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"DOUBLING, DIVIDING AND INTERCHANGING OF THE SELF": THE 'UNCANNY' SUBJECTIVITY IN DOSTOEVSKY'S *THE DOUBLE*

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Abstract. *This paper addresses a new model of meaning structuring Fyodor Dostoevsky's novella, The Double (1846) that moves away from the contextual literary background of nineteenth century Realism in which it was initially published. Dostoevsky's depiction of madness, hysteria and anxiety through The Double's protagonist, Golyadkin, indicates that there is less of an emphasis on the social and religious aspects of the novella than on the psychological complexities of the subject. Dostoevsky's innovative insight into the mind prompts the question of the wider aesthetic frame in which The Double can be understood. The frame which suggests itself because of its emphasis on the unconscious is Freudian psychoanalysis. In this paper, The Double is treated as a text whose poetics ground the Freudian psychoanalytic theories depicted in his paper on "The 'Uncanny'" (1919), which stresses the significance of repression that constitutes a split in identity. By examining and analysing Golyadkin through the framework of psychoanalysis offered by Freud's "The 'Uncanny'," which addresses such concepts as Oedipal anxiety, repression, castration and the split in subjectivity, the contention of this paper is to offer Dostoevsky as an innovative and inventive author whose insights into the world of psychoanalysis were far ahead of his literary-historical context.*

Key words: *Dostoevsky, realism, madness, unconsciousness, identity*

When Dostoevsky proclaimed in November 1877 that "[t]his story positively did not succeed for me, but…I have never pursued anything in literature that was more serious than this idea," he was referring to *The Double* (1846), which was published thirty-one years preceding this date.[1] *The Double* suffered numerous attacks from the critics of the early nineteenth century due to its disturbing representation of a lunatic protagonist. This paper addresses a new model of meaning structuring Dostoevsky's novella that departs

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[1] This quote is taken from Craig S Cravens, "Capek's *Hordubal* and Dostoevsky's *The Double*: Madness and free-indirect discourse," *Comparative Literature* 52, no. 1 (2000), p. 55.

from the context in which it was initially received. In this paper, *The Double* is treated as a text whose poetics grounds Freudian psychoanalytic theories. In a systematic analysis of *The Double*'s protagonist Golyadkin through the psychoanalytic framework offered by Freud in his paper on "The 'Uncanny'" (1919), the contention of this paper is to show *The Double* as a novella that pre-empts the world of psychoanalysis that would develop only decades later.

Modern criticism has already managed to characterise Dostoevsky as a novelist who depicts the world of the psyche and who pre-empts some of the discoveries later developed by Freud and Lacan in the science of psychoanalysis. This criticism includes Louis Breger's *Dostoevsky: The Author as Psychoanalyst*, who outlines the protagonist Golyadkin's problem as a psychological rather than social one. Breger argues that Dostoevsky's characters are actively engaging in a world where the psychoanalytic process of free association, in which psychic contents are analysed and treated, is being depicted.[2] Dostoevsky's profound insight into the world of psychoanalysis, later theorised by Freud, is one of the major reasons, to Breger, that *The Double* was so poorly received in its time of publication. Exploring the novella's depiction of dreams, hysteria and the unconscious, Breger's reading situates *The Double* as profoundly ahead of its time. In a similar vein, others have also given due attention to Dostoevsky's deviation from the traditional trajectory of realism.[3]

This lens incorporates attempts to treat the *sujet* of Dostoevsky's fiction in light of the trope of the unconscious. In his book *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, Mikhail Bakhtin analyses the language employed in *The Double* as a representation of the protagonist's inner [un]conscious state.[4] Bakhtin argues that everything we see in *The Double*'s polyphonic structure is merely an extension of Golyadkin's inner conflict, and not a mimetic object in its own right.[5] This ultimately characterises Golyadkin as a fragmented and "disunified speaking subject," [6] rather than a closed-up, finished or 'typical' character of Realist fiction.

Many of the ideas posited by Dostoevsky's portrayal of the subject in *The Double* have also been a topic of great interest to critics. Konstantin Mochulsky relates Golyadkin's madness to the mechanisation and dehumanisation of Nicholai I's rigid bureaucracy.[7] Mochulsky contends that Golyadkin's personality is initiated into a split precisely due to his 'cog-like' nature within a regime that reduces people "into mere objects."[8] To Mochulsky, this is the emergence of the first "man from the underground."[9]

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[2] Louis Breger, *Dostoevsky: The Author as Psychoanalyst* (New York: New York University Press, 1989), pp. 7-9.
[3] Cf. Donald Fanger, *Dostoevsky and Romantic Realism: A Study of Dostoevsky in relation to Balzac, Dickens, and Gogol* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1965); Rene Fueloep-Miller, *Fyodor Dostoevsky: Insight, Faith, And Prophecy*, trans. Clara and Richard Winston (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1950); Lonny Roy Harrison, "Duality and the Problem of Moral Self-Awareness in Dostoevsky's "Dvoinik"" (PhD thesis, University of Toronto, Canada, 2008).
[4] See Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, Trans. Caryl Emerson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984).
[5] *Ibid.,* p. 215.
[6] These words are use by Barbara Z Thadan, "Bakhtin, Dostoevsky, and the Status of the "I"" *Dostoevsky Studies.* Vol. 8 (1987), p. 201.
[7] Konstantin Mochulsky, *Dostoevsky: His Life and Work,* Trans. Michael A. Minihan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), p. 48.
[8] *Ibid*. Whilst Mochulsky does pinpoint that Golyadkin is psychologically deranged, he does not place this neuroticism into the context of Freud's theories of psychoanalysis.
[9] *Ibid*.

Finally, there have been attempts to briefly relate *The Double* to the Freudian 'Uncanny.' A recent attempt has been by Malcom V Jones, who, in his book *Dostoyevsky After Bakhtin: Readings in Dostoyevsky's Fantastic Realism*, notes that the prominence of repetition, as well as the theme of doubling itself both belong to the motifs that Freud associated with the phenomenon of the uncanny.[10] While this correlation has been acknowledged, there have not been many studies which give sole attention to reading *The Double* through this concept of the 'Uncanny' especially in relation to the protagonist's representation of repression, castration and the death drive. This reading situates Dostoevsky's novella as a very early representation of the major ideas inherent in the Freudian 'Uncanny.'

The reception of *The Double* – the second novella with which Dostoevsky emerged on the Russian literary scene in 1846, following the publication of his epistolary novel *Poor Folk* a few months earlier – was not favourable. One of the most famous representatives of the Russian Natural School was the critic Vissarion Belinsky, who stressed the importance of a literature true to the deployment of authentic reality: its aim was "not putting [daily representation] on a pedestal, not exaggerating…not idealising [it] rhetorically" but rather portraying through art an accurate account of everyday existence, where, as stressed by Belinsky, "the negative aspects of life give the possibility…to represent the positive sides of life with verisimilitude."[11] On the surface, *The Double* preserves the tradition of the downtrodden "little man" whose everyday proclivities are governed by the oppressive social hegemonies which doom their subjects to a life of solitary alienation. Dostoevsky's hero belongs here to a plethora of Russian fictional characters, most notably Gogol's Akaky from *The Overcoat* and Pushkin's Evgeny from *The Bronze Horseman.* These characters form a genealogy of defeated subjects whose existence resonated with readers' humanitarian values.[12] Yet even though *The Double* portrayed an array of elements that was tailored to the Natural School genre, its meaning signalled something different. With its dream-like topography of madness, as well as the strangeness of its language and narration, *The Double*'s deviation from the stylistics of the Natural school created a surge of negative attention. Belinsky, who at first famously rejoiced at Dostoevsky's portrayal of the downtrodden subject, later wrote that "the same thing over and over again, however wonderful, wearies and bores."[13] Existing as a preserver of the Natural School, Belinsky condemned *The Double* for its "misleading representations of reality."[14] Others understood *The Double* as a duplication of Dostoevsky's predecessors. K.S. Aksakov had claimed that the novel was "a naked imitation of the external features of the great works of Gogol."[15] Perhaps where *The Double* struck a nerve most was the perception of its unconventional portrayal of lunacy. Belinsky himself saw Dostoevsky's fantastical elements as a break from the accurate aims of literature. He wrote:

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[10] See Malcolm V Jones, *Dostoyevsky After Bakhtin: Readings in Dostoyevsky's Fantastic Realism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 44-54.
[11] *Ibid*., p. 191.
[12] Some of Dostoevsky's early prose had notably belonged to the tradition of the Chinovnik tales, which were hugely popular stories in the mid-1840s. For an informative account of the history of these tales, see Harrison, "Duality," pp. 63-77.
[13] Vissarion Belinsky cited in Craig S Cravens, "Capek's *Hordubal* and Dostoevsky's *The Double*: Madness and free-indirect discourse," *Comparative Literature* 52, no. 1 (2000), p. 55.
[14] Lonny Roy Harrison, "Duality," p. 81.
[15] K.S. Aksakov cited in David Gasperetti, "'The Double': Dostoevskii's Self-effacing Narrative," *Slavic and East European Journal* 33 no. 2 (1989), p. 220.

> …in *The Double* there is yet another substantial shortcoming: its fantastic coloration. The fantastic in our time has a place only in the madhouse, and not in literature, and it requires the expertise of doctors, not of writers.[16]

It is crucial to analyse Golyadkin's madness in particular, for it was this trait that spurred on much dissatisfaction amongst Dostoevsky's literary community of the nineteenth century. In terms of social standing, Golyadkin is a nobody, a petty civil clerk who, tormented by the penetrating gaze of others, reaches a point of madness that gives shape to his double. We meet Golyadkin at a point of impasse: he wakes up to the thought that he may not, in fact, actually be awake. As we follow Golyadkin on his journey around St. Petersburg – from his home, to his doctor's residence, to work, to lingering around parties to which he is not actually invited, to the cold and snowy dampness of the street – it quickly becomes apparent that this is a subject *interrupted*. Golyadkin is always hiding, referring to acquaintances as "enemies" and relentlessly convincing himself that he is "just like anyone else," that he *is* "his own master."[17] But Golyadkin is *not* his own master, and it is fascinating that these words foreshadow Freud's famous declaration about the ego which is "not master in its own house."[18] Freud's notion challenges the belief that man is a unified subject, arguing instead that in our essence we are subordinated to our unconscious drives and instincts. Golyadkin is never in a fixed state; when he meets his double, the latter's presence only exacerbates Golyadkin's psychological volatility. Whilst Dostoevsky does pay tribute to some of the traditional aspects of Realism his readers expected in order to entice them, Golyadkin is deeply problematic nevertheless. His "reality" of the "everyday kind" does not conform to the mimetic sense of reality which Dostoevsky's contemporaries understood to be the norm in fiction. This topography, in which Golyadkin's 'reality' unfolds within the domain of his own mind, is the topography of the *uncanny*.

UNDERSTANDING THE FREUDIAN 'UNCANNY'

Freud's paper "The 'Uncanny'" was written in 1919. In its essence, Freud's discourse of the uncanny functions as a phenomenon of defamiliarisation, where the comfort of man's world turns on him and opens him up to (an)other realm of estrangement and alienation. Theoretically realised, the uncanny encompasses the return of familiar phenomena that have been estranged through the process of repression. Freud's etymological discovery that the German adjective *heimlich* (homely) is the opposite of *unheimlich* (unhomely) led to the thematisation of the uncanny as "that class of the frightening which leads back to what is known of old and long familiar."[19] The uncanny posits the notion that what was once an internal and 'homely' sensation to the individual can, in time, become a defamiliarising harbinger of great emotional distress. Freud's etymological dis-

[16] Vissarion Belinksy, "Vzgliad na Russkuiu Literaturu 1846" ("An Overview of Russian Literature in 1846"), in *Sobranie Sochinenii v Deviati tomax* (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia Literatura, 1976-1982), p. 213.
[17] Fyodor Dostoevsky, "The Double" in "*Notes from Underground* and *The Double,*" trans. Ronald Wilks (London & New York: Penguin Classics, 2009), p. 127. All subsequent references to the text are taken from this edition, and cited within the text in parenthesis.
[18] Sigmund Freud, *The Essentials of Psychoanalysis*, trans. James Strachey (London: Vintage, 2005), p. 77.
[19] Sigmund Freud, "The 'Uncanny'" in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. ed. James Strachey (London: Hogarth, 1955), p. 340.

covery that within the *heimlich* lurks the *unheimlich* not only destabilises the semantic codes that exist between binary oppositions (it is strange at the same time as it is familiar), but also motions towards a deeper problem around the *self* – a self who, behind his homely interior, conceals the existence of a lurking alien presence. This state of 'unhomeliness' signalled to Freud more than simple ontological disorientation: it was a concept which demonstrated the disturbance, terror and grotesquery that lingers in the familiar mind which, at any given point, could, as stated by Vidler, "turn on its owners…becom[ing] defamiliarised, derealised, as if in a dream."[20]

Unfamiliar and clandestine, the emotions underpinning an uncanny sensation are founded upon *fear*, for the uncanny is "related to what is frightening – to what arouses dread and horror." [21] But this fear is not *fear* in the accepted sense of the word – it is not the stuff of nightmares and ghosts. This is a *fear* metamorphosed from something frightening into something strangely familiar – the fundamental leitmotif underpinning "The 'Uncanny'." This uncanny fear is that which "ought to have remained secret and hidden but has come to light."[22] Freud uses Schelling's phrase to illustrate the fundamental hallmark of the uncanny: that the notion of 'home' is transformed into its opposite through the recurrence of repressed memories and impulses:

> [the uncanny] is in reality nothing new or alien, but something which is familiar and old-established in the mind and which has become alienated from it only through the process of repression."[23]

This familiar, "old established" feeling is related to an "infantile complex" which has been repressed due to its forbidden sexual nature. This complex is described as the Oedipus phase of development, and Freud theorises this stage as a model of psychic development that signals the child's arrival into cultural law through the formation of the superego. Freud elaborates on this model in metaphoric language which has led commentators to describe it as 'Freud's Oedipus myth,' thus paying tribute to the metaphysical plane on which Freud describes psychic processes. The infant, according to Freud, develops a sexual possessiveness over the mother and desires to take the place of the father. Once the child perceives the mother's lack of phallus, she appears neutered, incomplete and a subject bound by deficiency. At the same time, the desire for the mother brings the child under the threat of *castration*.[24] The dissolution of the Oedipus complex occurs when the child separates from the mother and starts to identify with the father as the bearer of the law and culture. However, the infant's desire does not fade – it is repressed in the unconscious. Freud claims that every time an affect or emotional impulse is repressed, it is transformed into fear (Angst).[25] This return of the repressed as fear *is* the uncanny. It manifests itself as the compulsion to repeat.

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[20] For an excellent reading of the uncanny in relation to the home, see Anthony Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny* (Cambridge and Mass: MIT Press, 1992), p. 7.
[21] Freud, "The 'Uncanny'," p. 339.
[22] Freud uses Schelling's definition of the *unheimlich* to tease out the relationship between repression and the uncanny. See "The 'Uncanny'," p. 345.
[23] *Ibid*., pp. 363-364.
[24] See Freud's chapter on "The Dissolution of the Oedipus Complex" in *The Essentials of Psychoanalysis*, 395.
[25] Sigmund Freud, "Das Unheimliche," in: Sigmund Freud, *Studienausgabe*, Band IV (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1982), p. 263.

Freud associates the infantile complexes of Oedipal desires and "womb phantasies" as beliefs that have to be surmounted by society's strict moral demands.[26] What is encountered as uncanny then is merely an unconscious projection[27] which elicits the recurrence of a memory that had otherwise been repressed in the subject's infant phase. Developing a complex theory of the uncanny through ETA Hoffman's *The Sandman*, Freud argues that Hoffman's tale depicts the paradigmatic structure of the Oedipus complex. Nathanial, *The Sandman*'s protagonist, is unable to move past his infantile phase and, incapable of forming a coherent ego, Nathanial is haunted by the image of the Sandman who "tears out children's eyes."[28] This idea of tearing out one's eyes is designated by Freud as a symbolic substitution for castration, and he uses the myth of the "self-blinding" Oedipus as an emblem for this model.[29] Thus the anxiety about one's sight or "the fear of going blind" is linked to "the dread of being castrated."[30] This is an integral element which transforms the subject's familiar world into one permeated with a hostile, grotesque and alienating presence. The subject's consciousness is overcome by a clandestine sensation, once all too familiar, which has become repressed due to its transgressive nature.

Freud pinpoints that *unheimlich* carries the prefix 'un' which is "the token of repression." [31] This situates the term as an exemplar of *negation*, and Freud writes that the death drive [*Thanatos*] is the form of negation par excellence.[32] Thus if the uncanny is characterised by a type of negation, then it is not surprising that there is a tendency in subjectivity to return to the place from whence it first came:

> This *unheimlich* place, however, is the entrance to the former Heim [home] of all human beings, to the place where each one of us lived once upon a time and in the beginning.[33]

The uncanny signals the clash in consciousness which the unconscious cannot reject.[34] It is an impossible desire for a former self, nostalgia for a *home* that has been made strange, alienating, and rife with a terrific sense of threat.

GOLYADKIN'S *HOMELESSNESS*

Although Dostoevsky died well before Freud's studies on repression, his intention to translate the works of Carl Gustav Carus in 1849 signals that he was well acquainted with the scientific knowledge about the psyche that abounded in the mid-nineteenth century.[35]

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[26] Freud, "The 'Uncanny'," p. 371.
[27] This idea about "projection" is articulated by Rosemary Jackson in her attempt at defining the uncanny, in, *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion* (New York: Methuen, 1981), p. 66.
[28] Freud, "The 'Uncanny'," p. 348.
[29] *Ibid*., p. 353.
[30] *Ibid*., p. 352.
[31] *Ibid* [See Freud's paper on 'Negation' (1925), P.F.L., II, 437-8].
[32] See Dimitris Vardoulakis, "The Return of Negation: The Doppelganger in Freud's "The 'Uncanny'," *SubStance* 35, no. 2 (2006), p. 101. Vardoulakis is referring here to Freud's essay on 'Negation.'
[33] Freud, "Uncanny", p. 368. This former place is, of course, the mother's womb – the most familiar of all homes since it is the one from which man is born.
[34] See Vardoulakis, "The Return of Negation," p. 102.
[35] Carl Gustav Carus wrote a paper on a psychoanalytic study under the title of *Psyche: Zur Entwicklungsgeschichte der Seele*, published in Pforzheim, in 1848. Dostoevsky wanted to translate this work while still ex-

In this way it is important to attempt a reading of *The Double* through a psychoanalytic framework not only due to the novella's representation of psychic phenomena, but because Dostoevsky's model of subjectivity is grounded both *in* the psychological awareness of his own time, as well as that which is *ahead* of his time.

In *The Double* Yakov Petrovich Golyadkin is not in and of a stable mind just as he is not in and of an experience of *homeliness*. The world Golyadkin inhabits is from the start one of quotidian objects and city dampness, all distorted through a series of mirror images and hallucinatory dreams. We meet Golyadkin in the process of awakening, and our first impression of him is of

> …a man not yet entirely certain if he has woken up or is still asleep, if everything around him was now actually happening or was simply a continuation of his chaotic daydreaming. (121)

This sense of uncertainty pervades the entire narrative: Golyadkin is constantly struggling to locate his surroundings, for even when he *is* at home he never truly experiences the feeling of *homeliness. The Double* is replete with the *strangeness* that exists in the home. It is within his dwelling that Golyadkin reassesses his position and is left constantly unsure about whether he is in a wakeful or unconscious state: did the double *really* spend the night in his dwelling, or did Golyadkin merely dream it up?; did the events of the first encounter with the double *really* take place, or was Golyadkin in too dejected a state to exhibit rational thought?; did Klara *really* write him a letter of elopement, or is Golyadkin labouring under a profound misapprehension? Even before Freud's theories on the unconscious, Dostoevsky is already representing through Golyadkin an illumination of the solitary mind – never at ease with the lurking shadow of the Other inside it.

The Double is permeated by an undercurrent of fear which Freud sees as a symbolic manifestation of the uncanny. For the purpose of this paper the genesis of fear can be understood as a feeling of *uncertainty*.[36] Uncertainty governs the notion of the uncanny, for everything that is uncanny can be demarcated as that which dwells on the threshold of the definable states of dream/reality, familiar/unfamiliar, conscious/unconscious. It is this word *uncertain* (не совсем уверен – ne sovsem uveren) which is the first emotion with which Dostoevsky endows Golyadkin, and throughout the novella Golyadkin's sense of uncertainty grows and develops into an amalgam of horror, vagueness, confusion and disgust (121). Not only is Golyadkin uncertain about his surroundings when he first awakes (importantly this is how the reader first sees him), but his entire experience is invested with *uncertain* fear: when he first ventures out onto the street, he is overcome by an unpleasant feeling: "a most disagreeable sensation made Mr Golyadkin shudder." (125) This occurs just after he has encountered two of his colleagues on the street, which precipitates a series of horror-inducing sentiments that compel Golyadkin to shrink "fearfully into the darkest corner of the carriage." (*Ibid*) Even an event as trivial as ringing a doorbell is invested with panic for Golyadkin: as he walks up the steps to his doctor's apartment, Golyadkin is overwhelmed with doubt, concluding that it might "be better to

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iled in Siberia in 1849. Taken from Slobodanka Vladiv-Glover, "Dostoevskii's 'Positively Beautiful Man' and the Existentialist Authentic Self: A Comparison," *Canadian-American Slavic Studies* 23, no. 3 (1989), p. 315.

[36] Freud says the same thing about the uncanny in his essay: it is "undoubtedly related to what is frightening – to what arouses dread and horror… [it] tends to coincide with what excites fear in general." See "The 'Uncanny'," p. 339.

return tomorrow" to avoid such trials (127). These references to Golyadkin's genuine sense of trepidation are made repeatedly throughout the novella: he is always lurking in shadows and hiding from those around him – always in the background and never *in the light*.

Light can be understood as a metaphor for knowledge and self-awareness.[37] Therefore, Golyadkin's propensity to lurk in darkness indicates that his existence takes place in another realm – the realm of shadows and repression. In *Aurelia*, Gerard de Nerval speaks about the symbolism of the sun in the context of dreaming: "It is a well-known fact that one never sees the sun in a dream, although one is often aware of some far brighter light."[38] This brightness is not symbolic of joyfulness. It is an uncanny brightness which constitutes the return of that which is repressed. This "brighter light" makes an appearance after Golyadkin's disquieting series of dreams nearing the novella's ending whose contents include an array of doubles springing up from the pavement and hunting Golyadkin. Golyadkin wakes to find that:

> [i]n the room it was somehow *unusually* bright. The sun's rays were filtering through the frosty windowpanes and scattering themselves over the whole room, to the…surprise of Mr Golyadkin. (225; italics mine)

This is the first time the presence of the sun is made reference to in the entire novella. The fact that the light is described as "unusually" bright and that Golyadkin is further "surprised by this" suggests that this sun is a sinister presence in Golyadkin's world, and may in fact indicate that Golyadkin is still dreaming. This 'sun' is symbolic: it is a light that Golyadkin is aware *of* and running away *from*. This kind of light is what spurs on Golyadkin's anxiety. It is the harbinger of a memory that "ought to have remained secret and hidden but has come to light."[39] This is the phrase made famous by Freud, for it reveals the central element which spurs on the uncanny in the unconscious: repression.

Golyadkin's universe can be understood as a world repressed, where things remain secret, hidden, and lurking behind eerie shadows and dusty walls. As mentioned earlier, Golyadkin is never in the light: he suffers from being *seen*, and his everyday environs are also permeated with a darkness that prevents an accurate perception of seeing things as clearly as one might. This tendency to lurk in the shadows, to hide away from the light and to make decisions which within moments are to be reconsidered signifies a subjectivity defined by negation. This is important, for the uncanny is grounded in negation. This negation symbolises "an instinct to return to [an] inanimate state."[40] This "inanimate state" is the mother's womb: the ultimate *heim* which is characterised by a *drive* to cease to be.[41] This phrase is echoed by Golyadkin's narrator. After poor, uninvited Golyadkin makes a fool of himself at Klara Olsufyevna's ball, the narrator explains that Golyadkin

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[37] This metaphor is used as early as Classical Greek tragedy. See Aeschylus' treatment of the Prometheus myth in *Prometheus Bound* in which the titan Prometheus steals fire (light) from the gods to bring knowledge to mankind. See Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound and Other Plays*, trans. Philip Vellacott (London: Penguin Classics, 1961).

[38] Gerard de Nerval, *Aurelia,* in *Selected Writings,* trans. Geoffrey Wagner (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1957), p. 130. Julia Kristeva also uses Nerval's quote in her analysis of depression. See *The Black Sun: Depression and Melancholia*, trans. Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), p. 13.

[39] Here I use Schelling's famous phrase in Freud's paper. Freud associates with Schelling's definition the idea of repression, and sees this as the foundation stone upon which the uncanny rests. Freud, "The 'Uncanny'," p. 345.

[40] These words are used by Freud to characterise the death drive in "Beyond the Pleasure Principle," taken from *The Essentials of Psychoanalysis*, p. 246.

[41] The term *Trieb* (drive) is described by Freud as "*an urge inherent in organic life to restore an earlier state of things* which the living entity has been obliged to abandon…" *Ibid*., p. 244.

did "not want only to run away from himself, but to be obliterated, to *cease to be*, to return to dust." (160; italics mine**)** It is interesting that this remark is made in reference to a feminine character, for the female body is itself the source of repetition which characterises the uncanny. Not only does Klara's presence exacerbate Golyadkin's desire to return to a former state that has been repressed ("to return to dust"), but her femininity also signals the paradigm for infantile anxieties that act as a reminder of the threat of castration. Whilst Golyadkin finds a source of pleasure in this feminine presence, wanting to kiss and dance with her at the ball, she also elicits within him an uncanny dread. Golyadkin's anxiety, his need to "cease to be," is actually a *desire* for the trauma and destruction of *Trägheit* – a hallmark of negation.[42] These reactions all signal a split in subjectivity which initiate Golyadkin's first meeting with his double.

The entire scene in which Golyadkin first comes across the double takes place inside his consciousness, for it is here that his subjectivity is most intensely marked by the 'uncanny.' It is also here that the role of metaphor is most explicit: the "dank, misty" rain, the "howl[ing]" wind and the "deserted streets" all represent Golyadkin's agonizing, dejected and solitary emotional state (159). As he stands by the Fontanka embankment, he experiences the recurrence of the same thing: he sees his double "for whom he had made way and passed ten minutes earlier" appear before him for the second time (164). Haunted by the presence of someone with whom he has a strange affinity ("this stranger now seemed somehow familiar" (164)) Golyadkin is also troubled by some familiar sensation: "[s]ome remote, long forgotten idea, the memory of something that had happened long ago, now entered his head." (165-6) Thus, the emergence of the double is the return of an original lack that had been alienated through repression. In this scene temporality is constructed not as a linear event but as a series of alternating conscious states. This temporality cannot be measured by normal time but by the sporadic memory traces of Golyadkin's unconscious, for it is here that material that has been repressed re-emerges as a symptom (the double).

It is symbolic that this scene occurs within a topography that is cold, dark and foggy, for it further designates Golyadkin's general weak-sightedness. Undeniably, the allusions to occluded vision are to be found everywhere: the stairs that lead to Golyadkin's apartment are "dark, damp and dirty"; the "wet" and "murky" weather "strain[s] his vision; and he even confuses his double with his own reflection (166, 159). Golyadkin's violated gaze is characterised by his general inability to distinguish between his external reality and that which occurs within his own mind, and we often witness him asking himself "have I dreamt this up?" as a way of divulging his general confusion (134). The theme of being trapped within a dream-like spatio-temporal milieu is hinted at again in chapter six, when Golyadkin has woken up after seemingly spending the night with his double. Golyadkin muses that:

> …all of this was so strange, baffling, and wild, it all seemed so impossible, that it really was difficult to give any credence to the whole affair. Mr Golyadkin himself was even prepared to recognize the entire thing as an unprecedented delirium, a momentary disorder of the imagination, a darkening of the mind (167).

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[42] *Trägheit* encompasses the death drive, which is grounded in Freud's notion that "*the aim of all life is death*." This drive is manifested in the compulsion to repeat. *Ibid*., p. 246.

This inability to separate the dream from reality is a central motif throughout the events of *The Double,* signalling to the fact that Golyadkin's environment is pervaded by a tainted veil which distorts reality and prevents him from perceiving his surroundings with clarity. This is the *unhomely* topography of the unconscious: dreamlike and sight constraining, it is also made of the same stuff as the uncanny – for one cannot look the uncanny "straight in the eyes."[43]

This brings us to the role of the mirror both as it is represented by Freud in "The 'Uncanny'," as well as its depiction in *The Double*. In "The 'Uncanny'," Freud uses the concept of the mirror to exemplify the motif of the violated gaze. Freud explains that mirrors are a symbol of the treacherous vision and the doubling of the self:

> [The double] is marked by the fact that the subject identifies himself with someone else, so that he is in doubt as to which his self is, or substitutes the extraneous self for his own…there is a doubling, dividing and interchanging of the self. And finally there is the constant recurrence of the same thing…[44]

Doubles produce a reflection of the self that is distorted and inaccurate: they typify the horror of existing in a state of alienation. Like the scene in which Golyadkin first encounters the double, the entire novel is infused with this oppressive veil of inexactitude and inaccuracy. Golyadkin mistakes his own reflection for that of his double on two separate occasions. The first occurs when Golyadkin is accused of eating eleven pasties when he believes to only have eaten one:

> In the doorway to the next room…which until then our hero had taken for a mirror, stood a man…not the old Mr Golyadkin, not the hero of our story, but another Mr Golyadkin. (207-8)

The next instance occurs when Golyadkin is trying to explain the situation between himself and his double to his colleagues and superiors:

> [Mr Golyadkin] averted his eyes and at once caught sight of yet another very strange visitor. In a doorway which until then our hero had taken for a mirror, as sometimes happened with him, *he* appeared… (264)

As indicated by Gasparetti, the narration of such images induces Golyadkin to "see reality less than clearly."[45] Both occasions depict Golyadkin trying to plead his way out of a desperate situation, suggesting that the doubling of perception is a deep source of anxiety. They also signal at the deceptive gaze inherent in mirror reflections. This situation is echoed by Freud in a footnote to "The 'Uncanny'." Freud recalls an incident on a train in which he sees his own reflection on a swinging glass door. When exposed to his reflection, not only does Freud fail to recognise the "elderly gentleman in a dressing gown," but he recollects that he "thoroughly disliked his appearance."[46] Mirrors have the potential not only to produce distortion but to destabilise – they are a metaphor for the unfamiliar coming to light and threatening one's identity and unity.

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[43] These words are spoken by Samuel Weber, who pinpoints the inability to attempt a definition of the uncanny which is always eluding meaning. See "The Sideshow, or: Remarks on a Canny Moment," *MLN* 88, no. 1 (1973), p. 1115.
[44] Freud, "The 'Uncanny'," p. 356.
[45] "Dostoevskii's Self-effacing Narrative," p. 229.
[46] Freud, "The 'Uncanny'," p. 371.

In psychoanalysis, the mirror function has famously been coined by Lacan, for whom it serves as a metaphor for a stage in psychic development. Lacan theorises the mirror stage as a signifier of the Imaginary which is a register of the unconscious, along with the register of the Symbolic and the Real.[47] These are idealised categories to describe Lacan's topography of the psyche, which is developed from Freud's topography. The Imaginary is based on the infant seeing a reflection of itself in the mirror and developing a split between "the ideal ego that is formed and the ego that gazes at what it imagines the future self to be."[48] The Imaginary stage is one of "narcissistic identifications and mirror reflections" in which the child identifies his existence through the images that he sees reflected back upon him.[49] Lacan describes that "the visual *Gestalt* of [the child's] own body…represents an ideal unity, a salutary *imago*."[50] Yet Lacan designates the reflection as an alien one, because the image in the mirror comes outside of the self. The child "misrecognises" itself (this narcissistic misrecognition is termed **méconnaissance**) and finds in the image "a pleasing unity which it does not actually experience in its own body."[51] The result is the formation of a *self* and an *other*. The child desires to resemble the image in the mirror (the *other*), but like a reflection, the image is an inaccurate depiction. This produces a deficiency in the now desiring subject. Remarking on Lacan's model, Elizabeth Grosz characterises desire as "a fundamental lack, a hole in being that can be satisfied by only one thing – another's desire."[52] Thus, to Lacan the human subject is inevitably split, incomplete and characterised by a lack. This finds resemblance in the Freudian 'Uncanny,' for the very idea that grounds repression deems the subject to be bound by something that is missing.

Through Golyadkin, Dostoevsky is already exploring the notion of the split subject theorised in modern psychoanalysis. To both Freud and Lacan, the man in the mirror is strange. He is not a perfect unity but a *disunified subject*, already castrated before entering the symbolic world. Golyadkin is a perfect manifestation of the castrated subject. Even before we meet his double, Golyadkin's subjectivity is characterised by a lack, and we can sense this the very first time we meet him. The following is what occurs as soon as Golyadkin jumps out of bed at the beginning of the novella:

> Once out of bed he immediately ran over to a small round mirror…Although the sleepy, weak-sighted countenance and somewhat balding head reflected there were so insignificant as to command no attention at first glance, its owner was obviously perfectly satisfied with all he saw in the mirror. (121-122)

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[47] The Imaginary is the register in which the infant sees itself reflected in the objects surrounding it and forms through this identification an ego-ideal that is outside of itself. The Symbolic functions to bring the child into the order of law and language that is introduced by the phallus – the law of the father. The Real is that register prior to the Imaginary and Symbolic. It is the unknowable and acts as a reminder of the lack that characterises the Symbolic order, existing only in fragments in the subject's unconscious. See Alan Sheridan's "Translator's Note" in Jacques Lacan, *Écrits: A Selection*, trans. A. Sheridan (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. ix-x.

[48] See Ascroft, "Lacan's Desire and Dostoevsky's Double: The Problematics of Psychoanalytic Discourse in a Fictional Psychosis," *The Dostoevsky Journal: An Independent Review* 6 (2005), p. 2.

[49] See Derek Hook, "Lacan, the Meaning of the Phallus and the 'Sexed' Subject," *London: LSE Research Online* (2006), p. 62, http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/960/1/Lacanthemeaning.pdf.

[50] Lacan, *Écrits*, p. 2.

[51] These words are used by Terry Eagleton, cited in Hook, "Lacan," p. 62.

[52] See Elizabeth Grosz, *A Feminist Introduction to Lacan* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1990), p. 64.

Golyadkin partakes here in the role of the infant observing his own reflection in the Lacanian mirror stage. In this passage there is an inherent clash between the ideal and the real: described by Dostoevsky as a "balding" and "insignificant" figure, it seems strange that Golyadkin should spring "immediately" out of bed and be "perfectly satisfied with all he saw." Golyadkin speaks to the reflected object ("a fine thing it would be if there were something not quite right with me today…" (122)) as if speaking to another. This narcissistic engagement is subject to **méconnaissance**. There is already an imaginary formation of an *other* materialising in Golyadkin's consciousness, and throughout the novella we see him repeatedly take the form of someone else. When he notices two of his colleagues on the street he ponders: "should I pretend it's not me, but somebody else remarkably like me?" Later he even asserts to Krestyan Ivanovich, "I act," as though his existence were bound by the need to embody the characteristics of someone else (126, 130). The fact that Golyadkin relies so closely on another indicates that Golyadkin is from the beginning a subject who has already undergone symbolic castration.

Golyadkin is compatible with a number of well-known Russian literary characters who typify the 'little man' of St. Petersburg's 'underground.' As has been argued by others, Golyadkin's name (голый – golyj) suggests bareness and nakedness, and rather than inferring this as an image of sexuality, this association only amplifies Golyadkin's social and psychological dearth. Golyadkin leads an almost anonymous existence within the contours of his "dirty" and "dusty" apartment (121). Like Gogol's Akaky from *The Overcoat*, Golyadkin is only ever recognised as a cog in a tyrannical regime, and the narrator's constant emphasis on Golyadkin as "our hero" highlights the well-known stereotype of the subjugated office clerk for whom "[h]umiliation, oppression, and intimidation were expressed in…every gesture" (61). Golyadkin's insignificance is reflected everywhere: not only does his own servant snub him and disregard his existence, but even his work colleagues fail to notice the conspicuous resemblance of the double until Golyadkin draws attention to him. The fact that Golyadkin pretends to be someone other than himself, constantly assuring himself that he was "quite all right," indicates his desire for recognition, which is also a desire for the *other* (126).

Forever on edge, there is an integral fragment of the self which Golyadkin is lacking from the beginning. When we are told that Golyadkin has finally awoken, his walls, drawers, table and clothing all "glanced *familiarly* back at him." (121; italics mine) Golyadkin's reality is one in which inanimate objects are given living qualities.[53] Golyadkin not only contends with the animation of inanimate things in his everyday environment; he consciously engages with them. He takes delight in the clothes and ottomans that watch him, is reminded of the outside world when contacted by "the angry, sour look" of the "dreary autumn day" and is stimulated to the "greatest satisfaction" when the "brightly coloured banknotes looked at [him] approvingly and cordially." (122) As a desiring subject, Golyadkin depends upon the recognition of the *other* to fill his subjectivity. Yet, because desire is characterised by lack – it is unquenchable, "diametrically opposed to fixation" and seeks only "its own continuation and furtherance"[54] – it is outside of Golyadkin's control. Rife with deficiency, even the gaze of inanimate objects acts as an

[53] This type of circumstance is defined by Jentsch as "intellectual uncertainty" and Freud gives this notion due attention as part of his definition of the uncanny. Ernst Jentsch, "On the Psychology of the Uncanny," trans. Roy Sellars, *Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities* 2, no. 1 (1995), p. 12.

[54] Bruce Fink, *The Lacanian Subject: Between Language and Jouissance* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1956), p. 90.

uncanny recurrence of Golyadkin's alienated condition. This gaze is the return of the repressed – the reminder of Golyadkin's split in subjectivity. The final scene, in which "two fiery eyes were peering at him," is the ultimate manifestation of the recurrence of the castrative gaze (281). This gaze is represented by none other than Krestyan Ivanovich – "not the earlier one but a different, fearful Krestyan Ivanovich!" – the physical embodiment of the *nom-du-père*[55] whose presence signifies the threat of castration (*Ibid*). Like Coppola, who reminds Nathanial of his infantile complexes in *The Sandman*, this Kristyan Ivanovich – the father-figure par excellence – is a manifestation of an uncanny recurrence of the repressed materials in Golyadkin's unconscious. Just as Golyadkin's troubled consciousness is bound by the desire of the *other* due to an inherent lack, so too does his anxiety at the novella's closing signify a negation (*Trägheit*) which produces the desire to return to a previous, pre-conscious "womb" state. Golyadkin himself literalises this by stating "I am a suicide, that's what I am!" when confounded by the threat of the other (217). The death drive which grounds this compulsion is however intimately connected with language.

"THE UNCONSCIOUS IS STRUCTURED LIKE A LANGUAGE"[56]: THE LANGUAGE OF *THE DOUBLE*

Dostoevsky's novella represents a novel literary episteme in his treatment of *language* that is grounded in psychic phenomena. *The Double* challenges the tropes of narrative by depicting a split in the *speaking subject*. Almost the entire novella is presented as an extended dialogue between Golyadkin and *another*. It was scholars like Mikhail Bakhtin who identified a new model of discourse in *The Double*'s polyphony. Most unusual in *The Double* is the presence of a narrator who acts as a function of Golyadkin's inner thoughts, and Bakhtin identifies that Golyadkin speaks as if he is under the influence of another from whom he seeks to "simulate total independence."[57] Whilst the opening of the novella belongs to an objective third person voice – a type of camera eye ("[i]t was a little before eight o'clock in the morning when Titular Counsellor Yakov Petrovich Golyadkin awoke after a long sleep") – the point of view shifts almost imperceptibly a little further down the passage ("soon Mr Golyadkin's senses began to take in more clearly and distinctly their normal, everyday impressions") (121). The narrator modulates into Golyadkin's gaze, and we find that throughout the story it is almost impossible to pinpoint the exact moment where the narrator's speech ends and Golyadkin's begins. When Golyadkin is on his way to Ismailovsky Bridge the following is narrated:

> But it seemed as though difficulty did not exist for our hero at the moment. He was drenched through, it is true, and he was a good deal spattered with mud. "But that's no matter, so long as the object is obtained." And Mr Golyadkin certainly was nearing his goal. (141)

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[55] This is termed the name-of-the-father by Lacan, who associates the father as "the figure of the law." See *Écrits*, p. 74.
[56] This is the famous Lacanian phrase about the effect of language in the unconscious. See Jacques Lacan, *The Seminar XX, Encore: On Feminine Sexuality, the Limits of Love and Knowledge*, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller, trans. by Bruce Fink (New York: W.W Norton & Co, 1998), p. 48.
[57] Bakhtin, *Problems*, p. 211.

Here the voices of both Golyadkin and the narrator are interchangeable: where the narrator explains that "[h]e was drenched," Golyadkin answers back with "that's no matter" almost as if the two were speaking to one another.

Not only is Golyadkin's language dominated by the voice of another, but his very movements, like a marionette, appear as though he is under the control of somebody else:[58] "propelled by some external force" whilst in the grips of movement, it is clear that Golyadkin lacks the ability to exercise his own sense of autonomy (55). As Bakhtin has pinpointed, Golyadkin addresses himself as if participating in a conversation with another person, repeatedly trying to assure and convince himself that he is "like every one else…that he was quite all right…[and even] as good as any one" (13). It is obvious that Golyadkin seeks approval not only from other fellow human beings but also from himself: his tendency to comfort himself – "my young friend," "Yakov Petrovitch, you rascal, you old Golyadkin" (88, 103) – confirms not only his paranoid sense of self presentation, but also allows for, as Bakhtin declares, a substitution of "his own voice for the voice of another person."[59] This leads us back to the uncanny, for the uncanny is governed by an earlier impulse that must be repressed due to its transgressive nature – characterising Golyadkin as a split, and therefore desiring subject. It is in this way that the emphasis is no longer on Golyadkin the character or the ideological hero of Russian fiction: it is on Golyadkin as the representation of the function of language in the unconscious. Golyadkin is dependent upon the *other* to fill the lacking hole, the product being a "*discourse of the other*" – a place in the unconscious from which the *other* speaks.[60] To Lacan, language, which pre-exists the subject, is a performative structure which 'splits' the subject as he or she enters the domain of culture (the Symbolic order). This is why Golyadkin, a subject 'split' par excellence, is forever performing a back-and-forth discourse *vis-à-vis* himself and his *other*. Here there is a new model of discourse that grounds the themes of the uncanny: the compulsion to repeat due to Golyadkin's castrated subjectivity, the prominence of repression that pervades Golyadkin's dreams, and a subjectivity marked by negation (the drive of self-destruction).

CONCLUSION

In his reading of "The 'Uncanny'," Theodore Adorno proclaims that "[e]strangement from the world…is a moment of art."[61] *The Double* presents an early representation of this estrangement that would become the material for unconscious depictions in Freudian psychoanalysis. Estrangement is here a key Dostoevskian device to turn the tenets of fiction on its head and portray the world of psychic phenomena as the core of representation. Estrangement is also the fundamental trope of the 'Uncanny.' It is in Dostoevsky's novel treatment of language grounded in psychic phenomena that *The Double* presents a new poetics that departs from the nineteenth century poetics of Realism. Dostoevsky's

[58] This idea is developed by Viktor Vinogradov, quoted in Gary Rosenshield, "'The Bronze Horseman' and 'The Double': The Depoeticization of the Myth of Petersburg in the Young Dostoevski," *Slavic Review* 55, no. 2 (1996), p. 417.
[59] Bakhtin, *Problems*, p. 213.
[60] Jacques Lacan, *The Four Fundemental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller, trans. Alan Sheridan (London: Penguin Books, 1994), p. 131.
[61] Theodor Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, trans. C. Lenhardt, ed. Gretel Adorno and Rolf Tiedemann (London and New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984), p. 369.

language is not the discourse of everyday reality but of the unconscious. By reading the novella through "The 'Uncanny'," one can understand Golyadkin's subjectivity as governed by repression, castration and the desire for the *other*. *The Double must* necessarily be uncanny. It must provoke and shock the reader, because its very style conforms to the "Realis[m] in a higher sense", a paradigm that Dostoevsky himself proclaimed for his fiction in the nineteenth century.[62] *The Double* contains something which is not necessarily explicable. Like the uncanny, Dostoevsky's novella *eludes* concrete and empirical assumptions about life, art and subjectivity. This evasion is always escaping the reader, constantly dragging him into the very unconscious of the novella itself. Here the psyche rules uninhibited, and Dostoevsky portrays through Golyadkin the inner psychic realities of man that are necessarily disquieting, defamiliarising and unhomely.

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DVOJNIK I "TAJNOVITO"

Michelle Zvedeniuk

Ovaj rad bavi se novim modelom strukturisanja značenja u noveli Fjodora Dostojevskog "Dvojnik" koji predstavlja zaokret od kontekstualnog realizma 19. veka. Opis ludila, histerije i strepnje koji Dostojevski opisuje u "Dvojniku" u liku Goljadkina pokazuje da manje pažnje posvećuje društvenim i religioznim pitanjima nego psihološkoj problematici. Njegov novi uvid u psihologiju pokreće pitanje šire estetike u kojoj se nalazi "Dvojnik". Naglasak je na Frojdovskoj psihoananalizi i nesvesnom. U ovom radu "dvojnik" postavlja poetiku o kojoj je pisao Frojd u svome radu "Tajnovitost" (1919), naglašavajući značaj potiskivanja koji ukazuje na rascep ličnosti. Kroz analizu Goljadkina, i uz pomoć Frojdove analize koja govori o Edipalnoj strepnji, potiskivanju, kastraciji i rascepu ličnosti i njene subjektivnosti, u radu se ističe da je Dostojevski inventivan i inovativan i da je daleko išao ispred literarno-istorijskog perioda anticipirajući koncepcije iz psihoanalitičke teorije.

Ključne reči: *Dostojevski, realizam, ludilo, nesvesno, identitet*