

**Between the Divine and the Demonic: Dostoyevsky's 'Demons' and 'The
Brothers Karamazov' as Portraits of Russian Christian Orthodoxy, Identity
and Existentialism**

By

Saif Mahmood Mahim

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Bachelor of Arts

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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The thesis submitted is my own original work while completing a degree at Brac University.
2. The thesis does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.
3. The thesis does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
4. I have acknowledged all main sources of help.

Saif Mahmood Mahim (20103026)

Approval

The thesis titled “Between the Divine and the Demonic: Dostoyevsky's 'Demons' and 'The Brothers Karamazov' as Portraits of Russian Christian Orthodoxy, Identity and Existentialism” submitted by Saif Mahmood Mahim ID:20103026 of Summer 2023 has been accepted as satisfactory in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Bachelor of Arts.

Examining Committee:

Supervisor:

Dr. Abu Sayeed Mohammad Noman

Assistant Professor, Department of English and Humanities

BRAC University

External Examiner:

Dr. Raihan M. Sharif

Associate Professor , Department of English

Jahangirnagar University

Departmental Head:

Professor Firdous Azim

Professor and Chairperson, Department of English and Humanities

BRAC University

Abstract

Human mind and its conflict with the heart has always been a dominant part of humans as an intellectual being. There are many aspects & phases of existence which humans fail to understand. Modern humans consider themselves as rational but Fyodor Dostoyevsky questions this and points out that reason or rationality is not what defines humanity. Through the investigation of various characters from Dostoyevsky and his contemporary authors as well as authors Dostoyevsky were influenced by. This research investigates the relevance of existential void and how Dostoyevsky form a perception of achieving a divine peace through internal cleansing with his understanding of Christian Orthodoxy and eternal suffering. Moreover, the importance of originality of Russian identity or “Narod” pointing out true Russian way through peasants and people from lower class are also analysed. This research aims to clarify the complex relationship between Christian Orthodoxy’s teaching and people’s eternal search for purpose in the face of suffering where Dostoyevsky’s unique viewpoint creates a mosaic of ideological conflicts, Russian Identity and human psychology through religious and philosophical viewpoint bursting out the Russian socio-political background.

Keywords: Nihilism, Existentialism, Modernism, Peasantry, Russian, Narod, Narodnost, Suffering, Divine, Mysticism, Conflict, Psyche, Superfluous, Western, Eastern, Orthodoxy, Christianity, Papacy, Enlightenment, Rational, Philosophy, Faith, Freedom, Morality, Absurdity, Roman Catholic, Spirit ,Kenosis, Love.

Dedication

Dedicated to all those people who we meet in our messed up, disappointed and competitive arena of life and they make us happy and give us hope to join another fight.

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(Chapter 1) Introduction

It is essential to understand an author in the context of history and historical events ¹since these have a tremendous impact on the author's life and operate as potent mirrors reflecting the essence of existence. Fyodor Dostoevsky derived his creative inspiration from the tumultuous narratives of historical events and the literary works produced during his contemporary period. The intricately braided creative works he produces, which delve into ethical dilemmas and psychological intricacies, serve as a testament to his profound engagement with these contrasting forces. Dostoevsky's literary works were characterized by a profound engagement with historical context, offering a fertile backdrop for his exploration of the complexities of human nature and societal dynamics. The author's cognitive state underwent enduring modifications due to significant historical events such as the Decembrist insurrection and the Russian serfdom system. The author's literary works exhibited a profound awareness of historical echoes, enabling him to craft characters grappling with the moral quandaries in their contemporary society. The author

¹ Russia is an intriguing subject within the vast mixture of historical events decorated with tales of upheaval and development. Three significant and far-reaching events in the 19th century profoundly affected this vast empire, reverberated throughout the century, and helped determine its future trajectory. The earliest of these occurrences was Napoleon Bonaparte's daring invasion of Russia in 1812. In response to the French attack, the Russian armies, under the command of generals like Mikhail Kutuzov, engaged in a bloody military campaign now known as the Patriotic War of 1812. Consequently, the French military was ultimately compelled to withdraw. This significant event constituted a pivotal moment in the Napoleonic Wars and had a lasting impact on the trajectory of Russian history. The Decembrist Revolt, which stands as the second notable event, transpired on the 26th of December in the year 1825. The uprising was an endeavour by a faction of military personnel with liberal inclinations to depose Nicholas I, who had lately ascended to the position of Tsar. The insurrection symbolised the resistance to the tsarist authority, even if it was ultimately ineffective. This historical moment was a template for following waves of Russian revolutionaries, profoundly altering the country's political landscape. The emancipation of the serfs in 1861 was another landmark event that marked a turning point in history during the 19th century. During that particular year, Tsar Alexander II promulgated the Emancipation Edict, which bestowed independence upon serfs and facilitated their acquisition of land ownership. The aforementioned historical reform effectively tackled the enduring problem of serfdom in Russia as a response to mounting calls for reform, resulting in significant socioeconomic transformations and challenges. These events profoundly impacted the course of Russian history while also playing a pivotal role in facilitating the emergence of the Golden Age of Russian culture, a remarkable epoch characterized by unparalleled advancements in artistic and intellectual pursuits. The convergence of these notable historical occurrences gave rise to a captivating narrative of bygone times and paved the path for the emergence of profound literary and artistic manifestations from the brains of Russian individuals.

delved into the intricacies of human cognition in literary works such as "*Crime and Punishment*" and "*The Brothers Karamazov*," which were situated within a societal context undergoing a profound transformation. Dostoevsky's artistic prowess, however, was in his ability to amalgamate the concepts put forth by his peers. His engagement with other authors' literary works, where he assimilated their philosophical perspectives and ideas through reading. Dostoevsky's exploration of faith, morality, and the existence of evil resonated with the existential inquiries contemplated by intellectuals such as Friedrich Nietzsche. The depiction of internal struggles inside the characters of the author's works mirrors the psychological revelations made by his contemporaries, such as Ivan Turgenev and Nikolai Gogol. These conflicts are shown realistically, effectively capturing the tumultuous nature of the human psyche. Through his literary exploration, Dostoevsky comprehended that the human experience possesses an ethereal quality beyond temporal and spatial boundaries. The individual acknowledged the interrelationships between their existence and historical and contemporary contexts, effectively integrating these linkages into the fabric of their written works. The characters created by the author fulfilled a dual role as cultural artifacts and tools for examining the persistent conflicts inherent in the human condition. Dostoevsky's literary oeuvre demonstrates his simultaneous preoccupation with both contemporaneity and history. The works produced by the individual in question provide substantial evidence of the significant impact of historical events and the ongoing dialogue among writers spanning various periods. This dialogue enhances our understanding of the intricate nature of the human experience.

Fyodor Dostoevsky's novels give peasants important and nuanced roles. He explores crucial problems related to religion, ethics, culture, and the state of humanity via them. Dostoevsky's picture of peasants delves further into the interactions of various social levels, making it more

nuanced than clichés of rural life. In his works, peasants frequently present a stunning contrast to the urban, affluent elite. In contrast to the metropolitan elite's intricate masks and moral quandaries, rural dwellers frequently stand out for their directness and honesty. This fair picture emphasizes the moral complexity and psychological strain typical of the upper classes. One of Dostoevsky's recurring themes in his study of peasants is the ability to endure suffering and persevere in adversity. Physical and material struggles endured by peasant characters can symbolize wider human suffering. Dostoevsky portrays a picture of human suffering and fortitude in the face of adversity using their tribulations as a backdrop. Dostoevsky also uses the peasants' faith to address their social situation in his writings. His rural characters frequently show a deep and sincere interest in topics of faith and spirituality. This juxtaposition with the skepticism and intellectual agony of his educated characters emphasizes that spiritual depth is not limited to the educated or elite circles but may be discovered among the humblest elements of society. Dostoevsky explores moral and ethical dilemmas and the repercussions of human acts through the lens of his peasant characters. These characters are often uneducated yet encounter ethical challenges. Dostoevsky uses these characters and their actions to delve deeper into the nuances of moral action and the far-reaching consequences of individual choices. Dostoevsky's portrayal of the peasants addresses more prominent socioeconomic themes, including inequality and social separation. That there was such a vast chasm between the wealthy and everyone else reflected the broader socioeconomic inequalities of his time. In doing so, he sheds light on the moral implications of societal hierarchies by examining the moral dilemmas and tensions brought on by these differences through the perspective of his peasant characters.

Dostoevsky's novels feature investigations of peasants, and the vivid characters and relationships that result from his complexity in method of bring these explorations to life. In "*Crime and Punishment*," Sonia Marmeladov, a poor peasant coerced into prostitution, represents both despair and redemption. She plays a pivotal role in Raskolnikov's moral development, demonstrating the strong influence a figure from the underclass may have on an educated protagonist's quest for empathy and self-awareness. Similarly, Elder Zosima, a peasant, teaches in "*The Brothers Karamazov*," imparting profound spiritual lessons that cut over socioeconomic boundaries. His perception provides insight on humility, compassion, and the universal problems experienced by everyone, regardless of background. Moreover, Nastasya Filippovna is a character in "*The Idiot*" born into an aristocratic family but has always been associated with the peasantry. Dostoevsky explores the complexity of identification and societal expectations through her character, illuminating the difficulties faced by people who move between different social realms. Stepan Verkhovensky's meetings with local peasants in "*The Possessed*" (Also known as *Demons*), particularly Marya Timofeevna, highlight the divergence between academic beliefs and the realities of rural existence. These exchanges highlight Dostoevsky's insightful analysis of societal dynamics as they expose the conflicts between revolutionary enthusiasm and the realities of daily life. A contradiction that resonates through time and speaks to the recurrent patterns that have characterized our collective narrative emerges when one considers the nature of humanity's reason and its potential for historical learning. Despite the claim that people are rational beings with free will, the idea of learning is attacked by the repetition of historical occurrences. The destructive impulses infiltrating many layers of human existence, from relationships to the environment, are also proof of this cyclical recurrence. Delving into postcolonial literature as an individual Hailing from a colonized nation, one cannot help but perceive the profound devastation wrought by

colonizers, both on a literal and psychological plane. The repercussions of such destruction, inscribed deeply into the fabric of cultures and societies, point to a disheartening truth: the echoes of history's mistakes often persist, even in the face of acknowledgment.

In *"Notes from the Underground"* by Fyodor Dostoevsky, a biting critique of human reason emerges. The dominant philosophies of his time, atheism, nihilism, determinism, utilitarianism, and communism that took root in 18th-century Russia are challenged by Dostoevsky. Dostoevsky finds an inherent irony in the idea that people supposedly obsessed with the selfish "I" can come together to create utopias or flawless communities amidst these viewpoints. He cuts through the surface of these ideologies, emphasizing their flaws and the absurdity of expecting ideals to arise from structures based on rigid and dogmatic ideas. One of the main themes of these conversations is how different perspectives, power relationships, and societal institutions interact. Our understanding of the world is frequently shaped by the assumptions and projections of others, which etch their worldviews into our stories. We move through a world that was created by forces outside of ourselves. The standards of a perfect family, a top-notch education, and the personification of success are similar to those of other industrialized countries, which eventually encourages people to imitate rather than invent.

Fyodor Dostoevsky (1821-1881) was born to a Russian Orthodox father who adhered to rigid religious practices and was a medical doctor. The individual in question would use derogatory terms, such as "stupid," to refer to his sons when they made errors during their recitations. He enforced a rule that required his sons to adopt a posture of attentiveness while addressing him. Consequently, the young Dostoevsky was not presented with an entirely faithful representation of God the Father by his austere biological father. At 18, Dostoevsky experienced a significant event that greatly influenced his life trajectory. His authoritarian father met a violent demise at the hands

of his Russian serfs. The dead body was exposed in the field for two days, during which the law enforcement authorities refrained from initiating an inquiry or effectuating any apprehensions. Evidence suggests that a young Dostoevsky experienced a sense of culpable involvement in this homicide, but maybe simply as a manifestation of a subconscious desire for death. Dostoevsky's four principal books are centred on the theme of murder, with *The Brothers Karamazov* structured explicitly around the act of parricide. Dostoevsky had significant success with his inaugural work, *Poor Folk*. Vissarion Grigoryevich Belinsky, a prominent literary critic in Russia, proclaimed the emergence of a noteworthy literary figure on the horizon. Nevertheless, as Dostoevsky's subsequent literary works leaned more towards exploring human psychology than offering social critiques, the radical critic Belinsky and other Russian writers became increasingly harsh in their evaluations (Brinkhof,2021). Fyodor Dostoevsky's perspective on God can be characterized as orthodox and aligned with conventional religious ideas. In contrast to his contemporary Leo Tolstoy, whose perspectives were non-conventional, Fyodor Dostoevsky's depiction of God is consistent with established theological theory. It is worth noting that the atheist characters portrayed in the author's novels, namely Stavrogin, Kirillov, Ivan, Smerdyakov, and Svidrigaylov, all meet their demise through acts of suicide. This narrative choice implies their explicit rejection of the fundamental essence of life, leading to a lack of purpose in their mortal existence. Dostoevsky places significant emphasis on the notion that religion in God functions as a sanctuary for humanity, offering solace and the promise of everlasting happiness. Despite grappling with doubts throughout his lifetime, he consistently maintained a belief in the existence of a reality connected to a divine being. The challenging dynamic between the individual and his father during his developmental period potentially played a role in the subsequent emergence of his worries.

It is imperative to discern the distinction between the personal ideas held by Dostoevsky himself and the beliefs articulated by the characters in his literary works. The author allowed his atheist characters to express their perspectives, enabling them to partake in theological dialogues. Nevertheless, it is essential to note that this does not necessarily align with his beliefs. In Fyodor Dostoevsky's novel *The Brothers Karamazov*, Father Ferapont espouses a nontraditional interpretation of the divine, distinguishing between the Holy Spirit and the Holy Ghost, deviating from established biblical doctrines. However, Dostoevsky portrays the worldview of this individual as idiosyncratic, explicitly indicating that it diverges from his convictions. It is worth noting that a lack of substantial analysis challenges the conventional perspective of God ascribed to Dostoevsky. The author's depiction of faith and uncertainty, coupled with incorporating a range of character perspectives, demonstrates a nuanced exploration of theological concepts while upholding traditional convictions. Dostoevsky's viewpoint about Orthodox Christianity deviated from the established doctrines upheld by the Anglican and Catholic churches. The individual's approach exhibited a greater inclination towards a spiritual and subjectively interpreted belief system, as opposed to adhering closely to the teachings advocated by established institutions. Dostoevsky frequently explored profound aspects of faith in his literary oeuvre, engaging with the intricate dynamics of spirituality, uncertainty, and the human relationship with the transcendent. The individual's spiritual inquiry distinguished him from the customary teachings of the Anglican and Catholic traditions, potentially offering a more rigid and dogmatic methodology. Dostoevsky's depiction of people grappling with their convictions and participating in severe theological discussions demonstrated his leaning towards a vibrant, reflective form of Christianity that struck a chord with the individual's need for purpose and communion. The author's distinctive viewpoint contributed depth to his creative works and suggested his nuanced position, which aligned with

the core principles of Orthodox Christianity while interpreting them through a unique and reflective perspective. Fyodor Dostoevsky's literary works deeply examine Christian Orthodoxy's role in driving societal change, which is intricately woven into the fabric of his narratives. Fyodor Dostoevsky's steadfast belief in the transformative power of sincere devotion to Christianity on society highlights the thematic emphasis of his works. The spiritual dimension and the revival of moral values are essential themes in the author's works, investigating human nature's and ethics' complexities to advocate for societal norm shifts. Dostoevsky's vision of Christianity's revolutionary effect on society has widespread relevance, but it can and should be evaluated critically. This dissertation examines the nuanced reasons for and consequences of Dostoevsky's commitment to Christian Orthodoxy, focusing on his firm belief in the faith's transformative power in society. It also examines how his stories, set in a particular Russian context, can still resonate with readers worldwide. However, it must be stressed that Dostoevsky's viewpoint is not beyond reproach. This acknowledgment makes it possible to probe the various underlying subtleties of his visionary concepts.

Thesis Statement: By carefully analyzing *Demons* and *The Brothers Karamazov* by Fyodor Dostoyevsky, this research aims to clarify the complex relationship between Christian Orthodoxy's teachings and people's eternal search for purpose in the face of suffering through Mysticism which is an integral part of Eastern Orthodox church. Dostoyevsky's unique viewpoint creates a complex mosaic of ideological conflicts and resolutions by contrasting the central tenets of Christian Orthodoxy with the changing Western views of existence. Dostoyevsky's depiction of the Russian peasantry, which serves as a monument to the tenacity of religion and the transforming influence of Orthodoxy in molding societal viewpoints and aspirations, is fundamental to my study.

(Chapter 2) Literature Review and Thematic framework

One of the influential writers in Russian history, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, was influenced by both the rich texture of Russian history during his lifetime and the works of earlier literary luminaries like Mikhail Lermontov and Nikolai Gogol. The "superfluous man"² concept was first introduced to readers of Lermontov's *"A Hero of Our Time"* through Pechorin, the protagonist. This reflective and disillusioned figure struggles with societal alienation. Raskolnikov, a character in Dostoyevsky's *"Crime and Punishment"*, who is equally cut off from society and on the verge of moral nihilism³, embodies this pattern (Holquist, 1977). Historical events, especially the sociopolitical upheavals in 19th-century Russia, significantly influenced Dostoyevsky's writings. His writings reflect the reforms aimed at emancipating the serfs, the emergence of radical movements, and the state's ensuing reactionary positions. Dostoyevsky, who lived through these revolutionary times, included social commentary and ongoing discussions in his works, fusing intimate tales with more expansive historical accounts. In the meantime, Dostoyevsky's *"Notes from Underground,"* where the protagonist, like Gogol's Akaky Akakievich, becomes a scathing indictment of a dehumanizing society, mirrors Gogol's keen sarcasm and deep psychological understanding, which are visible in stories like *"The Overcoat"* and *"Diary of a Madman."* Dostoyevsky's characters, living on the periphery of society and riven by emotional turmoil, bear witness to the lasting influence of discourses and historical events that moulded 19th-century Russia and the fundamental literary framework supplied by Lermontov and Gogol. The force

² The Byronic hero served as the model for the Russian literary concept of the superfluous man in the 1840s and 1850s. It describes a person who defies social conventions and may be gifted and capable.

³ The rejection of all religious and moral principles, in the belief that life is meaningless.

behind talking about Nihilism also became relevant to Dostoyevsky's writing because of his observance of society. Ivan Turgenev's book "*Fathers and Sons*" also featured the self-described nihilist character Bazarov, who highlighted the generational divide and the increasing popularity of nihilistic ideas among young Russians. Dostoyevsky's writings, especially "*Notes from Underground*" and "*The Devils (Demons)*," present a direct challenge to the nihilistic tendencies that are beginning to emerge in Russian culture. His characters frequently argue philosophically about the perils of extreme scepticism, the applicability of moral standards, and the rejection of society's ideals.

The travel essay "*Winter Notes on Summer Impressions*" (1863) by Fyodor Dostoyevsky provides a detailed view of his conflicted feelings toward Western Europe. Certainly, Dostoyevsky was impressed by several aspects of Western innovations during his trip; he was amazed by Paris's architectural magnificence and the effectiveness of the European train network. However, entwined with this appreciation was a pervasive criticism. His scathing attacks on the European bourgeoisie demonstrate how much he detested the overt materialism of the West and its flimsy social veneer (Dostoyevsky, 1863). Additionally, he recognized the orderliness of European civilizations. Still, he compared it to spiritual emptiness, pointing out, for example, the sharp contrast between the criminal system in the West and his own horrific experiences in Siberia (Dostoyevsky, 1863). This contrast between scepticism and appreciation sums up Dostoyevsky's intricate tango with the West. Nihilism was unintentionally sown during the Enlightenment when Western intellectuals promoted reason, empirical research, and individual rights. In freeing minds from the constraints of conventional wisdom, this intellectual revolution also undermined deeply held moral and religious beliefs. There was a developing emptiness full of questions about the intrinsic value and purpose of existence, as the fundamental foundations that once gave existential

coherence and meaning to life were now scrutinized. Sensitive to this intellectual development, Fyodor Dostoyevsky expressed his concerns in his books and novels. He saw the perils of the encroaching nihilism that directly resulted from Enlightenment ideas. He provided a detailed commentary on the implications of this philosophy. Dostoyevsky's deep interests in these subjects went beyond simple philosophical reflections to become pressing appeals for self-examination and reform. He thought that to prevent the nihilism that resulted from society's intellectual achievements from consuming it, it was imperative that it recognize and confront the existential vacuum that had arisen.

The ideological subtleties found in Fyodor Dostoyevsky's "*Notes from the Underground*," where the author draws a sharp distinction between Western nihilism and Russian Christian Orthodoxy, will be one of the subjects of my following thesis. An excellent illustration of this contradiction is The Underground Man, who represents a complex spiritual and intellectual conflict. Declaring that "Man is what he is, a wild beast who has been given the intellect" (Dostoyevsky, 1864) is one of the most significant ideas in the narrative. This assertion challenges the Western concept of rational egoism by asserting that reason and self-interest are insufficient to regulate human behaviour. Dostoyevsky subtly implies that faith and moral ambiguity, which are included in Russian Orthodoxy but ignored by Western nihilism, are also part of the complete human experience, in addition to reason. It is said by the Underground Man that "you believe in the crystal palace, eternally indestructible; that is, you are sympathetic to your indestructibility and your right to it" as more criticism of Western philosophy (Dostoyevsky, 1864). The utopian aspirations derived from Western rationalism and the Enlightenment are represented by the "crystal palace" in this instance. Dostoyevsky believes these ideals are incompatible with the intricacies and flaws of human existence, which Russian Orthodoxy tackles more accurately. This study emphasises

Dostoyevsky's claim that Western ideologies such as nihilism, despite their seeming rationality, are essentially incompatible with the Russian Orthodox concept of human complexity.

“I am a sick man...I am a wicked man. An unattractive man. I think my liver hurts. However, I don't know a fig about my sickness and am unsure what hurts me. Though I respect medicine, I am not being treated and never have been. Moreover, I am also superstitious in the extreme, at least enough to respect medicine.”

Fyodor Dostoyevsky's "*Notes from the Underground*" opens with a statement summarising the narrator's existential crisis; thus, it's an excellent place to start when analysing the author's ideological critique (Dostoyevsky, 1864). The speech contains contradictions; the Underground Man acknowledges superstitions and even rejects medical care while professing confidence in medicine. The conflict between Russian Orthodoxy and Western rationality is reflected in this dualism.

⁴The existential suffering caused by the collision of opposing worldviews, such as Russian Christian Orthodoxy's emphasis on moral struggle and spiritual depth against Western nihilism's concentration on reason and self-interest, can be seen as the Underground Man's "sickness" in this quotation. Admitting to being superstitious and appreciating medicine simultaneously illustrates a deep-seated internal conflict and represents the coexistence of opposing ideologies. It highlights the main argument that Western ideologies like nihilism cannot simply replace Russian Christian Orthodoxy because of its rich theological and spiritual texture. It provides a more complex and nuanced understanding of human nature that considers contradictions and ambiguities.

⁴ The division of something conceptually into two opposed or contrasted aspects, or the state of being so divided.

Abraham's moral quandary in "*Fear and Trembling*" comes to a head when he has to choose between obeying God's will and offering his son Isaac as a sacrifice. In Kierkegaard's words, "He believed by the absurd; for there could be no question of human calculation, and it was indeed absurd that God should require this of him" (Kierkegaard, 1843). In this line, Abraham demonstrates how his faith elevates him above traditional ethics, a concept that Kierkegaard dubbed the "teleological suspension of the ethical"⁵. Like the Underground Man in "Notes from the Underground," he is in a dilemma. Though he has an intellectual affinity for Western rationality, he disagrees with its conclusions. To clarify, Dostoyevsky says, "I am a sick man... I am an evil man. But I have no idea what's hurting me, and I don't know a fig about my illness" (Dostoyevsky, 1864). The Underground Man rejects straightforward, logical explanations for human behaviour by acknowledging the absurdities and contradictions of his situation, just as Abraham adopts an "absurd" act of faith. Similarly, "*The Brothers Karamazov*" presents a range of viewpoints on moral obligation and freedom, represented by the disparate worldviews of the Karamazov brothers. Alyosha's obedient spirituality counters Ivan's cerebral disobedience. Dostoyevsky's insight that "the mystery of human existence lies not in just staying alive, but in finding something to live for" (Dostoyevsky, 1880) is encapsulated in the complex relationship between the brothers. The Underground Man bemoans the paradox of human freedom as both a gift and a burden, echoing the existential crises of these characters in his convoluted psychology (Dostoyevsky, 1864). The quote "I could never become an atheist; I see the miracle in every blade

⁵ The word "teleological" comes from the Greek word "telos," which means "end" or "purpose." The study of purposes or reasons for things, as opposed to just causality, is known as teleology in philosophy. Suspension: To temporarily lay aside or override is what it implies in this context. The realm of morality and ethical principles that direct people's behaviour in society is referred to as ethical.

Now, putting these pieces together, the term "teleological suspension of the ethical" describes the notion that there may be a higher purpose or divine command (a "telos") that calls for someone to temporarily disregard or supersede accepted social norms about ethics.

of grass" by Stavrogin from "Demons" perfectly captures his oscillation between religious longing and nihilistic despair (Dostoyevsky, 1872). This inner conflict, set against the backdrop of Stavrogin's Russia, parallels the suffering of Kierkegaard's Abraham, who is faced with a "teleological suspension of the ethical" (Kierkegaard, 1843) after being instructed by divine command to sacrifice Isaac. The conflicting demands of societal conventions and individual convictions grip both people. Together, these writings present a complex picture of freedom and internal strife. The protagonists' existential challenges are not merely unique experiences; they function as archetypes that explore the conflict between personal autonomy and moral or social obligations. They perfectly capture the essence of Mikhail Bakhtin's "dialogic" theory of existence⁶, in which various voices and points of view come together to form a complex narrative space that reveals the many perceptions of a person's inner life (Bakhtin, 1981).

Mikhail Bakhtin's and Julia Kristeva's interpretation of dialogic conflict offers a framework for analysing the complex ideological conflicts in Fyodor Dostoyevsky's writings, especially those between Eastern Orthodox Christianity and Western intellectualism. We may see Dostoyevsky's characters not only as unique people but also as locations where different discourses, religious, philosophical, and ethical, intersect and interact because of Julia Kristeva's (a critic) emphasis on intertextuality. "*The Grand Inquisitor*," Ivan's atheistic monologue from "*The Brothers Karamazov*," is a good example. "Man's freedom of conscience is the most alluring thing, but it also causes the most suffering" (Dostoyevsky, 1880). In this instance, the character takes on the

⁶ The Russian philosopher and literary critic Mikhail Bakhtin is credited with developing dialogism to the greatest extent; this is evident in his work "The Dialogic Imagination." The multifarious voices, viewpoints, and orientations in any literary discourse—written, spoken, or even thought—are highlighted by the multifaceted concept of dialogism. It runs counter to the concept of a monologic voice, in which one authoritative voice seeks to dominate other voices in the text.

role of a spokesperson for Western intellectual scepticism, fostering a dialogic environment where opposing beliefs clash. Ivan's criticism is not only a reflection of his philosophy; it is part of a broader Western conversation that questions traditional Russian Orthodox values, which is personified by his brother Alyosha. On the other hand, Alyosha represents the moral certainty and spiritual dedication of the Orthodox Christian ethos. "I think that Jesus is the most beautiful, kindest, empathetic, and flawless person there is; I tell myself with envious love that there could never be anyone else like Him" (Dostoyevsky, 1880). The principles of Orthodox Christianity enter the dialogic sphere through Alyosha, engaging with and challenging other ideological stances in the book.

The Underground Man states in "*Notes from the Underground*," "Man takes pride in thinking that he is capable of great contempt," this dialogic conflict continues. He wants other people to agree with him. Because he despises humans, he is an outsider (Dostoyevsky, 1864). The protagonist personifies the existential ambiguities that arise when Western philosophical unease and Christian aspirations conflict. He is a literary location where these discussions are still performed and discussed. These characters can be seen as polyphonic beings that express several voices, in line with Kristeva's reading of Bakhtin. Their dialogic encounters show conflicting cultural, ethical, and spiritual discourses in addition to personal beliefs. What shapes and refines the ideological outlines of their existential battles are the religious texts and tenets that inspire them; they are not static doctrines but active actors in these dialogues (Kristeva, 1980). By analysing Dostoyevsky's writings via the prism of Bakhtinian dialogism, as Kristeva has interpreted it, we can better see how these novels operate as intricate settings where Eastern and Western ideologies coexist and clash. This creates fresh opportunities to investigate how these dialogic conflicts influence Dostoyevsky's work's deep existential issues and narrative dynamics.

Furthermore, Fyodor Dostoyevsky and Albert Camus examined the concept of nihilism or the conviction that life has no value or purpose. In *"The Myth of Sisyphus,"* Camus illustrates his thesis that even if life may seem meaningless, there is still significance to our struggles by telling the tale of Sisyphus rolling a boulder up a hill only to have it back down. On the other hand, Dostoyevsky frequently conveys that his characters are confused and plagued by a lack of faith. However, Dostoyevsky disagrees with Camus and believes that religious faith, more significantly, Christian Orthodoxy, is the key to solving this issue. Simply put, although both writers concur that it's necessary to consider the meaning of life, they offer distinct answers: Dostoyevsky thinks that faith can supply the answers, while Camus argues that one should embrace the fight.

Edward Siecienski's work *"The Papacy and the Orthodox: Sources and History of a Debate"* thoroughly explains the long-standing disagreements and differences between the Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches. The idea of authority, a point of disagreement between these two branches of Christianity, is one of its central themes. This shows how the Papacy as a centralised power became a pillar of Roman Catholicism. This sharply contrasts Eastern Orthodoxy's more synodal or conciliar form of government, which views authority as more distributed among the bishops and the wider church body. Siecienski avoids using polemical or reductive analysis. Instead, he values the intricate theological fabric that both traditions have spent years weaving together. He looks at the main points of disagreement, including the filioque issue, the Pope's position as the "Vicar of Christ,"⁷ and the theological proclamations supporting these positions. This meticulous methodology guarantees that the analysis is firmly based on a solid

⁷ A fundamental component of the Roman Catholic Church's ecclesiology and conception of power is the Pope's position as the "Vicar of Christ." With this title, the Pope is seen as the earthly embodiment of Jesus Christ and the highest authority in Catholicism regarding church government and Christian philosophy. As the first bishop of Rome and the "rock" upon which Christ would establish his church (Matthew 16:18), St. Peter is the ancestor of all popes, and this function is based on apostolic succession.

academic framework, employing copious source material to substantiate its assertions. When his writing is paired with Dostoevsky's literary criticisms of Catholicism's hierarchical structure, such as those found in "*The Brothers Karamazov*" chapter "*The Grand Inquisitor*," his work becomes especially pertinent. Dostoevsky tackles the problem from a narrative and existential standpoint, but Siecienski offers a theological framework that might deepen one's comprehension of Dostoevsky's ideas. In the framework of Russian Christian Orthodoxy, the topics of doubt, faith, and the problem of evil are examined in Fyodor Dostoevsky's novel "*The Brothers Karamazov*." Ivan Karamazov, in particular, struggles with existential uncertainties and questions regarding God's existence, reminiscent of more significant religious debates. The story incorporates the distinctive viewpoint of Russian Orthodoxy on suffering, highlighting the ability of hardships to transform and lead one closer to God. The tradition emphasises a mystical and contemplative approach to faith, where the experience of pain is considered part of a spiritual path towards more profound communion with the divine, even when uncertainty and suffering are acknowledged. The novel's examination of these subjects illustrates how Russian Orthodox Christianity is complex and profoundly spiritual.

The way that Fyodor Dostoyevsky portrayed peasants is closely associated with his Christian Orthodox worldview, which provides a crucial foundation for deciphering the nuances of Russian culture, spirituality, and ethics in the 19th century. In his groundbreaking book "*Dostoyevsky: The Mantle of the Prophet, 1871-1881*," Joseph Frank emphasises how Dostoyevsky saw the Russian peasantry as "the carriers of the Russian national spirit," inextricably linked to Eastern Orthodox principles such as selflessness and atoning suffering.

Further exploring Dostoyevsky's storytelling tactics, Mikhail Bakhtin's "*Problems of Dostoyevsky's Poetics*" highlights his use of dialogism, which makes the peasant characters more

than just symbols but agents representing intricate existential contradictions. In "Dostoyevsky and the Ontology of Time," Saul Morson explores how the ethical aspects of these characters' lives mirror Eastern Orthodox theological demands, emphasising a "synergia" between human and divine action. Known for their Dostoyevsky translations, Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky contend in their introductions that Dostoyevsky's peasant characters frequently act as a counterbalance to the intellectual elite's rationalistic ethos, highlighting the shortcomings of a purely intellectual approach to moral dilemmas. Peasants historically made up the bulk of Russia's population in Dostoyevsky's era and were frequently referred to as the country's "soul." Since Russian identity was closely linked to Russian Orthodoxy, peasants were idealised representations of this spiritual environment. The peasantry was frequently seen as the "custodians of the nation's soul," as Orlando Figes explains in "Natasha's Dance: A Cultural History of Russia," a notion that Dostoyevsky found poignant.

When Fyodor Dostoyevsky's depiction of peasants is analysed under the prism of Eastern Orthodox Christianity, which emphasises suffering, humility, and a mystical relationship to the divine, theological nuances become more nuanced. These qualities are consistent with the theological emphasis on redemptive suffering and "kenosis,"⁸ or self-emptying. Father Zosima, a peasant-born monastery elder in "*The Brothers Karamazov*," is a prime example of these qualities. That "each of us is guilty in everything before everyone, and I most of all" is something Zosima clarifies to Alyosha during one of their chats (Dostoyevsky, 1880). This statement captures the

⁸ "Kenosis" is a Greek word that means "emptying." In Christian theology, it refers to the self-emptying of Jesus' own will to become entirely receptive to God's divine will. The concept is primarily derived from Philippians 2:7 in the New Testament, where Paul, speaking of Jesus, says that he "emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men."

idea of "kenosis" and is highly compatible with the Eastern Orthodox emphasis on shared sinfulness and humility.

Furthermore, Dostoyevsky views the Russian peasantry as living examples of Christ's Sermon on the Mount, which exalts the virtues of humility, poverty of spirit, and making peace. With an emphasis on humility and active love, Zosima's teachings frequently reflect these Beatitudes. He says, "Active love is a harsh and fearful thing compared with love in dreams" (Dostoyevsky, 1880). Joseph Frank observes in his analysis of Dostoyevsky that the writer saw in the peasantry a "living icon," so to speak, of the transformational potential of Christian humility and love. These are not just decorative theological aspects; they serve Dostoyevsky's literary purposes (Frank, 2002). Fyodor Dostoyevsky's writings were significantly impacted by the "Russian Idea," which emphasises the idea of a unique spiritual mission in Russia. This ideological framework distances Russia from Western rationalism and religious practices by presenting it as having a unique spirituality. It is in this framework that the peasant character assumes special significance. Dostoyevsky's concern in utilising the peasant image to negotiate the ambiguities of Russian spirituality with the West has been emphasised by academics such as Richard Freeborn (Freeborn, 1971). *"The Brothers Karamazov,"* where Father Zosima's role is crucial to expressing this "Russian Idea." As the elder states, "Love is such a priceless treasure that you can purchase the whole world with it, and redeem not only your own but other people's sins" (Dostoyevsky, 1880); he comes from a lowly background similar to that of the peasantry. This perspective highlights the Orthodox emphasis on transformational love and starkly contrasts the Western Enlightenment's emphasis on reason as the route to moral advancement. The teachings of Zosima were consistent with the spiritual traditions of the Russian peasantry, which helped Dostoyevsky define the "Russian Idea" as originating from a distinct brand of Christian spirituality.

Fyodor Dostoyevsky's spiritual and ethical concerns are very different from the philosophies and political approaches of Joseph Stalin and Vladimir Lenin. Dostoyevsky's Christian existentialism and concern for humanity's spiritual health conflict with the materialist and atheistic worldview that gave rise to Lenin and Stalin. In contrast to Dostoyevsky, who criticised both the state and the church for falling short of the ethical and spiritual qualities he held dear, Lenin and Stalin aimed to create a society where religion was, at most, irrelevant and, at worst, a barrier to advancement. It is evident from Lenin's "*State and Revolution*" that the state will establish a classless society after it is employed as a tool by the proletariat (Lenin, 1917). The contrast between Dostoyevsky and Lenin is striking: while Lenin believes that political activity to alter material conditions is crucial, Dostoyevsky regards individual moral development anchored in Orthodox Christianity as the foundation for society's health. The "*Dialectical and Historical Materialism*" of Stalin emphasises this difference even more. Based on a deterministic interpretation of Marxist-Leninist ideology, his perspective downplays the spiritual aspects that Dostoyevsky believed were essential to human existence and rationalises oppressive methods as a historical "necessity" (Stalin, 1938). Fyodor Dostoyevsky's scepticism of ideologically-driven movements finds its most explicit articulation in "Demons" (also known as "The Devils" or "The Possessed"). This work is a cautionary tale against the tyranny of collective ideals over individual conscience.

By delving deeply into human psychology and moral quandaries, Fyodor Dostoyevsky established the foundation for contemporary novelists to explore the complexities of the human psyche. In "*The Art of the Novel*," Milan Kundera considers the European novelistic heritage and recognizes the significant influence of authors such as Dostoyevsky. Kundera's perspective, which was undoubtedly influenced by Dostoyevsky's groundbreaking novels, grappled with complex subjects

like faith, nihilism, and free will and sees the book as a tool for challenging existence and the human condition. Despite writing in various historical periods and cultural situations, both authors are convinced that a book has the power to go beyond straightforward narrative and function as a philosophical investigation. Kundera views Dostoyevsky's books as the pinnacle of this literary tradition, in which figures such as Raskolnikov and the Karamazov brothers perfectly capture the nuanced interactions between morality, psychology, and ideology. Thus, Kundera subtly acknowledges Dostoyevsky's enormous effect on his view of the purpose and potential of the book in "The Art of the Novel," in addition to paying homage to the novelistic tradition.

Thematic framework

This research is based on critical analysis of Fyodor Dostoyevsky's major characters through which it is visible that why he was against western philosophies and didn't wanted the young Russian minds to be influenced by the west. He criticized Ivan Turgenev and other writers because they introduced characters who were influenced by Nihilism and called to be as a "Superfluous man" who didn't believed in any societal rules nor religion. To understand Dostoyevsky's explanation of Nihilistic characters, "The Myth of Sisyphus" is an idle analysis and explanation. Dostoyevsky, noticed the religious and moral decay in the west and talked about the importance of faith and what kind of leap is needed to believe in the divine and avoid the void in humans. Kierkegaard's "teleological suspension of the ethical" is where a similar leap of faith has been seen where one has to exclude societal ethics and have faith to connect with the divine amidst the eternal suffering and pain. Furthermore, "the great schism" divided Christianity into two major parts where Dostoyevsky aligned more with the Eastern orthodoxy because of it's difference in perception from the western Catholic church. He didn't stop at the Eastern

orthodoxical thinking but integrated Mysticism to point out the true Russian way of thinking and identity through peasant characters and compared their image with the Christ. The thesis also intends to highlight Dostoyevsky's emphasis on the plight of the peasantry, through different critical analysis which will help readers gain a better knowledge of Russian demographics and socio-political dynamics in the 19th century.

Chapter 3

Lost in the West, Found in the East: Dostoyevsky's Struggle with Nihilism.

People frequently experience a sense of clarity and enlightenment when they start to wrestle with a new idea or knowledge; it's as though the world has suddenly come into focus for the first time. This first comprehension, which offers a fresh perspective and interpretation of the world, can feel like a revelation. But as time goes on and experiences mount up, the clarity of that initial comprehension frequently gives way to a more intricate and nuanced perspective. New ideas are integrated, perspectives change, and the world is viewed through various lenses, each offering a distinct perspective. An essential aspect of the human experience, this evolution of thinking reflects our capacity for development, learning, and adaptation. Similar to how an adult's essential perspective of the world grows more complex as they age, our understanding changes as we work through life's challenges and constantly adjust to new knowledge and experiences.

"Nihilism" refers to various philosophical stances that contest or reject the presence of an objective meaning, purpose, or inherent worth in the universe. This idea was important throughout Dostoevsky's writings, especially in "Notes from Underground," which is frequently recognized as one of the earliest existentialist novels.

In "Notes from Underground," the Underground Man debated nihilism and rational egoism, two philosophical tenets popular in Russia when Dostoevsky wrote. The rational egoists' faith that reason and science can solve every human issue and create an ideal society is criticized by The Underground Man. He contends that this idea is founded on a misconception about human nature, which is essentially illogical and motivated by wants that reason cannot explain. Because he understands the emptiness and sorrow that can arise from losing confidence in external values and meaning, The Underground Man's viewpoint can be interpreted as a critique of nihilism. But in his denial of society and its moral standards and his incapacity to discover a consistent source of worth or meaning in his own life, he also personifies the nihilistic viewpoint. Dostoevsky's examination of nihilism in "Notes from Underground" indicates his broader worries about the ethical and spiritual dilemma he observed impacting Western society during that era. The book delves deeply into the intricacies of the human psyche and its quest for significance in an otherwise uncaring and sometimes antagonistic environment (Dostoyevsky,1993).

An important turning point in Western history was the Enlightenment, which brought about a significant shift in favor of reason and individual liberties. The emphasis on reason was fundamental to Enlightenment philosophy, as Voltaire succinctly stated when he said, "Those who can make you believe absurdities, can make you commit atrocities" (Voltaire, "Questions sur les miracles",1765). Because John Locke maintained that "the senses are the primary and most reliable source of knowledge" (Locke, "An Essay Concerning Human Understanding"), this rationalist viewpoint was complemented by a strong emphasis on empirical knowledge. The thinkers of the Enlightenment were also ardent supporters of individual rights. For example, Jean-Jacques Rousseau highlighted the conflict between societal restrictions and individual liberties when he wrote in "The Social Contract" that "Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains." Likewise,

Immanuel Kant defended the value of personal liberty in his essay "What is Enlightenment?" by claiming that "Enlightenment is man's emergence from his self-imposed nonage." These intellectuals and their theories significantly impacted social movements, legislative adjustments, and political revolutions that shaped the modern era.

In "Notes from Underground," Fyodor Dostoyevsky presented a complex critique of the rationalist and utopian ideas central to the Enlightenment. He questioned the idea that reason and science could lead to human perfection and social harmony, suggesting that these beliefs overlooked the complexities and contradictions of human nature. In "Notes from Underground," the Underground Man critiques the notion that human behavior can be understood and predicted based on rational principles:

“you believe in a palace of crystal that can never be destroyed - a palace at which one will not be able to put out one's tongue or make a long nose on the sly. And perhaps that is just why I am afraid of this edifice, that it is of crystal and can never be destroyed and that one cannot put one's tongue out at it even on the sly” (Dostoyevsky, "Notes from the Underground", Part II, Chapter 7).

Here, the Underground Man criticizes the utopian vision of a perfect society built on reason and science. He suggests that such a vision is ultimately dehumanizing because it does not account for human nature's irrational and contradictory aspects. Furthermore, the Underground Man critiques the idea that human behavior can be guided solely by rational self-interest:

“one’s own free, unfettered desire, one’s whim, however wild it may be, one’s own fantasy, sometimes worked up to the point of madness - all this is precisely that same most profitable profit ” (Dostoyevsky, "Notes from Underground", Part I, Chapter 8).

Here, the Underground Man asserts the importance of individual freedom and human nature's irrational, emotional aspects. He suggests that Enlightenment thinkers' emphasis on rational self-interest neglects the complexity and richness of human experience. Overall, Dostoyevsky's "Notes from Underground" can be seen as a profound critique of the rationalist and utopian ideals of the Enlightenment. The Underground Man's perspective highlights the limitations of reason and science as tools for understanding and guiding human behavior. It emphasizes the importance of individual freedom and the irrational aspects of human nature.

Dostoevsky made multiple trips to Western Europe, stopping in nations including France, Germany, Switzerland, and Italy. He battled a gambling addiction; thus, these travels were partially for his health and to get away from his creditors in Russia. Due to his intense encounters in the West, Dostoevsky developed nuanced and conflicted opinions of Europe and its cultural values. He was critical of what he perceived to be Western culture's moral and spiritual decay, even as he applauded the scientific and technical achievements of the West. He was apprehensive about the West's embrace of materialism and atheism at the expense of its Christian heritage. Dostoevsky frequently addresses issues of faith, uncertainty, and the search for purpose in a godless world in his works, which are influenced by his experiences in the West. For instance, in "The Brothers Karamazov," Ivan, one of the main characters, stands for Dostoevsky's cynical, scientific perspective toward the West. Still, Alyosha, his brother, represents the spiritual principles and faith he thought were disappearing (Dostoyevsky, 1990).

In "Winter Notes on Summer Impressions," Fyodor Dostoevsky presents insights from his explorations around Western Europe. His contemplations unveil an intricate network of appreciation, criticism, and deep-seated ambivalence regarding the diverse aspects of Western civilization. Dostoevsky's analysis of the moral and spiritual fabric of the West, which he sees to be in a condition of collapse, is one of the narrative's most striking themes. As seen by his statement that "Europe is indeed ailing," Dostoevsky is not afraid to criticize what he sees as the ubiquitous materialism and erosion of religion that characterize Western culture. The sickness is spiritual, and it is not an issue here whether or not Europe is a materialistic continent. God exists nowhere in Europe (Dostoevsky, "Winter Notes on Summer Impressions"). This lament represents a more significant topic, the fear of spiritual and moral values eroding in the face of modernity, that runs across most of Dostoevsky's literary canon. However, Dostoevsky's criticism touches on the political and social structure of the West in addition to the spiritual world. He considers the liberal emphasis on individual rights and personal liberties erroneous and is especially critical. His bold assertion, "In Europe, they talk about the rights of man," succinctly expresses this. Man has no rights; this is incorrect. What rights does this absurd, helpless, and sad creature have?" (Dostoevsky's "Winter Notes on Summer Impressions"). In this passage, Dostoevsky questions the Enlightenment ideal, which holds that humans are rational agents with unalienable rights. Instead, he challenges the fundamental tenets of Western liberal democracy by portraying people as imperfect, helpless, and weak.

Furthermore, it is possible to see Dostoevsky's critique of Western individualism as a manifestation of his more considerable anxiety about the alienation and isolation that might result from an overemphasis on the ego at the expense of interpersonal relationships and moral principles. Dostoevsky's writing frequently explores this conflict between the individual and the group; in

"Winter Notes on Summer Impressions," the author struggles with the divergent ideals of the East and the West. Dostoevsky uses his observations of the West as a mirror through which he examines and evaluates the philosophical and cultural changes occurring in his culture and the larger world at the time. The intricacy and profundity of his contemplations provide witness to Dostoevsky's lasting significance as a philosopher who was profoundly involved in the essential inquiries concerning humanity and the ethical structure of society.

Naturally, Dostoyevsky wasn't always like this. He had been a highly left-wing young man. He had been a revolutionary, had spent years in a labor camp, and had escaped the death penalty by the slimmest of margins (he was infamously taken to be hanged just before it was reported that his sentence had been remitted). Early on, he had written somewhat sentimental pieces that bemoaned the societal unfairness that causes so much sorrow, focusing on "poor folk," the "insulted and the injured," and other such subjects. But then, in the early 1860s, his perspective changed drastically (Chatterjee,2017). As Kyrill Fitzlyon (Zinovieff), the translator, states in the introduction of Winter Notes on Summer Impressions:

“His earlier novels aim at the entertainment of the reader; undeterred by considerations of verisimilitude or psychological probability, they glide over the surface of life without stopping to take soundings of what goes on underneath; they shun deep analysis, and they lack the later Dostoyevskian eagerness to reconcile the actions of men with their consciences, conceived in terms of spiritual anguish.”

During the 19th century, Fyodor Dostoyevsky and Ivan Turgenev represented opposing philosophies and points of view regarding Russian politics and society. After going through a

profound spiritual transformation and the sufferings of Siberian exile, Dostoyevsky formed a conservative and nationalistic worldview that valued autocracy, Orthodoxy, and the people (Narodnost). Based on these ideas, he thought Russia could experience a moral and spiritual rebirth. However, Turgenev was linked to liberal ideologies and Western-oriented intelligentsia. He supported individual liberties and social reforms, and European ideals and concepts influenced him. The two authors had a significant ideological divide due to their different worldviews. Because he felt that Turgenev's liberalism was at odds with Russia's distinct spiritual and cultural heritage, Dostoyevsky detested Turgenev's liberalism. He thought Western liberalism could breed moral decline and nihilism, endangering the moral foundation of Russian society. Dostoyevsky articulated these concepts in several works, such as "Demons" and "The Brothers Karamazov," in which he criticized the detrimental effects that liberalism, rationalism, and atheism had on people and society.

Furthermore, Dostoyevsky's resistance to Turgenev's liberalism was greatly influenced by his religious beliefs and life experiences. His exposure to the hardships and tenacity of the ordinary people during his stay in Siberia strengthened his conviction that autocracy and Russian Orthodoxy were essential social stabilizers. Dostoyevsky's religious convictions further persuaded him that liberal principles, which he perceived as lacking a spiritual base, were insufficient to bring about such a revolution and that Russia's moral and spiritual renewal was essential for the country's future development. In the first part of the 1800s, "narod" had several meanings and was sometimes used synonymously with "natsiia" to refer to a state's or nation's population. But "narod" can also mean an ethnic group that does not have its political entity; it is related to "plemia" (tribe) and the obsolete "iazyk". Alongside adjectives like "prostoi narod" (simple people) and "chernoi narod" (black people), the word also denoted the lower socioeconomic groups. Finally,

"narod" could simply refer to a crowd of many individuals gathered in one location. Poet P. A. Viazemsky is credited with coining the term "narodnost" in the 1820s (Miller,2008). Motivated by the Polish word "narodowosc," he suggested translating "nationalité" as "narodnost." According to Viazemsky, new words may be formed from foreign terms, like Russian had assimilated foreign words. However, as the later conversation between Viazemsky and A. I. Turgenev demonstrates, not even "narodnost" inventor understood what it meant. Though he commended Viazemsky's poetry for their "narodnost," Turgenev pointed out that Viazemsky's style was neither distinctive nor particularly Russian. In response, Viazemsky stated that the focus should be on the topic, which, in his instance, was Russian. "Narodnost" evolved to mean a one-dimensional, simplistic perspective centered on Russian issues. Furthermore, "narodnost" maintained its dual meaning, designating a community that gained prominence in the 19th century and a property characteristic of the 18th. The Slavophiles used this double connotation in political rhetoric (Miller,2008). It highlights the linguistic conflict between "narodnyi" as "populaire" (popular) and "narodnyi" as "national." The Slavophiles deliberately exploited this tension in their political discourse. In general, "narod" and its variations were complicated ideas that changed throughout time to represent the complexity of Russian politics, culture, and identity in the 19th century.

Dostoyevsky had a nuanced understanding of the notion of "narod." On the one hand, he was intensely interested in spiritual principles, the potential for moral greatness, and the Russian people. This is clear from reading any of his works since he frequently delves into his characters' moral and psychological complexity, many of whom are archetypes for the Russian people, and examines their depths. Dostoyevsky thought that the Russian "narod" possessed a particular moral and spiritual strength that might help Russia have a better future. Dostoyevsky, however, was not a fan of all things Russian. He worried about the impact of materialism, liberalism, and rationalism

on Russia from the West. Dostoyevsky argues that these ideas are incompatible with the fundamental nature and spiritual principles of the Russian people. Fyodor Dostoevsky was a devout Christian, although he had some serious reservations about the teachings of the Catholic Church. His staunch nationalism and Russian Orthodox faith often color interpretations of his criticism of the Catholic Church. How the Catholic Church and Dostoevsky perceive Christ's teachings is a significant dispute. Dostoevsky saw Christ's teachings as a path to spiritual freedom via love and compassion. Personal liberty and moral accountability were also his beliefs. Alyosha in "The Brothers Karamazov" exemplifies Christian faith and devotion. Dostoevsky opposed the Catholic Church's institutional dominance and proclivity to suppress spiritual freedom. One famous example of this criticism is "The Grand Inquisitor," an Ivan story from "The Brothers Karamazov." The Grand Inquisitor accuses Christ of burdening humanity with freedom, which he feels has caused misery and despair. The Grand Inquisitor says that the Church has made up for Christ's mistake by replacing human freedom with Church power. His complicated and nuanced opinions on Christianity and the Catholic Church reflect Dostoevsky's theological and philosophical interests. His works examine the conflict between faith and skepticism, freedom and authority, and the individual and the group, presenting a deep and thought-provoking look at religion in human life.

Chapter 4

Spiritual Crossroads: Dostoyevsky, Roman Catholicism, and the Mysticism of Russian Orthodoxy through Zoshima and Alyosha.

Fyodor Dostoevsky, a committed adherent of Christianity, integrated his religious convictions into his literary compositions. This is apparent in his examination of themes related to faith, atonement, and the human soul in literary works such as "Crime and Punishment" and "The Brothers Karamazov". The character of Sonya in Fyodor Dostoevsky's novel "Crime and Punishment" serves as a symbol of Christian love and redemption. Throughout the narrative, Sonya is pivotal in guiding the protagonist, Raskolnikov, toward repentance and a profound spiritual transformation (Dostoevsky, 1866). In Dostoevsky's novel "The Brothers Karamazov," the figure of Father Zosima embodies the author's Christian conception of humility, compassion, and forgiveness (Dostoevsky, 1880). Dostoevsky's literary oeuvre frequently explores profound religious inquiries, with his characters frequently partaking in philosophical exchanges concerning the essence of faith and the presence of a divine being. Dostoevsky's literary endeavours encompassed examining these thematic elements to shed light on the ethical and metaphysical aspects of the human condition while simultaneously presenting a conceptualization of salvation and spiritual enlightenment.

Fyodor Dostoevsky's critical analysis of the Catholic Church is intricately intertwined with his religious philosophy and overarching worldview. The individual in question adhered to the Eastern Orthodox Christian faith and held a firm conviction regarding the significance of spiritual autonomy and ethical accountability. He perceived the Catholic Church as endorsing a form of religious tyranny that eroded these fundamental foundations. Within the literary work "The Brothers Karamazov," Fyodor Dostoevsky introduces a renowned parable known as "The Grand Inquisitor." This story serves as a vehicle through which Dostoevsky articulates his critical perspective on the Catholic Church. The narrative depicts the reappearance of Jesus Christ on Earth amidst the historical context of the Spanish Inquisition. However, He is apprehended by the

Grand Inquisitor, who asserts that the Church has modified his teachings to provide individuals with the desired sense of security and contentment, even at the expense of their liberties (Dostoevsky, 1880). The aforementioned story serves as an embodiment of Dostoevsky's perspective, which posits that the Catholic Church endeavours to exert authority and influence over individuals by presenting them with an illusory assurance and deliverance, impeding their engagement with the intricate ethical and metaphysical intricacies inherent in human existence. Moreover, Dostoevsky expressed a critical perspective regarding the Catholic Church's entanglement in historical political power struggles. Dostoevsky's novel "The Demons" presents a portrayal wherein the Church is depicted as being implicated in the revolutionary fervour of the era, employing religion to advance its political objectives (Dostoevsky, 1872). This critique aligns with Dostoevsky's overarching preoccupation with the perils of ideology and the imperative for individuals to resist the allure of relinquishing their moral obligations when confronted with authority or dogma.

The Great Schism, which occurred in 1054, marked a significant division between the Eastern Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church. This schism resulted from protracted disagreements spanning several centuries, encompassing theological ideas, papal power, and various cultural and political disparities. The theological disagreements encompassed the Eastern Orthodox Church's repudiation of the Filioque clause, an augmentation to the Nicene Creed positing that the Holy Spirit flows from the Father "and the Son." The Eastern Orthodox Church contended that this addition deviated from the conventional comprehension of the Holy Trinity (Charles Rivers, 2020). The role and power of the Pope were subjects of considerable disagreement, as the Eastern Orthodox Church contested the Pope's assertion of universal jurisdiction over the entirety of the Christian Church. According to the Eastern Orthodox Church,

the Pope held a position of primary honour but lacked primary authority. Moreover, the partitioning of the Roman Empire into Eastern and Western Empires played a role in fostering cultural and political distinctions that served to deepen the divide between the two factions of the church. The formal schism occurred in 1054 when mutual excommunications were issued by the Pope and the Patriarch of Constantinople, resulting in an enduring division between the two ecclesiastical bodies that has yet to be resolved entirely despite subsequent attempts at reconciliation. Fyodor Dostoevsky, an ardent adherent of Eastern Orthodox Christianity, vividly incorporated his religious beliefs into his literary works, exemplifying the profound heritage of spirituality within the Eastern Orthodox Church, which places significant emphasis on the individual's direct encounter with the divine, mystical encounters, and the attainment of union with God, known as theosis (Charles Rivers,2020).

Here, the main difference can be seen through the whole concept of freedom and between the western version of the freedom and religious perspective and the perception of Dostoyevsky and true spiritual freedom. Alyosha responds doubtfully to Ivan's Grand Inquisitor tale in Fyodor Dostoevsky's "The Brothers Karamazov," claiming that the Inquisitor's depiction of freedom misrepresents Christ's teachings. The Inquisitor contends that having the ability to choose between right and wrong torments people and that freedom is a burden placed on humanity by Christ. According to his theory, people eventually want to give up their freedom to a person or organization that can settle their conscience and establish law and order. Alyosha objects because the Inquisitor confused Christ's spiritual freedom with the contemporary Western idea of individual liberty, not because freedom can be difficult. Alyosha and other religious figures, such as Zossima, distinguish between the political and civil liberties linked to the concerns of contemporary consciousness and the moral and spiritual freedom that Christ provided

(White,1993). The Grand Inquisitor falsely claims that the existential and social unrest of Dostoevsky's modern society, shaped by Western philosophy and the rise of the individual consciousness, is a natural byproduct of humankind's spiritual liberty. Dostoevsky does not believe that freedom always results in unhappiness, even though he does acknowledge that it can be a significant burden. The suffering that the author saw in his characters was not a direct result of Christian freedom but rather a symptom of the particular circumstances of contemporary society. Although Dostoevsky acknowledged the difficulties this freedom presented, he did not consider it a negative aspect of Christian life. When one considers the inability of Christian love to bring about world peace, the Inquisitor's accusation against Christian anarchism, which rejects the state's ability to enforce laws, becomes increasingly persuasive. Nevertheless, despite this seeming setback, Zossima does not waver in his conviction that love is the power that can conquer the entire globe. Essentially, the Inquisitor's argument is based on a misinterpretation that links the weight of Christ's moral and spiritual freedom to the anxiety and terror connected to the contemporary, personalized conception of liberty, a perspective that both Alyosha and Dostoevsky would deny (Dostoyevsky,1880). Fyodor challenges the Grand Inquisitor's strategy of just providing for people's basic needs and enforcing compliance to maintain order, arguing that true societal harmony necessitates people making the deliberate decision to give up their liberties to further the interests of the whole. In keeping with his view that individuals are not naturally motivated by the desire for personal liberty or happiness but rather by a more profound need to suffer and submit, this subject is interwoven throughout his portrayal of characters who discover paradoxical freedom in self-abnegation and suffering. Thus, Dostoyevsky's conception of freedom emphasizes disciplined self-sacrifice over individual rights, reflecting his belief that true peace and societal order can only be attained by such voluntary renunciation (White,1993). Dostoyevsky's

investigation of freedom goes beyond simple philosophical theory; it is an examination of the deep foundations of society as well as the human psyche. Through the metaphorical story of "The Grand Inquisitor," in particular, he presents a counterintuitive philosophy in his profound literary work "The Brothers Karamazov," which holds that true freedom is the willful acceptance of a higher order rather than the absence of constraint. According to Dostoyevsky, humanity is incapable of accepting Christ's conception of moral freedom, which allows people to choose between doing good and doing evil. The option is paralyzing because of the intrinsic responsibility it carries, although it is theoretically liberating. The philosophy of the Grand Inquisitor stands in sharp contrast, based on the notion that individuals are content when they are not burdened with freedom. Dostoyevsky explores the psychological lure of giving up control to a higher power that meets material demands while giving one a sense of purpose and security, even if doing so means sacrificing one's liberty. Imposing order by despotism can result in fake harmony since it robs people of their fundamental moral freedom. Dostoyevsky frequently exhibits a masochistic attraction to suffering, consistent with Dostoyevsky's view that pain has a cleansing and elevating effect. This preference for martyrdom is an active, deliberate decision to seek more profound liberty via self-sacrifice rather than a defeatist retreat from freedom. Dostoyevsky sees the route to true freedom here, at the intersection of sacrifice and pain, as avoiding the anarchy that results from uncontrolled free will and the dictatorship that follows its renunciation. Dostoyevsky's viewpoint fundamentally contradicts the individualistic liberty of the Enlightenment. He predicts a state of social harmony that results from internalized discipline rather than from external control; it is harmony based on a shared commitment to a higher moral standard. This is where he makes his most controversial claim: that the need for existential significance found in spiritual subservience and community belonging trumps the drive for personal freedom.

Mysticism is a kind of spirituality that aims to transcend the limitations of intellectual understanding and sensory experience to achieve a direct, personal unity with the Divine or Absolute. Hesychasm is a type of Eastern Orthodox mysticism that places a strong emphasis on prayerful introspection and repeating the Jesus Prayer to attain oneness with God and holy contemplation (Ware, 1979). Both mysticism and hesychasm aim to experience God directly or the ultimate reality by rising above the physical realm. His works often address themes important to hesychasm and mysticism by Fyodor Dostoevsky. His characters frequently go through intense spiritual crises that end in epiphanies, mirroring the mystical pursuit of heavenly truth. Hesychastic ideals are embodied, for example, by Father Zosima and other characters in "The Brothers Karamazov," who value prayer, silence, and contemplation (Dostoevsky, 1880). The hesychastic path, which aims to quiet the mind and get a vision of the "uncreated light," a metaphor for divine presence, aligns with the metamorphosis experienced by Dostoevsky's characters. The hesychastic ideal, which holds that the path to actual knowledge of God is not intellectual investigation but rather heart purification and constant prayer, is reflected in Dostoevsky's writings. This is similar to the mystical conviction that one can have a direct and personal encounter with God via inner transformation and heavenly grace rather than human effort. George P. Fedotov's "A Treasury of Russian Spirituality" provides a thorough analysis of the rich spiritual legacy of Russian Orthodoxy, especially its mysticism, which has had a profound impact on Russian literature and philosophy.

Fyodor Dostoevsky's writings stand out since they embodied Russian mystical and spiritual traditions. According to Fedotov, Russian mysticism frequently emphasises the profound, individual encounter with God and the soul's transforming path towards divine unification. This tradition places a strong emphasis on ascetic practises, inner spirituality, and the value of suffering

as a means of achieving spiritual enlightenment and development (Fedotov, 1950). Deeply rooted in Russian Orthodox mysticism, Dostoevsky's spirituality is powerfully depicted in his works, particularly in "The Brothers Karamazov." Alyosha Karamazov and Father Zosima are two characters that best represent this mystical spirituality. Among the figures of great spiritual depth is Zosima, who personifies the virtues of humility, compassion, and the quest for inner transformation by love and suffering. The core of Russian mystical thought is reflected in his teachings and life: one can gain a profound grasp of the truth and the nature of existence via sorrow, love, and close, intimate contact with God (Dostoevsky, 1880). Father Zosima, whose teachings are rooted in Christian mysticism and emphasise the redemptive aspect of suffering and the immanence of the divine in everyday living, is the one who guides Alyosha on his transformational journey. The monastery gives a deep sense of divine love and compassion, acting as a furnace for Alyosha's spiritual maturation. This stage of introspective spirituality is critical because it moulds his understanding and prepares him for the critical event of his mentor's passing. With Zosima's death, a significant turning point has been reached, signifying the conclusion of Alyosha's spiritual apprenticeship and the start of his journey. This is more than just a sad occasion for Alyosha; it symbolises a mystical rebirth that forces him to come out of the monastery and interact with the outside world. His escape from the monastery and subsequent absorption into everyday life is not a sign of his spiritual life's renunciation but rather of its fulfilment. Alyosha personifies the mystic notion that genuine spirituality involves compassionately and actively participating in the world rather than withdrawing from it. His encounters, infused with Zosima's knowledge, make him a living example of his mentor's lessons, actively putting them to use in a world of moral complexity and pain. Alyosha's experiences of transformational pain powerfully illustrate the mystic trait of integrating spirituality into mundane existence. Although challenging, these experiences increase

his empathy and comprehension, supporting the mystic idea that enlightenment involves a deeper engagement with and transformation of life's challenges rather than a flight from them. Thus, Dostoevsky's depiction of Alyosha becomes a powerful story of spiritual awakening, showing how mystical insight and active compassion can come together to pursue a more profound comprehension of the divine and human existence (Dostoyevsky, 1880).

Dostoevsky's "The Brothers Karamazov," in which he views the world through a lens of transformative melancholy and pain, provides a spiritual response to existential dilemmas in his intricate literary cosmos. According to Dostoevsky, only via the fires of adversity can one achieve a true spiritual awakening. His protagonists often find themselves lost in despair and existential dread. However, it is precisely in the face of these difficulties that people have epiphanies and come to a deeper understanding of the divine. Dostoevsky argues that this spiritual enlightenment serves as a shield against the oddities of reality rather than denying them. However, he is aware of the limitations of human perception and the complexities of the human mind. He does not propose simple solutions but rather intricate, introspective journeys that shed light on the complexities of life. Dostoevsky stresses that the human experience is mysterious and complex, but spirituality and the supernatural can offer consolation and insight.

Chapter 5

Peasants and Prophecy: The Moral Dichotomy of Civilization and Dostoevsky's Interpretation of Russian Identity

"Demons" and "The Brothers Karamazov," two of Fyodor Dostoyevsky's masterworks, depict peasants not as mere characters but as crucial elements that shed light on Russian culture, ethics,

and philosophy. These pictures show Dostoyevsky's keen understanding of the Russian spirit and his critical view of his day's social and political climate. Because it shows how susceptible the lower classes were to the intellectual deceit of the time, the depiction of peasants in "Demons" is particularly poignant. The anecdote shows how revolutionary ideas, founded on theoretical abstractions unrelated to the class's daily lives as peasants, cause anarchy and destruction. As a critique of revolutionary movements, this reveals how the intellectual elite genuinely do not understand the needs and reality of the Russian peasantry. "The Brothers Karamazov" offers a more complex depiction of rural life. Peasants' profound, inherent wisdom and unfaltering faith elevate them beyond mere social pawns in this context. To illustrate this point, consider Grigory and Marfa, whose profound spirituality and moral fortitude starkly contrast the existential and intellectual struggles faced by characters like Ivan Karamazov. This disparity reflects the characters' differing perspectives and symbolises the book's central themes, which revolve around the ongoing dialogue between reason, spirituality, faith, and doubt. Peasants symbolise the Russian psyche in Dostoyevsky's works. They are often portrayed as the true essence of Russia due to their austere lifestyle, deep connection to the land, and tenacity. This contrasts with the urban intellectuals' moral uncertainties and Western philosophy's corrupting influences. Dostoyevsky does this to examine and analyse the basic structure of Russian identity during its struggle with modernity and Western influences. Moreover, Dostoyevsky provides a biting analysis of the socio-political landscape of 19th-century Russia via the prism of peasant life. The vivid portrayal of exploitation, destitution, and the frequently harsh reality of peasant life calls into question the socioeconomic systems of the day and the idealised perception of peasants that was popular among Russian intellectuals. The way peasants are portrayed in "Demons" and "The Brothers Karamazov" is fundamental to Dostoyevsky's examination of his day's philosophical and religious foundations,

societal dynamics, and moral and ethical dilemmas. These people are essential to comprehending his literary and philosophical pursuits because they help him negotiate the complexity of faith, reason, and the human predicament. Therefore, the peasants in Dostoyevsky's stories are more than just incidental characters. Instead, they represent the central theme of his investigation of the Russian people and their psychology.

Early in the 19th century, there was a deliberate attempt to consolidate the country at the centre of the empire, emphasising the educated classes under Nicholas I and his Minister of Public Education, Uvarov. Universities started offering teaching in Russian, and departments of Russian literature and history were established. A significant contributor to the development of a new historical narrative that stressed "Russian narodnost" and rejected the ideas of classic continental empires and the Romanov dynasty's foreign origins was N. G. Ustrialov. In Uvarov's philosophy, "narodnost" was associated with Russia's "coming of age," a departure from being Europe's apprentice. Uvarov's conservatism aimed to combine European education's advantages with Russia's unique national self-sufficiency (Miller,2008). While "natsiia" also referred to the state, "narod" was more often used to refer to the state's populace or a particular ethnic group. "Narodnost" was frequently understood as an ethnic group in the late 19th and early 20th centuries; it later changed to "natsionalnost" and finally "natsiia." But as a natural phrase, this idea was never fully incorporated into the Russian language. In the 1840s, "narodnost" was still viewed as illusory and contrived. The 1860s witnessed a resurgence of interest in "narodnost," especially in light of nationalism's rise and the emancipation from serfdom. A "united and indivisible Russia" was the motto of M. V. Iuzefovich, emphasising the merging of White Russians, Little Russians, and Great Russians into a cohesive nation. During this time, there were also discussions about Russia's lack of development as compared to Western governments and attempts to establish the country's

borders, both geographically and population-wise. "natsiia" and "narodnost" were employed to describe Russia's identity, political system, and relationship to Europe (Miller,2008). Thinkers such as A. N. Pypin and N. Ia. Danilevsky employed these ideas in their discussions of Russia's internal growth and relations with Europe. These ideas were central to arguments concerning Russia's national identity, its relationship to the empire and dynasty, and its place in Europe in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Miller,2008). An essential period in the Russian Narodnik movement's history is the "Journey to the People" in 1874–1875. This movement distinguished itself from then-emerging Marxist concepts by emphasising the proletariat's role in urban areas and focusing on the peasantry (Narod) as the basis for a socialist revolution in Russia. Prominent intellectuals such as Dobrolyubov, Chernyshevsky, Herten, Bakunin, and Lavrov were part of the Narodnik movement (Pedlar,1927). The revolutionaries made a grassroots effort known as the "Journey to the People" to engage and inspire the peasantry to support revolutionary change. They were motivated by the idea that Russia might directly attain socialism without going through capitalism and by the inherent socialism of cooperative workshops (arteli) and peasant communes (obshchiny). These concepts suggested a tremendous social revolution headed by the people, challenging the status quo social structure. The Narodniki had different approaches, even if they believed in the peasantry in common. Some, inspired by Bakunin, called for an instant revolution, while others, Lavrov's followers, stressed the importance of earlier propaganda (Pedlar,1927). This split and the absence of a well-thought-out strategy undermined the movement. The Narodniki's activities were primarily individualistic, marked by a dearth of coordination and an excessive focus on idealism and selflessness. Despite having essential goals, the movement did not spark the expected widespread uprisings of peasants. Before having a significant influence, many revolutionaries were put in jail, and the movement's overall efficacy was constrained. The

revolutionaries became disillusioned with the peasantry's readiness for revolution when the "Journey to the People" failed, and they began to concentrate more on the urban proletariat and Marxist economic theories (Pedlar, 1927). This period revealed the intricacies and difficulties of bridging the divide between revolutionary ideals and the realities of Russian peasant life, marking a turning point in the history of the Russian Revolution. Due to the Narodnik movement's idealisation of the peasantry and lack of engagement with the objective conditions faced by the peasants, its influence was eventually curtailed, and revolutionary tactics in Russia were reevaluated.

Fyodor Dostoyevsky delves into the themes of Russian identity, national consciousness, and societal dynamics, offering a complex examination of the discourse around "natsiia" (nation), "narod" (people), and "narodnost'" (nationality or peoplehood) throughout the 19th century. Dostoyevsky's narratives get into the interconnection of the person, society, and nation-state, mirroring the contemporary quest for a distinct Russian national identity. Furthermore, they delve extensively into the Russian psyche. This inquiry holds particular significance given Russia's continuous intellectual and cultural endeavour to reconcile Western influence with its unique national identity. Dostoyevsky repeatedly disapproved of the uncritical adoption of Western ideas and strived to establish a distinct path for Russia. This recurring topic resembles the discussions surrounding "narodnost'" and the concept of Russia's maturation as a nation. Furthermore, the author's literary works under discussion provide insights into the existence of the Russian peasantry and the broader society and delve into the intricacies of ethical and spiritual beliefs, societal challenges, and the comprehension of "narod" within a societal and cultural framework. Dostoyevsky's political themes in "Demons," converge with the 19th-century debate over political ideology and national identity. The novel's examination of revolutionary concepts and how they

affected Russian society speaks to the period's concerns about federal consolidation and the intellectual elite's role in determining the country's course. This encounter highlights the fight for a national identity amid the turmoil of ideological disagreements and provides insights into the political and social undercurrents of the era (Dostoyevsky,1994). Moreover, Dostoyevsky's protagonists' moral and spiritual predicaments frequently reflect the more significant cultural conflict over a shared moral compass. His examination of the significance of Orthodox Christianity in Russian culture fits nicely with the era's efforts to establish Russian national identity through religious and cultural traditions. This fact of his telling significantly advances the comprehension of "narodnost," which encompasses the more profound spiritual and ethical aspects of national identity rather than merely being a demographic marker. Dostoyevsky's impact can be seen in the political, philosophical and literary spheres. His thorough analysis of Russian society has substantially contributed to the national dialogue over Russia's position in Europe and the world. Dostoyevsky is not only a literary giant but also an essential participant in the societal and intellectual discussions of his day because of his works, which resonate with this conversation that is intricately linked to the ideas of "narodnost'," "natsiia," and national identity. His stories present a nuanced and comprehensive picture of Russian society, capturing the complexities of Russia's 19th-century search for identity and self-awareness.

The presence of peasant characters in Fyodor Dostoevsky's writings, like in the tale "Peasant Marey," is evidence of his in-depth examination of nuanced people from lowly origins who mirror Russia's more significant social milieu. He frequently presents peasants as possessing deep moral and spiritual traits, which starkly contrasts the more troubled and often morally grey characters from upper socioeconomic classes (Kanzer,1947). This depiction emphasises Dostoevsky's understanding of the fundamental humanity and inherent worth of people from all socioeconomic

backgrounds. For instance, the title character of "Peasant Marey," a straightforward peasant, is portrayed with wisdom and innocence akin to Christ. Marey's tender, comforting presence during a terrifying event for the young Dostoevsky emphasises the profound moral and spiritual aspects that Dostoevsky assigns to individuals of this type (Dostoyevsky,1876). In addition to being a literary decision, this picture captures the realities of Russian society, in which peasants made up a sizable portion of the population. Dostoevsky recognises these individuals' essential place in Russian culture and society by giving them prominent roles in his works. Furthermore, autobiographical connotations exist in Dostoevsky's work. His life experiences, like being sent into exile in Siberia, affected how he understood and portrayed people from different social backgrounds. This gave his books a deep psychological depth. This is clear in "Peasant Marey," where Marey's personality and effect on young Dostoevsky are based on the author's experiences and observations. In addition, peasants are often used as images in Dostoevsky's books. His works are more meaningful because of how they show the Russian soul or people's natural goodness. This is especially clear in Marey's understanding and kindness, which show that compassion and sensitivity can exist even when unplanned. Through characters like Marey, Dostoevsky looks at existential pain, guilt, atonement, and the human situation as a whole. In this way, his works are pictures of Russian life and look into the deepest parts of human nature worldwide. Also, Fyodor Dostoevsky's writings, especially "The Brothers Karamazov," show a deeper connection with people in the countryside than just describing them. It gets to the heart of Russian identity and spirit, a theme throughout much of his work. Dostoevsky's works use peasants to show what it means to be Russian. Peasants are more than just a social or economic class. Dostoevsky shows how deeply connected, almost spiritually, peasants are to the land and the basic ideas of Russian society. The idea of "narodnost," which means a person's soul being clean and undamaged, is at

the heart of this link. "The peasantry" was what Dostoevsky said this spirit was made of. If you compare their morals to those of the metropolitan elite and intelligentsia, they were the ones who stood for moral truth and absolute Russian values. This is very clear in "The Brothers Karamazov," where Dostoevsky used characters and settings from the country to explore deep moral and philosophical problems. The novel is set in rural Russia, where life is hard for peasants and deals with profound philosophical and spiritual issues. The villagers often serve as the moral compass of the book. Their deep but superficial knowledge starkly contrasts the Karamazov brothers' philosophical and often morally vague thoughts. For instance, the novel's look at faith, pain, and redemption is centred on Father Zosima, a monk born in a peasant family. Characters like Alyosha find guidance in his lessons and life narrative, which reflect his peasant upbringing (Dostoyevsky,1880). It offers a road to moral and spiritual enlightenment based on humility, compassion, and a strong bond with all people. In addition, Dostoevsky's focus on peasant suffering is consistent with his examination of Christian themes, incredibly redemptive suffering. He frequently portrayed peasants as bearing their sufferings with dignified resignation, perceiving in it a mirror image of Christ's suffering. In addition to elevating the peasant class morally and spiritually, this representation criticises the social institutions that support their ongoing misery. In "The Brothers Karamazov," in particular, Dostoevsky's depiction of peasants is intricately linked to his study of the Russian spirit. Dostoevsky offers an embroidery of Russian identity, laced with themes of pain, morality, and redemption, by depicting the straightforward, frequently harsh facts of peasant life and their capacity for moral and spiritual depth. Using the peasant, the most fundamental component of Russian society, as a lens, this portrayal adds to a broader philosophical and ethical discourse while accurately reflecting the social reality of 19th-century Russia.

Fyodor Dostoevsky's views on Russia's civilised ideology juxtaposed with the peasants' honest and original nature are integral to understanding his literary and philosophical theme. Western philosophical and political opinions greatly affected the emerging 'civilised' ideology among the Russian aristocracy and intelligentsia, which Dostoevsky criticised. He was concerned that this movement may weaken Russia's distinctive cultural and spiritual character since he saw it as a departure from traditional Russian ideals. In his writings, the intellectuals and urban elite are frequently portrayed as existentially disturbed and ethically ambiguous individuals who lack the true spiritual principles he considered fundamental. On the other hand, Dostoevsky romanticised the peasant class, seeing them as the authentic representation of Russia's genuine and precise nature. Peasants are portrayed in his stories as the guardians of true Russian virtues, closely associated with the land, Orthodox Christianity, and traditional ways of life. They are portrayed as endowed with an innate knowledge of basic concepts such as suffering and redemption, symbolising moral purity and spiritual depth. Even though Father Zosima is a monk in "The Brothers Karamazov," he embodies the moral and spiritual wisdom that Dostoevsky held in high regard and is firmly based on these peasant ideals. Dostoevsky's emphasis on the misery of the peasant class is also idealised, serving as both a spiritual investigation and a social reflection. His depictions of peasants facing adversity with moral dignity and spiritual fortitude were common, reflecting his Christian conviction that suffering leads to spiritual atonement and redemption. This point of view criticises the social systems that support the peasants' struggles and highlight their tenacity. In addition, Dostoevsky's writings reveal a profound search for a genuine Russian identity that reconciles the 'original' Russian spirit qualities with the 'civilised' modernity frequently personified by the peasantry. He struggled to develop a synthesis to bring the best aspects of these disparate worlds together as he considered the tension between them.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

"Dostoevsky's 'Demons' has a prophetic quality that resonates across time, anticipating and addressing a slew of social, political, and psychological themes that would emerge in the twentieth century and beyond." The novel's examination of ideological conflict, notably the emergence of extremism and radicalism, echoes the ideological wars that defined much of the twentieth century, such as the Cold War and battles between rival political and economic systems. Dostoevsky's profound depiction of individual alienation and existential angst foreshadows the twentieth-century existentialist movement, while his deep dive into his characters' psychological complexities foreshadows the development of psychological literature and the study of the human mind. 'Demons' also has dystopian aspects that foretell the dystopian fiction that became popular in the twentieth century, and its analysis of media manipulation and the power of narratives foreshadows modern-day concerns about propaganda and media manipulation.' Demons' is a timeless masterpiece that sheds light on its contemporary culture and lays the groundwork for comprehending and handling the modern world's diverse issues."

Fyodor Dostoevsky's "Demons" must, in my opinion, be comprehended through the complexity of ideology, political turmoil, and the human condition. While the work is sometimes viewed as a political critique, its profundity extends beyond politics. In 1869, a murder inspired the novel, and Dostoevsky drew a vivid portrayal of frenzied radicals of numerous ideologies. The characters are different and fascinated with their views, from sentimental liberal Stepan Trofimovich to rebellious Pyotr and Slavophile Shatov. Modern society's ideological variety makes the novel's concerns more relevant. One of "Demons" 's most intriguing aspects is its exploration of ideological fanaticism's contradictions. Shigalyov's "starting from unlimited freedom, I conclude with unlimited despotism" reflects history's impassioned views. In modern politics, ideological forces

seem to follow similar patterns despite differing agendas. More than a political work, it captures human conflict. Rebels and rulers share goals. This dynamic resembles René Girard's "doubles" concept, in which rivals become more similar as they conflict. The article's examination of shared ideals' erosion and echo chambers' growth in modern politics is especially pertinent. Individuals often find themselves in ideological bubbles in an age of digital communication and social media, increasing polarisation and making healthy discourse difficult. The link between meaning rejection and the emergence of political ideologies is a profound insight. Dostoevsky's insight into how rejection of the meaning of creation creates a hole that political ideologies fill is thought-provoking and connects with modern society's continual desire for purpose and identity. "Demons" is a literary masterpiece that continues to enlighten and encourage self-reflection due to Dostoevsky's ability to dissect the human mind and societal issues.

On the other hand, Though the narrative techniques differ, Fyodor Dostoevsky's "The Brothers Karamazov" and Sren Kierkegaard's "Fear and Trembling" share significant philosophical examinations of faith, self, and the intricacies of the human condition. The common thread throughout these works is their in-depth analysis of religion, namely how it confronts and occasionally contradicts the individual's sense of self and ethical reasoning. In "The Brothers Karamazov," Dostoevsky explores the complexities of faith through his characters, who represent diverse perspectives on religion and morality. One example is the figure of Ivan Karamazov, who stands for existential anxiety and intellectual scepticism. In his now-famous critique of God's goodness in light of evil ("The Grand Inquisitor" chapter), he poses a crisis of faith that calls into question not merely religious dogmas but also human standards of fairness and decency. In contrast, like Kierkegaard's 'knight of faith' idea, Alyosha personifies a mysterious and unwavering faith. Despite facing challenges from the world, Alyosha continues on a path of spiritual

development and self-discovery throughout the book. Consistent with Kierkegaard's view that genuine faith is an individual experience outside objective thinking, his faith is profoundly personal and goes beyond rational comprehension. Kierkegaard's philosophical work "Fear and Trembling" explores the nature of faith, utilising Abraham's decision to sacrifice Isaac from the Bible as a model. The idea of taking a "leap of faith," or accepting faith in the face of absurdity, is introduced by Kierkegaard. This jump is an individual, introspective journey that frequently defies morality and reason. The ways the characters in "The Brothers Karamazov" handle faith and moral quandaries differ from one another, illustrating the similarities. Like Abraham's predicament, Ivan's struggle with theodicy and Alyosha's steadfast faith underscores the conflict between transcendent religion and logical ethics. Thus, the novel serves as a platform for examining Kierkegaard's theory—which holds that faith necessitates a level of personal commitment that frequently defies logic. Even though they existed before existentialism was formally established, Dostoevsky and Kierkegaard are frequently linked to existentialist ideas. Their works significantly contribute to existential topics such as the importance of personal responsibility and choice, the individual's struggle with absurdity, and the search for meaning. 'Existential despair' is a major idea in Kierkegaardian philosophy, and it becomes evident when examining the characters in "The Brothers Karamazov" through an existential lens—the realisation of one's freedom and the ensuing weight of decision-making lead to this melancholy. Alyosha's spiritual problems, Dmitri's emotional impulsiveness, and Ivan's cerebral confrontations all reflect distinct reactions to the existential state of human freedom and the pursuit of meaning.

Fyodor Dostoevsky's "The Brothers Karamazov" and "Demons" (also known as "The Possessed") are classic works of literature that dive into the deep inner conflicts of people while examining issues of freedom, faith, and the frequently stormy interaction between religion and human

behaviour. These novels encapsulate the essence of the human pursuit of liberty and the act of belief, which are fundamental elements of existential and religious encounters. Dostoevsky demonstrates the challenges individuals face when confronted with the vast extent of human freedom, often leading them to confront moral and ethical dilemmas. Dostoevsky's "Demons" delves into the consequences of subjugating morality to fervent ideology, illustrating how pursuing utopian objectives can lead to moral deterioration and catastrophe. Immersed in revolutionary fervour, the protagonists in this book show how unbridled freedom, whether used for one's own or another's political gain, can result in chaos instead of the desired emancipation. This reflects the existential idea that although freedom is freeing, it also comes with a duty and the possibility of existential suffering. "The Brothers Karamazov," however, explores this independence's ethical and spiritual ramifications in greater detail. The characters' differing perspectives on faith, from Ivan's cynical existentialism to Alyosha's intense spirituality, mirror the human struggle to comprehend and negotiate the difficulties of faith. Like Kierkegaard's philosophical reflections, the novel's examination of the leap of faith highlights the difficult balancing act between belief and doubt and the challenges of lifelong dedication to religion.

These books also critically analyse how religion can be misunderstood and exploited to sow division rather than promote harmony and understanding. Dostoevsky's writings make the case that misapplying or misinterpreting religious precepts can result in pain and strife, starkly contrasting the perpetual serenity and inner harmony that faith purports to provide. This contradiction offers a fundamental reflection on the state of humanity: the ongoing fight between humanity's higher goals and its baser inclinations, which breed conflict and turmoil. Essentially, "Demons" and "The Brothers Karamazov" by Dostoevsky are timeless investigations of the human

psyche rather than just tales of their period. They tackle the age-old issues of how we, as human beings, deal with the freedom bestowed upon us, how we face or welcome the leaps of faith in our lives, and how our understanding of faith can have a significant influence on our inner conflicts as well as the larger social environment. These books are still relevant because they provide insights into the universal human search for calm, meaning, and purpose in the face of life's endless complications. In conclusion, this thesis using critical analysis sheds light on Fyodor Dostoevsky's philosophical and religious underpinnings and their profound impact on 19th-century Russian literature and culture. By meticulously analysing Dostoevsky's metaphysics, rooted in Christian Orthodoxy, the study provides deep insights into how his literary creations offer guidance in confronting internal crises, avoiding nihilism, and advocating for a reliance on something more significant than the self. This exploration enhances our understanding of Dostoevsky's narratives and offers a broader perspective on his era's socio-political and cultural landscape. Furthermore, the thesis brings to the fore Dostoevsky's portrayal of the peasantry, enriching our comprehension of the Russian social fabric and the intricate dynamics at play. The complex interplay between Dostoevsky's philosophical views, his literary genius, and the societal context of his time has been effectively unravelled, bridging a crucial gap in existing literature and contributing significantly to both Dostoevskian studies and the broader field of 19th-century Russian literature and culture. Through this scholarly endeavour, the thesis affirms Dostoevsky's enduring relevance and multidimensional nature, ensuring its continued significance in contemporary discourse.

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