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THE CONFLICTING PERCEPTIONS OF DOSTOYEVSKY IN THE NOVEL "THE IDIOT"

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ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND

The objective of my article is to analyze the psychoanalytic perspective intuitive perceptions of Dostoyevsky on the conflict between good and evil. According to my hypothesis in search of these psychic perceptions, aggravated by epileptic seizures, Dostoyevsky has created the double characters in the novel 'The Idiot' (beneficent - the incarnation of love; demonic - the incarnation of death), to starting from the single entity. Dostoyevsky here denouncing the perversion of philosophical ideas and criminal acts which cause the discomfort of the Russian society of the time and defends the human moral values.

Keywords: conflicts, splitting of the personality, doubles, epilepsy, masochism, perversion, femininity.

METHODS

This article develops the idea that the introduction of the double characters in a regressive transitional moment of the writer is a factor of an uncanny, disrupting its feelings, its personal, social and national identifications in the pursuit of protection of God. Femininity as passivity and women who initiate the doubling of the masculine personality in this novel completes my analysis. The article examines the conflictual perceptions of the writer and these convictions in which suffering and masochism are needed to repent and defend the moral values of society in political and social crisis.

RESULTS

Taking into account the analysis of the splitting of the personality and the double characters in the novel and the state of health of the writer made worse by epileptic seizures, it is possible to restore a sense both metapsychological and clinical of the Freudian theory of drives.

INTRODUCTION

In the novel "The Idiot" (1868) Dostoyevsky was inspired by the question of the origin of good and evil, and he invented his version of dualism, whereby the perfect spirit created in the image of God is driven in the conflicting sensations by the body. To be saved from his torments, he needs God's forgiveness. The author believes that a scandal of evil is in the fusion of innocence and Sin, of pleasure and displeasure in the same personality. That's how intuitively he plans her split in two 'me': the outer self-forming in psychic life under the influence of the reality, and the inner self, source of all the sensations and backflow into the unconscious, which my experiences outside of the consequences. In addition to Dostoyevsky women initiating, duplication of the male personality. Through the novel "The Idiot", he extracted a rich material for tragedies where metaphysical revolt manifested in the dualism of the conflict. This would explain the depth of the psyche according to Dostoyevsky is a sort of expectation of the blessed death followed of the grace of life given to his body.

Remember this biographical element of 1849 where Dostoyevsky was sentenced as a member of the Petrashevsky Circle to the capital and pardoned just before his execution after twenty minutes of waiting to die on the scaffold. Dostoyevsky writes in this novel *"during this travesty of hanging, my me beat back death, and through his door, I felt alive, perhaps more alive than ever"*. After this event, seizures appear and occur repeatedly throughout the life of the writer. There would probably come the idea of bringing him inner and outer man. Through his characters, Dostoyevsky also denounces disastrous consequences of the vision of the world of the Russian society who ravage the country. He says that the high value that exists in this world is the beauty of the moral conscience. Before you begin the novel *the idiot*, dissatisfied with himself, Dostoyevsky (1873, p.277) exposes his feelings to his friend and critical Maikov in a letter "For a long time, I was tormented by an idea but I was afraid to make a novel (...)." It is of *represent an absolutely beautiful*. (...). I risked, as in roulette. Maybe it will take place under the pen? ». [1]

THE QUESTION OF DOUBLES IN THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE CHARACTERS OF THE NOVEL "THE IDIOT"

In Freudian theory, the splitting of the personality is a second state, of hysterical origin, characterized by the alternative appearance of distinct personalities in the same person. Freud believes that all men possess conservative characters that push the initial return of human urges through repression, even death and sexuality. From the experience of duplication "will originate" the foundations of bilaterally, of double identifications, of psychic bisexuality. Freud (1913, p. 253) writes in this regard: "The fact that an agency of this kind exists, which is able to treat the rest of the ego like an abject- the fact, that is, that man is capable of self-observation- renders it possible to invest the old idea of a 'double' with a new meaning and to ascribe a number of things to it- above all, those things which seem to self-criticism to belong to the old surmounted narcissism of earliest times".[2] Rank, in 'The Double' (1914) studies the relationships of the double to the mirror image and to the shadow, to the guardianship spirit, to the doctrine of the soul and to the fear of death. [3]

Dostoyevsky also imagined the theme of doubling personality in the form of double characters. In seeking to describe the double character, Dostoyevsky uses the hero, named the *Idiot*. In the beginning, the description of the Idiot corresponds to the character of Rogozhin: the pride, the psychopathy and the absence of the feeling of guilt. Rogozhin, a wealthy merchant, who identifies with the new Russian generation, is a poorly educated man, driven by the uncontrollable force of his sensations and willing to do anything to achieve his goal. Then Dostoyevsky hesitates in his description and writes in these notebooks that he seeks the new tracks "How can the idiot remain the main hero, if another hero is" stronger "than him? A new attempt is to transfer idiocy from one character to another, from Rogozhin to Myshkin. Myshkin would possess both kindness and guilt. Prince Myshkin, a Russian aristocrat, is an ideal man. He returned from a clinic in Switzerland after a long treatment for epilepsy. An orphan of his early age, this childish character is polite and sincere. Myshkin keeps in his heart the image of the sun, the purity of the mountains and the snow he had seen when he was in Switzerland and which he wants to transfer to the Russia. And, when he falls into the city Petersburg populated by perverts, he passes as an idiot, so he claims to act against the uses of this society. However, the prince is not entirely naïve; He can even be suspicious and ironic about others. Prince Myshkin, is he also double, stirred on one side by his thirst for the ideal of me, and subjected, at the same time, to the desires of his psychic nature? Is this another type of duplication: an internal doubling of two sides?

It should be noted that the voyages of Prince Myshkin and Rogozhin are strictly parallel: they return to St. Petersburg with the same purpose: Myshkin inherits the property of his deceased aunt and Rogozhin becomes wealthy owner after the parricide of his father, Orchestrated by his brother. Obviously, the relationship is not close between the doubling of the soul itself and these "double" characters. It is however possible to establish a relationship between a part of the soul that lives in super-ego guilt and in Myshkin, and the other that which lives in the chimeras of desires and in Rogozhin part.

In the novel, we also talk about the character Hippolyte Térentieff, 18 years old. He is part of the nihilist's band, claiming the prince half of his inheritance. This question of material and spiritual inheritance is, for Dostoyevsky, the means to show the perversion of the judgment of this youth under the influence of the Russian philosophy of the time. Hippolyte's speech, entitled "After me the deluge", sets out in infantile terms this philosophy. But Hippolyte is suffering from phthisis and is condemned in the short term, which explains his desire to give meaning to his life. Hippolyte's attitude towards the prince is ambiguous: he hates him but his words are dictated by the desire to identify with him. In front of Myshkin, Rogozhin plays a demon role that tries to wrest Hippolyte from the influence of the prince. Hippolyte makes the dream in which Rogozhin (his ghost) mysteriously appears to seize his soul. He understands then that it is the destructive force of Rogozhin that tries to possess it and the resistance against that force seizes it. He tries to commit suicide but misses his act. Thus, there is an intermediate idiot between Myshkin and Rogozhin which sums up the construction of the writer of the split identity "in abyss".

The other characters represent, in a way, the repetition of the theme of the doubles to describe the Russian society. The main feminine character, Nastasia Filippovna, is of pure tragedy. Orphaned and ruined aristocrat, she was collected by the Guardian Totsky, raped by him at sixteen and bred for his sexual pleasures. She became the Mademoiselle "of little Virtue", who was only entitled to money. Hysterical, she ceases to believe in her future, for her happiness is only an illusion. Nastasia Filippovna loves Rogozhin, as an object of her sexual desire but she acknowledges that this lout is unworthy of her. Only Prince Myshkin can save her from lowering, but this love filled with pity does not satisfy her. In our opinion, his image appears split, distributed to the level of opposite characters: Holiness on the side of the Virgin Mary, prostitution on the side of Mary of Magdalena. Unlike Nastasia Filippovna, Aglaïa Epanchine (his double), daughter of General Epanchine, is a young narcissistic, sensual and childish woman. She loves Myshkin and considers that he is superior to others and, at the same time,

does not tolerate that this superiority is not recognized by the entourage. This lack of recognition presents itself as a lack of "phallus". His quarrels and reconciliations with the Prince were endlessly followed throughout the novel.

It follows the meeting with Gania Ivolgin, the son of General Ivolgin. It is a noble but ruined descendant, hoping to marry Nastasia Filippovna only for money through Totsky. Obsessive, he is fascinated only by fortune. The rich man appears to him as a promise of phallus giving identity to his existence. In the same register of Lovers' choice for interest, one also notices Ptyzine, (the double of Gania), wealthy Bourgeois, who marries the sister of Gania Ivolgin, Varvara, in order to gain access to the high Russian society. There are also two generals (doubles): General Epanchine, rich and important in the State service, married to the distant relative of Myshkin, Lisaveta Prokofievna. He is in love with Nastasia Filippovna and hopes vaguely that Gania will "sexually lend" Nastasia Filippovna after their marriage. There is general Ivolgin, impoverished aristocrat, who lies for the pleasure of deceit, and who ends up no longer distinguishing the lie from reality. It is without counting with Totsky, rich and noble tutor of Nastasia who has better in sight and will want to get rid of it. He plans to marry a girl from a good family. Finally, appears Lebedev (his double), servile official, false witness who, moreover, is perfected in the explanation of the coming Apocalypse. However, in his delusional discourse we find the denunciation by Dostoyevsky of the ills of Russian society.

I think that at the presentation of these characters, one realizes that every purely idealistic character is possessed furtively by a carnal love and each perverted character quietly dreams of sensual love. The duplication of characters serves, in a way, to validate and sign the concerns of their inventor, the writer Dostoyevsky.

This duplication is not without reminding the epilepsy that has tormented throughout his life Dostoyevsky and especially at the time of writing this novel. The experience of twilight crises entering and leaving epilepsy exposes the author to a constant position of self-observation. This kind of "evil" exposes to a kind of sensation that is by way of sublimation, finds its expression in the literary work. Being subjected to evil and sickness generates a feeling of powerlessness and a rapprochement with the passivity attributed to the feminine position.

Berdiaeff writes (1921, p. 70) "The deeply Christian anthropology of Dostoyevsky will therefore differ from patristic anthropology." (...) No doubt the Christian soul once knew sin and let itself fall under the power of the demon. But she did not know this doubling of the personality of the souls studied by Dostoyevsky". [4]

THE ANALYSIS OF THE FEMINITY IN THE NOVEL BY DOSTOYEVSKY

The position of Freud in the definition of femininity is clear: the essence of femininity is not found in the unconscious and in its place two equivalences intersect: the assimilation of femininity to the passivity and the unconscious equation to be woman = to be neutered. Freud writes in *New Introductory Lectures (XXXIII. Femininity)* (1931-1936, p. 131):

« Some portion of what we men, call" the enigma of the woman "may perhaps be derived from this expression of bisexuality in women's lives. (...) We have called the motive force of sex life 'the libido' (...). To it itself we cannot assign any sex; if, following the conventional equation of activity and masculinity, we are inclined to describe it as masculine, we must not forget that it also covers trends with passive aim. (...) Furthermore, it is our impression that more constraint has been applied to the libido when it is pressed into the service of the feminine function...».[5]

Later, in this essay, Freud writes that the social interests of women are lower and their ability to drive sublimation less than those of men. Dostoyevsky is more radical in his judgement and presents women as objects of the desire of men. As Berdiaeff writes: (1921, p. 139) "... the feminine principle is the inner theme of human tragedy, its inner temptation. (...) The woman is only the inner expression of this destiny". [6] The women of the novel thus represent the masculine temptation by which the passage to their act promises.

Then, comparable Freud who says that the suppression of the aggressiveness of socially imposed women promotes their masochistic motions, Dostoyevsky describes the masochistic sensations his heroines. The sensations of Nastasia Filippovna are complex: his narcissistic wound, his need to suffer by a simulated licentiousness is only the mask by which she tries to conceal her displeasure. His double, Aglaïa is seized by the same sensation of ambivalent suffering: she believes that it is the prince who must identify with the ideal that she imagined for him. For this, she constantly gives him advice without understanding that if the prince accidentally did what he wants, all the origins that make her passionately love him would disappear abruptly. Is it another form of feminine masochism without the responsibility of super-ego? There is also the masculine masochism in the novel. So Prince Myshkin loves sensually a woman and ideally another. The beauty of Aglaïa seduces him, but he feels a moral

need for Nastasia Filippovna. Myshkin tries to save her, offering her marriage and sacrificing her love for Aglaia.

As for Rogozhin, he loves Nastasia Filippovna, but it is his inaccessible ideal that he does not deserve. Deep down, he is resigned to failure and, unconsciously, he does everything to provoke him. He will kill the woman if desired, at the very moment when he will possess her sexually. Dostoyevsky writes in this novel that "... bent over his face, on this breath, Rogozhin suffers from feeling as long a demon that presses against him. He knows that it is not entirely up to him (...). One day or another, she will leave him. Death alone can keep him and he strikes him with a stab at the heart. Love destroys and love is transformed into hatred".[7]. Nietzsche writes (1876, p. 364): "Love and hatred are not blind but blinded by the fire they carry everywhere with them." [8]

It is important to cite here the comments of Freud about love and hatred. Freud writes (1915, p. 138-139):

" So we see that love and hate, which present themselves to us as complete opposites in their content, do not after all stand in any simple relation to each other. They did not arise from the cleavage of any originally common entity, but sprang from different sources, and had each its own development before the influence of the pleasure – unpleasure relation made them into opposite. (...) If a love-relation with a given object is broken off, hate not infrequently emerges in its place, so that we get the impression of a transformation of love into hate". [9]

Later, Rogozhin will update his negative transference on his double and attempt to assassinate Myshkin. But the pervert-murderer and the perfect man will finally reconcile before the corpse of their beloved. Later, Rogozhin will be condemned by justice for the murder and shall fall into prison. Myshkin will suffer irreversible epileptic confiscations and be permanently placed at the clinic in Switzerland. The potential of their negation is determined by their downfall and it is also the experience of the epileptic seizures. This "fall" is often synonymous with moral downfall and loss. This feeling of malaise facing a perception which is through sublimation, finds its expression in this novel. Being subject to evil and suffering in his epileptic body generates in him a sense of anguish, linked to the death drive, and a rapprochement with the passivity attributed to femininity.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE “IDIOT’S” INFINISHED MISSION IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER

In the history of mankind, as described by Freud, the totems and taboos came, after the murder of the father and by the guilt of the sons, synonymous with assassins. In this way, the world has moved from the primitive horde to an organized society, developing through symbolic systems and transferring laws and morals to the generations. Lacan introduces the meaning name-of-the-father in which the real father-whether or not he is the progenitor-is thus invested with the function of symbolic father, or the other, prescriber of the phallic law which imposes symbolic castration. In fact, the other is the place where the subject of the unconscious is constituted with the signifiers: The mother, the symbolic father and the "Treasure of the signifiers: real, symbolic and imaginary." Lacan writes (1964, p. 16) "What I had to say about the name-of-the-father was not aimed at anything else, indeed, that to question the origin, namely, by what privilege Freud's desire had been able to find, in the field of experience which he designates as the unconscious, the entrance door. " [10]

The role of the father also passes no doubt through the real-imaginary-symbolic Lacan's dimensions in the psychic structure of Dostoyevsky. His hatred of his sadistic father and the desire for his death were fantasized during his childhood. Freud notes (1937, p.185): "In addition, it must be of importance as an accidental factor whether the father, who is feared in any case, is also especially violent in reality. This was true in Dostoyevsky's case, and we can trace back the fact of his extraordinary sense of guilt and his masochistic conduct of life to especially strong feminine component".[11] But when this fantasy became reality (after the peasants' assassination of his father), all defensive forms were consolidated. Does the need for punishment for her wishes explain her desire for suffering and remorse? Freud add (p. 186): "Dostoyevsky's condemnation as a political prisoner was unjust and he must have know it, but he accepted the underserved punishment at the hands of the Little Father, the Tsar, as a substitute for the punishment he deserved for his sin against the real father". [12] By characterizing Dostoyevsky's personality, Freud differentiates "four faces: the writer, the neurotic, the man of ethics and the sinner." In these reflections, the link is clearly defined between the different natures of perceptions (duty, suffering, guilt, obedience) and traumas affecting the psychic and the body of the writer.

This acceptance probably determined his attitude in social relations where the relationship to the father was decisive in his conduct towards Tsarist power and his belief in God. By an individual repetition of the moral punishment he hoped to find in the ideal of Christ, as the symbolic substitute of the father, a release of his guilt of super-ego. In the novel "The Idiot", it is the Prince Myshkin, endowed with the necessary qualities, and must pass on to the others the message in the father's name. On several occasions Dostoyevsky makes us understand that Myshkin is Christ. The likeness between Myshkin and Christ is suggested by signs of his language: the parables to which he uses, his communion with the high synthesis of life during his epileptic aura and the perpetual image of the sun that accompanies him everywhere. The prince's particular skill is endowed with an intelligence and a special gift for this transmission, which allows him to understand his interlocutors and to foresee better than anyone what might happen to them. In exchange, he is forgiven for his misaddresses, his foreign accent and his ignorance of the uses of society.

This "man who came from elsewhere" forgives for love the betrayals of one and justifies sins by ignorance of others. Two attributes make him the favoured object of sacrifice: his "innocence" and his lack of defence. It is no coincidence that this "infantile" character constantly feels his moral guilt. Dostoyevsky has acquired the conviction that unpleasure and moral masochism itself are necessary because they call repentance. So Freud says about it (1924, p. 169): "Again, masochism creates a temptation to perform" sinful "actions, which must then be expiated by the reproaches of the sadistic conscience (as is exemplified in so many Russian character-types) or by chastisement from the great parental power of Destiny». [13]

Thus, in the novel Myshkin is the only one capable of combating this societal scourge with the thoughts that are directly passed from the correspondence of the writer with his friends to the mouth of the character. Can it be estimated that at this precise moment Dostoyevsky takes the place of his character to split? But, most characters don't understand it and resist its influence. Similarly, Myshkin lacks success with Rogozhin. The influence of the prince on his double is effective only when they are face to face: when he moves away, the demonic desire arises in Rogozhin to push him towards crime. Dostoyevsky supplies a harsh indictment of the Russian ruling class of his day who have created a world which cannot accommodate the goodness of this "idiot". His mission finally proved unfinished, bringing the prince back to the point of departure. And Dostoyevsky predicts, "Russia will cover itself with darkness and mourn its former God." But, undoubtedly, the regeneration of the people, like that of the individual, passes through the ordeal of suffering.

Dostoevsky therefore criticizes the philosophy of Russian society, deprived of the essential moral bases, with virulence. The difficulties of the political and economic development of Russia are also linked to the fact that Russia occupied huge Eurasian space. "The basis of this original identity lies in the methods of appropriation of the European system of values and representations (...) in the Eurasian natural geographical and economic conditions" (Radtchenko-Draillard, 2018) [14]. In this sense, several rival Russian thinkers (favouring an Europeanisation of Russia and authentic traditional Orthodox values) face each other through double characters. This is why so many characters of the novel are embarking on *carnival* discourses whose absurdity and delirium often provoke the reader and society sometimes appears as a world populated by idiots. The progress of anarchism with the rise of psychopathic acts in Russia worries Dostoyevsky. For the composition of the novel, Dostoyevsky has used various facts collected in Russian newspapers. What shocks Dostoevsky here is that the illusion of reality with the principle of "everything is permissible" strikes all, even believers. He also denounces all forms of atheism and socialism.

In this logic, the novel is nourished by great temporality thanks to its composition of events, a vertigo of dialogues on traumatic experiences of people, as well as entangled sensations in the malaise of Russian society. I think that this appreciation that differs over time also affects the anticipation of the future which is distinguished by its hierarchy between three types: the first is a pure illusion of desire and the whole world is attached to it; the second is enlightened by the consciousness of reality and the responsibility of the super-ego, the third is that of true knowledge (somehow the thing in itself) that Dostoyevsky sees in itself through the synthesis of life and death during the epileptic aura. Finally, one can always wonder about this dark and luminous perspective, in what is it always as desirable for the writer in the form of disturbing strangeness (Uncanny) as being peculiar to the enjoyment.

DISCUSSION

In the novel 'The Idiot', Dostoyevsky gives himself the task of depicting the image of the depths of the human soul, allowing the characters to be fulfilled by the spontaneity of their sensations. Through his work and in the words of the characters is expressed the thought of Dostoyevsky on the conflict between good and evil, between the impulses of life and death. In this novel of the *clear -obscure*, the double characters, as "brothers-enemies" belong to different worlds, but in their unified duality they probably represent, for the writer, a synthesis of their wandering in

search of the ideal of the self. Moreover, the entanglement of the intrigues of the double characters (masculine and feminine) gives rise to unexpected spirals. Thus, Prince Myshkin, just by his ideal hero appearance, supports the conflicting actions of the demon who penetrated his soul under a mask of his double, Rogozhin. Prince Myshkin speaks seriously for the first time when he recounts the impressions of a condemned to death - Dostoevsky's personal experience.

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

But Dostoevsky's problem of religious belief and his feminine tendency to submit to the earthly father-the idealized Tsar are inseparable from his struggle against the death drive and the "devils" who assailed tirelessly his conscience. Despite this, Dostoevsky keeps a glimmer of hope in him and addresses to future generations his messianic message: "Beauty is divine!" Beauty will save the world! To conclude, the novel "The Idiot", one of Dostoevsky's most complex novels, goes from the search for the real of life to the comprehension of the final causes, which makes it possible to assert: the values that Dostoevsky defends are the real values, common to all humanity, to any social order. The value of this immense masterpiece is undoubtedly explained.

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