 Malcolm Jones, Dostoevsky and the Dynamics of Religious Experience (London: Anthem Press, 2005), xii.
presages an imminent shift to a pluralistic paradigm that affects the individual and the structure of society alike.

All in all, at issue in the authority theme of Dvoinik is a struggle between moral rectitude and ego assertion, between legitimate authority and the spirit of rebellion. Golyadkin is incapable of separating the poles of these oppositions because of his confusing and self-disruptive moral notions. His appetite for success in a world whose moral terms he opposes instinctively blinds him to the reality that his intentions, if not his actions, are equally subject to the moral standards to which he holds those whose patent duplicity revolts him. Were he self-possessed enough to align his intentions with the values he espouses, he might free himself from the hope that an authoritative imprimatur on his work would protect him against the designs of his Doppelgänger. Still, his faith in the ersatz patriarchy of the bureaucracy provides him with what he believes to be an anchor in a stable, absolute moral order. Golyadkin, for all his faults, represents a figure whose instinct is to resist the bureaucratic culture of blandishment as immoral even as he succumbs to its imperatives in practice. His rejection of the portion of ego that curries favour, wears a mask and tells lies is, in the language of psychology, a defence mechanism employed to shield himself from awareness of his own moral imperfections. The wider framing of psychology and nineteenth-century philosophy is my focus in the final sections of this chapter.

The Ends and Beginnings

Robert L. Jackson describes a poetics of transcendence in Dostoevsky’s later works, wherein a philosophically idealist understructure is the base for his narrative techniques,
which reach beyond their literal denotations as if aiming to tap into an innate moral sense lying below conscious understanding.\textsuperscript{78} To my mind, the psychological portrait of Golyadkin is an early attempt in this vein at something that might be called transpersonal psychology: an approach to the human mind that shows how mind, body and spirit are integrated, while stressing the importance of the core values or ideals needed to achieve a level of personal growth sufficiently grounded in universal principles to merit moral freedom.

Additional evidence supports my thesis that the hero’s reluctance to embrace his personal tragedy is a result of his restrictive moral self-awareness. The problem, inasmuch as it relates to the discord between conscious and unconscious motivations of the psyche, led Dostoevsky to explore connections between the physiological, sociological and spiritual causes of mental disease. The editors of 	extit{PSS} report that in 1846, shortly after the appearance of 	extit{Dvoinik}, Dostoevsky queried his friend and later medical advisor, Dr. C. D. Ianovsky, on specialized medical literature concerning diseases of the brain and nervous system as well as on a broader range of psychic disturbances and ‘	extit{dushevnye bolezni}’ [mental illnesses]. One finds that Dostoevsky was interested in more than a medical problem, as the editors explain:

В то же время, уже в «Двойнике» душевное расстройство Голядкина изображается Достоевским как следствие социальной и нравственной деформации личности, обусловленной ненормальным устройством общественной жизни. Мысль о ненормальности обособления и разобщения людей, критика необеспеченности и щедрости положения личности в существующем мире, стремление обнаружить деформирующее влияние склада современных общественных отношений на нравственный мир отдельного человека связывают проблематику «Двойника» . . . с аналогичными идеями социалистов-утопистов 1830—1840-х годов.\textsuperscript{79}

\textsuperscript{78}Robert L. Jackson, 	extit{Dostoevsky's Quest for Form: A Study of His Philosophy of Art} (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1966), 71-91.
\textsuperscript{79}PSS 1:488.
At the same time, already in *The Double*, the mental derangement of Golyadkin is portrayed by Dostoevsky as the result of social and moral deformation of the personality conditioned by the abnormal structure of society. The idea of the abnormality of isolation and the separation of people, the critique of dispossession and the precariousness of the situation of the individual personality in the existing world, as well as the aim to disclose the deforming influence of the dynamics of contemporary social relations on the moral world of the individual tie the problems of *The Double* to analogous ideas of the socialist utopians of the 1830s – 1840s.

The role of Socialist Utopianism as a formative influence on Dostoevsky has been discussed in Chapter One, above. Dostoevsky’s attraction to ideas that posit moral idealism as the transcendental end of reason, in the Kantian sense, which Socialist Utopianists themselves adapted, is proven also by his interest in the book *Psyche: Zur Entwicklungs geschichte der Seele* (1846) by the House of Saxony court physician, physiologist, painter and writer, Carl Gustav Carus.

In the tradition of Schelling’s *Naturphilosophie*, Carus practised modern science and philosophy on the foundations of Idealism and a religious worldview, seeing nature and human life as originating from a Divine Idea, and the individual soul as sharing in the divine creative principle and therefore immortal.\(^80\) Detecting its potential to pique Dostoevsky’s interest, James Rice describes the book as “the biological application of Hegelian ideas,” and “... an eclectic blend of science and poetic speculation, with an increasingly heady admixture of occult musings which always retained a certain magnetic appeal for Fyodor Mikhailovich.”\(^81\) Dostoevsky’s interest in Carus is documented by Baron von Wrangel, writing from Semipalatinsk in 1854 of his and Dostoevsky’s plan to translate *Psyche*. Dostoevsky knew of Carus before his exile, however, and there is reason to believe he was familiar with *Psyche* when he wrote *Dvoinik* in 1846.\(^82\)

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\(^{80}\) Frank, *Ordeal*, 172.


\(^{82}\) Ibid., 134-138.
emphasized the power of the irrational and the unconscious in both the human psyche and in the natural, material world—endowed with a spirit differing from the psyche only in degrees of consciousness and self-consciousness. Carus took it as a first principal that the conscious mind operates in a sensitive balance with the unconscious, and moreover that the divine idea resides in the unconscious. The role of unconscious life in directing our physical and spiritual well-being is therefore a major tenet of the book, including the guiding role of spirit over the unconscious psychic forces and their manifestations in human physiology.

Among scholars who have examined Carus’s possible influence on some of Dostoevsky’s later works, George Gibian reads Carus’s views on the unconscious roots of disease into Raskolnikov, in particular, noting the rebellion of his subconscious against his whole way of life. His illness is an infection both psychological and physiological in nature, spread throughout his body and mind. For healing, he needs repentance—a total remedy of the unconscious through spiritual redemption. By the same token, Father Zosima in Brat’ia Karamazovy, in giving counsel to pilgrims, heals through uncovering the underlying causes of their ailments—in each case a spiritual defect rather than a localized biological symptom. He advises total repentance, an end to shame, and openness to love. Doctors in general in Dostoevsky (who are usually German, emphasizing Dostoevsky’s distaste for their practice) prescribe futile remedies without comprehending underlying causes. Golyadkin’s visit to Dr. Rutenspitz, analyzed above, illustrates this very fact: the medical profession falls short when it comes to diagnosing the unconscious roots of a problem that is more an infirmity of spirit than of physical

83 Frank, Ordeal, 173.
health. On the other hand, the true healers like Zosima, Tikhon, Sonia, Myshkin and Alyosha accord with Carus in their application of remedies of sympathy, love, and solidarity with humankind.\textsuperscript{85}

As an exploration of moral disorientation and the unconscious psychological rift it causes the hero, \textit{Dvoinik} prefigures the thrust of moral dilemmas that are at the centre of the major works of Dostoevsky’s oeuvre. On the persistent aim of Dostoevsky’s writing to investigate the vicissitudes of modern moral controversies, the critic Wayne Booth surmises,

\begin{quote}
Dostoevsky, like Shakespeare, derives some of his pre-eminence from his ability to show what a murky business the moral world really is while still keeping the lines of our moral sympathies clear. His criminals remain deeply sympathetic because he knows, and makes us know, why they are criminals and why they are still sympathetic. Not genuine ambiguity, but rather complexity with clarity, seems to be his secret.\textsuperscript{86}
\end{quote}

While it is true, as Joseph Frank warns, that it is impossible to read into \textit{Dvoinik} all the complexity and profundity of Dostoevsky’s later masterpieces, the temptation to do so evinces the presence of inchoate themes and structures in \textit{Dvoinik} that materialize in myriad forms throughout the later works.\textsuperscript{87} But if complexity with clarity is the key, in Booth’s estimation, to Dostoevsky’s successful handling of moral problems in his greatest works, is there a clue here to the shortcomings of \textit{Dvoinik}? The tangled mass of ethical dilemmas shrouded in Dostoevsky’s mystifying stylistic mannerisms has a density in this novella that it would take the rest of Dostoevsky’s writing career to weigh and evaluate. One could argue that it is precisely because the abstract ethical dilemmas in \textit{Dvoinik} are poorly defined and find no clear resolution that the novella was doomed to critical failure in 1846. Booth has prescient advice to offer a writer dealing with moral

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{85} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{86} \textit{The Rhetoric of Fiction}, 2\textsuperscript{nd} ed. (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1983), 135.
\textsuperscript{87} Frank, \textit{Seeds of Revolt}, 295.
\end{flushright}
ambiguity in truth-probing tales, which might shed some light on the problems with

*Dvoinik:*

... if an author wishes to take me on a long quest for the truth and finally present it to
me, I will feel the quest as a boring triviality unless he gives me unambiguous signs of
what quest I am on and of the fact that I have found my goal when I get there; his private
conviction that the question, the goal, and their importance are clear, or that clarity is
unimportant, will not be sufficient.\(^8^8\)

Do we understand what quest we are on when reading *Dvoinik*, and do we have
unambiguous signs that lead us to our goal? We can be sure the protagonist does not. If
the critical voices among Dostoevsky’s contemporaries are any indication, his readers did
not either. So why are the moral issues in *Dvoinik* so imprecise? What is the point of the
frenzied and overwrought tale of the misadventures of Mr. Golyadkin?

Our greatest clue is Golyadkin’s own perplexity, since the narrative of *Dvoinik*
centres around the protagonist’s confusion and exasperation as he tries desperately to
reconcile egoistic impulses with his moral sensibilities. If his predicament involves
finding his rightful place in society and understanding its ethical basis, Golyadkin himself
is only crudely aware of that. Not only are his doubt and confusion stressed repeatedly
throughout, but the author’s notes for a revision of *Dvoinik* in the early 1860s show that
this aspect of the hero’s plight was slated for greater emphasis in a new edition.\(^8^9\) In the
following exchange sketched in the notes, Golyadkin Sr. pleads with Junior for some
modicum of understanding:

Голиадкин: «Позвольте же спросить, что всё это означает? Я вот всё
dобивался, мне бы хоть капельку узнать, что это всё означает». Младший: «Зачем всё добивается? Пребывайте покойны, и всё будет
ладно».
Мне бы хоть капельку.
 Да зачем? И притом это, может быть, ровно ничего не означает.
Как-с?

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\(^8^8\) Ibid., 136.
\(^8^9\) See Chapter 5 on Dostoevsky’s planned revisions to *Dvoinik*. 
Голядкин: 'Allow me to ask what all this means. I'm just trying to figure it out... I'd like just an inkling of what it all means'.

Jr: 'Why try and figure it out? Just relax, and everything will be alright'.
- I'd like just an inkling.
- But why? Maybe it doesn't mean anything at all.
- Excuse me, sir?
- That's right. Anything can happen and mean nothing at all.

The hero’s confusion through this dialogue would have made it clearer in a revised version that Golyadkin’s failure consciously to grasp the significance of his trouble lies at the root of the problem. The hero’s usual reaction to snares that frustrate his self-aggrandizing schemes is to deny that there is any problem at all. Exclamations of exasperation and despair are usually followed by resignation and denial: “Да и что же мне в самом деле?”91 [What’s it got to do with me anyway?]; “Мне-то что? Я в стороне.”92 [What is it to me? I’m just a bystander]; “Так дело-то наше обыкновенное дело. Так всё пустяками кончается, ничем разрешается.”93 [It’s all just an ordinary matter. Everything will end in a trifle, it’ll turn out to be nothing.] Golyadkin is crippled by these retreats into denial, which prevent him from making the breakthrough to self-awareness that might liberate him from his torment. Indeed, the hysterical pitch in which his expressions of distress are portrayed indicates what is at stake. As his predicament escalates to ever greater (and comic) extremes of mayhem, and his seditious adversary—ostensibly a suppressed facet of self—tries to convince him that it “means nothing at all,” we can be assured that, on the contrary, it means a great deal.

90 “Chernovye nabroski k predpolagavsheisia pererabotke povesti [1860-64] (CH2)”. PSS 1:435-436.
91 PSS 1:145.
92 PSS 1:152.
93 PSS 1:150.
If we might safely assume that Golyadkin’s plight is no trifle, then why does he repeatedly insist that nothing is really happening, that what is happening does not really concern him, that it is merely the result of circumstances that can easily be ironed out? What is he hoping to justify, or what does he wish to deny and avoid? Effectively, it is consoling to Golyadkin to maintain his innocence and plead ignorance. To question his own motives, to recognize his own moral failings, would be to impugn the institutional framework that defines success for him—consequently, to implicate himself in a morally defunct system. To acknowledge personal involvement in the unfolding drama would be to permit an irreconcilable conflict that would be devastating to his sense of unified self as a virtuous and noble citizen. Since Golyadkin’s sense of self-worth hinges upon his aspirations to improve his status in a dissembling social climate, an evolving awareness of the objectionable inclinations he needs (and is willing) to cultivate in order to thrive in that environment must lead to a conscious confrontation with deep-seated motivations whose moral bases conflict with his sense of the high and ‘noble’—that which he calls chivalry. Jungian psychology would identify Golyadkin’s double as an unconscious projection of the ‘shadow’ self, whereby “Projections change the world into the replica of one’s own unknown face.”

Accordingly, Golyadkin externalizes the negative force of his ambition while recognizing only his noble yearnings and engaging in sanctimonious moralizing. Analogous to Jung’s shadow archetype, “consciously he is engaged in bewailing and cursing a faithless world that recedes further and further into the distance.” As such, Golyadkin’s see-saw act of feigned indifference and sanctimonious moralizing is the work of a multi-faceted ego unwilling to be made conscious in order to

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95 Jung, 93.
avoid detection and eradication. As a result, the ostensible divide in personality that produces Golyadkin’s double leads not only to the situational misfortunes that assail him, but also to a challenge to self-identity that signifies a problem in the very awareness of his moral self. Thus, moral disorientation is dramatized in a duality myth in this work and later, more sophisticated creations in which Dostoevsky tests and defines his heroes’ moral perceptions.

As argued in the previous chapter, the primary basis of Golyadkin’s moral sense is a conceived framing of Romantic discourse. His propensity for Romantic abstractions is evidence that he conflates aesthetics and ethical issues in his heroic fantasy. Yet the heroic fantasy prevents him from owning up to certain psychic flaws. In literary creations throughout his oeuvre, Dostoevsky would continue to develop characters whose worlds are dominated by the intangible, where the otherworldly and mysterious figure largely in their daily experience and in the nuances of both their conscious and unconscious mental operations. Golyadkin is an early prototype, whose business of self-aggrandizement and moralizing demonstrates the problems inherent in the Romantic posture that places self-indulgent moral pride above real moral culpability.

Romantic discourse for Dostoevsky is an avenue for the expression of the ineffable but very real complexities binding mind and spirit. At the same time, he emphasizes the fact that Romantic abstractions, when employed in the service of mental escape, are potentially detrimental to the psychic health of the individual. Addiction to fantasy and escape is described via the “mechtatel” [dreamer] character type in “Peterburgskaja letopis” (“Petersburg Chronicle”), a series of feuilletons Dostoevsky
wrote in 1847, and also through the narrator-hero of *Belye nochi* (*White Nights, 1848*). Dostoevsky later commented directly on the pitfalls of this kind of dreamer syndrome:

A dreamer—to give a precise definition—is not a person, but some kind of, you know, neuter being. He spends most of his time in some god-awful corner, as if to hide even from the light of day, and drawing into himself, he grows into that corner like a snail, or at least, he very much resembles in this respect that entertaining animal that is both animal and shelter in one—a tortoise.97

But what is it behind these symptoms that is so detrimental to a healthy imagination? As he observes in a letter to his brother Mikhail in 1847 shortly after writing *Dvoinik*, Dostoevsky found the compulsion to escape into an inner life of fantasy to be the dangerous result of an individual’s unsuccessful integration in society:

It is true that the dissonance and the imbalance which society presents to us is a terrible thing. The *internal* must be balanced with the *external*. For, lacking external experiences, those of the inward life will gain the upper hand, and that is most dangerous. The nerves and the fancy then take up too much room, as it were, in our consciousness. Because of our lack of experience every external happening seems colossal and frightens us. We begin to fear life.98

The extravagant fantasies of Romantic colouring that fill the void of frustrated intentions in Golyadkin’s world stem from an unbalanced psychic equilibrium reminiscent of the cognitive dissonance Dostoevsky describes in this letter. Fantasy salves the emotionally distraught would-be hero’s humiliated pride, giving shape and validation to his inchoate
yearnings after truth and moral purpose—at the same time as it feeds the ever-widening dimensions of his self-delusion and his spiralling descent into madness. In this way Golyadkin plays a role analogous to that of a Romantic hero, except that his lack of moral self-awareness blinds him to the psychic damage that accompanies his self-contradictory obsession with worldly success. This is a key difference, since a Dostoevskian hero is more of an ordinary man than the Romantic hero, who often is an extraordinary individual. Dostoevsky's ordinary chinovnik views himself as a Romantic hero, and the practice of mental escape is precisely his defence against his social and moral failures.

Dostoevsky's hybrid literary construction problematized the moral visions of Russian intellectual life of the 1830s and 1840s. Adapting the devices and ruling tropes of social humanism, adding Romantic clichés of anxious thought, fantastic visions, nightmares and prophetic foresight, he depicted contours of the human psyche that suggested the moral dilemmas behind its primary motivations. Dostoevsky destabilized the formal and ideological aspects of the range of influences described in Chapter One above, using prose so thoroughly saturated with this variety of genres that the resulting melange was difficult for the author's contemporaries to describe in conventional terms and terminology. David Gasperetti calls the text a 'self-effacing narrative,' in which readers' expectations are set up through references to recognized literary motifs and formulas, only to be undermined by a persistently 'vanishing reality.' Disorientation and disintegration are created by gaps in the spatial and temporal unity, while the narrator and even the hero himself are unreliable as referential voices. Ultimately, Golyadkin's inability to decode the signs and systems of society is aimed at the reader, creating
discomfort and alienation to undermine conventional readings that would befit generic literature of the 1840s.  

Later in life, Dostoevsky would call his method “realism in a higher sense,” explaining that he defined realism not as the product of a statistical average, but as the discovery and investigation of newly emerging phenomena: “Меня зовут психологом: неправда, я лишь реалист в высшем смысле, то есть изображаю все глубины души человеческой.”  

[They call me a psychologist: not true. I am only a realist in a higher sense, i.e., I depict all the depths of the human soul.] While drawing on Natural School conventions, the author made his particular form of realism ‘higher’ by employing a diversity of discourses to access the intangible and elusive motivations for behaviours that could not be explained via naturalistic depiction of the social environment. More than demonstrating the sociological causes and effects of mental instability, the psychological permutations of Golyadkin’s inner dialogue explore the dynamics of his self-awareness and moral perceptions, as well as his existential makeup. Thus, sociological and psychological motivations must be considered in conjunction with more fundamental questions of ontology in order to interpret the broader dimensions of the theme of the divided self in Dvoinik. While there are few overtly philosophical or religious arguments in the book, the novella centres on an underlying theme of moral idealism and transcendental truth that Golyadkin seeks, however blindly, in a secular bureaucratic society where egoism and moral relativism predominate.

As Victor Terras describes Dvoinik, the social problem develops into a metaphysical problem, where Golyadkin is engaged in a struggle to assert not only his

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social identity, but the very reality of his existence.\textsuperscript{101} For Dmitry Chizhevsky, Dostoevsky’s “realistically psychological” analysis is at the same time “transcendentally psychological” and “existential.” This inherent duality, where the plot develops on two planes of meaning, is fundamental to the story.\textsuperscript{102} As the double usurps Golyadkin’s place in the service and society, the problem of ‘one’s own place’ develops the social significance of the tale. Golyadkin has no place of his own, while the double keeps his ‘places’ by flattery and servility. But these superficial and essentially inhuman means are incapable of ensuring him a sphere of his own because a personality with no moral grounding lacks ontological stability. In this connection between ethics and ontology, Chivezhsky finds the focus of the tale:

Here Dostoevsky raises the ethical and ontological problems of the fixity, reality and security of individual existence—surely one of the most genuine problems of ethics. The reality of human personality cannot be secured simply on the empirical plane of existence but needs also other (non-empirical) conditions and pre-suppositions.\textsuperscript{103}

The ontological instability of a personality is not necessarily connected with psychological instability (‘weakness of character’) or social instability (‘dependence’) since, as Chizhevsky proves, Dostoevsky develops the same idea in characters very unlike the dependent and weak petty official in \textit{Dvoinik}—particularly Versilov in \textit{Podrostok}, Stavrogin in \textit{Besy} (\textit{The Devils}, 1871), and Ivan Karamazov in \textit{Brat’ia Karamazov}.\textsuperscript{104} Moreover, the loss of the ontological ‘fixity’ of an ethical being is the central problem of nineteenth-century philosophy, described not only by Søren Kierkegaard but also Hegel, Feuerbach, Bruno Bauer, Stirner, and even Karl Marx.

\textsuperscript{101} Terras, 22.
\textsuperscript{103} Chizhevsky, 116.
\textsuperscript{104} Ibid., 117-122.
Simply put, ‘to exist’ is not a sufficient condition for man’s existence as an ethical individual. In short, it is the ethical problems and not the social or psychological bases of the tale that stand in the foreground and address current issues of ontology.

Golyadkin’s obstructed self-awareness in the midst of his inner conflict indicates a human limitation that Dostoevsky once explained as the fundamentally circumscribed nature of our self-knowledge. That man is familiar only with the immediate and visible [лишь насущное видимо-текущее], “да и то понаглядке, а концы и начала—это всё еще пока для человека фантастическое” [and this only in its appearance, while the ends and beginnings—all this is still a realm of the fantastic for man], is an idea Dostoevsky expressed explicitly in 1876 in *Dnevnik pisatelia*, and demonstrated tacitly in many (if not in all) of his works. Discovering the “ends and beginnings” is certainly an objective that preoccupied the writer’s imagination as he composed *Dvoynik* in 1846, a fact he attested to in the instalment of *Dnevnik pisatelia* cited above. In the interests of uncovering some of the ends and beginnings at the heart of this novella, in the final section of this chapter, I investigate the narrative tool of duality in terms of the structural design it shares with myth, as well as the metaphysical concerns that occupied nineteenth-century philosophy. Self-knowledge, in this sense, becomes a problem of where the self begins and ends—i.e. how one’s sense of personhood, social persona, and ethical attitudes are created in the forge of the psyche, defined by the myths and ideas that make up one’s contemporary social and personal realities.

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105 Ibid., 122-124.
106 *PSS* 23:145.
107 “Это я знал еще с 46-го года, когда начал писать, а может быть и раньше.” [This I knew in ’46 when I began to write, and maybe even earlier.] *PSS* 23:144.
Duality in a ‘Higher Sense’

Duality as a function of myth has been recognized as an organizing principle of Dostoevsky’s major works in the sense that protagonists typically view commonplace facts and experiences in their lives as keys to a ‘higher reality.’ Their behaviours and motivations stem not from the causal relationships of a rationally ordered universe, but from an idealist vision that compels with the force of sacred destiny. Facts and personal experience are ordered about the characters’ insistence that they should have direct access to ‘reality in a higher sense.’

Roger Anderson describes the function of duality myths in Dostoevsky as a preoccupation with these leaps into a higher, ideal realm, rather than a problem of the particular social or historical context of the characters’ lives.

Contemplating the restrictions of time, space, and their own mortality, the memorable characters try to leap beyond to a higher condition. Each would join the self with a vision of eternal constancy. What joins these characters is, first, their dissatisfaction with the empirical world and, second, a common insistence that life open onto a unitary whole that includes them personally. As a result, they are all subject to a deeply ingrained duality that they seek to resolve at any cost. They push against the knowledge of factual containment and attempt to join a cosmology of final permanence. The duality they share thus suggests a question beyond the specific programs that give it a narrative shape from novel to novel. In Dostoevsky’s art duality is a structural matter, an ontological speculation in its own right.

The conditions of a higher reality in myth are typically dualistic, and lead to a central paradox which the protagonist must confront and resolve. The hero of myth explores values that exist in inseparable oppositions, both sides of which compel him to action.

This pursuit of personal authenticity, as Anderson describes it, is synonymous with a sacred quest:

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108 See, for example, Berdiaev, Ivanov, Jackson, and Anderson.  
109 Anderson, 2.  
110 Anderson, 67.
In the process, such characters as Golyadkin, the underground man, or Raskolnikov exceed the empirical definitions and hierarchies of their milieu. The term sacred fits their respective searches, not as a reflection of any particular set of Christian religious beliefs but as an indication of the significance they attach to what they seek beyond the factual. In each case, the protagonist strives to gain his own authenticity by partaking directly in what governs life as a whole.\footnote{Ibid., 66.}

Moral judgment, Anderson concludes, is not calculatingly rational; it is intuitively emotional. It is a mythmaking, mental-psychological process that takes on cosmological importance for the protagonist, where the stakes of the ensuing drama are moral freedom.

Metanarratives or myths of social and spiritual transfiguration are most often related to moral questions. This is true also of the story of Golyadkin, whose encounters with his double provide a venue for the confrontation of conscious and unconscious mental processes that poses challenges to his moral self-awareness.\footnote{More than that, it is possible that Dostoevsky's fantastic method—using Romantic tropes to explore notions of the fantastical, the otherworldly or transcendental, provided him with a framework for a kind of poetics of religious gnostis such as the Russian philosopher N. A. Berdiaev described in Dostoevsky's work. See Mirosozertsanie Dostoevskogo (Dostoevsky's Worldview).} In her book, The Revolution of Moral Consciousness: Nietzsche in Russian Literature, 1890-1914, Edith Clowes asks, “why is specifically moral consciousness central to literary creation?” She uses Mircea Eliade’s definition of myth to conjecture that narrative, like myth, implies the codification of values, and first among them, moral value. Myth is a narrative of “a past sacred time when a supernatural power penetrated nature to establish a ‘right’ state of things. This event also justifies a right mode of behaviour and, thus, a right way of evaluating human actions.”\footnote{See Edith W. Clowes, The Revolution of Moral Consciousness: Nietzsche in Russian Literature, 1890-1914 (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 1988), 12. Clowes cites Mircea Eliade, Myth and Reality (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), 8.} In relation to his own endorsement of particular values, Golyadkin is caught between traditional and modern forms of myth-making. His allusions to the code of chivalry demonstrate a traditional frame of myth, one that functions as a
means of canonizing a value system. His practice of panning the social conventions of polite society, on the other hand, is modern myth-making—which, according to Eliade, breaks down the canon of contemporary morals and celebrates change, pointing to a future time when another value system will be established. Both attitudes are made explicit in Golyadkin’s moralizing pronouncements. Referring to historical precedent for validity, he exclaims, “A самозванством и бесстыдством, милостивый государь, в наш век не берут. Самозванство и бесстыдство, милостивый мой государь, не к добру приводят, а до петли доводит. Гришка Отрепьев только один, государь вы мой, взял самозванством, обманув слепой народ, да и то ненадолго.”

[Imposture and effrontery, sir, get you nowhere today. Imposture and effrontery, sir, lead to no good. They lead to destruction. Grishka Otrep’ev was the only one to gain by imposture, sir—after deceiving the blind people—but not for long.] He harks back to the legend of the False Dmitry (the first, who was thought to be named Grigory Otrep’ev) to place his personal struggle within the framework of traditional value systems. At the same time, his conflict with present values forces him to project to the future. He sounds a solemn and ominous note in the forewarning, “. . . лучше отложим всё это в сторону, до времени . . . до другого времени, Крестьян Иванович, до более удобного времени, когда всё обнаружится, и маска спадет с некоторых лиц, и кое-что обнажится.”

[It’s best left till another time, Krest’ian Ivanovich. . . till a more convenient time when all will be revealed, when the masks will fall from certain faces, and this and that will come to light.] With piety that smacks of Revelations, Golyadkin’s prophecy matches the character of modern myth-making which poses a ‘sacred’ time when the transformation

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114 PSS 1: 167-68; Bird 132.
115 PSS 1:119; Bird, 31.
will happen: “Whereas in conventional narratives it is usually the deep past, in these modern ones the sacred time is the future, more often than not, the near future as it is encompassed in the narrative itself or within the characters’ framework of expectations.” The sacred time for Golyadkin is one in which his present inhibitions will be justified in the light of a utopian future. As in many sacred myths, his is cyclical time—a future that revives the past to restore the traditional values by which he validates himself and judges others.

How are the antinomies implicit in Golyadkin’s moral reasoning connected to modern European thought and the experience of the mid-nineteenth-century Russian citizen? Far from a merely topical theme, at issue here is a broader change in human consciousness and social organization. The ideal of science and empiricism, especially since the onset of the Industrial Revolution and the Age of Enlightenment in Europe, is biased toward empirically verifiable natural laws—implying that all terrestrial phenomena, including human consciousness, are reducible to physical formulas. In the larger picture, this conflict points to a crisis of the Modern Age. For nearly two millennia the Christian world into which Dostoevsky was born had accepted a transcendent reality beyond the pale of human experience, providing a familiar, universal narrative of the human soul in which life is a test and the results are played out into an eternal fate. Suddenly modern science and philosophy were describing a mechanistic world increasingly hostile to the mythic spirituality of the sacred world, and they were arguing that society should be transformed so as to free humankind from the shackles of superstition and dogmatism. In the worldview that emerges from Dostoevsky’s fiction, on the other hand, the empirical mind exists in tension and conflict with first purposes and

universal value systems that operate according to spiritual realities not apparent to the logical and analytical mind of science.

To understand better how Dostoevsky pursues this particular quarry in *Dvoinik*, I turn again to features of the intellectual backdrop against which his education and immersion in literature and culture played out. In the first place, the social and philosophical Idealism Dostoevsky absorbed in the 1840s clearly informs *Dvoinik* and Golyadkin's grasping at universal moral truth. Dramatic tensions in *Dvoinik* reflect a theme that held wide currency in Russia and Europe in the early half of the nineteenth century and, in the larger picture, point to key tensions that characterize the modern mind. In particular, the notion that reason, conscience and moral understanding are faculties of mind that constitute man's communication with the Divine Idea was a primary concern for Dostoevsky and his contemporaries in the 1830s and 1840s. In Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807), *History of Philosophy* (1833-36) and other works of the pre-eminent philosopher of Idealism, the notions of Spirit, God and religion are given self-reflexive definitions like 'self-consciousness of Spirit,' 'universal self-consciousness,' 'self-knowing of man in God' and 'the eternal Idea, existing in and for itself.'\(^{117}\) As noted in Chapter One above, Dostoevsky's own upbringing in the 1830s and 40s during the ferment in Russia of German Romantic Idealism and French Utopian Socialism meant that his exposure to the ideas of Hegel, Fichte and Schelling, as well as self-styled social architects Feuerbach and Fourier, would have ensured his immersion in the language of these forerunners of modern European thought who treated religion and questions of spiritual life as a problem of human consciousness. Where consciousness is

\(^{117}\) Cassedy, 33-35. Emphasis is in Hegel's original.
depicted as a struggle between competing forces of material culture and universal mind, the latter is the source of knowledge and power for the 'higher Self' which has access to, but not full understanding or control over the active agents of its evolution, conscience and will. Charles Taylor reminds us that Hegel was a critic of the Romantic generation, although he came close to some of its aims in his idea that man comes into his own when he views himself as a vehicle of a larger spirit. What separates them is Hegel's insistence that the synthesis can be achieved through reason, while Romantics—and I would add Dostoevsky also—aimed for an intuitive grasp of the whole.118

The expression of consciousness and moral freedom through Dostoevsky's duality method also bears comparison with Kant. The writer's younger brother Andrei Mikhailovich reported that Dostoevsky's first introduction to Kant was through an account of Nikolai Karamzin's visit with the philosopher. Karamzin found Professor Kant eager to describe his philosophical system during their personal interview and summarizes it in his Pis'ma russkogo puteshestvennika (Letters of a Russian Traveller, 1789-1790) this way: humans have innate consciousness of good and evil (conscience) but good does not always prevail. Assuming a rational and beneficent Eternal Creative Mind, there must be a just reward in immortal life. Immortality, it follows, is a necessary condition of a world with moral sense.119 Discerning the extent to which Dostoevsky may or may not have been familiar with Kant's philosophy in the 1840s is a matter of speculation and must be done with caution. For one it is certain, as James Scanlan warns, that Karamzin's account of Kant's theses was not detailed enough for Dostoevsky to have

119 Frank, Seeds of Revolt, 56-57.
gained any concrete understanding of the philosopher's argument. Secondly, Kant makes for a strange Dostoevskian bedfellow considering the rationalistic orientation of his ethical theory. Yet however little knowledge Dostoevsky may have had of Kantian ethics, several researchers have compared Dostoevsky's work with Kant's moral theory that posits an absolute and universal basis for moral judgment grounded in a transcendent order. Yakov Golosovker goes so far as to propose that the mature Dostoevsky interwove direct references to Kant and his philosophy throughout the plot and thematic structure of Brat'ia Karamazovy. Reading the novel through the prism of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Golosovker aims to prove that the real murderer of Fyodor Pavlovich Karamazov, the Devil himself, emerges directly from Kant's *Critique*. In the more recent study *Dostoevsky's Religion*, Steven Cassedy challenges Golosovker's notion that Dostoevsky had at any period in his life studied Kant in detail. Cassedy holds, nevertheless, that "... the difference between Dostoevsky's and Kant's antinomies is precisely the most important feature in Dostoevsky's conception of belief." Cassedy's analysis implies that even if Dostoevsky did not make explicit reference to Kantian thought, his ideas bear comparison by virtue of their response to the same set of problems pertaining to faith, reason, and moral conscience.

Malcolm Jones observes that it was one of Dostoevsky's great projects to try to 'rethink' Christianity for a post-Kantian world. He had this, though little else, in common with the post-Kantian Idealists—notably Schelling and Hegel—who were so influential.

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in Russia in his youth. Jones posits that Dostoevsky understood what Kant’s philosophy had revealed about the limits of human reason, namely, that we can have knowledge only to the extent that the world conforms to our conceptual apparatus and that reason, consequently, can shed no light on questions of a metaphysical nature. The experiential and emotional dimensions of religion, on the other hand, held great significance for Dostoevsky. Jones goes on to argue, “the most menacing challenge to religion in Dostoevsky is not science or rational argument (in whose ultimate authority in spiritual matters he did not believe), but his own psychological insight. He unremittingly explores those areas of human experience where the religious, the supernatural, the irrational (what he calls ‘higher realism’) break through into consciousness, and he knew that they could be accounted for psychologically, without recourse to religious explanations.” What is important here in regards to Dvoinik is that Dostoevsky’s presentation of conscious awareness in the novella engages in a polemic with secular attempts, in contemporary European philosophy, to ‘explain’ moral feelings and religious attitudes. In particular, Feuerbach’s Essence of Christianity, which is known to have been a widely read and hotly debated treatise among Russian intellectuals in the 1840s, holds that religious experience is not to be discounted, but is to be seen as a projection of the human mind. Golyadkin’s experience of grappling with moral awareness is obscured by the fact that it is presented as all just the result of an imbalanced psyche. It is not likely that Dostoevsky meant to confirm Feuerbach’s thesis. The idea that all notions of a higher order of being can be explained away by psychology was a current belief that Dostoevsky contested by means of ironic presentation. The problems inherent in opting

123 Malcolm Jones, Dostoevsky and the Dynamics of Religious Experience (London: Anthem Press, 2005), 41.
124 Ibid., 49.
for the simple solution of psychological disorientation to account for all of Golyadkin’s moral flounderings force one to consider that the psychological portrait of this character is in large part a smokescreen. What happens to our view of moral self-awareness if we attribute its inflections to mere psychology? Sounding the same note, Dostoevsky posed his ever-pervasive question through the Underground Man in Zapiski iz podpol’ia, arguably an ‘update’ of the Golyadkin syndrome: “What happens to an intellectual of our time who has lost his sense of the holy and his grasp of ‘living life’ [zhivaia zhizn’] and finds himself in the thrall of fashionable progressive ideas?”125 This is not to say that Dostoevsky posed a simple alternative to ‘fashionable ideas,’ much less that he promoted a religious doctrine, but rather that he problematized views at the centre of intellectual debate when he was composing Dvoinik that threatened to oversimplify questions about the moral nature of society. In Jones’s conclusion,

Whatever Dostoevsky’s intention was, there was to be no depiction of religious experience in his novels that could not be satisfactorily interpreted in this way [i.e. according to Feuerbach]; and the degree to which the most radical questioning of religious claims becomes the ideological cornerstone of his major novels likewise testifies to the deep and permanent impression that thinkers like Belinsky, Petrashevsky and the even more extreme Speshnev made on his creative consciousness during this formative period in his life, when he was still in his 20’s and finding his feet as a writer.126

In sum, Kantian ethics and their reverberations in Russian intellectual currents of the 1840s are relevant to Golyadkin’s struggle because the protagonist seems intuitively to understand that secular society has imposed a conventional moral order on everyday life that makes it impossible to judge one’s actions against the categorical imperative of moral law—even if he doesn’t see that he himself buys into those conventional ethics in longing to be accepted in that culture. Thus, I mention Kant strictly to establish context,

125 A summary by Jones (12) of the core thesis of Zapiski iz podpol’ia.
126 Jones, 5.
and do not mean to suggest that Dostoevsky had any intention of developing Kant’s theses in *Dvoinik* or any other pieces. As a towering figure of modern European philosophy stemming from the Enlightenment ethos that Russia readily absorbed in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Kant is a natural (and necessary) contextual backdrop to Dostoevsky. Resonating with Kant’s ideas about the teleological reasoning and transcendental logic that underpin morality, *Dvoinik* shows that Dostoevsky, even as a young writer, was inextricably engaged in the socio-ethical problematics that permeated post-Kantian Europe.

It should be emphasized that the array of ethical problems described above were, above all, a literary challenge for Dostoevsky to solve. One should caution against implying that such a young, beginning writer would consciously deal with this complex interplay of metaphysics and ethics. If his later works show that Dostoevsky was vehemently opposed to ethical rationalism—could this sophisticated philosophical idea have been embedded in the work of the young writer who wrote *Dvoinik*? The older Dostoevsky could and did explore such complexities, but it is impossible to attribute the intellectual sophistication of the mature Dostoevsky to the young writer. I mean only to point out the features that are implicit in the text. As the firm basis of principle is swept from under Golyadkin’s feet by the appearance of the double, the latter’s machinations ostensibly show the tension of forces in the hero’s psychic nature, especially as they concern moral reasoning. The difficulties inherent in addressing contemporary controversies over the foundations of moral truth are evinced by the author’s decision to portray Golyadkin’s moral reasoning as a tumult of warring internal forces, an inner division of mind and spirit which, at base, is a complex pathology. The interplay of
conflicting visions of the self—culminating in the literal division of the hero into two separate beings—is an ontological experiment testing the makeup of Golyadkin’s moral awareness.
CHAPTER 4
ETHICAL EGOISM AND DOSTOEVSKY’S EFFORTS TO REVISE DVOINIK

“Zuboskal” and “Peterburgskaia letopis”

None of the works Dostoevsky wrote in the two-and-a-half years between Dvoinik and his arrest and exile in June 1849 drew as much critical attention as Bednye liudi and Dvoinik had in 1846. If Dostoevsky did not pass the Booth standard of “complexity with clarity” when it came to defining the web of moral issues in Dvoinik, neither did the “long quest for truth” end in unambiguous signs of the quest’s fulfillment in other stories of this period. The Petersburg grotesque “Gospodin Prokharchin” and the lyrical fantasy “Khoziaika” (“The Landlady,” 1847) earned Dostoevsky his worst reviews yet. The author still would not be deterred, however, from developing his ideas about egoism and moral awareness in these and other narratives and in popular journalism.

The satirical piece “Zuboskal” (“Jester”), written simultaneously with Dvoinik, is the prototype for four short satires published between April and June 1847 in Sankt-Peterburgskie vedomosti (Saint Petersburg Gazette), known collectively as “Peterburgskaia letopis” (“Petersburg Chronicle”). The chronicle shows Dostoevsky trying his hand as a literary-satirist in the popular feuilleton style adapted from the French and popularized in the 1840s in Russia by publicists like O. I. Senkovsky, who used the alias Baron Brambeus in his journal Biblioteka dlia chtenija (Library for Reading). Many new talents of the Natural School—Grigorovich, Panaev, Turgenev, Goncharov,

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1 PSS 18:5-10.
2 PSS 18:11-33.
3 See Chapter Two above on the feuilleton as a Natural School genre. For more information, see also B. S. Meilakh, Russkaia povest’ XIX veka (Nauka: Leningrad, 1973), 282-296.
Sollogub, Pleshcheev—had begun to adapt the feuilleton. Among his other goals, we find that Dostoevsky exploited the genre to delve further into the murky world of moral action while elaborating on the several versions of ethical egoism. As Frank observes, the satiric devices used in these feuilletons are a key to the function of egoism in Dvoinik, providing insights into Golyadkin’s motivations and clues that shed light on the author’s satiric portrayal of his beleaguered protagonist.4

“Zuboskal” was Dostoevsky’s announcement and introductory manifesto for a new almanac to be published in OZ for which he, together with Nekrasov and Grigorovich, was to be one of the principal contributors and organizers. This is Dostoevsky’s first attempt at the mock-feuilleton style that he would develop and improve upon in the following year in “Peterburgskaiia letopis’.” The manifesto creates a portrait of its salacious narrator modelled, as Dostoevsky confided to his brother Mikhail Mikhailovich, on Balzac’s Lucien de Rubempré in Illusions Perdues (1837-39).5 The Zuboskalist takes his name from the Russian ‘skalit’ zuby,’ which, literally ‘to bare/to show one’s teeth,’ also carries the pejorative meaning ‘smeiat’sia’ [to laugh] or ‘khokhotat” [to guffaw].6 Colloquially, the verb ‘zuboskalit’ means ‘to scoff, to mock.’7 He assures us that he is simple and modest [prostoi, nezateilivy], and makes a point of stating that he is a person with no pretensions [chelovek bez pretenzii] save one: to give us a laugh at times [vas posmeshit’ podchas].8 The Zuboskalist goes on to reveal, however, that his satirically oriented critique aimed to cut much deeper, as Dostoevsky summarized in an earlier letter to Mikhail: “... дело в том, чтобы острить и смеяться

4 Frank, Seeds of Revolt, 222.
6 S. I. Ozhegov, Stovar’ russkogo iazyka (Moscow: Russkii iazyk, 1987), 625.
7 Ibid., 203.
8 PSS 18:6.
The ‘zuboskal-flaneur’ type—as the satirist of the piece also calls himself—is a talker, “речист, всегда с своей задушевой идеей” [garrulous, always with a heart-felt idea]—and a dilettante of many professional careers: army service, the university, the medical academy, and even some dabbling in art. After science and art couldn’t contain him, he explains, a seat in the chancellery occupied him for two months until, “При неожиданном повороте своих обстоятельств, очутился он вдруг владетелем неограниченным своей особы и своего состояния. С той поры он, заложив руки в карманы, ходит посвистывая и живет (извините господа!) для себя самого.”

[Owing to an unexpected change of circumstances, he suddenly found himself the unbounded sovereign of his own person and his fortune. Since that time, sticking his

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9 Letter of October 8th, 1845. PSS 28(i):113.
10 Ibid.
11 PSS 18:7.
hands in his pockets, he whistles while he walks, and lives, (sorry gentlemen!) for his own very self.] The Zuboskalist practises an ambiguous form of egoism: at base, it is the shallowness and emptiness that results from one’s immersion in self-serving aims, leaving the Zuboskalist with only his cynical laughter to vent—to zuboskalit’. At the same time, the Zuboskalist gives himself a vital function—to mirror the foibles of society with his merciless satire. Reiterating the intended epigraph, his truth serum is to be administered in no uncertain terms: “. . . до последней капли крови будет за правду стоять!”12 [. . . he will stand for the truth to the last drop of blood!]

In “Petersburgskaia letopis’” the voice Dostoevsky introduced in “Zuboskal” has matured, as he further develops the theme of egoism he had by that time carried through Dvoinik and other prose pieces and journalism. These critiques expand on Dostoevsky’s treatment of the manner in which ethical egoism predicates morality on self-interest, as the four feuilletons present a range of character types in a devastating expose of the egoist disposition. For one, the “gospodin dobrego serdца” [gentleman of good heart] is a man whose self-sufficient good nature is all he needs to keep him happy and content:

Этого господина вы очень хорошо знаете, господа. Имя ему левон. Это господин, имеющий доброе сердце и не имеющий чего, кроме доброго сердца. Как будто какая диковинка—иметь в наше время доброе сердце! Как будто, наконец, так нужно иметь его, это вечное доброе сердце! Этот господин, имеющий такое прекрасное качество, выступает в свет в полной уверенности, что его доброе сердце совершенно достанет ему, чтоб быть навсегда довольным и счастливым. Он так уверен в успехе, что пренебрег всяким другим средством, запасаясь в житейскую дорогу. Он, например, ни в чем не знает узды, ни удержку. У него всё нараспашку, всё откровенно.13

You know this man very well, gentlemen. His name is legion. He has a good heart but nothing else besides. Just as though it really is something extraordinary to possess a good heart in this day and age! As though one simply has to possess it, this eternal good heart! The man who possesses this excellent quality makes his appearance in the world fully

12 Ibid., 8.
convinced that his good heart will be quite sufficient to make him happy and contented for the rest of his days. He is so convinced of his success that, on entering upon the journey of life, he scorns any other means. He has no notion of any impediment or restraint. He is always frank and outspoken. He is the sort of person who wears his heart on his sleeve.

Knowing no bounds or restraints, the gentleman of good heart has no moral foundation for his thoughts and actions, save his own self-satisfaction. Having a good heart means visiting no deliberate harm on anyone else, and that, he thinks, is sufficient collateral to guarantee his integrity and moral rectitude. But this version of an egoist runs the danger of growing self-absorbed and ignorant of the needs and interests of others. The narrator of “Peterburgskaia letopis’” is unequivocal on this point:

Его доброму серцу никогда и не снится, что мало полюбить горячо, что нужно еще обладать искусством заставить себя полюбить, без чего всё пропало, без чего жизнь не в жизнь, и его любящему сердцу, и тому несчастному, которого оно наивно избрало предметом своей неудержимой привязанности.14

The good-natured fellow never imagines that it is not enough to grow very fond of people, but that one must possess the art of making people fond of you, without which nothing is of any avail, without which life is no life both for his own loving heart and for the unfortunate fellow whom his heart has chosen for the object of his uncontrollable affection.

Lacking the fundamental empathy that underlies the true art of living, the gentleman of good heart does not realize that his prized good nature, in isolation and without genuine compassion for the true interests of others, and sharing in no common goals of the community around him, is morally no better than self-serving egoism. Dostoevsky finds these gentlemen of good heart particularly among intellectual circles infected with the ‘Western disease’ and other contemporary rationalists who fail to acknowledge the humane art required for an individual’s successful integration into society.

Да! только в уединении, в углу, и более всего в кружке, производится это прекрасное произведение natury, этот образец сыро го материала, как говорят американцы, на который не пошло ни капли искусства, в котором всё натурально,
Yes, it is only in solitude, in some dark corner and most of all in a ‘circle’ that this wonderful work of nature is produced, this specimen of our ‘raw materials,’ as the Americans say, on which not a particle of art has been spent, in which everything appears in its natural colors, pure and undefiled, without restraint or hindrance. In his complete innocence such a man forgets, and indeed does not even suspect, that life is an art in itself, that to live means to make a work of art of oneself; that it is only within society’s interests, in accord with society as a whole, with its direct and spontaneous demands, and not by drowsiness and indifference, which lead to the disintegration of society, not in solitude that his hidden treasure, his capital, his good heart can be ground and polished into a precious, sparkling and genuine diamond!

The gentleman of good heart is fundamentally flawed in failing to respect the interests of others as highly as he respects his own, and in allowing self-satisfaction to persuade him that as long as he means no harm he need not promote the interests of others. In stressing the importance of equating one’s own interests with those of society, Dostoevsky reminds us that the harmonious ideal of rational community is achieved not in the splendid isolation of selfish aims but in an individual’s application of his rational will and the devotion of his energy and talents toward the betterment of a community of fellow beings.

An egoist of this seemingly benign type is sketched in the immediately proceeding portrait of Yulian Mastakovitch, “... y которого очень доброго сердце.”[. . . who has a very good heart.] Near fifty, Yulian Mastakovitch is betrothed to a seventeen-year-old girl but continues to woo a young widow he had been pursuing under the pretext of helping her with legal affairs. Seen as early as Bykov from Dostoevsky’s

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15 PSS 13-14; Magarshack, 14.
16 Ibid., 15.
first work *Bednye liudi*, this villain-egoist is a prototype for some of Dostoevsky’s later creations. Prince Valkovsky in *Unizhennye i oskorblennye* schemes to marry a general’s underage daughter for her sizeable dowry, and Luzhin and Svidrigailov from *Prestuplenie i nakazanie* are two immoralists who defend their pride and nobility while indulging their proclivities to exploit young women. The issue in Dostoevsky’s portrayal of this type of egoist is the dearth of moral ideals in contemporary society, the corrupted understanding of right and wrong, noble and ignoble—to the point that you can hardly recognize the villains anymore. The feuilletonist cries:

Господи боже мой! Куда это девались старинные злоди старинных melodram и романов, господин! Как это было приятно, когда они жили на свете! И потому приятно, что сейчас, тут же под боком, был самый добродетельный человек, который, наконец, защищал невинность и наказывал зло. Этот злодей, этот *tirano ingrato* так и рождался злодеем, совсем готовый по какому-то тайному и совершенно непонятному предопределенью судьбы. В нём всё было олицетворением злодейства. Он был ещё злодеем в чреве матери. [...] Хорошо это было! По крайней мере понятно! А теперь бог знает о чем говорят сочинители. Теперь, вдруг, как-то так выходит, что самый добродетельный человек, да еще какой, самый неспособный к злодеяству, вдруг выходит совершенным злодеем, да еще сам не замечая того.17

Good Lord, where are the old villains of the old melodramas and novels, gentlemen? How nice it was when they were about in the world! And therefore how nice it is now to find that right here next to you there lived a most virtuous man, who defended innocence and punished wickedness. This villain, this *tirano ingrato*, was born a villain, ready-made in accordance with some secret and utterly incomprehensible predestination of fate. Everything about him was the personification of evil. In his mother’s womb he was already a miscreant. [...] That was excellent; at least understandable! But today our novelists talk about goodness only knows what. Today you are somehow suddenly faced with the fact that the most virtuous man, a man, besides, who is quite incapable of committing a crime, suddenly appears to be a perfect villain without even being aware of it himself:

The most disgraceful thing, Dostoevsky continues, is that these unrecognized villains live long and respected lives, and they die so greatly honoured and exalted—mourned even by their own victims—that you cannot help but envy them. In sum, modern-day villains, as

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17 *PSS* 18:14; Magarshack, 14-15.
Dostoevsky conceived them, were not so easily recognized because contemporary moral perceptions were skewed, and the issues were not black and white. The Yulian Mastakoviches—self-satisfied egoists—are approved of and rewarded by popular values and their social structure, so much so that one is astounded to find a seemingly upright citizen implicated in some scandal.

In the final feuilleton, another type of egoist is introduced for comparison. Dostoevsky describes the 'flaneur-dreamer' [flaner-mechtatel'], the persona adopted by the feuilletonist himself, who represents yet another dangerous form of egoism. The issue here is the lack, in men of weak character, of 'necessary egoism' [neobkhodimyi egoizm]—indicating the lack of self-interest, not for serving the purposes of ambition, but to develop one's special potential [sposobnost'] and natural inclinations [naklomnosti]. The problem, as Frank summarizes Dostoevsky, is that Russian life provided no outlet through which the ego could assert itself normally, so that the Russian character as a result tended not to exhibit “a sufficient sense of its own personal dignity” [soznaniia sobstvennogo dostoinstva]. And the important conclusion is that “Dostoevsky’s genuine indignation at the crippling conditions of Russian life, in other words, did not turn him into a moral determinist willing to absolve the victims of all responsibility for their conduct.”

Dostoevsky’s elaborations on the issue work as an analysis of the very type Dvoinik’s Golyadkin represented:

Коль неудовлетворен человек, коль нет средств ему высказаться и проявить то, что получше в нем (не из самолюбия, а вследствие самой естественной необходимости человеческой сознать, осуществить и обусловить свое Я в действительной жизни), то сейчас же и впадает он в какой-нибудь самое невероятное событие; то, с позволения сказать, сопьется, то пустится в картеж и шулерство, то в братерство, то наконец, с ума сойдет от амбиции, в то же самое время вполне про себя презирая амбицию и даже страдая тем, что пришлось страдать из-за таких пустяков, как

18 Frank, Seeds of Revolt, 307.
When a man is dissatisfied, when he has not the means to show what is best in him, to express himself fully (not out of vanity, but because of the most material necessity to realize, fulfill and justify his I in real life), he at once gets involved in some quite incredible situation; he either takes to the bottle in a big way, or becomes a gambler and card-sharp, or a rabid duellist, or goes crazy from sheer arrogance while at the same time despising the arrogance in his heart and even resenting the fact that he had to get into trouble because of such a silly thing as arrogance. And before you know, you come to a conclusion, an almost unfair, offensive but seemingly very probable conclusion, that we have little sense of personal dignity; that we have little of necessary egoism, and that, finally, we are not accustomed to do a good deed without a reward.

The remedy which the feuilletonist offers for lack of necessary egoism is constructive activity [deiatel'nost']. The thirst for positive, useful, constructive activity [zhazhda deiatel'nosti], through which one may exercise all of one's faculties and abilities in direct, unmediated, purposeful action, is the fundamental component of personal and social harmony. The absence of proper outlets for this vital drive seems to be what underlies the egoistic expressions of self we have seen in Golyadkin and the foregoing types in the present chronicle:

Our passion for some sort of activity reaches a point of feverish and uncontrollable impatience; we all long for some serious occupation, many of us are full of an ardent desire to do good, to be of some use, and we gradually begin to realize that happiness is not the same thing as being able to afford to sit about twiddling one's thumbs or to do something heroic just for a change when the occasion arises, but consists of continual and tireless activity and the development of all faculties and capabilities in practice.

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19 PSS 18:31-32; Magarshack, 33-34. Dostoevsky's italics.
20 PSS 18:30-31; Magarshack, 32.
This again echoes the precept that all rational persons are obligated (albeit not unconditionally) to cultivate their abilities so as to make themselves useful to other members of the moral community. This involves as well the development of a degree of self-possession and self-respect sufficient to motivate one towards self-perfection—virtues that one such as Golyadkin, for all his pontificating, can not lay claim to. The theme of “Peterburgskaia letopis’” relating to the willful application of the energy of one’s ego toward self-cultivation offers important insight into the misconceived aims that distort the self-perception of Dvoinik’s own protagonist. Never does he recognize that increasing one’s status and realizing one’s self-ideal are one and the same process of making oneself a better member of the community, able to contribute value to the lives of others.

Finally, acknowledging talk that Russians are lazy by nature, the feuilletonist now questions the truth of that and proposes that an explanation can be found in the impulses of the dreamer type by recognizing them as common experiences in many Russians deprived of useful and meaningful activity:

And are there many Russians who possess the means of doing their work properly and with love? For all work requires a will to do it well, requires love in the man who does it, requires this man to devote himself to it entirely. And are there many Russians who have discovered what their real activity is? For some activity requires the possession of means, security, and, besides, a man may not be inclined to some kind of work: He gives it up

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21 PSS 18:32; Magarshack, 34-35. Dostoevsky’s italics.
and then the whole thing goes to rack and ruin in no time. It is then that what is known as
dreaminess arises in the characters who are eager for activity, eager for life, eager for
results but are weak, feminine, tender. And in the end the man is no longer a man but a
kind of strange being of a neutral gender—a dreamer.

At one moment an egoist and at another capable of the most honourable feelings, the
dreamer exhausts himself, churning over some abstruse problem, but in reality produces
nothing, either for himself or for others. Gloomy and taciturn, absorbed in himself, the
dreamer-egoist has acute senses, refined aesthetic tastes and an excitable imagination; he
is capable of being completely oblivious to his surroundings, but also of being affected
by the most trivial detail that will take on enormous dimensions and a fantastic colouring
in his mind. Withdrawing ever-increasingly into isolation, apathy and self-absorption, the
dreamer loses his talent for real life and, tragically, loses the capacity for moral judgment
that allows people to appraise the full beauty of the present. This is the template also for
the dreamer-narrator of Belye nochi of 1848, a story of painfully disappointed dreams of
exalted love and happiness, and Dostoevsky’s fullest treatment of the dreamer type.

In reviewing these excursions of Dostoevsky into the feuilleton genre, more or
less predating or contemporary with the composition of Dvoinik, we are able to
understand better the broader moral critique that the character of Golyadkin embodies. As
I have argued, Golyadkin’s fatal flaw is his lack of moral self-awareness. He seems to
know that there is something dishonourable about the subversive tactics he uses to
promote his ambitions, but he cannot see that it is his own egoistic self, and not someone
else, employing them. In the terms suggested in these feuilleton pieces, Golyadkin is both
the good-hearted egoist and the idealistic dreamer who lacks ‘necessary egoism.’ He
takes evident pride in self-sufficiency, insisting to Doctor Rutenspitz that he rises above
the fray of personal intrigues. He refrains, he says, from doing harm even when he sees
the opportunity to do so. But we know that he also dreams of success in work and love
even though his dreams can never be realized unless he comes to terms with his own
identity. Consequently, instead of letting his work and good will speak for themselves, he
finds himself caught in a trap of the very sorts of intrigues that he claims to eschew. He
believes, of course, that these troubles have nothing to do with him but are the result of
his double’s diabolical scheming. Undoubtedly some of Dostoevsky’s desire to rework
Dvoinik came about because of his critics’ vexation over the fantastic colouration of the
relationship between the two Golyadkins. Yet even more instrumental, as we shall
presently see in Dostoevsky’s notes for revision, was the role he would come to attribute
with increasing complexity to the volatile friction between rational egoism and personal
idealism.

**Dvoinik in the 1860s**

Dostoevsky’s thoughts on egoism and moral bearing come clearer in the light of efforts
he made to revise Dvoinik nearly twenty years after its original publication. Until his
arrest in 1849 and later in the mid-1860s, Dostoevsky turned again and again to defining
and redefining the themes, the protagonist, and the overall concept of Dvoinik. Few of
these efforts would eventually lead to any considerable rewriting of the book, but much
of the thinking that went into reconceptualising the novella led to such works as Zapiski
iz podpol’ia and Prestuplenie i nakazanie.

After reviews of Dvoinik had fluctuated widely, and even Belinsky, in the end,
expressed reservations about its author’s idiosyncratic tendencies, critical disfavour and
other motives caused Dostoevsky to wish to improve and reissue his book almost
immediately. On 1 April 1846, he wrote to Mikhail Mikhailovich, after informing him that his fame had reached its apogee:

Но вот что гадко и мучительно: свои, наши, Белинский и все мною недовольный за Голядкина. Первое впечатление было безотчетный восторг, говор, шум, толки. Второе—критика. Именно: все, все с общего говору, то есть наши и вся публика, нашли, что до того Голядкин скучен и вял, до того растянут, что читать нет возможности. Но что всего комичнее, так это то, что все сердятся на меня за растянутость и все до одного читают напропалую и перечитывают напропалую.

[...] 

But the painful and disgusting side of it is that my own group, our people, Belinsky and all the rest, are displeased with Golyadkin. Their first reaction was one of unqualified enthusiasm, a lot of talk, noise, and chatter. Then—they criticized. That is to say, everyone agreed; i.e., our people and the public at large found Golyadkin so boring and dull and drawn-out that it was quite impossible to read. But the funniest thing of all is that all those who take me to task because the novel is so long gulp it down and then reread it again and again.

[...] 

As to myself, there was a moment when I was gripped by despair. I have a terrible weakness—a boundless pride and egotism. The idea that I had betrayed the expectations placed in me and spoiled something that could have been a major achievement just about killed me. I am sick of Golyadkin now. Much of it was written in a hurry when I was tired. The first part is better than the last. Alongside of sparkling pages, there is rubbish and trash that turns the stomach and is painful to read. And this is what has made my life hellish for some time and made me sick with grief.

Dostoevsky’s own pride, along with pressing finances, tormented him enough to speak of plans, already in October 1846, of reworking and reissuing the book: "Но чтоб жить, я решаюсь издать «Бедных людей» и оделанного «Двойника» отдельными
[But to make a living, I plan to publish *Bednye liudi* and a reworked *Dvoinik* in separate books.] This plan never came to fruition. It is likely that, in addition to the part played by financial and logistical constraints, Dostoevsky’s now ambivalent estimation of his second work would have prevented him from undertaking any serious revisions at this time.

He returned to the idea of revamping *Dvoinik* after serving his sentence in Siberia, while living in Tver’ and readjusting to life in European Russia in autumn 1859. Writing to Mikhail Mikhailovich with renewed enthusiasm on 1 October, he describes a plan to reissue his Collected Works, again with the intention of featuring a redesigned *Dvoinik*, which he aimed to have ready for the censor by December:

> Believe me, brother, this new version, accompanied by an introduction, will be as good as *a new novel*. People will finally understand how good *The Double* really is! Indeed, I expect, if anything, to attract too much attention to myself—I am issuing a challenge to every one of them! (After all, if I did not revise *The Double* now, when would I do it? Why should I waste an excellent idea and a character of tremendous social significance, which I was the first to discover and proclaim?)

But by 9 October, Dostoevsky had rejected the idea of including *Dvoinik* in the projected edition of Collected Works in favour of spending more time revising it and giving it more significance by issuing it separately with a preface. He wrote to Mikhail, “Двойник исключен, я издаю его впоследствии, при успехе, отдельно, совершенно переделав и с предисловием.”

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25 *PSS* 28(i):340; MacAndrew, 146. Italics in the original.
26 *PSS* 28(i):350.
well, completely revised and with a preface.] Consequently, _Dvoinik_ does not appear in
the first two-volume Collected Works of Dostoevsky published by N. A. Osnovsky in
Moscow, 1860. Critics interpreted Dostoevsky's not putting _Dvoinik_ in his Collected
Works as an admission of its failure. But even after the Works were published, the
novella remained a priority for him, he still held its main idea in high regard, and he was
still interested in finding the right form with which to express it. Reworking it was one of
the first literary projects he undertook upon release from prison.

Later, a few sketches in extant notebooks from 1861-1864 demonstrate that the
ideas Dostoevsky initialized in _Dvoinik_ had matured, and that he had indeed begun
plotting out a new redaction. These efforts coincided with his work as a journalist for
_Vremia_ (Time, 1860-63) and _Epokha_ (Epoch, 1864-5), where he had been engaged in
testing and defending some of the ideas that would spawn the first creations of his mature
oeuvre, such as _Zapiski iz podpol'ia_ and _Prestuplenie i nakazanie_. Dostoevsky finally did
publish a revised edition of _Dvoinik_ in 1866, which is the text that most modern
replications utilize. But the revised edition offers little more than editorial corrections
and some efforts to eliminate superfluous scenes and tighten up the language in a few key
places—changes obviously made in response to criticisms of wordiness and idiosyncratic
writing in the original text. In the end, Dostoevsky never fully carried out the plans for a
major revision of his cherished second work, but it seems that the idea of the book was

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27 See the comment by A. Piatkovskii, 1861, in P. I. Avanesov, “Dostoevskii v rabote nad «Dvoinikom»,”
in _Tvorcheskaia istoriia. Issledovaniia po russkoi literature_, edited by N. K. Piksanov (Moscow:
28 Both variations are available in _PSS_ (see “Istochniki teksta” [sources of the text], _PSS_ 1:482). The main
text (_PSS_ 1:109-229) is derived from the 1866 publication in _OZ_ (vol. 3, 64-128), and the journal redaction
of 1846 is given under “Druje redaktsii” [other redactions] (_PSS_ 1:334-431). Translations into English are
usually made from the 1866 variation. Evelyn J. Harden has created a very useful tool for analysis in _The
Double: Two Versions_, (Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1985). She presents the texts in an overlapping format, allowing
one to compare the revised manuscript with the original.
never far from his mind. Clearly, he still believed in its merits when in 1859 he vowed to
“issue a challenge” to his critics. It should also be noted that much later, in November
1877, Dostoevsky wrote in Dnevnik pisatelja that he considered Dvoinik to be a failure
artistically, but that the original idea he had conceived for it was a good one. He reflects:

Повесть эта мне не удалась, но идея ее была довольно светлая, и серьезнее этой
идей я никогда ничего в литературе не проводил. Но форма этой повести мне не
удалась совершенно. Я сильно исправил ее потом, лет пятнадцать спустя, для
tогдашнего «Общего собрания» моих сочинений, но и тогда опять убедился, что
эта вещь совсем неудавалась, и если бы я теперь принялся за эту идею и изложил ее
вновь, то взял бы совсем другую форму; но в 46-м г. этой формы я не нашел и
повести не осилил.29

I failed with that tale, but the idea of it was quite a bright one, and I never adhered to
anything in literature more serious than this idea. But I failed utterly with the form of the
tale. I then revised it considerably, fifteen years later, for the ‘Complete Collection’ of
my works; but even then I again became convinced that the thing was a total failure, and
if I were to take up the idea now and work it out anew, I would choose a completely
different form; but in '46 I hadn’t found this form and couldn’t cope with the tale.

Leonid Grossman observed that it is astounding indeed for the author of Prestuplenie i
nakazanie, Idiot and Besy to say “I never adhered to anything in literature more serious than
this idea.”30 At any event, Dostoevsky’s comment draws attention to his awareness that
his zeal to express his prized idea in its appropriate form had produced peculiarities of
style that fell under attack by critics. Through many years of planning a revision,
Dostoevsky was cognizant of the pressure to reform and restate the idea he had presented
as a debut artist and social thinker, especially after returning from exile at a time when
future success depended on reaffirming his position in the light of changes and
developments in the social and political landscape of Russia.

When Dostoevsky returned from exile, the intellectual climate had changed
significantly: the ‘men of the 1840s,’ whose aesthetic and political alignments stemmed

29 PSS 26:65. Translation by Harden, xxiii.
30 Quoted in Avanesov, 161.
from French and German Romanticism, Hegelian Idealism, nationality, and Natural School realism were replaced by the ‘men of the 1860s,’ who promoted rational egoism, materialism, utilitarianism, and revolutionary socialism. A famous assessment of Dvoinik was made by Dostoevsky’s contemporary in the early 1860s, N. A. Dobroliubov, firebrand critic with the radical left-wing Sovremennik, and one of Dostoevsky’s arch ideological rivals. He expounds the spirit of Dostoevsky’s early heroes in “Zabyte liudi” (“Forgotten People”) in the vein of the downtrodden or ‘little’ hero stirred to rebellion against oppressive social forces (see Chapter Two, above). His interest was sparked by the Osnovsky Collected Works; although Dvoinik was excluded from it, Dobroliubov nevertheless paid special attention to the novella in his article. The Forgotten People are:

... люди, потеряющие широкое сознание своего человеческого права, но заменившие его како-нибудь узенькую фикцией условного права, утверждались в этой фикции и бережно ее хранящие. При всяком случае, где подобные господа воображают, что их личное достоинство в опасности, они готовы повторять, например, что я титулярный советник», «мне сам Василий Петрович руку подает», «меня штаб-офицерша Покhilстова знает», и т. п. Это тоже люди трусливые, подозрительные, щепетильные, обидчивые донельзя и сами всех более нечестные своей обидчивостью. Кто наблюдал в нашем обществе над тем, что называется «мелком людом», тот знает, что короткие и покорившиеся люди тоже иногда бывают обидчивыми и щепетильными. Это зависит от отношений: пред начальником отделения помощник столонначальника—пас, смирился совершенно; но с другими помощниками он считает себя «в своем праве» и за это право держится решиво и угрюмо. Последняя сторона развита г. Достоевским в «Двойнике»...31

... those who have lost the full awareness of their human rights but have replaced it with a narrow fiction of conventional prerogatives, who have become convinced of the truth of this fiction and treasure it. At any moment when such gentlemen imagine that their personal dignity is in danger, they are ready to repeat, for example, “I am a titular counsellor,” “Vassili Petrovich himself shakes hands with me,” “The wife of staff-officer Pokhlestov knows me,” and so on. They are also cowardly people, suspicious, stickling, unconscionably quick to take offence, and they themselves suffer most of all from their touchiness. From observation in our society of the so-called “little people,” one knows that the meek and submissive are sometimes also touchy people and sticklers. This depends on the circumstances. In the presence of the chief of the division, an assistant to the head clerk is blotted out and completely subdued, but with the other assistants he

31 A. A. Belkin, ed., F. M. Dostoevskii v russkoj kritike (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel’stvo khudozhestvennoi literature, 1956), 64.
considers himself “within his rights” and holds on to his rights jealously and sullenly. The latter aspect is developed by Mr. Dostoevsky in The Double ... Dobroliubov also concluded that a successful reworking of Golyadkin would succeed in creating not an exceptional, strange being, but a type many characteristics of whom can be found in many of us. While Dobroliubov’s assessment shows the critic’s acumen for decoding this social type and its development in Dostoevsky, the views of Dobroliubov and the critical slant of Sovremennik generally conflicted with Dostoevsky’s in their degree of political radicalism, and in their approach, predominantly positivist and utilitarian, to problems of aesthetics and political ideology. Dobroliubov and N. G. Chernyshevsky, chief among the ‘men of the 1860s’ left-wing radicals, were zealous disciples of Belinsky, noted for carrying his founding principles on the social and political utility of literature to greater extremes of radicalism. Their promotion of popular views on ethical egoism like those of Max Stirner—German philosopher, leftist Hegelian and proponent of individualist anarchy—rankled with Dostoevsky, who combated what he saw as the harmful and destructive tendencies of the kind of aesthetic and political radicalism the purveyors of Stirnerean egoism represented. One bears in mind, however, that these polemics provided the bases for the essential conflicts found in much of Dostoevsky’s work:

It is difficult to determine whether the many echoes of Stirner’s ideas in Dostoevsky’s works in fact came from the German thinker or were simply the result of Dostoevsky’s own exploration and critique of egoism, achieved by pushing it to its logical limits. Egoism, after all, has been a factor in human life since the birth of consciousness. One can say with more confidence, however, that Stirner’s striking philosophical arguments in favour of egoism challenged the young Dostoevsky, who had grown up with the idea of the inherent goodness and nobility of human beings, and so provided him with a starting point from which he went on to develop the major dramatic conflicts in his novels.33

32 PSS 1:493.
In light of the process of its revision in the context of the 1860s, it may be that *Dvoinik*, from its very inception, positioned Dostoevsky in opposition to the critical strains of the Belinskian circle and its later outcroppings. Its dominant theme is treated in a critique of ego-centred morality and its consequences for the relationship between the individual and society. Golyadkin has been called a guinea pig in the experiment of eighteenth-century rationalism and the spirit of the progressive, industrial age.\(^{34}\) The critique of materialism and rational egoism has much greater currency in the 1860s—with the advent of the radicals, utilitarians, nihilists and revolutionaries—than in 1846 when French Utopian Socialism and Hegelian Idealism were the leading social and political perspectives. When the evidence is compiled, one might venture to say that in his plans for revising *Dvoinik*, Dostoevsky endeavoured to upgrade what he had depicted in the original version of the text, building on what he had known only intuitively at the time of the novel’s writing but which he had come to understand more completely after the experiences of prison and exile, his polemics with the left wing radicals, the development of his philosophical position of *pochvenichestvo*, and the evolution of his own personal convictions and belief system. His notes refer to his intention to depict the increasing secularization of society, the explosion of egoism, and the reign of universal moral chaos resulting from a rejection of God and an ideological platform akin to that advocated by the 1860s radicals.

**Projected Revisions to Dvoinik and Correlations with Zapiski iz podpol’ia**

Two notebooks, one from 1860-62 and another from 1862-1864, contain drafts that centre around particular themes and ideas for *Dvoinik* that reflected the new cultural

\(^{34}\) Terras, 63-64 (paraphrasing Konrad Onasch).
zeitgeist. Proposals involving further adventures for Golyadkin, new episodes, and new interactions between characters are augmented by psychological observations from the author and coloured with views that reflect political, social and religious problems that had emerged since the novella’s first publication in 1846. In particular, the so-called ‘prokliatye voprosi’ [accursed questions] that were appearing in the press—on the natural sciences, atheism and nihilism—show some of Dostoevsky’s attitudes toward the progressive ideas of his day. For example, the thrice-mentioned “кислород и водород” [oxygen and hydrogen] is connected to the proposition, “нет более всевышнего существа” [there is no longer a Supreme Being] and the freedom, anarchy and irresponsibility that might result from eliminating ‘the fathers’: “Что же будет с министерством и с начальством? Сон. Всё упразднено. Люди вольные. Все бьют друг друга явно, на улице. Обеспечивают себя (откладывают копейку).” [What will happen to the ministry and to his superiors? The dream. Everything has been abolished. People are free. They all beat one another openly on the street. They provide for themselves (save their kopeks).] There are obvious reverberations here with Raskolnikov’s dreams in Chapter V of Prestuplenie i nakazanie, when Mikolka and other peasants beat a decrepit horse to death, and in the Epilogue, when Raskolnikov dreams that everyone becomes infected with madness and kills each other out of senseless spite, each thinking he alone has the truth. In sum, these notes foreshadow Raskolnikov’s, and later, Ivan Karamazov’s ominous warnings of moral degeneration and chaos when “all is permitted” [vse pozvoleno].

35 Avanesov, 161-162.
36 PSS 1:435; Harden, 292. Dostoevsky’s italics.
Another updated theme is the idea of the relationship to one’s superiors as ‘fathers.’ The theme of authority and rebellion is actually rather intensified in the notebook drafts. The idea is expressed by Golyadkin Sr. in the original redaction (see my discussion in Chapter Three, above); but in two passages marked “NB” in the first notebook, curiously, it is assigned to Golyadkin Jr.—in connection with his appeal to Senior’s Romantic sensibilities to persuade him to challenge a general to a duel:

Г-н Голядкин-младший растолковывает старшему: что так, значит, принимая благодетельное начальство за отца и что тут рыцарское. Юридическое и патриархальное отношение к начальству и что правительство само добивается за отца.

NB. Тут анатомия всех русских отношений к начальству. Взаимные мечты обоих Голядкиных под предводительством младшего, как генерал поймет рыцарственность и выйдет на дуэль, как он не будет стрелять; можно стать на барьер и только, сказать: «Я доволен, Ваше превосходительство». Как потом Голядкин женится на генеральской дочери. Манилов. Это была бы райская жизнь.37

Mr. Golyadkin Jr. explains to Senior: What I accept my beneficent superiors as a father means and what is chivalrous about this. The juridical and patriarchal relationship to authority and that the government itself seeks to be looked upon as a father.

NB. Herein is the anatomy of all Russian attitudes to authority. The mutual dreams of both Golyadkins under the command of Junior, how the general will understand chivalrousness and come forth to duel, how he will not shoot; one can stand at the barrier and do nothing further, say, “I am satisfied, Your Excellency.” How then Golyadkin marries the general’s daughter. Manilov. That would be paradise.

We saw how, in the original version of Dvoinik, Golyadkin tried to appeal to His Excellency as a father figure, to submit to a fatherly authority in effect for protection from his nemesis Golyadkin Jr. Here we have Golyadkin Jr. actually working with Senior to exploit the patriarchal nature of the relationship with superiors in the bureaucratic hierarchy.

NB. Юридически начальство только по законам поступает, это только грубая подчиненность и послушание начальству. Но если за отца, тут семейственность, тут подчинение всего себя и всех домашних своих вместо

37 PSS 1:432; Harden, 289. Dostoevsky’s italics. ‘Manilov’ refers to the character from Gogol’s Mertvye dushi. Though Manilov and his wife follow the romantic ideal of a harmonious family idyll, Gogol presents them as misguided simpletons living in a fool’s paradise.
начальства. Начало детских отношений к отцу. Детский лепет невинности, а это приятнее начальству.

Это теория младшего. Младший—олицетворение подлости.\(^{38}\)

NB. From the juridical point of view the authorities act only according to the law. This is only crude subordination and obedience to authority. But if one takes the authorities as a father, then this means familiality, this means subordination of one’s entire self and all of one’s family instead of an authoritarian relationship. The principle of the child’s relationship to the father. The childish prattle of innocence, and this is more pleasing to the authorities.

This is Junior’s theory. Junior is the personification of baseness.

Whereas in the 1846 version Golyadkin Sr.’s appeal to the chief was an act of desperation, here it would have become a cynical ploy orchestrated by Golyadkin Jr. Still, Junior’s role in these notes diverges only slightly from his original posture, which was that of pretending to be a friend and trusted confidant while ultimately betraying Golyadkin Sr. every time. Now he has the additional role of social advisor, which only serves to increase Senior’s vulnerability to Junior’s machinations. The latter begins to teach Senior how to conquer Klara, and instructs him in making *bon mots*, but when at a party Senior displays his awkwardness, the duplicitous Junior cruelly divulges their intentions. Moreover, Junior construes Senior’s invitation to Klara to dance the polka as an expression of rebellion against society which, as Harden infers, could also be interpreted as a statement about the relationship to one’s superiors as ‘fathers’.\(^{39}\)

In rewriting *Dvoinik* it appears also that Dostoevsky would have created a more discernible political dimension in the book. In the first notebook, the two Golyadkins dream together of becoming a revolutionary hero: “Вдвоем с младшим. Мечты сделатьсь Наполеоном, Периклом предводителем русского восстания. Либерализм и революция, восстанавливающая со слезами Louis XVI и слушающаяся его (от

\(^{38}\) PSS 1:432; Harden, 290. Dostoevsky’s italics.

\(^{39}\) Harden, xvii.
[Alone with Junior. Dreams of becoming Napoleon, Pericles, the leader of the Russian revolt. Liberalism and revolution restoring Louis XVI with tears and obeying him (out of goodness).] In the second notebook, contemporary political and social issues loom even larger. There is clearly evidence that Dostoevsky planned to depict Golyadkin as interested in the ideas of utilitarian materialism and social revolution that proliferated in Russia in the 1860s. Perhaps the author felt that the first edition obscured the underlying political or social theses that motivated him. Some relevant passages are:

"Проект о благодеянии России, сочиненный г-ном Голядкиным." [A project concerning the prosperity of Russia, created by Mr. Golyadkin.]

"Г-н Голядкин сближается с почвой у писарей." [Mr. Golyadkin assumes close ties with the soil at the copyists'.]

"Г-н Голядкин вступает в прогрессисты. Кислород и водород." [Mr. Golyadkin joins the progressists. Oxygen and hydrogen.]  

What is more, Golyadkin is associated with the Petrashevsky Circle—Dostoevsky’s association with which being the reason for his own arrest and exile in 1849—and the author even introduces scenes that take place at Petrashevsky’s and hark back to the forties and his own life. At a gathering at Petrashevsky’s that Senior and Junior attend, Junior makes speeches and they embrace. Golyadkin finds Petrashevsky reading his Fourier system to peasants and servants. The next day, when Senior attempts to tell Petrashevsky that Junior will inform (presumably about their illegal political conspiracy, although this detail is not given), Petrashevsky, already forewarned by Junior, answers that it is he, Senior, who is the informer.

There is also the cryptic "Обвинение Голядкина в том, что он Гарибальди" [Mr. Golyadkin is accused of being Garibaldi]—and several other references to the
Italian rebel leader who, by the 1860s, represented the epitome of mid-nineteenth-century revolutionary nationalism and liberalism. A lengthy scene regarding Garibaldi is the last in the notebooks. It begins with the naming of Garibaldi in the passage mentioned above that cites oxygen and hydrogen in connection with there being no Supreme Being: "(Головоломное известие, во-1-х), о Гарибальди, а во-2-х, о кислороде и водороде." [The stunning news, 1st) about Garibaldi, and 2nd, about oxygen and hydrogen.] Further down a section begins with the heading, "О появлении знаменитого разбойника Гарибальди." [About the appearance in the town of the famous robber Garibaldi.] Fitting the motif of Golyadkin’s other visits with figures of authority, he goes looking for Garibaldi and pays a ten-kopek piece for his address, but after finding the residence and waiting there, “Лакей выпроваживает.” [The footman shows him out.] Finally, having challenged someone—presumably Garibaldi—to a duel (the Russian is without an object: "вызван на дуэль"), he talks with his servant Petrushka about the rules of honour, but Petrushka won’t let him have his say and instructs him in the rules of honour. Dostoevsky’s “Peterburgskie snovideniia v stikhakh i v proze” (“Petersburg Visions in Verses and Prose”), published in his own journal Vremia in 1861, sheds some light on the passage. In it, a poor clerk is pushed to the edges of poverty and despair and goes crazy, calling himself Garibaldi. The parallel with Gogol’s madman is reinforced by Dostoevsky who writes, “Как Поприщин об испанских.” [Like Poprishchin about the Spanish.]

To reiterate, the planned revisions to Dvoinik outlined above show the increasing intellectual sophistication of Mr. Golyadkin as he develops an interest in modern

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42 PSS 1:436; Harden, 292.
43 PSS 1:436; Harden, 292.
44 Avanesov, 168.
materialism and the revolutionary underground. The focus of his ambition is ratcheted up a notch with the aim to become one of the ‘new men’—as unattainable, however, as his other modest ambitions in the service because, again, his own intuitive moral sense continues to be an inhibiting force. As Golyadkin’s drama is projected to unfold in the new context of the 1860s, Dostoevsky intensifies his critique of what he viewed as the false road of rational egoism, utilitarian materialism and atheism that many contemporary intellectuals were promoting as the building blocks of the civic ideal of humanitarian socialism. Dostoevsky’s notes suggest that in his own mind the critical stylistic failures that plagued *Dvoinik* in 1846 were regrettable in part because they eclipsed the social critique that the book conveys. Bearing in mind, however, that the fantastic element was neither eradicated nor significantly reduced, it seems that in the context of the political radicalism of the 1860s, it might have been employed in framing the problem, posed in *Zapiski iz podpol’ia* and later works, of the disintegration of personal and moral integrity in rationally planned society, owing to human irrationality. The Golyadkin Jr. character may have been used more effectively in a revision to show how becoming a ‘new man’ of the 1860s, or even a revolutionary hero, would be unlikely to develop the clarity of moral vision in Golyadkin to save him from his existential angst.

Harden summarizes the changes made for the 1866 redaction, bringing to light especially the ways in which the revamped *Dvoinik* makes fewer references to *Don Quixote* and to imposture. It dispenses, moreover, with some of Gogol’s mocking attitude, increasing the identification instead with *Mednyi vsadnik* and Pushkin’s compassion for his ‘little man’ hero Evgeny.45 These references are made explicit by Dostoevsky in the subtitles he chose for each of the redactions. In 1846, *Priklucheniiia*
gospodina Golyadkina (The Adventures of Mr. Golyadkin) would immediately have called to mind Gogol’s Mertvye dushi, which carried the subtitle Prikiuchenii Chichikova (The Adventures of Chichikov). As Ludmilla Turkevich shows in Cervantes in Russia, Chichikov was an easily recognized inversion of Don Quixote, an idea given to Gogol by Pushkin, following which “the noblest of heroes ... is inverted into the basest of men.” Moreover, Dostoevsky’s original work mimicked Don Quixote overtly by incorporating subheadings modelled after Cervantes’s own chapter headings to summarize the events of each separate chapter, but in a tone of mock solemnity betraying Dostoevsky’s own satiric purposes. In making these explicit parallels with Quixote and Chichikov, Dostoevsky directed the reader to two models, one of moral depravity and the other of spiritual perfection.

In 1866, Dvoinik is now subtitled Peterburgskaia poema (A Petersburg Poem), which echoes the subtitle of Pushkin’s own Mednyi vsadnik. He also removed the summarizing sentences at the beginning of each chapter, downplaying the link with Mertvye dushi and Don Quixote.

As traditionally interpreted, the poem deals with the conflict between the individual and the State, and in this sense The Double belongs to The Bronze Horseman tradition. Moreover, just as in writing Poor Folk Dostoevsky set up Pushkin’s compassionate attitude toward the clerk Samson Vyrin (“The Station Master”) as the model to be emulated in contrast to Gogol’s mocking attitude toward his clerk Akaky Akakievich (“The Overcoat”), so, in revising The Double, Dostoevsky again selected Pushkin’s compassion for Evgeny over Gogol’s satiric treatment of Chichikov, by making the links between The Double and Dead Souls and Don Quixote less obvious and establishing instead the link with The Bronze Horseman.

These changes may suggest that Dostoevsky wished to reduce the satirical force of the narrative, whose knotty innuendos were perhaps lost on contemporary audiences, in

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46 Harden, xx; Ludmilla B. Turkevich, Cervantes in Russia (New York: 1975), 44-45.
47 Harden, xx, paraphrasing Turkevich, 50.
48 Harden, xxii.
favour of a more sympathetic treatment of the protagonist. Frank posits that diminishing the stylistic relation to *Mertvye dushi* “was perhaps meant to dissociate *The Double* from the elements of radical social critique and the memories of Belinsky still connected with Gogol’s novel.”\(^{49}\) While this interpretation may be purely speculative, it is clear at least that the closer connection to *Mednyi vsadnik* emphasizes the issue of the opposition of the individual and the state, or civil society.

In the final accounting, few changes were made to the text itself. Changes to Chapters I – IX are negligible, consisting solely of the removal of repetitious words and phrases.\(^{50}\) Chapters X – XIV underwent more extensive revisions involving changes to particular incidents in the plot. Chapters X and XI (1846) are combined to form Chapter X (1866), causing the remaining chapters to number one fewer in their sequence.\(^{51}\) Harden details these changes, pointing out that they tend to deemphasize the theme of imposture and further reduce covert allusions to *Quixote*. For instance, the ‘elopement letter’ Golyadkin ostensibly receives from Klara Olsuf’evna in Chapter XII (1846), which is shortened for the new Chapter XI (1866), omits the reference to Grishka Otrepiev, one of the pretenders to the throne during the legendary Time of Troubles after Ivan the Terrible’s demise. John Jones reads more into the revision of the elopement letter: in 1846 it shows enough verbal mannerisms to indicate that it had to have been written by Golyadkin himself. With the elimination, in 1866, of some of its indeterminate language like Golyadkin’s signature phrase “дескать” [say…], Jones detects a “ruthless stripping” or “descaffolding” of the hero’s involvement in the elopement fantasy which is only

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\(^{49}\) Frank, *Seeds of Revolt*, 310.

\(^{50}\) See Harden (xxvi-xxvii) for details.

\(^{51}\) For a detailed enumeration of these changes see Harden, xxviii-xxix.
"kind of" his. According to Jones, here and in other places, Dostoevsky demonstrated the discipline and attention to detail needed to change his "Adventures of Mr. Golyadkin" (1846) into "A Petersburg Poem" (1866) by intensifying the degree of the hero’s "nobody" status that makes him impossible to pin down. The case is a difficult one to make, and Jones handles it admirably. David Gasperetti, in turn, sees the omission of the elopement letter as an example of the textual recalcitrance that characterizes the "self-effacing" text as a whole, "a text that continually reads itself and finds its constituent parts to be inappropriate." Yet if the stylistic editing achieves greater concision, the fact that none of the plans Dostoevsky had been sketching over the course of several years made the final cut leads one to believe that these revisions, in the main, seem to have been motivated chiefly by the desire to eliminate superfluous details. They were likely made in response to accusations by Dostoevsky's critics of prolixity and tedium, but it is hard to see how these minor changes could have changed the perception of anyone not favourably disposed to the baroque extravagance of the narrative. All in all, it is clear that none of the substantial revisions Dostoevsky had begun to sketch in his notebook suggesting a significant increase in Golyadkin’s political involvement came to fruition in the published redaction of 1866.

The fact that Dostoevsky worked on a second version of the novella, a retelling and elucidation of the ideological thrust of the work, tantalizes one with its possibilities—unrealized though they were by the artist. Although a significant revision of Dvoinik was never fully achieved, it may be argued that Dostoevsky’s thinking in the late 1850s and

53 Jones, 49.
54 Gasperetti, 221.
early 1860s about the issues he raised in Dvoinik led directly to his conception of other, better-developed works that shared some of the same themes and motifs. It is revealing, especially, that Dostoevsky’s work on revising Dvoinik coincided with his writing of Zapiski iz podpol’ia, and ceased shortly after the latter’s publication.\textsuperscript{55} This work would produce a far more profound effect on readers and critics and was destined to achieve much greater status in the writer’s oeuvre than the earlier piece would ever attain. If, as I have stressed, Golyadkin himself does not understand his own predicament, one might suggest that the great breakthrough in form of the 1860s for Dostoevsky may have been the creation of a character—the Underground Man—who possesses a higher degree of self-understanding and a more sophisticated argument against the hypothetical ideological opponents he addresses in his protracted monologue.

Fortunately, links can be seen between Dostoevsky’s conceptions as he worked on Dvoinik in the 1840s, and the progression of his thought as he revisited the work in the early to mid 1860s. He finally incorporates some of its key elements into Zapiski iz podpol’ia—the first work, according to Frank, in which the author “attempted to portray the consequences for the human personality of the attempt to put into practice—but with a full awareness of all their implications—the ideas of the progressive and radical ideologies of the 1840s and 1860s; and one can observe him constantly trying to define his own position in relation to such doctrines.”\textsuperscript{56} This challenge to radical ideologies, one must recognize, is only vaguely grasped by the author at the time of his writing his second novella, and comes into focus only after years of grappling with the wide spectrum of implications that stem from the principles he had begun to outline in the mid-

\textsuperscript{55} Dostoevsky later dubbed Golyadkin his first and most important “underground type.” PSS 1:489.

1840s. Nevertheless, it is hard to underestimate the vital importance of Golyadkin as a prototype for some of Dostoevsky’s more sophisticated character creations, from the Underground Man to Raskolnikov, Nikolai Stavrogin and Ivan Karamazov. In Frank’s summation, “The character-type discovered in the 1840s, and used to further the progressive social ideals of the Natural School, becomes in the later Dostoevsky a weapon against radical ideology.”\textsuperscript{57}

Notebooks from 1860-62 show that Dostoevsky was especially suspicious of totalizing philosophical systems with their dangerous theoretical reductionism and doctrinaire flavour. Take these critiques of Chernyshevsky, for example, whom Dostoevsky indicts for those reasons:

Чернышевскому: [. . . ] Весь комизм заключается в том, что ведь этого никак не может быть на деле, даже вообразить этого нельзя, а так только на бумаге у себя в кабинете. Г-н Чернышевский тешится тем, что подыгрывает к себе пальцем всех великих мира сего: Канта, Гегеля, Альбертины, Дудышкина и начинает их учить по складам. Это потеха очень невинная и, конечно, очень смешная, она напоминает Поприщину, вообразившего, что он испанский король.

To Chernyshevsky: [. . . ] The whole comedy is that it all has nothing to do with anything, you cannot even imagine it, except on paper at your desk. Mr. Chernyshevsky amuses himself with beckoning to all the greats of the world: Kant, Hegel, Albertin, Dudyshkin, and begins to teach them by rote. This is all innocent fun, of course, even very funny. It reminds one of Poprishchin imagining himself as the King of Spain.\textsuperscript{58}

The reference to Poprishchin from Gogol’s “Записки сумасшедшего” is a curious connection to the imposture theme, outlined in Chapter Two above, that reveals just how much this kind of theoretical philosophical posturing rang false to Dostoevsky. Among further apostrophic mentions of Chernyshevsky in these notes is the following: “К чему это слишком выделанное высокомерие и назойливость в ваших статьях, чтоб

\textsuperscript{57} Frank, \textit{Seeds of Revolt}, 311-312.
\textsuperscript{58} \textit{PSS} 20:154.
прельщать ... и с мало-совестною скоростью разрешать вопросы." [What is all this manufactured arrogance and importunity in your articles to try to entice ... and to give hasty solutions for every question with little conscience?] The same exasperated sentiment is expressed by the Underground Man who admonishes his imagined interlocutors for their naive proselytizing on the virtues of rational self-interest (which has come to be known as ‘Rational Egoism’) as the basis of a harmonious social order. Those interlocutors are generally believed to represent Chernyshevsky, Pisarev, and other proponents of Stirnerean egoism alluded to above. Chernyshevsky’s own 1863 novel Chto delat’? (What Is to Be Done?), which promoted egoism as a model system of interpersonal and communal relations, is an obvious source for Dostoevsky’s attack on the Rational Egoists that has been given due attention in the scholarship on Zapiski iz podpol’ia. The Underground Man’s critique itself is a complex argument that has been treated in several excellent studies. I will not attempt to duplicate it here, except to summarize his position, in part, that the freedom innate to a conscious being cannot be determined by physical laws, and therefore self-interest cannot be calculated by the rational mind to predict the wisest course of action under every given circumstance. The irrational force of the human drive for unbounded wilfulness—even if it means thwarting one’s own ‘best interests’—is just as strong, if not a stronger motivation. A caveat must be added to this overview to caution that the Underground Man cannot be looked upon as a mouthpiece for Dostoevsky’s own convictions in all respects; neither is the Underground Man an example of a free, autonomous being, but one trapped by his own

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59 Ibid., 155.
60 See, for example, James Scanlan, Dostoevsky the Thinker, 57-80, from which my summary of the Underground Man’s position is adapted. See also Joseph Frank, The Stir of Liberation, pp. 310-347, Robert L. Jackson, Dostoevsky’s Underground Man in Russian Literature (The Hague: Mouton, 1958) and René Girard, Resurrection from the Underground.
form of logic. As Scanlan determines, for Dostoevsky, human will transcends natural law but not moral law:

Where Dostoevsky parts company with the Underground Man, of course, is in the appraisal of this egoistic insistence on boundless freedom. For all the importance of free choice in Dostoevsky's worldview, when the Underground Man proceeds to the normative dimension of Rational Egoism and characterizes freedom itself as man's "most advantageous advantage," we cannot assume that he is still echoing Dostoevsky's own convictions. From our knowledge of Dostoevsky's Christian value system [. . .] we can be sure that for him man's "most advantageous advantage" lies not in free choice as such but in the free acceptance of Christ and His moral message. The normative stance of the Underground Man, far from coinciding with Dostoevsky's, illustrates the evils of a freedom unstructured by higher values; the Underground Man's egoism is the perversion of a distinctive and precious human capacity by exempting it from all spiritual authority.\textsuperscript{61}

Ultimately, the position represented here, if one may encapsulate it in a few words, is that the cultivation of egoism is more likely to foster destructive rebellious wilfulness than measured rational progress and social harmony.

Another valuable source for gauging the crystallization of Dostoevsky's ideas in the 1860s roughly concurrent with both his notes for \textit{Dvoinik} and his writing of \textit{Zapiski iz podpol'ia} is the projected article "Sotsializm i khristianstvo" ("Socialism and Christianity"), never completed but outlined in some detail in his notebooks of 1864-1865.\textsuperscript{62} Dostoevsky traces three stages in the evolution of human society, from primitive patriarchal tribal communities, to civilization (which he distinctly labels a \textit{transitional phase}), to consciousness of the individual self through a progressive realization of the Christ ideal, fully attainable, however, only in the afterlife. This range of concerns—problems inherent in the structural organization of modern society, their basis in the legacy of patriarchal tradition and, at the same time, their part in the teleological process of evolving self-knowledge and moral self-awareness implied in the Christ

\textsuperscript{61} Scanlan, 75.
\textsuperscript{62} PSS 20:191-203. See Frank's discussion of the projected article in \textit{The Stir of Liberation}, 371-374.
ideal—shows continuity between Dvoinik and Zapiski iz podpol’ia, which calls for closer inspection in the broader field of Dostoevsky studies. Recalling, especially, that the deduction of the necessity of faith in Zapiski iz podpol’ia was cut out by censors, it is evident that Dostoevsky had intended to make the spiritual ideal a more central aspect of his ideological stance of that work. An approximation of the case against atheistic socialism in “Sotsializm i khristianstvo” provides some clues as to how that might have sounded:

Социалисты хотят переродить человека, освободить его, представить его без бога и без семейства. Они заключают, что, изменяв насильно экономический быт его, люди достигнут его. Но человек изменится не от внешних причин, а не иначе как от перемены правственной. Раньше не оставят бога, как уверившись математически, а семейства прежде, чем мать не захочет быть матерью, а человек не захочет обратить любовь в клубничку. Можно ли достигнуть этого оружием? И как сметь сказать заранее, прежде опыта, что в этом спасение? И это рискуя всем человечеством. Западная дребедень.

The Socialists want to have man reborn, to free him, to imagine him without God and family. They conclude that, having forcibly changed his daily economic life, they will attain their goal. But if man is to be changed, it will not be for external reasons and not otherwise than by a moral transformation. You will not abandon God until you are convinced by mathematics, and the family until mothers do not wish to be mothers and man wishes to turn love into raw sex. Can you achieve this with weapons? And can one dare to say beforehand, before the experience, that here lies salvation? And with this, risk all of humanity? Western rubbish.

In her excellent study of the problem, Liza Knapp explains that the Underground Man’s position, much like Dostoevsky’s own words above, is an objection to the view that all man has to do to thrive is discover the laws of nature—because inertia is one of the most commanding among them, and it leads only to death. In other words, the laws governing matter are tyrannical and exacting so that when, through sinning, man loses his divine attributes and becomes earth-bound, subject to his own impulses and desires, he

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63 This fact is reported by Dostoevsky in his letter of 26 March, 1864; see Liza Knapp, The Annihilation of Inertia: Dostoevsky and Metaphysics (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1996), 29.
64 PSS 20:171-172. Translation by Frank in The Stir of Liberation, 374-375. Italics are in the original.
65 Knapp, 22-23.
forsakes his divine heritage and becomes nothing more than matter. This is a philosophy developed in greater depth in Dostoevsky’s later books, but already in Zapiski iz podpol’ia, the first elements of the equation are present. Both the Underground Man and the ‘man of action’ he criticizes submit to paralyzing mechanistic determinism. Both are materialists who bow to scientific law, ruled by inertia, which sooner or later depletes the vital force. Both have lost the capacity for free-willed, self-generated and self-directed action since, if human nature is determined by physical laws, then free will is superfluous. The problem comes down to a question of inner freedom vs. external necessity. Man’s divine origins guarantee him freedom of will, but he must participate in his own salvation by struggling against natural law. That is, the law of spirit delivers man from material necessity, and faith in the resurrected Christ liberates man from his subjugation to nature (as decreed by Paul in Romans). Man’s task, in short, purged from Zapiski but implied by negative example, is transcendence over the ‘laws of nature’ (i.e. Newtonian physics) and the exercise of free will to strive for an ideal predicated on love and compassion rather than material necessity. In the final analysis, Dostoevsky stresses the responsibility of the individual for the moral direction of his will. He advocates not unbridled individualism but the requirements of ‘conscious’ man to develop awareness of moral conscience and to learn its function in the liberation of spirit.

The Underground Man shares with Golyadkin a fundamental ontological disease that stems from the same feverish longing for spontaneous, direct and purposeful action defined by Dostoevsky’s feuilletonist of “Peterburgskaia letopis’.” Their inability to do ‘good’ and satisfy their inner longing is the result of inertia that keeps them bound to the materialist philosophy and ignorant of their divine heritage. In Golyadkin’s case, he tries

66 Ibid., 14-16.
to conform to the system but cannot accept it in his moral conscience, and the effect of his inability to reconcile his social aspirations with his moral conscience is so severe as to cause a rupture of consciousness. Trying to assert his free will and independence, he submits to determinism and inertia by misunderstanding his vital force and directing it toward selfish aims. This is the root cause of his confusion and suffering, as well as his penchant for fantasy and escape. With the ‘gentleman of good heart,’ Yulian Mastakovich and villains of later vintage, Dostoevsky creates a more dire picture, in one-dimensional portraits of quintessential egoists, of the consequences of self-serving moral principles disguised as exemplary social altruism. The Underground Man, finally, has a keener sense of both political consciousness and self-awareness—an over-developed sense, which he terms *usilennoe soznanie*—yet his self-consciousness is less moral self-awareness than the cyclical ruminations of a hyper-rational mind that give way to paralysis, ennui and spleen. In Part I, Chapter 5, he queries, ‘Где у меня первоначальные причины, на которые я упрюсь, где основания? Откуда я их возьму? Я упражняюсь в мышлении, а следственно, у меня всякая первоначальная причина тотчас же тащит за собою другую, еще первоначальнее, и так далее в бесконечность. Такова именно сущность всякого сознания и мышления.’ [Where are my primary causes on which I can rest, where are the foundations? Where can I find them? I exercise myself in thought and, consequently, with me every primary cause immediately drags after it another still more primary one, and so on into infinity. Such precisely is the essence of all consciousness and thought.] The infirmity of finding no primary causes on which to rely leads him to the startling conclusion that consciousness is a disease. Like Golyadkin, he is plagued by inertia that allows him only to express core

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67 *PSS* 5:108.
oppositions to the norms and values of his contemporary society while despairing that innate yearnings for higher purpose cannot be alleviated by musings of the rational mind.
In an age that witnessed escalating tensions between reason and the irrational depths of the human psyche (or heart and mind), *Dvoïnik* is the most consequential among Dostoevsky's early works to contribute to the nineteenth-century inquiry into the nature of self-reflexive consciousness. Dostoevsky structured his narrative around the knotty problem of duality, which has roots in Western philosophical and religious traditions. Through the conduit of such Western philosophers as Kant and Hegel, the problem of duality preoccupied Russian intellectuals in the early half of the nineteenth century. They questioned the relation of 'mind' to 'nature,' or of individual subjective consciousness to perceived external reality and the social environment. 'Doubling' as a literary trope is related to the Romantic outlook, which Dostoevsky adapted and parodied in much of his early work and continued to exploit in his mature fiction. The new individualism of Romanticism had given rise to cultural disenchantment and malaise at the same time as it gave expression to transcendent strivings for knowledge of the higher Self and merger with the Absolute. This duality between egoism and 'idealism' is expressed in many of Dostoevsky's works, whose characters sense their deeply ingrained duality as a critical paradox which they must confront and resolve. *Dvoïnik* explores the paradox in a dualistic mock-heroic myth, in which values exist in inseparable oppositions, both sides of which compel the protagonist to action. In the first place, the hero's drive for success and personal attainment, which is egocentrically motivated, leads him to uphold and exploit the cultural values of civil bureaucratic society. Unsuccessful in these attempts, he
alludes to intrinsic virtues and the code of chivalry, which function as means of
canonizing a value system that includes him personally and opens onto a unitary whole.

I have reviewed some of the literary antecedents that helped to shape
Dostoevsky’s Romantic sensibilities and inspired these themes as they are presented in
Dvoinik. Attempts to dramatize the duality of conscious life in narrative form were made
in Russia by writers like Pogorelsky, Veltman, V. F. Odoevsky and Gogol. But the
advent of the Natural School and its struggle for a consolidation of Russian realism in the
early 1840s created a context in which Dostoevsky would be forced to defend his
idiosyncratic narrative style against shifting critical alliances. The ambiguous success of
Odoevsky’s fantastic tales is one example I have used to show that the critical readership
had come to reject abstract idealism in favour of naturalistic depiction. Objective reality
of the physiological sketch was favoured over the depiction of extraordinary states of
mind, the inner world of consciousness, the supernatural or transcendent. As a result,
Dvoinik’s first readers saw it as a cryptic aberration from conventions of the Natural
School owing to its reliance on the fantastic and other idiosyncrasies of language and
style. I have argued, on the other hand, that the author’s contemporaries may have
overlooked the literary value of his innovative technique. Dostoevsky bared the chinovnik
protagonist’s inner world by exploiting the duality trope in a psychological melodrama
that defies Natural School realism in order to supersede its limitations.

One of my primary aims has been to analyse the workings of subjective duality as
a literary mode that treats the hero’s awareness of himself as a moral being. I have
focussed on the way Golyadkin’s complicity in the social behaviours he reviles illumines
the wayward course of his subjective moral reasoning. The dramatic potential of this
conflict arises from its impact on the hero’s self-perception(s) and self-definition(s): the moral-psychological conflict that afflicts him is one that challenges his self-perception to the point that it cleaves his consciousness in two. The contradictions that occasion his psychic division stem from conflicting self-images arising from attempts to embrace at once worldly success and moral idealism. On one hand, the promise of material success and ego gratification fuels his efforts to mimic the symbolic social behaviours and fashion accoutrements of the cultural elite. However, they also commit him to wearing ‘masks’ and resorting to unscrupulous means for the sake of professional and social advancement. On the other hand, his yearning for a moral order in which every citizen knows his or her rightful place yields an idealist vision of social harmony based on traditional paternalistic patronage. But rather than providing ego fulfillment, moral truths or social harmony, both courses, as they spur him on to grasp for unattainable ideals, only continue to misshape his self-definitions. As a result, his conflicting value systems obscure Golyadkin’s concept of self and interfere with his moral footing in society. The debilitating uncertainty generated by the conflict feeds his penchant for externalizing moral contradictions and rationalizing his moral decisions along contradictory lines. Ultimately, the perceived division into ‘authentic self’ and ‘double’ perpetuates the traumas of Golyadkin’s daily existence, as it prevents him from recognizing himself as a unified being with innate social value and moral worth.

In the outcome, *Dvoinik* achieves more than the analysis of a single character type. It ventures beyond the genre restrictions of naturalistic realism, which Dostoevsky’s critics and even some supporters had expected him to uphold. *Dvoinik* portrays its protagonist’s self-perceptions through his rhetorically-strained discourse, erratic
behaviour, and paranoid delusions, which, taken together, demonstrate a subjective outlook polarized by competing value systems. The expression of values is, for Golyadkin, a way of arbitrating between contradictory self-perceptions and attempting to reconcile the relation of mind to external reality. In *Dvoinik*, where this relation is out of balance, conflict occurs as a result of the dualistic separation of subject (Golyadkin, the self) from object (the Other, society and the double, or the alienated self).

Golyadkin’s mystified understandings of moral responsibility, dignity, nobility and honour prevent him from reaching a higher synthesis of personal integrity to overcome his subject-object fixation. Yet to expect that kind of synthesis would miss the point of Dostoevsky’s novel. As Bakhtin and others have observed, instances of harmonious synthesis are atypical of Dostoevsky’s use of ‘doubling.’ Instead, the simultaneous coexistence of discordant elements is a universally recognized touchstone of Dostoevsky’s poetics. He continued, throughout works of his later oeuvre, to foreground duality as a feature of the reasoning conscious mind engaged in the moral problems of self-knowledge, interpersonal relationships and the structure of society. If, in Bakhtinian terms, self-consciousness is the dominant principle of Dostoevsky’s characterizations, it is fertile ground for the contemplation of the inherent dualities of subjective experience in both personal and world-embracing terms.

When Dostoevsky referred to the protagonist of his second novella as “my most important underground type” many years after its creation,¹ he neglected to describe exactly what parallels he drew between Golyadkin and the Underground Man, his ‘anti-hero’ of the confessional monologue *Zapiski iz podpol’ia*. The oblique reference is all the more intriguing in light of the fact that Dostoevsky’s notes for a planned revision of

¹ *PSS* 1:489
Dvoinik between 1860 and 1864 coincided with his work on Zapiski and show evidence of having contributed to the latter work’s conception. Dostoevsky’s notes for revision of Dvoinik indicate that the author had thought of stressing the protagonist’s ambivalent inclinations to join the materialist and atheistic progressive left that had gained tremendous momentum through the 1850s and early 1860s. Advocates of this progressive camp are the main target of the Underground Man’s vitriolic sallies against rational, utilitarian social humanism.

In the Underground Man, we have an indication of who Golyadkin becomes. The difference between the two heroes is that the Underground Man seeks self-knowledge while Golyadkin is not conscious of doing so. In dualistic terms, the ‘underground’ is the counter-ideal, the negation of idealism itself. It is the rational, material reality that undermines the subjective compulsion to strive for the unattainable. Thus, the divide between egoism and idealism is most acutely felt in the underground—the Underground Man knows the ‘good’ but does not believe in the possibility of achieving it.² He rejects idealism outright, embracing egoism as the only viable frame of self-definition. Yet his underground cynicism still carries the potential, by negative example, to call out for the transcendent ideal for which the higher self strives. We know that a passage was cut from Zapiski in which a religious solution of the Christ ideal was presented.³ The Christ ideal itself is a duality, which Dostoevsky defined explicitly in his notebooks of 1863-64 when he wrote, “человек стремится к идеалу противоположному его натуры."⁴ [a person strives for an ideal counter to his nature.] Awareness of this duality is the way to wholeness, for duality brings knowledge of the ‘idea,’ which creates from itself the ideal.

² PSS 16:329.
³ See Chapter 4, p. 209, above.
⁴ PSS 20:175.
In the end, it is the knowing and striving for the ideal that matters. Dostoevsky goes on in the notebooks to describe this as "Закон развития личности и достижения окончательной цели, которым связан человек." [The law of the development of the personality and the achievement of the ultimate goal, to which a person is bound.] Rebellious willfulness complicates the effort, but "равновесие земное" [terrestrial equilibrium] intervenes to strike a balance: "Когда человек не исполнил закона стремления к идеалу, то есть не приносил любовью [. . .], он чувствует страдание и назвал это состояние грехом." [When a person has not carried out the law of striving for the ideal, i.e., has not brought it about through love [. . .], he feels suffering and has named that state sin.] This is an example of the reconciliation of opposites that seems, for a moment, to satisfy the writer’s lifelong quest to deconstruct idealism. Dualities can find balance and reconciliation in the reasoning mind; yet, as Dostoevsky’s novels attest, the idealism that stabilizes them is no panacea for personal, religious or social harmony. For instance, Golyadkin sometimes allows himself to wish for reconciliation with his antagonist, whereby a ‘friendship’ might be born. But this tack is always undermined by the irrational shadow self, in Golyadkin’s case his double, who, as the Underground Man attests, acts out of the wilful impulse to freedom and self-assertion, which does not always accord with one’s ‘best interest.’

Dostoevsky’s first specimen of the ‘underground type’ lacks the mental sophistication to ruminate over the contradiction between the ideal and the actual, but instead experiences it as a cognitive-emotional rupture. While the redaction published in 1866 differed little from the original publication, Dostoevsky’s extant notes for revision

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5 \textit{PSS} 20:174.
6 Ibid., 175.
7 See Chapter 2, pp. 38-40, above.
show plans for a considerable reworking of the text that brings key issues and themes to light. The updated hero from Underground displays a greater conscious understanding of his ethical dilemmas. At the same time, his awareness of their agonizing complexity emphasizes the still impassable divide between the rational reasoning mind and the passionate force of the ego.

Modern thinkers after Dostoevsky grappled with similar problems. Friedrich Nietzsche's 'psychological' approach has often been compared to Dostoevsky, the philosopher's acknowledged precursor. Nietzsche discredits Christian myth and idealist thinking by denying the transcendence of earthly existence. Rather than contact with the otherworldly, Nietzsche places all values within the inner world of the human psyche. The transfiguration of self can occur, and new consciousness can be reached only through contact with the life force within. Principally, as Edith Clowes articulates, Nietzsche saw the vital transformation as an overcoming of dualities:

If for idealists and romantics the image correlates with an 'other' reality, now it points to a this-worldly if subliminal level of being. Through this imagery he implies the connectedness of opposites: past with present, high with low, inner with outer, bad with good. In this idea of being as a continuum will be found the greatest difference between Nietzsche and his Idealist forebears, particularly Plato, Kant, and Schopenhauer. Idealists, in his view, insist on the isolation of opposites into separate spheres: heaven and earth, reason and instinct, being and seeming. Belief in one necessitates the discrediting of the other, and ultimately the collapse of the whole fabrication. Nietzsche will propose a different ordering process: instead of discrediting and denial the subordination and sublimation of one in the other.

Idealism, for Nietzsche, was a major culprit in the problem of duality. Did Dostoevsky see the same? We recall that as a young writer, Dostoevsky learned the 'metaphysical mission of art' from German Idealism, or art as a vehicle for the expression of

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8 Clowes, 17-18.
9 Ibid., 20.
transcendental truth. In Schelling, for example, nature's inherent spiritual meaning eluded discursive reason but revealed itself through superior intellectual intuition and the creative arts. Yet in Dostoevsky's art, idealism as a personal or social philosophy, or as a road to salvation, is almost always tarnished. Humanism and individualism, which were associated in the 1840s with rational egoism, utilitarianism, and other secular ideals, are refuted in the fantasies of the mechtatel' type, in the portraits of egoism in Peterburgskaia letopis', and in the Underground Man's 'heightened awareness' and his rejection of the 'exalted and beautiful.' The inherent idealism of social utopianism was particularly targeted by Dostoevsky. An example is the polemical relationship of Zapiski iz podpol'ia to Chernyshevsky and other proponents of a social utopia, wherein the rational egoism of its citizens would naturally serve the utilitarian interests of society. With his metaphors of the Crystal Palace and the Anthill, the Underground Man scoffs at the oversimplification of man that rational egoism implies. As Donald Fanger puts it, "While others were seeking to adapt the political utopianism of the forties and make it more practical, the former utopian socialist Dostoevsky was trying to show the impossibility of any such adaptation." The Underground Man's own complex interior contradictions are evidence alone that humans cannot be reduced to rational formulae. The dual nature of humankind in its present state ensures that political and social change are useless without the regeneration of the individual.

As in Nietzsche, idealism remains a problem rather than a solution in Dostoevsky, a coefficient of duality rather transcendence over it. If secular idealism is condemned, the

10 Frank, Seeds of Revolt, 63-64.
11 See Chapter 1, p. 2, above.
12 Fanger, Dostoevsky and Romantic Realism, 181.
13 Ibid.
Christ ideal, too, is almost always treated with ambiguity. Examples of the latter are seen in Prince Myshkin and Alyosha Karamazov—their saintliness is tainted with tragic dualistic paradoxes, such as Myshkin’s complex love for Nastasya Filippovna and Alyosha’s indomitable Karamazov blood. Dmitry Karamazov’s ‘two abysses’ of Sodom and the Madonna, in the author’s last novel, are a final testament of the unassailable breach between the impassioned self of ego and the exalted self of the spirit.

Oppositions and dualities continued to serve Dostoevsky in later works as means of working out ideals, and especially moral questions, in terms of their relationships with converse meanings. Moreover, just as duality in Dvoinik relates to the problem of self-knowing and the practice of self-defining, later works also develop the narrative game of self-imaging and self-scripting. That is, the problem of moral self-awareness is configured in a narrative game that relies on creation and re-creation. The later Dostoevsky depicts characters who build a self-image based, not on external ideas, but on what Sarah Young calls “scripting.” This is a development of Bakhtin’s idea that people achieve self-understanding through mirroring themselves in others. In the subject-object dichotomy, we are a composite of our self-definitions paired with the images conjured and imposed upon us by others.

Sarah Young has shown that self-definition in Dostoevsky’s novels depends on one character’s attempt to claim meaning from others and pattern it according to his or her own perceptions. Each character imposes on another to subsume the point of view: “. . . the success of a particular script depends on the characters’ ability to persuade another

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to give it a concrete reality through participating in its realization." For example, in "Son smeshnogo cheloveka" ("The Dream of a Ridiculous Man," 1877), the Ridiculous Man’s vision inspires his zeal to ‘tell the story,’ through which he creates meaning and tries to make others accept his vision of truth. Similarly, the characters in Idiot “define the ‘story’ of their world and their position in it [. . .] in terms of religious faith.” Language itself serves as the code and the means for creation, which is analogous to the re-creation of reality through the restoration of words and meaning after the dispersion of languages in the biblical myth of the Tower of Babel. This is an example of how subject-object duality contributes to, or rather creates self-knowledge and moral perception.

On the other hand, an experience of non-dual synthesis is increasingly portrayed in Dostoevsky’s later novels as the conscious attainment—almost within reach—of universal Truth. The dissolution of the ego, coupled with visionary experience, is the state in which Truth, eternity, or the Absolute can be glimpsed, if not forever attained. As in the otherworldly visions of Odoevsky’s “Sil’fida” and other examples of Romantic transcendentalism, Dostoevsky’s later depictions of visionary experience suggest the possibility of venturing beyond duality to witness, if only fleetingly, the unity of all things. Some examples of this are the dream of the Ridiculous Man, or the epileptic Prince Myshkin’s pre-attack revelations.

Recent Dostoevsky scholarship suggests the possibility of reading Dostoevsky with a mind to attributes his works share with non-dual thought, such as those characteristic of Eastern spiritual traditions. Sarah Young relates the dissolution of the

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15 Young, Dostoevsky's The Idiot and the Ethical Foundations of Narrative, 18.
16 Ibid., 23.
Ego in Buddhist teaching to Myshkin’s description of his epileptic fits and his story of
the condemned man. Features of his discourse resemble the concepts of ‘presentness,’
‘impermanence,’ and ‘timelessness,’ the understanding of which, according to Buddhist
tradition, is a necessary stage in the progress of enlightenment. In Buddhist teaching, full
conscious awareness of the present moment and the reality of one’s existence is liberation
from the illusory duality which separates the ‘self’ from the ‘other’ and creates the Ego.
“In this state, the notion of the Ego is understood to be illusory, and as one discovers that
there is no absolute self, one also rejects the concept of dualism which separates us from
the other.” However, a dualistic separation of self and other, along with growing fears
of the other and irrational paranoia, eventually comes about as a consequence of the
prince’s increasing tendency to judge others, as compared to his former unwillingness to
do so. As Myshkin loses his detachment from people and the material world and his
sense of the importance of the present moment, his ego begins to re-assert itself. “This in
turn leads to a shift from the self-less compassion he exhibited at the beginning of the
novel to a dualistic pity [in his relationships with Aglaya and Nastasya Filippovna and
others] which leaves him incapable of a fully compassionate response. . .” Myshkin’s
fleeting experiences of nonduality, which ostensibly underlie his moral perfections, are
themselves impermanent, and cannot be separated from the moral decline that results
from his ‘relapse,’ as it were, into duality. The counterpoint provided by other characters
and their relationships to him reinforce and illumine Myshkin’s own inherent duality.

17 Sarah J. Young, “Buddhism in Dostoevsky: Prince Myshkin and the True Light of Being,” in Dostoevsky
on the Threshold of Other Worlds: Essays in Honour of Malcolm V Jones, edited by Sarah Young and
Lesley Milne (Ilkeston, Derbyshire: Bramcote Press, 2006).
18 Ibid., 227.
19 Ibid., 228.
20 Ibid.
Paradoxically, duality creates the possibility of seeing both the ideal and its negation, thus creating a whole that is neither one nor the other.

Young concludes, in sum, that *Idiot* depicts "...the mind and mental processes as the ultimate (spiritual) basis of existence" and the positive potential of the creative formula that led to so many doubles and underground personalities in Dostoevsky. Nevertheless, the plane of analysis which proved to be the most productive for the author was the exploration of those things which separate us from oneness with the Absolute. Dualistic thinking and behaviour is the foremost trait of Golyadkin, the Underground Man, Raskolnikov, Stavrogin, Ivan and Dmitry Karamazov, and others, whose complex inner divisions have been the topic of thoroughgoing examinations and research. Even Dostoevsky's most 'perfectly beautiful human beings' like Myshkin, Alyosha Karamazov or the Elder Zosima are flawed individuals who lose their moral equanimity when entangled in relationships and the affairs of life with other people. The potential to move beyond duality is suggested but never fully realized in Dostoevsky. Nonduality is the mystical union of self and other that eludes all his characters in the end.

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21 Ibid., 229.
Listed are the Russian titles mentioned more than once in this dissertation. The transliteration and English title are both given on first use only. Afterward only the transliteration or abbreviation is used.

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