

Kierkegaard and Dostoyevsky Seen Through Bakhtin's Prism

Alex Fryszman

Leo Shestov and „Doppelgänger-Interpretation“

The Russian philosopher Leo Shestov was one of the first thinkers to become fascinated by the relation between Dostoyevsky and Kierkegaard. He introduced this subject in his lectures at the Sorbonne in 1931 and later developed his views on it in a series of ground-breaking articles in *Revue Philosophique*.¹ His interpretation of Kierkegaard was, in the beginning, confined to the anti-Hegelian themes in *Fear and Trembling* of the „teleological suspension of the ethical“² and „belief by virtue of the absurd“.³ He gradually broadened his reading of Kierkegaard, however, to encompass not merely other pseudonymous works but many non-pseudonymous works as well as Kierkegaard's journals and papers.

Shestov's articles and lectures on Kierkegaard bear the stamp of his strange friendship with Edmund Husserl. It was Husserl who first directed Shestov to Kierkegaard and Shestov's preoccupation with the irony of fate that made Husserl his „guide“ through Kierkegaard's authorship approaches the monomaniacal.⁴ He writes, for example, in his last essay, „Momento Mori to Husserl“:

Husserl's „self-evidence of reason“ stares at me with Medusa-like eyes that turn everyone who looks in them to stone... It is a mysterious twist of fate that it was Husserl who led me to Kierkegaard. He led me to a philosopher who guarded the gates of Paradise with the bared sword of paradox, a philosopher who had no interest in the essence of truth and refused to draw a line between the possible and the impossible.⁵

Shestov interpreted both Kierkegaard and Dostoyevsky as a *skandalon* in the Pauline sense. That is, both Kierkegaard and Dostoyevsky were, on

his view, an offence to the reader and a stumbling-block for all theoretical, or with Shestov's words, „truth-contemplating“ (*umozritel'naja*) thought. Husserl, on the other hand, represented for Shestov the culmination of European thought that stared paralysed into the Medusa eyes of the irrefutable, incontestable evidence of truth.

The universe of Kierkegaard and Dostoyevsky was, for Shestov, an offensive exception to the mainstream of the European intellectual tradition. They are doppelgänger who have escaped the dominance of reason, the paralysing eyes of Medusa, and have tested the limits of human knowledge. Shestov returns, at the end of his very last essay to Dostoyevsky, but only to reaffirm him as Kierkegaard's doppelgänger and ally. „When I began, after Husserl's intrusive insistence, to read Søren Kierkegaard, I discovered, to my great surprise, that Kierkegaard was Dostoyevsky's doppelgänger. I recognized the person of Dostoyevsky, the selfsame Dostoyevsky who was my unwavering support in my quarrel with Husserl“.⁶

Shestov's „doppelgänger-theory“ had a decisive influence on subsequent interpretations of Kierkegaard and Dostoyevsky. It was presented repeatedly by various scholars almost without alteration. My purpose in taking up this subject in the present article, is not to criticize Shestov's existentialist views (which cannot now be read without a certain wistful sympathy), but to take exception to the „doppelgänger-interpretation“ of Kierkegaard and Dostoyevsky, an interpretation which continues to thrive despite Shestov's diminished popularity.

I believe there is a better way to describe Dostoyevsky's relation to Kierkegaard and that is by using Dostoyevsky's leitmotif of parallel lines that can never meet in the three-dimensional space of Euclidean geometry, but which may meet somewhere in the genuine space of infinity.⁷ Since, however, infinity is seldom at the disposition of the reader, one could adapt the thesis *Similitudo Christum inter et Socratem in dissimilitudine præcipue est posita* from Kierkegaard's dissertation on the concept of irony and take as one's point of departure the claim that the similarity between Dostoyevsky and Kierkegaard consists essentially in dissimilarity.⁸ No one was more aware than Kierkegaard that comparison is in itself a treacherous, if fascinating problem. It will thus be in keeping with this insight of Kierkegaard's to maintain that opposition and contrast is most pronounced against a background of similarities. In other words, similarity can never become so great that dissimilarity is not even greater.

Shestov was the first to classify Dostoyevsky and Kierkegaard as existentialists in the same sense, or as doppelgänger thinkers who discarded the grand philosophical systems of their day in order to emphasize the freedom of the individual. Juxtaposition of Søren Kierkegaard and Fjodor Dostoyevsky has become commonplace in the broad body of literature on the authorship of Dostoyevsky and the history of Existential philosophy. Walter Kaufmann asserts, for example, in his book *Existentialism*, that Dostoyevsky's *Notes From Underground* is „the best overture for existentialism ever written,”⁹ and Robert Jackson argues, in *Dostoyevsky's Underground Man*, that „the reaffirmation of the intrinsic worth of the individual is one of the major links between Dostoyevsky and Kierkegaard: both in essence stand with what Hegel termed The 'Unhappy Consciousness'“.¹⁰

The danger in this pervasive form of comparison of the thought of Kierkegaard and Dostoyevsky is that it will reduce the complex correlation between distinct authorships to a single common denominator such as „unhappy consciousness,” Oedipus complex, or Christian truth. That is, as Kierkegaard remarks with respect to the unhappy consciousness in *The Unhappy*, one cannot help suspecting, that „he will get too much or too little to know“¹¹.

Bakhtin's Kierkegaard Connection and Polyphonic Poetics

My objective, in this article, is to suggest the possibility of a more complicated insight into the asymmetric and ambiguous relation between Dostoyevsky and Kierkegaard. This approach is inspired by Mikhail Bakhtin's work in philosophy and literary criticism. Bakhtin's work was ground-breaking, both in the interpretation of Dostoyevsky and in Russian philosophical and humanistic thought in general. In contrast to Dostoyevsky, Bakhtin was familiar with Kierkegaard's authorship. It is thus hardly accidental that Bakhtin's works on poetics are considered to exhibit clear hermeneutic and rhetorical traces of his reflections on Kierkegaard's authorship.

I will argue, in the follow pages, that Bakhtin received decisive impulses from Kierkegaard. This fact is left out of consideration in the burgeoning Russian and American Bakhtin scholarship, which is otherwise so fond of deducing his poetics from various European philosophical contexts which will not be discussed here- i.e., the neokantianism of

the Marburg school, phenomenology, the philosophy of dialogue and the Russian reception of Nietzsche. There is, however, an inspiring remark in John Smyth's interpretation of Kierkegaard's concept of irony, that hints at Bakhtin's subtle relation to Kierkegaard. „A paradigm for novelistic 'polyphony' is to be found in romantic literary theory, but it has been developed in a way currently influential by Mikhail Bakhtin, whose own pseudonymous strategies and Christian interests might provide an interesting comparison-in-contrast to Kierkegaard“.¹²

There is a good reason Bakhtin's Kierkegaard connection remains a fact of which most scholars are either unaware or mention merely as a curiosity: Kierkegaard's name seldom appears in Bakhtin's texts. The recent publication of Bakhtin's philosophical lectures from the 1920s and previously unknown memoirs have helped, however, to reveal the depth of Bakhtin's indebtedness to Kierkegaard. There are places in these texts where Bakhtin almost directly quotes Kierkegaard and this would appear to support the assertion that both Bakhtin's philosophy and his explication of Dostoyevsky are profoundly influenced by his peculiar, open-ended and *dialogical* reading of Kierkegaard. This reading represents a profoundly challenging example of taste and perceptivity for what Kierkegaard calls „the motley variety of life endlessly interwoven within itself“¹³. But it was just this reevaluation of the concrete, colourful variety, that was characteristic as well for Bakhtinian way of reading literature, as for his philosophical thinking. If my claim concerning Kierkegaard's influence on Bakhtin is correct, then Bakhtin read him as an author who, as Sylviane Agacinskij asserts, transformed and blurred the map of genres.¹⁴

Several of Bakhtin's texts that have only recently come to light contain his account of his initial involvement with Kierkegaard. According to Bakhtin, he became familiar with Kierkegaard's authorship before the Revolution through the first German edition of Kierkegaard's collected works. „I was the first Russian,“ Bakhtin remarked immediately before his death, „to study Søren Kierkegaard [...] Dostoyevsky“, Bakhtin continued, „was, of course, unaware of Kierkegaard's existence, despite the fact that they were nearly contemporaries. The sympathy, however, between the concerns of these two authors and the similarity of the depth of their insights is astounding“.¹⁵

Kierkegaard's direct influence on Bakhtin helps account for the fact that „Bakhtin's prism“ may be used to trace points of agreement as well as differences in the poetics of Dostoyevsky and Kierkegaard.

Bakhtin's most famous essay from the twenties, *Problems of Dostoyevsky's Poetics*,¹⁶ represents a break with both Hegelian aesthetics and the brand of existential interpretation exemplified in the works of Shestov. Bakhtin, was, throughout his life, a militant anti-Hegelian. Dostoyevsky's universe consisted, he argued, „of artificially organized coexistence and interaction of spiritual diversity, not stages of an evolving unified spirit... Dostoyevsky perceived the profound ambiguity of every phenomenon. But none of these contradictions and bifurcations ever became dialectical; they were never set in motion along a temporal path or in an evolving sequence“.¹⁷

Bakhtin is equally critical, however, of Shestov and other Russian existentialists who were responsible for the subject-centered interpretation of Dostoyevsky's authorship. The essence of Bakhtin's critique of these interpretations of Dostoyevsky is that he should not be read *uno tenore*, but as a polyphonic author who has a variety of incommensurable voices embodied in various independent literary-dramatic figures. Bakhtin's „polyphonic author“ never presents his metaphysical truths directly, but uses a maieutic form of communication that has its model in the *Socratic genre*. The reader should reflect, remarks Bakhtin, on the fact that one discovers in Dostoyevsky's works „a number of authors and thinkers – e.g. Raskolnikov, Myshkin, Stavrogin, or the Grand Inquisitor“.¹⁸

What is most important for Bakhtin is that Dostoyevsky's „authors“ personify „independent and mutually exclusive philosophical positions“. According to Bakhtin, Dostoyevsky's role as the „authors' author“ means that his individual authors are set free not merely in the sense that they are not under his control, but in the sense that they can actually revolt against his intentions.¹⁹ Theological and literary perspectives clash in Bakhtin's picture of the polyphonic author who releases his characters and allows them to „revolt“ against the author.

The juxtaposition of theology and poetry in Bakhtin's own works has often been pointed out by his interpreters, but never with reference to Kierkegaard's poetics. The revolt of literary characters against an author who cannot control them is, however, also a recurrent theme in Kierkegaard's works. A good example of this can be found toward the end of *The Sickness Unto Death* where Anti-Climacus, the pseudonymous author of this book, reflects on the nature of „the demonic“.²⁰ If one reads this text while wearing Bakhtin's spectacles, one discerns a stratum of irony concerning the relation of the author to his characters and, in particular, his unsuccessful attempt to control them. The irony is

intensified by the way „the insightful“ (*den Indsigtsfulde*) Anti-Climacus is distinguished from the other pseudonyms.²¹ Like Judge Wilhelm, he is fond of appearing an authority, an all-knowing *autor*. In contrast to Judge Wilhelm, however, he appears to break all the rules of maieutic and dialogical communication. As the „arrest[ing]“ (*standsende*) and „higher“²² pseudonym, he possesses a competence which surpasses even that of the author and seems to embody what Bakhtin calls an „essential surplus of meaning“²³ and what Kierkegaard calls a „greater understanding“ (*Mere-Forstaaen*).²⁴

Can Kierkegaard's pseudonymous works be read as a polyphonic structure of the sort Bakhtin describes? Kierkegaard's own repeated description of himself as „author of ... the authors“²⁵ and „the authors' author“²⁶ appears to support such a reading. Kierkegaard is fond of emphasizing, when he uses these expressions in his journals, that this figure never relates directly to his public, but that „*qua* author I make others creative“.²⁷ An intriguing discussion of this issue is found at the end of Kierkegaard's *Postscript* where Kierkegaard describes himself as an author of „poetically actual authors,“²⁸ who, „by means of audible lines, has placed the life-view of the creating, poetically actual individuality in his mouth“.²⁹ It is even tempting to read Kierkegaard's reflections on his production of „the creating, poetically actual individuality“ as the ideal introduction to Bakhtin's poetics.

Bakhtin consistently maintains that the polyphonic nature of a work makes even discussion of the narrator's authentic voice, let alone the attempt to develop this voice into a complete, coherent philosophical system, self-defeating. Monological presentations of Dostoyevsky necessarily ignore „the centrifugal force of heteroglossia“³⁰ in his authorship. That is, heteroglossia is specifically designed to sabotage direct communication. The monological reader will not discover Dostoyevsky's many narrative masks, the ironic and paradoxical distortions of the works fundamental „unfinalizability“.³¹ He will not discover Dostoyevsky's dialogical search for the truth, the model of which is to be found, on Bakhtin's view, in the Socratic dialogues and Socratic maieutic.

Bakhtin's insistence concerning the polyphonic nature of Dostoyevsky's novels seems, at first glance, not to cohere with his assertion that in Dostoyevsky's universe „the image of Christ represents the solution of ideological quest“.³² On the other hand, Bakhtin points out that „Dostoyevsky's hero is not an objectified *image*, but rather an autonomous word, a pure voice; we do not see him, we hear him“.³³ But Dos-

toevsky's „silent Christ' does not participate in the dialogue. His image arrests the dialogue. The voices are silenced when it comes into view. „Christ put forward no teaching as such," Dostoyevsky noted, „the main thing is Christ's image".³⁴

Many interpreters have argued that the semiotics of the icon is one of the generative principles of Dostoyevsky's poetics. This principle, however, never becomes supreme, but often comes into conflict with the dialogical principle of the authorship. The Norwegian Dostoyevsky scholar, Jostein Børtnes, suggests that Dostoyevsky's poetics exhibits two competing tendencies: an iconological „*Urbild-Abbild-Aesthetik*" and a deconstructive tendency.³⁵ The question of whether Dostoyevsky's „*Urbild-Abbild-Aesthetik*" imitates the hagiography and iconography of the Eastern Orthodox church or whether it is a parodied distortion of these traditions cannot be adequately addressed within the confines of the present article. We will thus have to be content with the observation that there is a fundamental contradiction between Dostoyevsky's iconologic pattern and Kierkegaard's iconoclastic attitude.

What was important for Bakhtin was not Dostoyevsky's hagiographical discourse, or the hagiographical *topos* of the Eastern church, but the „dialogical open-endedness" which creates room for a „plurality of independent and unmerged voices and consciousnesses, a genuine polyphony of fully valid voices,"³⁶ in his works.

Michael Holquist captures the universe of Bakhtin's thought when he explains that

Unlike the third eye of Tibetan Buddhism, which gives those who possess it a vision of the secret unity holding creation together, Bakhtin seems to have a third ear that permitted him to hear differences where others perceived only sameness, especially in the apparent wholeness of the human voice. The obsessive question at the heart of Bakhtin's thought is always: Who is talking?³⁷

There seems to be an implicit tendency among Russian philosophers interested in Kierkegaard, to interpret him as a polyphonic writer. Pijama Gajdenko's dissertation on *Either/Or* from 1970 is an excellent example of this tendency. It is entitled „The Tragedy of Aestheticism" and though it is now almost thirty years old, it continues to serve as a classic introduction to Kierkegaard. Bakhtin is not referred to explicitly, but his presence throughout the work is unmistakable:

The voices of Kant, Fichte, Schlegel, Schelling and Novalis resonate through the text of *Either/Or*. They fight for dominance and polemicize against one another while simultaneously aiding one another in the production and presentation of their respective philosophical credos. What is even more important, however, is that in Kierkegaard's universe they are forced to put their theoretical standpoints on the line in the sense that they must express them in their existence. Just as in Dostoyevsky's novels, philosophical ideas are personified in Kierkegaard's works. Kierkegaard's *Either/Or* is a philosophical novel that has never been surpassed in its genre. The collision of disparate ideas in this work receives a more refined and subtle presentation than is found even in the works of Dostoyevsky.³⁸

Bakhtin himself read Gajdenko's dissertation, which he considered the first serious work on Kierkegaard in Russian. Kierkegaard, explains Bakhtin, „was denounced in Russia, both as a philosopher and as a theologian. One could not mention his name without conjuring up epithets such as ‘the possessed obscurantist’. „This dissertation,“ he continued however, „expresses a profound appreciation of his significance“.³⁹

The clearly polyphonic nature of both Kierkegaard's and Dostoyevsky's works represents a deep affinity between the two thinkers, while it also serves to distinguish them from other authors who populate the borderland between philosophy and poetry. This plurality of discourses, literary styles and perspectives, collapsing one into the other in the poetical context is referred to by Bakhtin as *heteroglossia* and is considered by him to be the central characteristic with a polyphonic work.

Heteroglossia is not synonymous with the controversial concept of polyphony. The reason this concept is so difficult to define is that Bakhtin himself, in order to encourage interaction among widely divergent rhetorical, hermeneutic, philosophical and theological perspectives, was deliberately open-ended in his definition of it.⁴⁰ This has, as one might expect, the unfortunate consequence of confusing both readers and scholars. Christopher Pike remarks, for example, that „Bakhtin's poetics, like Dostoyevsky's novels, breaches the boundaries of literature in its envisioning of subject and other... Thus Dostoyevsky's novels cease to be just ‘novels’ and become something more“.⁴¹

Polyphony represents a new type of prose that goes beyond the boundaries of literature and explodes literary genres. It breaks with con-

ventional forms of literary communication and redefines the concept of a literary text, the position of the author and his contact with the reader. „Aesthetic production,“ explains Kierkegaard in *The Point of View for My Work as an Author*, „becomes a means of communication“. ⁴² The reader can no more control a polyphonic text than the author can control its characters. Kierkegaard's rupturing of familiar literary genres and forms of literary communication in his pseudonymous authorship represents a type of poetic praxis that corresponds to Bakhtin's theoretical concepts and embodies these concepts in a more refined manner than even Dostoyevsky's poetics.

It is precisely this transgression of aesthetics, where literature transcends itself, that so fascinates readers of Dostoyevsky and Kierkegaard. One of Dostoyevsky's more astute readers explains that „Dostoyevsky's novels have no exterior walls; they extend out into the street so that the reader himself becomes an author“. ⁴³

Dostoyevsky is often referred to as „a reader of genius“. ⁴⁴ Like Kierkegaard, however, Dostoyevsky was a brilliant „reader“ in more than one sense of this expression. He places himself in the position of the reader, reflects on the activity of reading and addresses the reader via his fictional narrators. It is thus possible to refer to him as an „author-reader“ (to use a neologism of Bakhtin). This authorial strategy is expressed again and again by Kierkegaard. But it is perhaps useful here to refer to his amazing and frequently quoted statement: „That I was ‘without authority’ I have from the first moment asserted clearly and repeated as a stereotyped phrase. I regarded myself preferably as a *reader* of the books, not as the *author*“. ⁴⁵ While the latter claim could have been made by Dostoyevsky, this is not the case with the former.

Irony and Authority

„The dialectical self-contradiction seems to be a very essence in all kinds of art“ ⁴⁶ noted Kierkegaard in his journal in January of 1848. Few literary authorships succeed in creating an abiding and vital philosophical tradition. It was, however, precisely the unresolved contradictions in Dostoyevsky's works that made him a midwife to the Russian philosophical tradition that blossomed after the turn of the century. We have already mentioned the most controversial representative of this tradition, namely Leo Shestov. It is important to appreciate, however, that Bakh-

tin belongs to this tradition as well and that he at once represents the culmination of Russian modernism and the beginning of a new epoch in the interpretation of Dostoyevsky.

Bakhtin emphasizes repeatedly, in his dissertation on Dostoyevsky, that Dostoyevsky transformed philosophical concepts to existing, speaking subjects and that he „thought with voices, positions and types of consciousness“.⁴⁷ This corresponds to Kierkegaard's practice of representing existential possibilities in „creating, poetically actual individual-it[ies].“⁴⁸ It is generally recognized that both Dostoyevsky's and Kierkegaard's works exhibit a rare ability to undermine established interpretations, to invite new readings and to lead the interpreter into contexts of ever-increasing complexity. The interrelated complexity of their polyphonical works seems to generate a remarkable indeterminacy of the interpretation and the resultant widely divergent readings of these two authors. This indeterminacy can be explained, in part, by the fact that these works move back and forth across the borders *between* poetry, philosophy and religion. But one of the major problems in the reading Kierkegaard and Dostoyevsky is attached to the problem of the indirect communication.

It is important to note, however, that the recognition that Kierkegaard was „a kind of poet“⁴⁹ did not come until the last decade, while the recognition that Dostoyevsky was „a kind of metaphysician“ followed him *post mortem* like a faithful shadow.

Like many modern interpreters, Russian philosophers in the first decade of this century accepted it as given that Dostoyevsky's fiction represents his prophetic insight into the formulas for being and nothingness, the principles governing life and spiritual death. Doubt, however, was not far away. Mereškovskij comes close to comparing Dostoyevsky's universe to a kaleidoscope of masks, where each mask is confronted with its own distorted caricature, its own doppelgänger. „Who can say behind which mask lies Dostoyevsky's face? Is it behind Zosima's, or the Grand Inquisitor's? Not even Dostoyevsky himself knew the answer to this question“.⁵⁰ Bakhtin's refrain: „Who is speaking?“ can also be detected reverberating in the interpretation of the philosopher Leo Karsavin, who observed the presence of a fictional, often „incompetent“ narrator in Dostoyevsky's novels, a narrator who served as a „literary device,“ that „obscured the true author“ and served to „disorient the reader“.⁵¹

As pieces of fiction, Dostoyevsky's works are in harmony with

Kierkegaard's narrative strategies. That is, Kierkegaard consistently maintains that „ethical-religious truth“ can never be communicated „directly“. ⁵² Dostoyevsky does not restrict himself, however, to the use of indirect communication. He occasionally communicates his views directly, as, for example, in *The Diary of A Writer*, where he expresses his messianic program of Orthodox culture.

The problem which Kierkegaard presents for the ironical theory, argues Richard Rorty, is a problem of conquering the authority, without making demands on the authority. ⁵³ Unfortunately, this is apparent not a problem which the author of *Diary of a Writer* sets for himself. Dostoyevsky's *Diary* is like Kierkegaard's *Journals* in that it is full of fragments of fiction and literary experiments. This is, however, where the similarity ends. There is little resemblance between Kierkegaard's „individual“ (*hiin Enkelte*) and Dostoyevsky's ideas about the exalted Messianic mission of Russia, his great Russian chauvinism and xenophobia, his ideas about authentic Russian Christ, the extension of Russia through victory over her enemies and about the creation of an orthodox world-order. ⁵⁴

Several Western scholars assert that „Dostoyevsky's nonfictional writings from the 1860s onwards display a consistent and unchanging opposition to the humanistic ethic“. ⁵⁵ It is also possible, however, to interpret Dostoyevsky's fiction as exposing the „spiritual and intellectual bankruptcy of humanism“. ⁵⁶ Even a sympathetic reader like Shestov, who was hardly a „humanistic ethicist“ had to admit that Dostoyevsky's program of Orthodox culture looked very much like a literary sanction of Russian chauvinism. Shestov could never understand „how the same pen could have produced both *Diary of a Writer* and *The Idiot*“. ⁵⁷

Bakhtin argues, in *Discourse in the Novel*, that authoritative discourse

is by its very nature incapable of being double-voiced; it cannot enter into hybrid constructions ... there is no space around it to play in, no contradictory emotions ... For this reason images of official authoritative truth, images of virtue (of any sort: monastic, spiritual, bureaucratic, moral) have never been successful in the novel. It suffices to mention the hopeless attempts of Gogol and Dostoyevsky in this regard. ⁵⁸

Bakhtin later remarks elsewhere, that „the speaking subjects of height,

proclamatory genres of priests, prophets, preachers, judges, leaders, patriarchal fathers, and so forth have departed this life. They have all been replaced by the writer, simply the writer, who has fallen heir to their styles".⁵⁹

But can we simply brush aside Dostoyevsky's messianic religiousness as „hopeless attempts of authoritative discourse“? Like Kierkegaard's *Instant*, Dostoyevsky's *Diary* was published as a one-man periodical. Unlike the *Instant*, however, Dostoyevsky's *Diary* did not address itself to the individual. It articulated, instead, the expectations of very numerous readers of *Diary*. „Dostoyevsky's fame,“ remembers one of his well-informed contemporaries, „was not caused by his novels – at least not primarily by them – but by the *Diary of a Writer*. It was the *Diary* that made his name well known to all of Russia, that made him the teacher and the idol of the youth...“.⁶⁰

Joseph Franks matter-of-fact account of the overwhelmingly positive response to Dostoyevsky's „authoritative discourse“ accentuates the relation of polarity between Dostoyevsky and Kierkegaard. „It is important to understand,“ he continues however, „that in expressing this faith Dostoyevsky was by no means simply giving voice to the ideological aberrations of a man of genius. Quite the contrary, he was articulating ideas that found a ready response in his numerous readers“.⁶¹

How does one explain, however, the discrepancy between the *Diary* and the pluralistic discourse in the universe of Dostoyevsky's novels? According to Bakhtin, the Slavophilic *credo* that Dostoyevsky expresses directly in his journals states his chauvinist opinions, but the status of this *credo* changes when it is expressed in the polyphonic universe of Dostoyevsky's novels. That is, it struggles on an equal footing, in this universe, with occidental, romantic and nihilistic positions. The same is true with the Orthodox and edifying discourses in Dostoyevsky's novels. The voices of Zosima, Alyosha Karamazov, Tichon and Makar Dolgoruky are always challenged and penetrated by the texts of the others, by a *pro* and *contra*, that cannot be dialectically reconciled. „Once the writer launched his characters in dialogue,“ remarked Jan Meijer, „when every idea called forth its opposite, it drove them ... far beyond the opinions Dostoyevsky, the man, held“.⁶²

There is more involved, however, than mere artistic necessity. The importance of Bakhtin's discoveries of „inner“ polemic of the texts, of his concept of „dialogicity“, the so-called „two-voiced“ word are not restricted to the field of poetics. In the recent studies on Dostoyevsky,

which draw inspiration from Bakhtin's ideas, a crucial rule play Dostoyevsky's communication to the reader and the theme of communication, that he dramatizes in his novels. Analyses of Dostoyevsky's narrative correctly emphasize a gap between the narrator and the author Dostoyevsky and his very sophisticated play with „implied authors“ and „narrators whose knowledge is partial and limited“. ⁶³ It is tempting to compare this narrative strategy with Kierkegaard's practice of using „incompetent“ narrators such as, for instance, Aesthete A, Constantine Constantius, or Johannes *de silentio*. Paul de Man is not the only interpreter to remark that „the presence of a fictional narrator is a rhetorical necessity in any discourse that puts the truth or falsehood of its own statement in question“. ⁶⁴

Dostoyevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* is unique among novels in that it is either praised or criticized for its hagiographical authoritative discourse. This discourse is, however, undermined by an omnipresent irony and satire. The narrator of *The Brothers Karamazov*, who also passes himself off as the author of the preface „From the Author,“ insists that he is himself perplexed by the events he describes and that an overview of the entire situation „far exceeds his abilities“. His role is „that of an observer, witness, biographer, chronicler“. ⁶⁵

Dostoyevsky's skilled use of the „incompetent“ first-person narrator represents a rhetoric that gives an ambiguous ironic cast to the most authoritative discourse and makes determining the truth-value of the message problematic. It is important to remember, for example, that Father Zosima's confession was written down from memory by Alyosha Karamazov, who is thus, in a sense, its author. The confession is presented as an incomplete and fragmentary manuscript. In the final analysis, Zosima, the figurative representative of Christian spirituality is far less convincing than the despairing ironist Ivan Karamazov. Ivan Karamazov's *Legend of the Grand Inquisitor* is far more powerful than Alyosha's hagiographical *Homilies of the Elder Zosima*. The former deals with human freedom in confrontation with irreconcilable powers and interpretations of existence, while the content of the latter may be exhaustively characterized as „belief in joy, love, mutual forgiveness, the beauty of Creation, the image of Christ as cherished and propagated by the Russian people,“ and the invitation to a „rather more mysterious kissing of the earth“. ⁶⁶ Several interpreters of Dostoyevsky's hagiographical discourse have also reached the conclusion that it represents „the combination of the sincerest piety with the apparent absence of its object“. ⁶⁷

These readings can themselves function as a kind of proof that

Dostoyevsky's controversial novels afford the reader the freedom to choose between incommensurable discursive universes. Like Dostoyevsky's fictional characters, however, readers time and time again choose interpretations at surprising variance with the author's own intentions.

The virtuosity with which Dostoyevsky employs the method of indirect communication in his novels may well be surpassed only by Kierkegaard. According to Kierkegaard, „all poetic creation would *eo ipso* be made impossible or meaningless and intolerable if the lines were supposed to be the producer's own words (literally understood)“⁶⁸ This remark of Kierkegaard's is reminiscent again of Dostoyevsky's often quoted motto, „it is not I who speaks in my novels“.⁶⁹ Dostoyevsky protests often, in his notes and letters, against the notorious confusion of the author with one of his characters. „One sees the face of the author everywhere in my novels,“ writes Dostoyevsky, „but I have never shown my face in these works“.⁷⁰ Dostoyevsky's renunciation of his position as the omniscient author of his novels was also a rejection of the authority that makes up one of the strongest cultural codes in Russian philosophy and literature.

Dostoyevsky's novels were models for Bakhtin and his vision of cultural plurality and heteroglossia. Like Socrates, Dostoyevsky was a „speech-forcer“,⁷¹ able to bring together disparate ideas and interpretations of existence that were otherwise deaf to one another and force them to dispute with one another“.⁷²

Bakhtin conceived of cultural interaction as a symposium where disparate discourses serve not merely to elucidate one another but also to parody and „mercilessly criticize one another“⁷³ without ever reaching any agreement. But as Paul de Man argued in his polemic against Bakhtin, in contrast to the poetics that is inspired by Nietzsche's perspectivism, Bakhtin's poetics invite the reader to participate in a continuous „conversation with many voices rather than ... a contest with winners and losers“.⁷⁴

Bakhtin is convinced that the modern novel is not one literary genre among others. It is rather, on his view, a place for cultural self-reflection, a place that can „emancipate consciousness from the power of direct discourse and break down its deaf and dumb reclusiveness“.⁷⁵

Bakhtin remarks in his last notes that „irony has penetrated all languages of modern times ... it has penetrated all words and forms ... Irony is everywhere, from the minimal and imperceptible to the loud,

which borders on laughter. Modern man does not proclaim; he speaks. That is, he speaks with reservations“.⁷⁶

Alterno pede

One of Bakhtin's favorite themes is that of the difference between prosaic dialogue that emphasizes distinction and difference and dialectic that strives to establish „the unity of emerging and developing idea“. „Dialogue and dialectics: Take a dialogue and remove their voices ... carve out abstract concepts and judgments from living words and responses, cram everything into one abstract consciousness-and that's how you get dialectics“.⁷⁷

Bakhtin's Socratic theme exhibits striking similarities to Kierkegaard's dissertation *The Concept of Irony*, though Bakhtin's Socrates embraces only a fraction of Kierkegaard's multifaceted construction. According to Bakhtin, genuine Socratic dialogue is opposed to Platonic dialectic. Like Kierkegaard, Bakhtin maintains that Plato obscured Socrates' „paradoxical ambivalence“ and „monologised the dialogue“.⁷⁸ Socrates, on the other hand, is described by Bakhtin as a master at creating rhetorical crises which rupture dialectical understanding and subvert univocal communication.

Bakhtin argues that Socrates employs two rhetorical methods of relating disparate views: *sincrisis*, which causes incommensurable discourses to collide with one another and *anacrisis*, which „encourages, or elicits, a rejoinder and thus forces the other to formulate his view of the truth in language“.⁷⁹ Bakhtin comes close to identifying Socrates as the first representative of „novelness“⁸⁰ to experiment with translating philosophical thought into dramatic figure and put it in dialogue.

In, for example, *Epic and Novel*,⁸¹ Bakhtin describes Socratic dialogues as „masks for novelness“⁸² which is distinguished from mythological and epic discourse. Bakhtin's Socrates is a figure reminiscent of his creator. He appears as a peripatetic thinker, the philosopher in the town square and marketplace „the speaking and conversing individual“⁸³ who listens to the various noises and voices of the marketplace. Bakhtin emphasizes that the point of departure for Socrates' dialogical investigations is what is apparently peripheral, accidental and meaningless. Socratic irony brings together seriousness and laughter and anticipates the literary parody, travesty and mockery which dissolves the normative power of

the epic. It anticipates knowledge that „all existing clothes are too tight, and thus comical, on a man“. ⁸⁴ Socratic irony, parody and satire all serve to „demolish [] fear and piety before an object“ and to deliver that object into the „fearless hands of investigative experiment“. ⁸⁵

Bakhtin's view of Socrates is similar to Kierkegaard's in that Kierkegaard also emphasizes in his dissertation that „Socrates commences most of his enquiries not at the center but on the periphery, in the motley variety of life endlessly interwoven within itself“. ⁸⁶ Kierkegaard gives what is perhaps the most emphatic expression of the essence of Bakhtin's philosophy when he asserts that in a genuine Socratic dialogue

the subject is an account to be settled between the one asking and the one answering, and the thought of development fulfills itself in this rocking gait (*alterno pede*), in this limping to both sides. This, too, is of course a kind of dialectical movement, but since the element of unity is lacking, inasmuch as every answer contains the possibility of a new question, it is not the truly dialectical evolution. ⁸⁷

This „*alterno pede*“ philosophy characterizes Bakhtin's confrontation with epic and developmental interpretations of Dostoyevsky. The type of „stadiale“ interpretation Bakhtin polemicized against is best illustrated by René Girard's book: *Dostoievski- du double à l'unité*. ⁸⁸ That is, Girard views Dostoyevsky's authorship as an evolving unity. „The differences“ he argues, „between the subjects of the novels are only superficial: in fact they are all one and the same oeuvre“. This unity, he continues, is determined by Dostoyevsky's consistent „pursuit of the absolute“. It begins in „anxiety, lie and doubt and ends in joy and certainty“. ⁸⁹ Girard traces the outlines of the development of an authorship that begins in anxiety and despair in *The Double* and *Notes from Underground* and culminates in joy, reconciliation with the sacred and illumination in Dostoyevsky's masterpiece *The Brothers Karamazov*.

Shestov, on the other hand, gives us a different picture of Dostoyevsky's authorship. He argues that the depths of the cellar from which the underground man writes provide the best insight into the nature of the human condition, freedom and death. The Orthodox Christian figures, he argues, are best understood as expressions of the abysmal doubt and horror of the dangerous insights that issue from the depths of this cellar.

Anti-Climacus in the Depths of the Cellar

Anxiety and despair have crucial roles in both Kierkegaard's and Dostoyevsky's views of the nature of human consciousness and spiritual life. Analyses of nihilistic revolt, of reclusiveness and even demonic self-isolation, of the disintegration of the self and the forms and dynamic of despair are consistent themes in Dostoyevsky's works. These themes represent the „subterranean“ structure in Dostoyevsky's novels. The motifs of the doppelgänger and the reduplication of the self are central to this subterranean structure. Dostoyevsky himself considered *The Double* (1846) to be his first attempt to create his „major underground type“.⁹⁰

Through the double, wrote Bakhtin, „the possibilities of the other, and another life, are revealed. The dialogical attitude of man toward himself ... contributes to the destruction of his integrity and finalizedness“.⁹¹ According to Bakhtin, the relation between the self and the other characterizes, among other things, the relation of the author and his hero. To be a self is to be both an author and a character in the other „poet's“ discourse.

For Bakhtin, *The Double* represents „a small-scale Copernican revolution“⁹² that displaces the authoring „I“ from the center of the universe. Dostoyevsky never transforms „the crucible of the hero's self-consciousness,“⁹³ that occupies the foreground of this work into an object of manipulation for an omnipotent author. Dostoyevsky's maieutic position as author, his staging of his characters as the authors of their own discourses, allows him to show them „from within,“ as „the other's I not as object, but as another subject“.⁹⁴

Bakhtin's description of Dostoyevsky's authorial strategy appears reminiscent of Roland Barthes' somewhat melodramatic reference to „the death of the author“.⁹⁵ This resemblance is, however, only superficial. Bakhtin insists that polyphony is a literary model of actuality where „the experimenter becomes an aspect of the system being experimented on“.⁹⁶ In a polyphonic work, he argues, the I of the author rejects his authority as author and is transformed into an active receiver of the discourse of the other. The voice of the author, however, is not for this reason absent. It permeates the voices of the characters, enters into dialogue with them, creates complicated echo effects, supplements them and at times even permeates them.

The voice of the narrator in Dostoyevsky's *The Double* eventually breaks down and becomes a participant in the unpredictable and uncon-

trollable relations with other voices. The reader becomes just as disoriented by the text as the protagonist is by his disintegrated actuality. Instead of a structured reality, as one finds, for example in Tolstoy's novels, Dostoyevsky presents merely the relation of the subject to reality, which is to say the relation of the subject to himself and to the other. As Bakhtin explains, „we do not see how he (Goljadkin) is, but how he is conscious of himself“.⁹⁷ *The Double* is, for Bakhtin, the first staging of the drama of self-consciousness. „Dostoyevsky intended *The Double*,“ he explains, „as a confession (not in the personal sense, of course), that is, as the representation of events that take place within the bounds of self-consciousness. *The Double* is the first dramatized confession in Dostoyevsky's work“.⁹⁸

The „Copernican revolution“ that *The Double* represents extends far beyond the boundaries of literature. „As long as a person is alive,“ explains Bakhtin,

he lives by the fact that he is not finalized ... A man never coincides with himself. One cannot apply to him the formula of identity $A = A$. In Dostoyevsky's artistic thinking, the genuine life of the personality takes place at the point of non-coincidence between man and himself, at the point of his departure beyond his limits.⁹⁹

„His soul is in contradiction and is self-contradiction,“ as Kierkegaard expresses it in *Upbuilding Discourses*,¹⁰⁰ and this same insight is expressed by several of Kierkegaard's pseudonyms. It is perhaps most sharply formulated by Anti-Climacus in *The Sickness Unto Death* where the self is the scene of the dramatic collision of opposing forces. The figure of Anti-Climacus can be detected in the background of Bakhtin's philosophical-religious motifs. „Without God,“ explains Bakhtin, „without faith in absolute otherness, self-awareness and even self-expression are impossible, and this is not, of course, because they would have no meaning in practice, but because trust in God is the immanent constructive factor of pure self-consciousness and self-expression“.¹⁰¹

Naomi Lebovitz remarks, in her book on Kierkegaard *A Life of Allegory*,¹⁰² that Kierkegaard's anticipation of many of Dostoyevsky's ideas „has been frequently noted ... This seems to be especially true,“ she continues, „when he charts the journey from doubling as a demonic sign to doubling as a spiritual action, between repetitions and Repetition“.¹⁰³

The most appropriate starting point for an examination of Dosto-

yevesky's presentation of „the demonic“ is the subterranean structure in *Notes from Underground*. It has been noted more than once that this same subterranean structure can be seen in the space whose contours are described by Anti-Climacus in *The Sickness Unto Death*. The exciting interplay of the two works, however, has yet to be elucidated. This interplay has little to do with the existentialist terminology that one uses almost automatically in this context. According to Bakhtin, Dostoyevsky's novel „reflects in the form of extreme parody the relations of author and listener in a confession“.¹⁰⁴

„The term ‘underground man,’“ remarked the prominent Dostoyevsky scholar Joseph Frank, „has become part of the vocabulary of contemporary culture, and this character has now achieved – like Don Quixote, Don Juan and Faust – the stature of one of the great archetypal literary creations“.¹⁰⁵ Dostoyevsky himself believed the essential idea in the work was the „necessity of faith in Christ“.¹⁰⁶ Few readings of the text, however, would agree with him on this point. There is no question, however, that *Notes from Underground* provides the best example of what Bakhtin call Dostoyevsky's „hidden dialogues,“ or „dialogues where responses of the interlocutor are missing, though his unseen presence is anticipated“.¹⁰⁷

The Underground Man is the great artistic discovery of Dostoyevsky's post-Siberian period and prefigures an entire gallery of characters in his later novels. Like a *perpetuum mobile*, the subterranean world of the Underground Man produces a kaleidoscope of Dostoyevsky's underground-figures, from Rodion Raskolnikov in *Crime and Punishment* and Ippolit in *The Idiot*, to Stavrogin in *The Possessed* and finally „the despairing ironist“ Ivan Karamazov in *The Brothers Karamazov*. Dostoyevsky's reader will recognize the decisive characteristic of this structure: demonic reclusiveness, the lack of communication with the environment, the vicious circle of the self from despair to defiance, the phenomenon of the doppelgänger. The scene of the drama of self-consciousness – the dark, narrow, gloomy hole in which Dostoyevsky's Underground Man lives – finds a remarkable parallel in Anti-Climacus's studies in *The Sickness Unto Death* of the landscape of despair. The despairing individual, explains Anti-Climacus, „prefers to live in the basement, that is, in sensate categories ... He not only prefers to live in this basement, but loves it so much that he is indignant if anyone suggests that he move to the superb upper floors that stand vacant and at his disposal, for he is, after all, living in his own house“.¹⁰⁸

The narrator in *Notes from Underground*, the „hyperconscious paradoxicalist“,¹⁰⁹ refers to himself ironically as both an insect and the inhabitant of a „mouse hole“¹¹⁰ where he consciously „buries himself alive“. „There,“ he explains, „in its nasty stinking underground home, our insulted, crushed and ridiculed mouse promptly becomes absorbed in cold, malignant and, above all, everlasting spite“. ¹¹¹

„Sickness“ is a key expression in the Underground Man's story. He begins with the statement: „I am a sick man,“¹¹² and throughout his confession he diagnoses his sickness as both „acute consciousness“¹¹³ and „painful consciousness“. ¹¹⁴ His confessions unfolds as a dialogue with an imagined audience of his „gentleman-readers“. The ironic confessor acknowledges that he lives in hiding and is tortured by passions which „have turned in on themselves“. ¹¹⁵

Anti-Climacus describes, in *The Sickness Unto Death*, „an inwardness with a jammed lock“¹¹⁶ and classifies this sickness as the most intense, demonic form of despair. „In hatred toward existence, it wills to be itself, wills to be itself in accordance with its misery“. ¹¹⁷ Like a troll that „disappears through a crevice that no one can see,“¹¹⁸ the demonically despairing person wants to live „behind actuality“ in „a world exclusively [*ude lukkende*] for [him]self“. ¹¹⁹

„The loophole of consciousness and word“¹²⁰ is recurrent concept in Bakhtin's works. It is unfortunately, however, also one of the most ambiguous concepts he employs. In the context of communication, it refers to „the possibility of altering the ultimate meaning“. ¹²¹ This concept receives a surprising expression, however, in Bakhtin's discussion of „the loophole“ as a characteristic of novelistic discourse („novels-as-loopholes“). ¹²² Bakhtin's „loophole“ seems to be related to the other of his favourite pet words: „error“. „Error“ defines what can not be traced to single consciousness and single discourse. As Bakhtin puts it, in the monological culture there „exists only one principle of cognitive individualization: *error*. True judgments are not attached to a personality, but correspond to unified, systematically monological context. *Only error individualises*“. ¹²³

The Underground Man's „loophole“ is clearly a metaphor, both for both the despairing and „demonic“ isolation of the particular consciousness and for its victory over this isolation. In the eyes of Dostoyevsky's „gentlemen-readers,“ the existence of the Underground Man remains „a mistake“, or error, like „the formula twice-two-equals-five“. ¹²⁴ But „the formula twice-two-equals-four,“ the Underground man argues,

„is not a life, gentlemen, but the beginning of death“.¹²⁵ The Underground Man's loophole is also a privileged position that allows him to distance himself ironically from his „confessions“. „I assure you solemnly,“ he asserts, that „there is not a word I have just written I believe in!“¹²⁶ Anti-Climacus asserts that with demonic despair „it is as if an error slipped into an author's writing and the error became conscious of itself as an error“.¹²⁷ He adds, however, with characteristic subtlety, that „perhaps it actually was not a mistake but in a much higher sense on essential part of the whole production“.¹²⁸

If we view the Underground Man as a poet, then it is difficult to ignore that his poetic strategy resembles Dostoyevsky's own. He triumphs over his gentlemen-readers „from within, carrying their logical presuppositions and possibilities to their consistent conclusions and arriving at a destructively helpless blind alley“.¹²⁹

Anti-Climacus leaves no doubt in the mind of the reader that demonic despair is symptomatic of both the author and his characters. „This kind of despair,“ he asserts, „is rarely seen in the world; such characters really appear only in the poets, the real ones, who always lend 'demonic' ideality – using the word in its purely Greek sense – to their creations“.¹³⁰ According to Anti-Climacus, „the old legend about breaking a certain magic spell is true: the piece has to be played through backwards or the spell is not broken“.¹³¹

Retrospection and parodied confession in unended rewriting of his life is also the strategy of the Underground Man who runs through his memories *ad infinitum* and transforms them into a story of the fundamentally incomplete, always open-ended creation of the self. The last words of his anti-confession are: „But enough! – I don't want to write anymore from underground“. These words are followed, however, by the concluding „editor's“ note: „He could not resist and continued further“.¹³²

Notes

- 1 Cf. Leo Shestov, „Dans le taureau de Phalaris,” *Revue Philosophique* 1-2 (1930): 18-60; „A la mémoire d'un grand philosophe. Edmund Husserl,” *Revue Philosophique* 1-2 (1940): 5-32. „Søren Kierkegaard, philosophe religieux,” *Le Cahiers de Radio-Paris* 12 (1937): 1214-1242. The most well-known essay, „Job ou Hegel?” was published in *Nouvelle Revue Française* 240, May (1935): 755-772. Shestov's book: *Kierkegaard et la philosophie existentielle*, was edited by *Les Amis de Léon Chestov et Vrin* and published in Paris in 1936.
- 2 Søren Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling*, in *Fear and Trembling and Repetition*, ed. and trans. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983) 54-57/*Søren Kierkegaards Samlede Værker* (Søren Kierkegaard's Collected Works), ed. A. B. Drachman, J. L. Heiberg and H. O. Lange, 1st ed. 14 vols. [Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1901-1906] vol. III, 104-116. Subsequent references to this edition of Kierkegaard's collected works will be designated by SV along with the relevant volume and page numbers).
- 3 FT, 36/SV, 87.
- 4 Cf. Claude Bonnefoy, „Qui est Chestov?” *Arts-Loisirs* 8 (1967): 38-43.
- 5 Leo Shestov, *Umozrenije i otkrovenije* (Paris: Ymca-Press, 1964) 314-315. All translations, unless otherwise noted, are my own.
- 6 Ibid. 325.
- 7 Fjodor Dostoyevskij, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii v tridsati tomakh* (Complete Collected Works in Thirteen Volumes) the Academy of Sciences Edition (Leningrad, 1976) vol. X, 195 and vol. XIV, 214. All subsequent references to this edition of Dostoyevsky's collected works will be designated by PSS and followed by the volume number and page.
- 8 Søren Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Irony*, ed. and trans. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989] 5-6/SV XIII, 99-100.
- 9 Walter Kaufmann, *Existentialism from Dostoyevsky to Sartre* (New York: Anchor Books, 1956), 14.
- 10 Robert Louis Jackson, *Dostoyevsky's Underground Man in Russian Literature* (The Hague: Mouton/Leiden University, 1958) 14.
- 11 There is always the fear that one will „faae for Meget eller for Lidet at vide“ (SV I, 196).
- 12 John Vignaux Smyth, *A Question of Eros: Irony in Sterne, Kierkegaard and Barthes* (Tallahassee: Florida State University Press, 1986) 243.
- 13 Søren Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Irony*, op. cit. 32/SV XIII, 128.
- 14 Sylviane Agacinski, *Aparté: Conceptions and Deaths Of Søren Kierkegaard*. Tallahassee: Florida State University Press, 1987 233.
- 15 This quotation is taken from a collection of Bakhtin's recorded interviews and memoirs. Selections of these recordings have been published in the literary journal *Tjelovek* from 1993 and 1994. Cf. *Tjelovek* IV (1993): 151.
- 16 M. M. Bakhtin, *Problemy poetiki Dostoevskogo* (Problems of Dostoyevsky's Poetics) (Moscow, 1963). This work exists in two English translations: *Problems of Dostoyevsky's Poetics*, ed. and trans. Caryl Emerson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984) and *Problems of Dostoyevsky's Poetics*, trans. by R. W. Rotsel (Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1973). References to this work will, whenever possible, be to Emerson's translation.
- 17 Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoyevsky's Poetics*, ed. and trans. Caryl Emerson, op. cit. 30.
- 18 M. M. Bakhtin, *Problemy poetiki Dostoevskogo*, op. cit. 3.

- 19 Cf., e.g., Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoyevsky's Poetics*, ed. and trans. Caryl Emerson, op. cit. 6.
- 20 Søren Kierkegaard, *The Sickness Unto Death*, ed. and trans. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980) 71-74/SV XI, 182-185.
- 21 SUD, 23/SV XI, 137. The expression „Indsigtsfulde“ is actually translated by the Hongs as „well-informed.“
- 22 Søren Kierkegaard, *The Point of View for My Work as an Author*, trans. Walter Lowrie (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers [Harper Torchbook], 1962) 142n./SV XIII, 495n.
- 23 Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoyevsky's Poetics*, ed. and trans. Caryl Emerson, op. cit. 73.
- 24 POV, 27/SV XIII, 533.
- 25 Søren Kierkegaard's *Journals and Papers*, ed. and trans. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1967-1978) vol. 6 no. 6547/*Søren Kierkegaards Papirer* (The Papers of Søren Kierkegaard) eds. P. A. Heiberg, V. Kuhr and E. Torsting (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1968-1978) vol. X2 A 242.
- 26 Søren Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, ed. and trans. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992) vol. I, 627/SV VII, 547.
- 27 JP 6:6574/Pap. X2 A 242.
- 28 CUP I, 627/SV VII, 546.
- 29 CUP I, 625/SV VII, 545.
- 30 M. M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M. M. Bakhtin*, ed. and trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981) 270.
- 31 This is the standard translation of the Russian „nezavershenmost“ (cf. *Mikhail Bakhtin: Creation of a Prosaics*, ed. Gary Saul Morson and Caryl Emerson (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990) index.
- 32 Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoyevsky's Poetics*, ed. and trans. Caryl Emerson, op. cit. 97.
- 33 M. M. Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoyevsky's Poetics*, trans. R. W. Rotsel (Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1973) 43.
- 34 PSS 11, 192.
- 35 Cf. Jostein Bortnes, „Dostoevskij's *Idiot* or the Poetics of Emptiness,“ *Scando-Slavica* Tomus 40 (1994): 5-14.
- 36 Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoyevsky's Poetics*, ed. and trans. Caryl Emerson, op. cit. 6.
- 37 Michael Holquist, „Answering as Authoring,“ *Bakhtin: Essays and Dialogues on His Work*, ed. Gary Saul Morson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986) 59.
- 38 Pijama Gajdenko, *Tragedija estetizma. Opyt charakteristiki mirosozercanija Serena Kirkegora* (Moscow, 1983) 83.
- 39 *Tjelovek* IV (1993): 151 (cf. note 16 above).
- 40 Cf. M. M. Bakhtin, „'Notes' 1970-1971,“ *Bakhtin: Essays and Dialogues on his Work*, op. cit. 182.
- 41 Christopher Pike, „Formalist and structuralist approaches to Dostoyevsky,“ *New Essays on Dostoyevsky*, ed. Malcolm Jones (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1983) 202.
- 42 POV, 33/SV XIII, 537. Lowrie's translation reads: „[A]esthetic works remain only a means of communication.“
- 43 Karl Erik Lagerlöf, *Dostoyevsky: Liv och dikt* (Stockholm, 1978) 203.
- 44 A. L. Bem, *O Dostoevskom: Shornik statey* (Prague: 1933) vol. 2, 7.
- 45 POV, 151/SV XIII, 501.
- 46 „Egentlig ligger al Kunst i dialektisk Selvmodsigelse“; Pap VIII 1 A 88.
- 47 M. M. Bakhtin, *Problemy poetiki Dostojevskogo*, op. cit. 121.
- 48 CUP I, 625/SV VII, 545.

- 49 Louis Mackey, *Kierkegaard: A Kind of Poet* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971).
- 50 Dmitrij Merezhkovsky, „*Prorok ruskoj revoljutsii*“ (Prophet of the Russian Revolution), *Sobranie sochinenij* (Collected Works) (Moscow, 1914) vol. 14, 188–200.
- 51 A. L. Bem, *O Dostoevskom*, op. cit. 278.
- 52 Pap. X6 B 134.
- 53 Richard Rorty, *Kontingens, ironi og solidaritet*, (Århus 1992) 105.
- 54 Cf. Joseph Frank, „Approaches to the *Diary of a Writer*,“ *Through the Russian Prism: Essays on Literature and Culture*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990).
- 55 Aileen Kelly, „Dostoevskij and Divided Conscience,“ *Slavic Review*, Summer 1988, 241.
- 56 Ibid. 240.
- 57 Leo Shestov, „*Prototjeskij Dar*“ (Prophetic Gift), *Poljarnaja Zvezda* 7 (1908): 85–91.
- 58 M. M. Bakhtin, „Discourse in the novel,“ *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M. M. Bakhtin*, op. cit. 344.
- 59 M. M. Bakhtin, „Notes' 1870–1871,“ in *Bakhtin: Essays and Dialogues on His Work*, op. cit. 179.
- 60 Elena A. Stakenschneider, Al. (?) Dolinin, *F. M. Dostoyevsky v Vospominayakh Sovremennikov*, ed. A. S. Dolinin (Moscow, 1964) vol. no.2. 397. As quoted by Joseph Frank, „Approaches to the *Diary of a Writer*,“ *Through the Russian Prism*, op. cit. 153.
- 61 Joseph Frank, *Approaches* ... op. cit. 169
- 62 Jan Meijer, „The Author of *Brat'ya Karamozovy*,“ in *Essays by Jan der Eng and Jan M. Meijer* (The Hague: Mouton, 1971) 44.
- 63 Harriet Murav, *Holy Foolishness* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992) 84.
- 64 As quoted by Christopher Norris, *The Deconstructive Turn: Essays on the Rhetoric of Philosophy* (London/New York: , 1983) 102.
- 65 Diana Thomson, *The Brothers Karamazov and the Poetics of Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge U. Press, 1991) 35.
- 66 Sergei Hackel, „The religious dimension: vision or evasion: Zosima's discourse in *The Brothers Karamazov*,“ *New Essays on Dostoyevsky*, op. cit. 58.
- 67 A. B. Gibson, *The Religion of Dostoyevsky* (London: 1973) 196.
- 68 CUP I, 627/SV VII, 546.
- 69 F. M. Dostoyevsky *Pis'ma* (Letters) vol 1, ed. A. S. Dolinin (Moscow/Leningrad, 1928–1930) 86–87.
- 70 Ibid. 87.
- 71 Aaron Fogel, „Coerced Speech and the Oedipus Dialogue Complex,“ *Rethinking Bakhtin: Extension and Challenges*, eds. Gary Saul Morson and Caryl Emerson (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1989) 289.
- 72 M. M. Bakhtin, *Problemy poetiki Dostojevskogo*, op. cit. 121.
- 73 M. M. Bakhtin, „*Voprosy Literatury i Estetiki*“ (The Problem of Literature and Aesthetics) (*Khudozhestvennaia literatura*, Moscow, 1975) 223 and 425.
- 74 Paul de Man, „Dialogue and Dialogism,“ *Rethinking Bakhtin: Extensions and Challenges*, op. cit. 106.
- 75 Bakhtin, *Voprosy Literatury i Estetiki*, op. cit. 425.
- 76 M. M. Bakhtin, „Notes' (1970–1971),“ *Bakhtin: Essays and Dialogues on His Work*, op. cit. 181.
- 77 M. M. Bakhtin, „Notes' (1970–1971),“ *Bakhtin: Essays and Dialogues on His Work*, op. cit. 181 (emphasis added).
- 78 M. M. Bakhtin, *Problemy poetiki Dostoevskogo*, op. cit. 146–147. Cf. Gary Morson, *Mikhail Bakhtin: Creation of a Prosaics*, op. cit. 60–61.
- 79 Ibid. 147. The first English translation of *Problemy poetiki Dostojevskogo* reads as follows: „Anacrisis consisted of the means of eliciting and provoking the words of the interlocu-

- tor, forcing him to express his opinion, and to express it fully. Socrates was a great master of anacrisis" *Problems of Dostoyevsky's Poetics*, trans. R. W. Rotsel (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1973) 91.
- 80 Cf. Michael Holquist, *Dialogism: Bakhtin and his Word* (London/New York: Routledge, 1990).
- 81 M. M. Bakhtin, *Voprosy Literatury i Estetiki*, op. cit. 465-469.
- 82 Ibid. 478-479.
- 83 Ibid. 160-161.
- 84 Bakhtin, „Epic and Novel," *The Dialogic Imagination*, op. cit. 37.
- 85 Bakhtin, *Voprosy Literatury i Estetiki*, op. cit. 465-469.
- 86 CI, 32/SV XIII, 128.
- 87 CI, 35-36/SV XIII, 131.
- 88 René Girard, *Dostoevski- du double à l'unité* (Paris: Édition Grasset 6 Faquelle, 1976).
- 89 This reference comes from the Danish translation of Girard's book. René Girard, *Dostoyevsky. Fra dobbeltgænger til enhed*, Frederiksberg 1991. p. 8.f.
- 90 PSS 1, 489.
- 91 Malcolm Jones, *After Bakhtin* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) 14-15.
- 92 Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoyevsky's Poetics*, ed. and trans. Caryl Emerson, op. cit. 56.
- 93 Ibid. 48.
- 94 Ibid. 11.
- 95 Roland Barthes, „The Death of the Author," *Image, Music, Text*, ed. and trans. Stephen Heath (Glasgow: 1977) 142-148.
- 96 M. M. Bakhtin, *Estetika slovesnogo tvorjstva* (Moscow, 1979) 302.
- 97 M. M. Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoyevsky's Poetics*, op. cit. 49.
- 98 Ibid. 215.
- 99 Ibid. 59.
- 100 Søren Kierkegaard, *Eighteen Upbuilding Discourses*, ed. and trans. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Princeton: Princeton University Press) 60/SV III, 60. „Hans Sjel er derfor er i Modsigelse og er Selvmodsigelse“.
- 101 Bakhtin, „Avtor i geroj," *Estetika Slovesnogo Tvortjestva* op. cit. 126. The wording here is from Ann Shukman's translation, „Bakhtin's Tolstoy Prefaces," *Rethinking Bakhtin*, op. cit. 143.
- 102 Naomi Lebovitz, *A Life of Allegory* (Louisiana University Press, 1985).
- 103 Ibid. 148.
- 104 Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoyevsky's Poetics*, ed. and trans. Caryl Emerson, op. cit. 231-232.
- 105 Joseph Frank, *The Stir of Liberation, Dostoyevsky*, vol. 3, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986) 328.
- 106 Cf., e.g., Joseph Frank, *The Stir of Liberation, Dostoyevsky*, vol. 3, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986) 310-328.
- 107 M. M. Bakhtin, *Problemy poetiki Dostojevskogo*, op. cit. 264.
- 108 SUD, 43/SV XI, 156.
- 109 PSS 5, 101.
- 110 PSS 5, 105.
- 111 Dostoyevsky, *Notes from Underground*, op. cit. 10.
- 112 PSS 5, 99.
- 113 PSS 5, 101.
- 114 PSS 5, 103.
- 115 PSS 5, 105.
- 116 SUD, 72/SV XI, 183.

- 117 SUD, 73/SV XI, 184.
118 SUD, 73/SV XI, 184.
119 SUD, 73/SV XI, 184.
120 Mikhail Bakhtin: *Creation of a Prosaic*, op. cit. 67-71; 159-161; 223 and 442.
121 Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoyevsky's Poetics*, ed. and trans. Caryl Emerson, op. cit. 233.
122 „Novels as loopholes“, *Mikhail Bakhtin: Creation of a Prosaic*, op. cit. 67-71; 159-161; 223 and 442.
123 Bakhtin: *Problems of...*, op. cit. 81.
124 PSS 5, 105-106 and 117-119.
125 PSS 5, 160.
126 PSS 5, 122.
127 SUD, 74/SV XI, 185.
128 SUD, 74/SV XI, 185.
129 A. Skaftymov, *Nravstvennyye iskanija russkich pisatelej* (Moscow: 1972) 70 and 96.
130 SUD, 72/SV XI, 183.
131 SUD, 44/SV XI, 156/157.
132 PSS 5, 178.

(Translated by M. G. Piety)