

A.S.Pushkin's "The Little Tragedies", as a blueprint of F.M.Dostoevsky's main novels.

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ABSTRACT Semantic parallels between Pushkin's "The Little Tragedies" and Dostoevsky's main novels raise many questions about who is the real author of all these works and for what purpose these books were written. Revised chapter from the book "Beyond Pushkin".

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FOREWORD. HOW IS THIS EVEN POSSIBLE?

Topics of Pushkin's "The Little Tragedies" were not chosen by chance, but were subject to strict semantic patterns. Each tragedy corresponds to one of the main novels of "the pentateuch of Dostoevsky", being a kind of expanded epigraph to the corresponding novel. This article is devoted to a detailed description of this observation. Judging by Pushkin's diary entries, the entire cycle of "The Little Tragedies" was created during the miraculous Boldino Autumn of 1830 in a little more than two weeks¹. In the fall of 1830, the poet was preparing for the wedding with Natalya Goncharova and wrote "Belkin's Tales" and "The Little Tragedies" for monetary reasons rather than thinking deeply about their ideological content. At the same time, Anna Akhmatova noted that "perhaps in none of the creations of world poetry are the formidable moral questions posed so sharply as in Pushkin's "The Little Tragedies"².

If Pushkin wrote "The Little Tragedies" in 14 days, Dostoevsky created his pentateuch for 14 years. It is impossible to assume that the semantic sequence of Dostoevsky's novels was strictly planned from the very beginning, but with texts of "The Little Tragedies", a precise conceptual plan of

Dostoevsky's novels is clearly visible. If such a strange correlation really exists, and I will try to show that it really is, only one fantastic conclusion can be drawn from here — *neither Pushkin nor Dostoevsky were the authors of their works*. They acted as "prophets", that is, they just wrote down information in some hypnotic way transmitted to them by some extraterrestrial super-mind, which nevertheless has a completely terrestrial origin. A direct analogue of such a mind is Solaris from the famous sci-fi story by Stanislaw Lem. And if human hypnotists like Wolf Messing are able to inspire anyone with arbitrary information³, what can be expected from a super-mind like Solaris. The idea of a "prophet conveying revelation" arose for the first time within framework of the Jewish religion. Muhammad is considered the main prophet in Islam. Traditions say that, not being able to read and write, he dictated to his followers the Qur'an, whose language until today is the standard of Arabic.

Another example is related to the Piri Reis map created in 1513 in Constantinople (Ottoman Empire) by a Turkish admiral and a lover of cartography Piri Reis⁴ (full name — Haji Muhiddin Piri ibn Haji Mehmed). There is a lot of controversy surrounding this map, but it has been almost strictly proved that the only way to create such a map was aerial photography, which was obviously impossible at the beginning of the 16th century and the map used knowledge of spherical trigonometry developed only in the 18th century. Center of the spherical coordinates of the Piri Reis map, a kind of its epicenter is located near Egyptian pyramids and the Sphinx. But the most interesting thing is that this map shows the coastline of Antarctica's mainland, discovered in 1820, and this line on the map reflects a coast of the *subglacial* part of the mainland, which was studied in detail only in the late 1950s by American scientists.

In 1979, the director Mikhail Shveitser at the Mosfilm studio made the three-part television film "The Little Tragedies" dedicated to the 150th anniversary of Pushkin's Boldino Autumn. All the tragedies in this film are united by the subject of the story "The Egyptian Nights". Pushkin's tragedy "The

¹Ustyuzhanin D. L. The Little Tragedies of A. S. Pushkin. — M.: Fiction, 1974s. 14-15.

²A. A. Akhmatova. The Stone Guest by Pushkin // Pushkin: Research and Materials. — Publishing House of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, 1958. — T. 2. — S. 185-195.

³Wolf Messing. About myself. — M.: 1965.

⁴Stiebing, William H., Jr. (1984), Ancient Astronauts, Cosmic Collisions and Other Popular Theories about Man's Past, Amherst, New York: Prometheus Books, ISBN 0-87975-285-8

Scene from Faust", which was not part of the main cycle written in Boldino, but logically directly related to it, served as a kind of epigraph to the film. In "The Egyptian Nights" an improviser poet appears who is able to turn any thought into poetry, however the improviser himself is only occupied by mercantile considerations. Charsky asks him to write poem on the topic "the poet himself chooses objects for his songs; the crowd has no right to control his inspiration." The theme is provocative — no one has the right to control the poet's inspiration and at the same time, the improviser must compose verses to order. Having created poems for Charsky, the brilliant improviser denies himself the right to be called a "poet." The epigraph to the chapter of "The Egyptian Nights", where the improviser shows his creativity is taken from Derzhavin's ode "God":

I am a king, I am a slave, I am a worm, I am a god.

Who is a "prophet" if he does not create anything himself, but only conveys the words of "revelation"? His life and poetry are only indirectly interconnected. He is a "king", because he can do everything and at the same time he is a "slave", since this "everything" does not belong to him, he only fulfills someone else's order. And "god" is just a "worm" in the poet's head. Pushkin writes about the freedom of creativity and at the same time, his poems are a literal "gift from above". In Schweitzer's film, all "The Little Tragedies" is a product of fulfilled by improviser other people's orders, which is exactly what I want to demonstrate — *Pushkin did not write his works himself*. If one wonders how a certain super-mind could prove the authenticity of his product, then there is no better way — one writer in two weeks created the creativity plan of whole life of another. If so, the authorship of the super-mind is proved, and both writers are "prophets". Neither Pushkin nor Dostoevsky could even suggest that their works were combined into a single, logically self-connected product.

Dostoevsky's "pentateuch" includes five of his major novels — "Crime and Punishment", "The Idiot", "The Demons", "The Raw Youth", and "The Brothers Karamazov". The first four novels correspond to four small tragedies from Boldino Autumn. "The scene from Faust", standing separately, complements the cycle to its logical conclusion. This poem was published in the same year as the first chapter of "Eugene Onegin" and bored Faust is in tune with bored Eugene, but by no means Faust Goethe. Pushkin's Faust orders the sinking of a spanish ship with a fashionable disease on board due to the fact that he simply can not sit and miss, as in the opinion of Mephistopheles, "all reasonable creatures do". The inability to express oneself leads to the desire act in any way, even the most illogical and destructive. Eugene Onegin's boredom disappears only after he encounters an obstacle that he is unable to overcome — Tatyana's refusal in chapter eight. In Schweitzer's film, the role of Mephistopheles is played by an actor who looks very much like Pushkin. In Charles Meteyurin's novel "Melmot the Wanderer", often mentioned in Pushkin's work, two people watch the death of a *spanish* ship: student John Melmot, who came to his uncle for an inheritance like Eugene Onegin and his demonic namesake.

The first five numbers corresponding to the five books of Dostoevsky in chronological order and the tragedies of Pushkin may become some kind of symbolic analogue of the first five commandments of the presented "revelation".

COMPARISON OF "THE LITTLE TRAGEDIES" AND THE BOOKS OF DOSTOEVSKY.

1. "Mozart and Salieri" ⇔ "Crime and Punishment".

The similarity of these works begins with the name — two words through "and" connect two opposites together. Mozart symbolizes talent and "free art", while Salieri symbolizes profit and "despicable benefit". The main theme of the tragedy is a crime committed in order to achieve the good that Salieri allows himself "by conscience". Is "universal happiness" worth the blood of one tortured innocent child? How much it costs? Justifying the murder of Mozart, Salieri gives an example of Mikel Angelo Bonarotti. It was a tradition that he killed the sitter in order to more naturally portray the dying Christ⁵. Is the death of a sitter worth the naturalness of the picture? The historical Salieri never killed Mozart — it is well proven⁶, but rumors about this brought Salieri to a psychological illness. Pushkin's tragedy made Salieri a symbol of a jealous jerk. Myth defeated reality. Mozart exclaims:

We're few, the fortune's chosen, happy idlers,
Despising the repellent cares of use,
True votaries of one and only beauty⁷.

This refers to the biblical phrase "many are called, but few are chosen" from the parable of the marriage feast⁸. Dostoevsky refers to this theme in the poem by Ivan Karamazov, "The Great Inquisitor", from the book "The Brothers Karamazov". Proving to his interlocutor the correctness of his actions, the Inquisitor says:

Thou didst promise them the bread of Heaven, but, I repeat again, can it compare with earthly bread in the eyes of the weak, ever sinful and ignoble race of man? And if for the sake of the bread of Heaven thousands shall follow Thee, what is to become of the millions and tens of thousands of millions of creatures who will not have the strength to forego the earthly bread for the sake of the heavenly? Or dost Thou care only for the tens of thousands of the great and strong, while the millions, numerous as the sands of the sea, who are weak but love Thee, must exist only for the sake of the great and strong⁹?

⁵In the time of Pushkin, this legend was very common. Here, for example, is an excerpt from N.M. Karamzin: "Showing Mikel-Angelov a picture of the Crucifixion of Christ, they always say that he, wanting to more naturally imagine the dying Savior, killed the person who serves him as a model, but this joke is absolutely incredible". In addition to Karamzin's book, literary scholars found several more sources from which Pushkin could draw "this anecdote". This is the novel of the Marquis de Sade, "Justine, or The Misadventure of Virtue", the poem de Miera "Painting" and "Crucifixion" by A. Chamisso, "The History of Painting in Italy" by Stendhal.

⁶Deutsch O. E. Mozart, a Documentary Biography. — Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1966. — S. 522, 524. — 692 p. — ISBN 978-0804702331

⁷Translated by Genia Gurarie.

⁸Lk. 14: 16-24

⁹Translated by Constance Garnett

For the common good, as the Inquisitor understands it, he has done what he did and must kill his interlocutor, as Salieri did. At the very end of the tragedy, Salieri exclaims, "Was the creator of the Vatican not a killer?" In order for religion to exist, a living and creative person should be replaced by a lifeless image that is not even allowed to say a single word. When creating an idol, there is always a killing of reality in the name of "the common good". No religion can be based on the stories of living and real people, but only, as the Grand Inquisitor explained, on the three main "three powers, three powers alone, able to conquer" — miracle, mystery and authority. Is it possible to justify the murder whose purpose is to create a world Christian civilization? Suppose a talented poet and storyteller, who lived in Russia in the Middle Ages and created the "Word about Igor's Regiment" was turned into a wordless "Saint", so that no one can still find the real author of the "Word about Igor's regiment". I explain this hypothesis in my book "Do Not Make an Idol"¹⁰. Can such a historic murder justify the task of strengthening and uniting the new Moscow state? Yes? So we justified the action of Salieri and creator of the Vatican.

Ideas of the last book of Dostoevsky "The Brothers Karamazov" return to the first — "Crime and Punishment". Is it possible to commit murders "in good faith" when the end justifies the means? The looping of Dostoevsky's books suggests that his work is a single and complete product. An idea "the end justifies the means", in the book "Crime and Punishment" best explained by the student in the tavern:

"Listen, I want to ask you a serious question," the student said hotly. "I was joking of course, but look here; on one side we have a stupid, senseless, worthless, spiteful, ailing, horrid old woman, not simply useless but doing actual mischief, who has not an idea what she is living for herself, and who will die in a day or two in any case. You understand? You understand?"

"Yes, yes, I understand," answered the officer, watching his excited companion attentively.

"Well, listen then. On the other side, fresh young lives thrown away for want of help and by thousands, on every side! A hundred thousand good deeds could be done and helped, on that old woman's money which will be buried in a monastery! Hundreds, thousands perhaps, might be set on the right path; dozens of families saved from destitution, from ruin, from vice, from the Lock hospitals—and all with her money. Kill her, take her money and with the help of it devote oneself to the service of humanity and the good of all. What do you think, would not one tiny crime be wiped out by thousands of good deeds? For one life thousands would be saved from corruption and decay. One death, and a hundred lives in exchange—it's simple arithmetic! Besides, what value has the life of that sickly, stupid, ill-natured old woman in the balance of existence! No more than the life of a louse, of a black-beetle, less in fact because the old woman is doing harm. She is wearing out the lives of others; the other day she bit Lizaveta's finger out of spite; it almost had to be amputated."

"Of course she does not deserve to live," remarked the officer¹¹

The questions that Rodion Raskolnikov constantly poses

to himself and wants to test in real life are: "Am I a trembling creature or I do have the right?" and "Dare I to bend down and take it?". The book "Crime and Punishment" describes an example of murder, which could be perfectly justified by society, as quite appropriate. Raskolnikov's sister, Dunya, shoots a pistol at Svidrigailov, who allegedly wants to rape her. He only scared Dunya, but the court would have mistaken her actions for self-defense. If the girl shot him (because she do hated him), then the court and, probably, many readers would be on her side. Thanks to the sharply negative public image of Svidrigailov, everyone would have been happy about his death and said out loud or to oneself "Dunya did the right thing that she killed. It serves him right!". Negative image: an evil, worthless old woman or depraved Svidrigailov determine the license to kill. Killing Svidrigailov, Dunya would have helped him, since he himself was preparing to commit suicide. She would save him from "mortal sin", taking responsibility for the murder, which would be forgiven.

The concept of "ethical law" first appears in Old Testament texts and is associated with the "commandments" sent from above as part of a contract or "covenant" of some higher authority, super-mind, with people. According to the logic of religious doctrine, the commandments are non-negotiable and are absolute truth. The requirement "Do not kill", defines killing as an absolute moral evil, but it turns out that this question is much more complicated than it might seem at first glance. If some super-mind that has gone far in his development wants to explain what is "good" and what is "bad", how should he do it? The Eutifron Dilemma¹², formulated in the "Dialogues" of Plato states:

Is the pious loved by the gods because it is pious, or is it pious because it is loved by the gods?

In the first case, ethics is formed independently of the gods. In the second case, morality may depend on a random whim. If gods were invented by people, then divine morality may pursue certain private selfish interests of a single social or ethnic group, especially in the case of gods with a national orientation. If "my god" considers one to be good, and yours is another, then how can we agree? Therefore, any ethics should be formulated objectively and independently of any gods, even if it is formulated by the super-mind. "Mozart and Salieri" begins with an exclamation of Salieri:

There is no justice on the earth, they say.
But there is none in heaven, either. To me
That is as plain as any simple scale.

Was the creator of Christianity and the Vatican right when he sacrificed his "only begotten son" for the common good¹³,

¹²G.W. Leibniz stated, in Reflections on the Common Concept of Justice (circa 1702): "It is generally agreed that whatever God wills is good and just. But there remains the question whether it is good and just because God wills it or whether God wills it because it is good and just; in other words, whether justice and Goodness are arbitrary or whether they belong to the necessary and eternal truths about the nature of things."

¹³John 3:16

¹⁰Sergey Shavyrin "Do Not Make an Idol", ISBN 978-5990611405

¹¹Translated by Constance Garnett

because if the fallen grain dies, it will bring much fruit¹⁴? The first book of Dostoevsky's pentateuch, "Crime and Punishment", defines *Number "1"* — *the essence and nature of objective ethical law*.

2. "The Stone Guest" ⇔ "The Idiot"

The image of the Seville seducer Don Guan first appears in the comedy of the Spanish playwright Tirso de Molina "Seville seducer, or Stone guest". Similar stories were embodied by many authors: Moliere, Goldoni, Hoffmann, Byron, Grabe. It is believed that Pushkin wrote his play "The Stone Guest" after he saw the Russian version of Mozart's opera Don Juan. The invincible and arrogant Don Guan perishes from the handshake of the Stone statue, a kind of insensible object that has nothing to do with life. The statue is a dead cast from the deceased commander. A similar image arises for Pushkin in the poem "The Bronze Horseman", when the statue of Peter I comes to life and pursues the unfortunate Eugene in the night streets of St. Petersburg.

The second commandment from the Bible says, "Do not make yourself an idol"¹⁵. Unlike a living person, the image created in dreams has only an indirect relation to reality. The image is virtual and incorporeal. He cannot be killed with a sword or a gun, but he is able to direct the affairs and thoughts of people. In a world filled with images, a living person is of secondary importance; he confronts a certain surrogate based solely on "breads", "miracles" and "Caesar's sword." "Free art" devalues in favor of wealth, image or social status in society. In some tales, a situation arises when a hero fights an adversary in a mirror room. Before destroying an opponent, he must first smash all his images — reflections in the mirrors. When another reflection in a mirror dies, it does no harm to a person, and only when there are no mirrors left can one hit a living being left unprotected. Such a battle takes place in the movie "Enter the Dragon" with the participation of Bruce Lee.

Dostoevsky's second book defines *Number "2"* — *the role of idols in society*. At the beginning of the book "The Idiot", prince Myshkin appears in the form of a half-silly "poor relative" and the attitude of others around him is formed in accordance with this image. A sharp change in attitude towards Myshkin occurs immediately after it turns out that he is the owner of a large inheritance received by will from a deceased relative. Myshkin himself, its actual content, remains the same: only the image changes. When Myshkin appears at the first meeting before Nastasya Filippovna as is, she takes him for a servant. And only later, after identifying him with her old dreams of "the handsome prince", she elevates him to her idols. In this case, the real person has only a distant relation to the dream itself. She does not see point-blank Rogozhin from the flesh and blood: she does not need such a person. Analogously, for Myshkin, Nastasya Filippovna is also an image, he saw her "somewhere in a dream", he does not need a real woman at all.

At the very beginning of literary activity, Dostoevsky acutely felt a sharp change in the attitude of society towards him due to a change in his image. At first, after reading the novel "Poor Folk," Belinsky declared: "the new Gogol has appeared"¹⁶. From an unknown student Dostoevsky instantly turned into a popular and famous writer. Soon after, the "new Gogol" by the same Belinsky was overthrown from the pedestal down.

If "The Stone Guest" presented the image in the form of an omnipotent stone statue, in "The Idiot" the main character is a weak painful prince with a mouse surname and sonorous first name "Leo". One interpretation of the novel name "The Idiot" is "bolvan." In Dahl's dictionary, "bolvan" refers to an idol, a statue, an idol, a pagan sculpted god, which is fully consistent with the theme "Do not make yourself an idol." And although outwardly Prince Myshkin is far from the statue of the commander, essentially, from the point of view of the "second commandment," it is the same. May be the creation of idol that is so easy to fall in love with was the purpose of killing "the only begotten son," who was in reality liked barely by a small number of "the chosen ones." But is it possible to defeat the statue of the commander?

3. "A Feast in Time of Plague" ⇔ "The Demons"

The image of "A Feast" Pushkin took from Baratynsky's poem "A Feast". In real life, "earthly bread" is always closer, sweeter, and more pleasant than "heavenly bread." A person can be deceived by heart, reason, but the stomach never deceives. In times of timelessness, the soul is warmed only by the "clatter of bowls." As the Grand Inquisitor clearly explained it is almost impossible to build a new ideological doctrine solely with the blessings of "heavenly bread." The virtues of poetry change and fly away "like a morning dream." Who will believe in that is not paid by hard currency? Baratynsky's poem ends with the words:

Let youth disappear forever,
Feast, friends: with a clatter of bowls
Perhaps the lured joy
Will sometime come into our corner...

The tragedy "A Feast during the Plague" takes place during the dark Middle Ages, when in the midst of thousands burning enemies of the Christian faith, the Grand Inquisitor rules the ball. The name of Walsingham is a bit like the name Woland. The idea of "Feast" is associated with the famous "Belshazzar's feast"¹⁷. According to the book of Daniel, Belshazzar was the last Chaldean ruler of Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar is called his father. On the night of the capture of Babylon, at his last feast, Belshazzar used the sacred vessels taken by his father from the Jerusalem temple for food and drinks. In the midst of fun on the wall appeared lines drawn by a mysterious hand, which Daniel interpreted as a message from god informing of the imminent death of Belshazzar and his kingdom. That very night Belshazzar died. Christian teaching used the writings

¹⁴John 12:24

¹⁵Ex. 20: 4

¹⁶F.M. Dostoevsky, "The Diary of a Writer" January 1974

¹⁷Dan. 5: 1 — 31

of Jewish writers for their feasts. In the tragedy, Yeshua can be associated with Jackson "whose jokes, tales, funny table talk revived", and the lost people who created Christianity, with Walsingham's dead wife. Relying on "bread," "miracle," and "Caesar's sword," religion "glorifies the kingdom of the Plague." Walsingham's poems are a little consonant with Baratynsky's poem; in lifeless years, only Feasts can be given faith.

The history of the communist dictatorship repeats the history of Christianity. Stalin created the personality cult of Lenin, just as St. Paul created the personality cult of Jesus¹⁸. Maxim Gorky became the founder of "socialist realism", which is more correctly called "socialist utopia" as well as St. Peter became the first "pope of Rome." For seventy years, a third of the globe has been praying for the covenants of the "communist trinity" — Marx, Engels and Lenin. Many of those who personally created the new socialist state were shot in the GULAG during the years of repressions. And along with executions, repressions and suppression of all dissent, everywhere there were slogans, banners and demonstrations glorifying the great Soviet state and socialist way of life — a feast during the plague. Similarly the Grand Inquisitor reigns among the burned enemies of Christianity.

All these phenomena could arise only because people trust their feelings more than objective reality and facts. A traditional "god" cannot exist within the framework of consciousness and a scientific way of thinking. This is the subject of "faith", which is exclusively sensual in nature. The "scientific god", if one exists, can have nothing to do with religion and faith. Adolf Hitler was able to turn the German nation into a weapon of mass destruction only by influencing people's feelings. Only the sensory attitude to reality can explain the mass repressions of the Stalinist dictatorship. In the third chapter of "Eugene Onegin", Tatyana in love is compared with the "poor moth," who shines and beats in the hands of a school naughty man. But, feelings of a person is what makes up his essence. A man without feelings is dead. Is Tatyana guilty that she loves?

Why is Tatiana, then, more guilty?

Is it because in sweet simplicity
deceit she knows not and believes
in her elected dream?

Is it because she loves without art, being
obedient to the bent of feeling?

Is it because she is so trustful¹⁹

One can forgive Tatyana's frivolity of passions, but can you forgive frivolity of passions of the crowd, which is ruled by skilled creators of public opinion? In the book "The Demons", Dostoevsky describes revolutionary circles that set themselves the task of social reconstruction in Russia. The image of the revolutionaries is caricatured, but it well demonstrates how, in skillful hands, the "poor moth" can be turned into a formidable weapon of destruction of the whole society. In "The Demons", Pyotr Verkhovensky explains to Stavrogin his

plan in the following way:

I'll tell you what I am directly, that's what I am leading up to. It was not for nothing that I kissed your hand. But the people must believe that we know what we are after, while the other side do nothing but 'brandish their cudgels and beat their own followers.' Ah, if we only had more time! That's the only trouble, we have no time. We will proclaim destruction.... Why is it, why is it that idea has such a fascination. But we must have a little exercise; we must. We'll set fires going.... We'll set legends going. Every scurvy 'group' will be of use. Out of those very groups I'll pick you out fellows so keen they'll not shrink from shooting, and be grateful for the honour of a job, too. Well, and there will be an upheaval! There's going to be such an upset as the world has never seen before.... Russia will be overwhelmed with darkness, the earth will weep for its old gods.... Well, then we shall bring forward ... whom?"

"Whom?"

"Ivan the Tsarevitch."

"Who-m?"

"Ivan the Tsarevitch. You! You!"

Stavrogin thought a minute.

"A pretender?" he asked suddenly, looking with intense surprise at his frantic companion. "Ah! so that's your plan at last!"²⁰

Feelings of Walsingham under the influence of major disaster are silent. Seneca remarked: "Only a small sorrow says, a large one is silent." Stavrogin in a farewell letter to Daria Pavlovna writes:

"I've tried my strength everywhere. You advised me to do this 'that I might learn to know myself.' As long as I was experimenting for myself and for others it seemed infinite, as it has all my life."

Feelings are the most vulnerable side of the human psyche and Stavrogin's strength is unlimited precisely because he is devoid of feelings. However, without feelings, human life is meaningless and Stavrogin's suicide turns out to be quite natural. *The number "3"* should correspond to *the theme of feelings* and the role that the feelings of the individual and the crowd play in managing public opinion. As the epigraph to the novel "The Demons", Pushkin took the lines from Pushkin's poem "The Demons" and a quote from the Gospel, where Jesus heals the demoniac by removing demons from him into pigs²¹. There are malignant feelings or sensitive resonant frequencies that can greatly affect consciousness. If one is given opportunity to enjoy these feelings, go wild with them, being horrified by the results of this event, one won't make the same mistake twice. A state that has passed through a period of civil wars, coups, and revolutions, especially in times of critical breakdowns, is much more stable than another what has always lived in peace and harmony. Walsingham in his poems compares the plague with winter. When it's winter outside, then "fireplaces burst towards it and the winter fever of the feasts is cheerful." Stavrogin himself is a cold winter and his experience is an opportunity to go crazy with a complete lack of feelings.

¹⁸see e.g. Hans Lietzmann. A History of the Early Church (German: Geschichte der Alten Kirche) Vol 1 p.206

¹⁹Translation by Vladimir Nabokov

²⁰Translated by Constance Garnett

²¹Lk. 8: 32-36

4. "The Miserly Knight" ⇔ "The Raw Youth"

In the book "The Raw Youth" by Dostoevsky, Arkady Dolgoruky recalls "The Miserly Knight":

When I was quite a child I learnt Pushkin's monologue of the "Miserly Knight." Pushkin has written nothing finer in conception than that! I have the same ideas now.

"But yours is too low an ideal," I shall be told with contempt. "Money, wealth. Very different from the common weal, from self-sacrifice for humanity."

In his "idea", Arkady Dolgoruky argues about the absolute power of wealth:

... money is the one means by which the humblest nonentity may rise to the FOREMOST PLACE. I may not be a nonentity, but I know from the looking-glass that my exterior does not do me justice, for my face is commonplace. But if I were as rich as Rothschild, who would find fault with my face? And wouldn't thousands of women be ready to fly to me with all their charms if I whistled to them? I am sure that they would honestly consider me good-looking. Suppose I am clever. But were I as wise as Solomon some one would be found wiser still, and I should be done for. But if I were a Rothschild what would that wise man be beside me? Why, they would not let him say a word beside me!

The mechanisms of development of the material world, based on free market and technological progress, are undoubtedly stronger than all artificial state structures, but is the power of money omnipotent? Money is the greatest driving force, but the "miserly knight" from Pushkin's tragedy does not strive for any progress. His goal is only calm and awareness of his power. His money is completely dead, although it was obtained on some other's feelings. Baron gives an example of a widow who gave him an old doubloon before half a day howling in front of him with three children. But can you persuade a bank to forgive debts by demonstrating your suffering? In the best case, bank will advise you to find some charitable foundation. Baron needs only a consciousness of his power, he does not need to rebuild the world.

And who shall set its bounds? Like some great demon,
From here I can control and rule the world.
I need but wish—and palaces will rise;
And in my splendid gardens will appear
A throng of nymphs to caper and to sport;
The muses too will offer me their tribute,
And freedom-loving genius be my slave;
And virtue too, and unremitting labor,
Will humbly wait on me for their reward.
I need but whistle low—and, bowing, scraping,
Blood-spattered villainy itself will crawl
To lick my hand and look into my eyes
To read therein the sign of my desire.
All things submit to me, and I—to none;
I stand above all longings and all cares;
I know my might, and in this knowledge find
Enough reward...²²

²²Translated by James E. Falen

In hands of avaricious knight money is dead, however, how will his young son manage this money, thinking only about fights and tournaments? If the first one has accumulated tremendous power, the second one will probably squander it sight unseen. Dostoevsky's book "The Raw Youth" analyzes the true power of money. Are they so omnipotent and is it possible to buy anything for money, including love? The material law of life determines the development of civilization and at the same time, in some cases, it is inferior to the laws of life that develop the soul.

In "The Miserly Knight" tragedy, the main characters are father and son. The attitude of both to money cannot lead to any progress and development. If the father's goal is only calm and cold contemplation of his own strength, then the son is ready to spend any amount on a beautiful sword or shield for a tournament in which he can simply be killed. "The Raw Youth" also depicts a father and a son, where the son Arkady strives for the ideal of the "The Miserly Knight" of Pushkin, that is, for cold calm, and the father Versilov, who extensively discusses the "Golden Age", without special remorse loses few inheritances despite the fact that his close relatives are in great need of money. *The number "4"*, corresponding to Dostoevsky's fourth novel, must be related to *the laws of the material world* and, above all, to *the law of breads*. However, this law is seriously different from Marx laws of the "class struggle".

5. "The Scene from Faust" ⇔ "The Brothers Karamazov"

If life obeys strict laws, it seems that it is easier to arrange the most ideal and correct world, some dream of Utopian socialists. Everyone in such a world will know what to do, being a cog in the general most correct mechanism. However, it turns out that living organisms cannot and should not obey the rules by which the inorganic world lives. In the story "Notes from the Underground," the protagonist argues that when the state of general happiness is reached — "the crystal palace will be built"²³ and the Kagan bird will arrive²⁴ he won't be surprised

all of a sudden, A PROPOS of nothing, in the midst of general prosperity a gentleman with an ignoble, or rather with a reactionary and ironical, countenance were to arise and, putting his arms akimbo, say to us all: "I say, gentleman, hadn't we better kick over the whole show and scatter rationalism to the winds, simply to send these logarithms to the devil, and to enable us to live once more at our own sweet foolish will!"²⁵

A state of absolute happiness, when everything has already been decided and there is nowhere else to strive, is

²³In Chernyshevsky's book "What to do?", In the fourth dream of Vera Pavlovna describes "a cast-iron-crystal" palace building, in which, as it was imagined by S. Fourier ("Theory of World Unity", 1841) people of a socialist society live. The crystal palace in London served as a model for the image of this palace.

²⁴According to popular legend, this legendary bird brings happiness to people. Here and above, quotes from Dostoevsky's novel "Notes from the Underground"

²⁵Translated by Constance Garnett

identical to death. For the "The Miserly Knight", a state of complete calm and awareness of his strength and capabilities is natural. Any physical system seeks such a state by "the principle of least action." Mephistopheles at Pushkin has the same worldview. When Faust complains of boredom, the demon does not see anything special:

What's to be done,
Faust? Man's not without limits, is he?
And to be bored, like it or not,
Is every rational being's lot:
Some are too idle, some too busy,
Have too much or too little faith;
Some find no joy, while some are dizzy
With it, enjoying themselves to death.
You yawn your lives out, till you fall
Into the grave that yawns for all.
Why shouldn't you yawn too?²⁶

But the boredom of Faust is much more serious than it might seem at first glance. When Mephistopheles gives him everything he wants, life loses all meaning. If you turn on the "god" mode in a computer game, when a character can kill the strongest monsters with one little finger, then the game ends, since any interest in playing it disappears. Gretchen was bewitched for Faust by the demon, therefore, even in the minutes "when no one thinks", owning a girl was completely unimportant to Faust. Life claims that it does not obey the laws of the material world. In the real world of living things, material gain is not always decisive. The war for the independence of the colonial states often does not bring economic benefits and the protection of big brothers is never eternal. Many choose the right to die free than to live on their knees. Living creatures to declare their independence can sometimes *make mistakes consciously* — just to indicate their freedom from the rules.

The Kulikovo battle may seem a completely illogical event in terms of material gain, despite the formal victory. Together with huge losses, this battle angered the Mongol Tatars, who soon dealt a terrible blow to Moscow²⁷. But representatives of different principalities went to battle, united to fight against the yoke, and a single people was returning back. Living, unlike the dead, does not always strive for a state of maximum peace, so the "great silence" in Russia in the XIV century should end up with a terrible battle. After many centuries of professing Orthodoxy, after the revolutions of 1917, Russia lived for several decades with an ideology that completely denied the existence of gods, and carried along a third of the globe.

The fifth book of Dostoevsky "The Brothers Karamazov" demonstrates many situations where the desire for freedom goes against the generally accepted and established rules. The girl Lisa is in a wheelchair and therefore is very limited in possibilities. In this state, her thoughts become very destructive. This is described in the chapter "A Little Demon".

When Elder Zosima was relegated from the status of saints to mere mortals, because a bed odor went from him after death, Alyosha was ready to break all his rules and vows — to drink champagne and go to visit Grushenka. After Ivan's story about the cruelty of the landowner, who was hounding a small child with his dogs in front of his mother's eyes, when asked what to do with the landowner, Alyosha answers: "Shoot!" Fedor Karamazov discusses the question of the existence of God and immortality in this way:

Good Lord! to think what faith, what force of all kinds, man has lavished for nothing, on that dream, and for how many thousand years. Who is it laughing at man? ... Damn it all, what wouldn't I do to the man who first invented God! Hanging on a bitter aspen tree would be too good for him.

The Grand Inquisitor clearly explains to his interlocutor, reminding Jesus that the one on whom the entire building of faith is based does not have the right to say one new word, since this will destroy the Inquisitor's church. And if the actions of the Inquisitor are subject to the strict laws of the development of the material world, including bread, miracle and sword of Caesar, then as soon as the super-mind shows signs of life and says a few words, like "Valaam's donkey"²⁸, then this will be a destructive action that violates the usual course of events, which is characteristic only of living organisms. This is a direct analogy of the sinking of the Spanish ship by Faust from the tragedy of Pushkin.

If super-mind is faced with the task of saying a "new word" or writing "the newest testament", he is well aware that this can lead to fatal consequences for many world ideologies. His main questions are: "Am I a trembling creature or do I have the right?", "Does the end justify the means?" And "Can I bend down and take it?". Here we return to Dostoevsky's first book "Crime and Punishment" and, accordingly, Salieri's problem. Dostoevsky's books loop on themselves.

RESULTS. POLYPHONY AND MONOPHONY.

The ten commandments of the Bible are not entirely unambiguous: there are several versions of them²⁹, however, they carry a very specific idea of the objective ethical law, a set of rules that are "not accessible to the rules of gold." The polyphony found by Bakhtin in works of Dostoevsky speaks about absence of author's personal opinion. Each character has its own independent voice. This indicates the writer's special talent not to interfere with his heroes, so that the psychological and ethical analysis of each situation can be made easier and more visual. If there is a semantic correlation between Pushkin's work and Dostoevsky's books, this proves the monophony of their work as a whole — all this was written by one super-mind. But it is also polyphony — writers and their characters have independence, relative freedom and own voice.

An analogue of the first five commandments could be taken

²⁶Translated by Alan Shaw

²⁷Shabuldo F. M. Land of South-West Russia as part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

²⁸Num. 22: 21-34

²⁹Ex. 20: 2-17; Deut. 5: 6-21, Ex. 34: 14-26

from Dostoevsky's books, where number of each commandment indicated by the corresponding book in chronological order. If you bring it all together, you get the following:

1. The first issue is the idea of an *objective ethical law*. This law should be independent from the presence or absence of gods even if this law formulated by some super-mind. Dostoevsky considered this topic in the book "Crime and Punishment".
2. The second issue is *the idea of images and idols*, as well as what role they play in people's lives and in the development of society. The book "The Idiot."
3. The third number is *feelings*, the most vulnerable side of a person, due to which some craftsmen can control entire nations like a poor moth, beating in the hands of a minx. "The Demons".
4. The fourth topic includes the principles of the development of *the material world* and, above all, the "breads", for which most of humanity runs "like a flock." At Marx, it was a "class struggle." "The Raw Youth".
5. The fifth point discusses violations of the laws of the material world, as a *declaration of a living being on freedom and independence*. These are the exceptions due to which the human soul and all living things can be developed. "The Brothers Karamazov".

The fourth and fifth points are in a sense opposed to each other — the development of the material world (4) is often destructive for the development of the spirit and vice versa — the development of the spirit can be destructive with respect to matter (5). Thanks to feelings (3), idols arise (2), but may be defeated by an objective ethical law (1). Analyzing the eight chapters of Eugene Onegin, one can add three more figures, but this is a topic for a separate article.