

The Failure of the Extraordinary Man: Cognitive Dissonance and Moral Fragmentation of Raskolnikov in Dostoevsky's Crime and Punishment

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Abstract

There has been much critical writing about guilt, morality and psychological agony in Fyodor Dostoevsky's novel *Crime and Punishment*. The psychological conflicts involved in Raskolnikov's divided consciousness have been a subject of numerous psychoanalytical interpretations, but the connection between his self-fashioning of ideology and psychological conflict is open to further analysis. In this paper, utilization of both Leon Festinger's Cognitive Dissonance Theory and Freudian psychoanalysis is integrated with an eye towards understanding the fragmentation of Raskolnikov's mind. The study highlights the conflict between a rationalization of intellect and moral awareness as explored through the main character's philosophy of the "Extraordinary Man" on his dreams, hallucinations and encounters with Sonia Marmeladova. The psychological anguish

experienced by Raskolnikov is explained by the psychoanalytical framework of psychological tension between his theoretical beliefs and moral drive using the theory of cognitive dissonance, repression, unconscious, and superego. The study aims to show, by a careful literary examination that in Dostoevsky guilt is not only a moral or religious concept but something much more complex, a psychological condition that causes a process of self-denial and undermines both identity and certainty of ideology.

Keywords: Crime and punishment; Cognitive Dissonance; Psychoanalysis; Guilt; Moral Consciousness

INTRODUCTION

Fyodor Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* (1866) has received more scrutiny, both psychological and philosophical, than any other novel. The novel's central theme revolves around Rodion Raskolnikov, a former student whose murder of a pawnbroker is driven by more than just economic desperation, instead based on an intellectual experiment and theory regarding the "Extraordinary Man". This theory claims that there are a number of people who have an exceptional right to break moral and legal limits in order to achieve higher purposes in history [2]. But this stance is throughout marred by a lack of coherence in the narrative. Instead of gaining self-affirmation through the act of murder, Raskolnikov becomes more and more divided, vacillating between self-defense and self-condemnation. His psychological breakdown has left literary critics with a primal question: why does a character, who has a very clear belief that he is incorruptible, continue to be unable to rid himself of guilt?

The question has been discussed a number of times in critical interpretations of *Crime and Punishment* from a religious, philosophical and psychoanalytical perspective. The study of Raskolnikov's actions in terms of a split psyche, one ruled by mental urges, repression, and moral paranoia is most popular among psychoanalytical critics. Sigmund Freud's ideas on free associations to the unconscious and the struggle between drives of instinct and moral restraint have been particularly fruitful in understanding the baffling behaviour of the protagonist and his final incrimination. Studies that discussed only Freudian psychoanalysis often tended to emphasize unconscious motivations while discussing comparatively less the intellectual and ideological oppositions that determine Raskolnikov's experience. It is important; however to further critically analyze the conflict between Raskolnikov's convictions and his psychological ability to take them and to acknowledge that one is not inherently superior to the other.

This paper suggests that a more complete picture of Raskolnikov's psychological conundrum can be realized if the Freudian psycho-analysis is accompanied by Leon Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance. The unconscious mechanisms of repression, guilt, and moral conflict (which psychoanalysis focuses on) can help explain the mental strain produced by the

incompatibility that is the backbone of cognitive dissonance [3]. Raskolnikov's suffering does not only come from his murderous act, but because it reveals the fragility of his (fallacious) ideological identity. Attempts to make sense of the killing clash with a sense of right and wrong that is deeply entrenched and only grows stronger as the plot unfolds, leading to a psychological disintegration. An urge towards explaining the crime is contrasted by a sense of right and wrong that is self-evident and is only reinforced by the story as it goes.

The present study mainly analyzes the correlation between ideology, conscience and psychological conflict from the perspectives of close reading of the novel through pivotal episodes, revealing that ideology and conscience are not opposed categories but rather a unity, for only when two or three are combined can a psychological conflict arise. The paper examines the mental fragmentation of Raskolnikov and the implications of his theory of exceptionalism in light of Freudian notions of repression, the unconscious, and the superego as well as Festinger's cognitive dissonance theory. In that way it aims to show that the motif of guilt in *Crime and Punishment* does not signal only a moral verdict of guilt due to doing something wrong, but a psychological state brought on by the lack of meaningful self-fashioning through the thought.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The psychological dimension of Raskolnikov's crisis has been developed in a number of critical readings, in part psychoanalytical, which interpret the concept of guilt and unconscious struggle, and in part through a moral-philosophical perspective focused on conscience and responsibility, and redemption. Although progress has been made in understanding the complexity of Dostoevsky's protagonists, the interplay between ideology and psychological conflict between the characters has tended to be left underdeveloped because of assumptions in the disciplines concerned.

The psychoanalytic tradition began with the essay by Sigmund Freud "Dostoevsky and Parricide" published in 1928, one of the earliest uses of dynamics of unconscious guilt to read the Dostoevsky fiction. Freud asserts a psychological connection between crime and punishment: "But the criminal is often a person who is seeking punishment as a solution to relieve conscious or subconscious guilt" ([5], pp. 182-83). What the story of Dostoevsky's life and his personal significance to Freud demonstrated for him was a framework for judging Raskolnikov's suffering from a psychological perspective instead of just a reaction to a set of external conditions. Freud's emphasis on repression and guilt continues to influence later interpretations of the novel.

Psychoanalysis in the interpretation of literature has later been developed into something more than Freud originally envisioned. According to Lois Tyson, *Critical Theory Today: A User-Friendly Guide* (2006), literary works often express unconsciously held desires and concerns in imagetic form that creates the symbolic pattern, contradiction, and dream imagery of the work. Tyson's approach is especially helpful in its application to reading *Crime and Punishment*, which refocuses attention from the clear story of crime to the more subtle psychological conflicts the novel contains ([13], pp. 12-15). Raskolnikov's motives are not always obvious, and, by her interpretation, cannot be fully comprehended by psychology within the concept of rational

thoughts only; they must also be studied in its relation to the unconscious drives which both at times and again and again disrupt his rational recreation.

In his article “On Raskolnikov’s Dreams in Dostoyevsky’s *Crime and Punishment*” published in the Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association (1969), Richard B. Lower offers a more text-based psychoanalytic interpretation. According to Lower, the dreams in the novel are symbolic representations of the narrators’ repressed emotions and moral fears. In his reading, the dreams reveal an aspect of humanity that Raskolnikov is working hard to deny: the awareness of his own condemnation in relation to the violence and moral ramifications of what he does ([10], pp. 731–738). Lower’s exploration of this unconscious symbolic field reveals a place of guilt and the function of dream imagery in Dostoevsky’s depiction of psychological dissension while bringing to bear the insights of Freudo-Marxian thought.

Similarly, the dream-language of the novel was recently discussed in the context of Srushti Kamble’s “Dreams and the Return of the Repressed Unconscious in Raskolnikov’s Psyche: *Crime and Punishment*” scholarship, which describes the way in which repressed guilt re-emerges, even though Raskolnikov strives to consciously control his intellectual mind in his struggle. Kamble’s analysis of dreams brings to the fore the importance of dream as place where an ideology’s certainty meets its unconscious resistance (Kamble, 2025). Taken together, the psychoanalytic critics have offered important perspectives on how guilt, repression and psychological fragmentation are operative in the novel. These readings, however, tend to focus on the motives of the subconscious mind, and pay relatively little attention to ideology, which is responsible for arousing and sharpening Raskolnikov’s conflict of consciences.

While psychoanalytic critics tend to highlight the unconscious conflict, another body of scholarship is charged with an ethical and philosophical undercurrent of Raskolnikov’s experience. In Joseph Frank’s *Dostoevsky: The Miraculous Years, 1865–1871*, he frames *Crime and Punishment* in the intellectual climate of nineteenth-century Russia, and read Raskolnikov’s “extraordinary man” theory as a counterattack against radical individualism and utilitarian thought. Frank further suggests that the novel is revealing to experience the darker sides of idealizing systems of ideas over moral accountability, which equates Raskolnikov’s murder with larger philosophical questions of authority, liberty and human worth (Frank, 1995, pp. 98–103). Unlike the psychoanalytical interpretations, Frank’s explanation emphasizes the ideology that propels the protagonist’s behavior and the psychologization of the protagonist’s double-consciousness through his intellectual commitment.

The moral aspect is continued in Deborah A Martinsen’s 2018 article titled “Shame and Guilt in Dostoevsky’s *Crime and Punishment*. ” When studying Christianity in Russia, Martinsen distinguished between shame and guilt as two distinct yet interrelated experiences that make up Raskolnikov’s suffering, rather than interpreting his suffering as merely remorse. She contends that for Dostoevsky moral awakening occurs as a kind of slow unfolding of the process in which self-recognition takes place before real repentance (Martinsen, 2018, pp. 43–46). Her analysis shows that psychological depths of suffering in the novel are inextricably linked with the ethical

dimension of self-examination and she proposes that this adds to the depth of understanding of the main character's final transformation.

Hanif & Shoja in "The undeniable inner compass: Fyodor Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* in light of Mohammad Taghi Jafari's concept of conscience" also play up the role of conscience in the novel, insisting that the rationalizations that Raskolnikov offers for committing murder ultimately fall short since people have an internal moral compass, which cannot be manipulated by ideology. Through the character's reading seat, they reflect conscience as a current, prompting to rationalized transgression, ultimate making the protagonist realize self-examination and confession. They reflect the force of conscience while using character's reading seat, which encourages rationalized transgression, then gradually leads the protagonist to self-examination and confession (Hanif & Shoja, 2020). These takes highlight the moral issues which emerge in the novel and underemphasize the importance of guilt as a challenge and change experience.

While there is important scholarship examining Raskolnikov's psychology, guilt, conscience and redemption, often such pursuits have fallen short of providing a perspective that is holistic. Psychoanalytical critics look for evidence of repression and unconscious battle while moral and existential readings seek to identify some sense of conscience and ethical responsibility. The investigation of possible psychological conflict is a problem that has little been paid attention to so far with the consideration of Raskolnikov's ideology of the extraordinary-man theory in terms of the theory of cognitive dissonance. The present study aims at bridging this gap between Festinger's theory and Freudian psychoanalysis and provides a more all-encompassing description of the role of ideology, conscience and psychological disassociations in *Crime and Punishment*.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK:

Freudian Psychoanalysis: Psychoanalytic criticism gives a good approach to the psychological complexes arising to determine Raskolnikov's life in *Crime and Punishment*. The interplay of id, ego and superego is at the core of Sigmund Freud's theory and is most clearly explained in his book *The Ego and the Id* (1923). Freud has the id acting according to the 'pleasure principle' without considering reality or society; the 'ego' is a middle ground that senses needs and motives from the id and makes sense of them in reality and society (Freud, 1923/1961, pp. 18–39). The superego, on the contrary, is the internalization of the moral and social norms; it is a source of guilt, self-reproach and moral restraint (pp. 34–39).

These psychic structures are not static but dynamic and continually in conflict. The tension between instinctual urges and moral taboos and societal norms often leads to mental discomfort (p. 54). Conflict is especially significant with regard to Raskolnikov, who repeatedly tries to convince himself that he is some kind of "extraordinary man," but whose conscience refuses to connect the dots in any way, serving as a kind of moral hurleys that he continually misses as he attempts to rationalize his actions with the laws of logic. In "Dostoevsky and Parricide" (1928), Freud makes another comment on the relationship between "criminal acts, guilt and punishment" and claims that criminal behaviour are also driven by an uninformed wish of "self-punishment" (pp. 182–83). The observation that Freud makes is mostly focused on Dostoevsky, but it nonetheless can help us see Raskolnikov's continual self-torment after he killed the young woman.

Cognitive Dissonance Theory: While psychoanalysis offers insights into unconscious aspects of guilt, Cognitive Dissonant Theory, developed by American psychologist Leon Festinger, offers a complementary perspective from a practical framework on conflict between what people believe and what they do. Festinger gives the definition for cognitive dissonance in his work *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance* (1957): “Cognitive dissonance is a state of psychological discomfort which arises when background conflict between the results of two or more beliefs, attitudes, or behaviors is juxtaposed” ([3], pp. 1–5). People who find themselves in such a state are driven both to change their belief and then to rationalize their behaviour, or to look to information to make it psychologically coherent for them.

The theory is especially significant in connection with Raskolnikov since there is always a significant gap between his intellectual attitude to the extraordinary-man theory and moral and emotional attitude to murder. After the murder, he tries to rationalize his decisions using philosophical thinking, but these attempts at logic and reasoning don’t alleviate his anxiety, guilt, and mental imbalance. Festinger’s model therefore can explain the increasing anguish of Raskolnikov despite his nonrelenting attempt to justify himself. Freudian psychoanalysis and the theory of cognitive dissonance technically supplement each other in a regard to psychological problems of Raskolnikov. In psychoanalysis, the process of unconscious guilt and moral repression is revealed; in cognitive dissonance, the mental conflict arising out of conflict between ideals and moral awareness is uncovered. The two of them provide a more holistic set of lenses with which to explore the psychological disintegration at the heart of Dostoevsky’s novel.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to analyze the psychological and moral fragmentation of Rodion Raskolnikov in Fyodor Dostoevsky’s *Crime and Punishment* using close textual analysis to reveal the different aspects of him. The main source used here for this research is the Oliver Ready (2014) translation of the novel which is analyzed in detail through close reading techniques used to examine key events in the novel: the formulation of the extraordinary-man theory by Raskolnikov, the murder itself, dream motifs, the interactions with Porfiry Petrovich, Sonia Marmeladova, and the Epilogue. Patterns of ideologically charged moments of text, psychological shift, and moral change are analyzed in these moments. The analysis is underpinned by an inter-disciplinary theoretical perspective of Sigmund Freud’s psychoanalytical framework of the id, the ego and the superego as well as Leon Festinger’s cognitive Theory of Cognitive Dissonance. In supporting and contextualizing the interpretation, essential secondary literary resources, such as peer-reviewed journal articles, as well as critical studies on Dostoevsky’s psychological realism, narrative technique and moral philosophy, are consulted. This interpretive study analyzes the connection between the concepts of ideology, conscience and cognitive dissonance and shows that Dostoevsky’s psychological conflicts are the necessary implications of moral deviations and ideological self-deception.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

Extraordinary-Man Theory and the Origins of Cognitive Dissonance: Long before the murders take place, deep internal conflict arises in Raskolnikov's mind due to his "extraordinary man" theory, stemming from Napoleonic ideology. Gary Rosenshield points out that Raskolnikov is an explicit transcendence of "Napoleonic" "great man" arguments, "despite Dostoevsky's undermining of such arguments." With Razumikhin, Raskolnikov considers himself the case of "some man...fancying himself a...Lycurgus...removing all the obstacles in his way...making preparations for some big crusade" ([2], p. 369). This situational premise sets up Raskolnikov's reasoning: If one thinks he is meant for greatness, like Lycurgus or Muhammad, he can transcend convention, even through the use of force. The use of such a grandiose comparison of the founder or emperor conveys the ideological warping of Raskolnikov's brain. Literature often asks the reader to "vicariously experience characters' dissonance", as Marco Caracciolo says, and Dostoevsky treats Raskolnikov's opposing convictions on purpose.

The tension becomes explicit when Raskolnikov summarizes his theory to Razumikhin: "ordinary people...do not have the right to overstep the law, because...they are ordinary. But extraordinary people have the right to carry out all manner of crimes and to break the law as they please" (p. 363). This statement embodies the fundamental contradiction – two opposing principles are formulated by Raskolnikov. On one hand, he asserts a moral limit for "ordinary" people; on the other, he claims moral exemption for the "extraordinary." According to Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance (1957), having such contradictory cognitions causes psychological discomfort. Here Raskolnikov's logic is in opposition to his "horrendous conscience," which rebels against violence. Porfiry Petrovich directly challenges this obvious divide and when Raskolnikov does defend himself in interrogation, he says plainly that he considers himself "neither a Muhammad nor a Napoleon" ([2], p. 371). This admission—that he cannot claim any great-man status—reveals deep uncertainty. Freud (1928) would argue it a symptom of anticipatory guilt: Raskolnikov's conscience begins to doubt his "special" theory at this very moment and to predict the struggle that is to follow.

Overall the ideology of the Extraordinary Man associates Raskolnikov's theory with a rift between him and his true nature. His Napoleonic rhetoric ("Muhammad or Lycurgus...big crusade...funds") and legalistic justifications clash with his growing self-doubt ("neither a...Napoleon...none of the above"). This division is emphasized by recent critics: When the act is considered, he finds himself in a state of total psychological disarray that makes it impossible for him to see very clearly what is happening. Raskolnikov is already in a state of 'cognitive dissonance' before the series of murders, between arrogant ideology and an uneasy conscience.

Murder and Psychological Fragmentation: The murder of Alyona Ivanova does not justify Raskolnikov's extraordinary-man belief, but rather causes the idea he is constructing to slowly fall apart. While he thinks to himself of whether he is one of those special people who has legal permission to "step over" moral lines, the next few moments display extreme psychological instability as the suspect's previous actions are brought to light. In this work, Dostoyevsky diverts

the focus from the crime itself to its psychological effects, and he suggests that the real punishment comes long before sentencing.

Seizures of anxiety and mental disorientation that ultimately outlast the picture of a rational, self-controlled extraordinary man are immediate and observable in Raskolnikov immediately after the crime. He awakes, in a “fever and panic” (p. 169) in which he learns that his legs are shaking and his head is aching from the fever. Instead of displaying the calm of a Napoleonic figure he dwells on details, constantly looking into his clothes for evidence of evil and speculating that they are there when they actually are not. The psychology behind the crime appears to take its toll before there’s been any external accusation of his actions. As one critic notes, “Dostoyevsky is not really concerned with finding or seizing the criminal as much as he is with the criminal’s subjective feelings of guilt and fear” (Jackson, 1981).

This is further revealed in his relationship with Porfiry Petrovich. Porfiry does not try to present Raskolnikov with any material evidence, but rather with a series of conversations, he challenges Raskolnikov’s extraordinary-man theory, and he makes him reconsider the premises. One of the most helpful terms for this is provided by Mikhail Bakhtin’s notions of polyphony. Bakhtin states that Dostoyevsky’s characters live in a dialogic world where ideas and thoughts are in constant opposition to each other ([1], pp. 5–7). Porfiry cannot just be an investigator; he has to be an interlocutor of a different sort. He unsettles Raskolnikov with conversation and highlights the paradoxes contained in his logic.

Robert Louis Jackson also notes the fragmented consciousness of Dostoyevsky, rather than stable character, as the basis of his psychological realism (Jackson, 1981).. This is demonstrated by Raskolnikov’s paranoia. He thinks he may be known and feared more than he suspects by others as having a secret, and his anxiety for this reason might be more severe even than the actual threat that is being placed on him. As he arrives at the investigating office he is afraid to have some hidden eyes lensed on him, but they seem not to have been interested in him at all. The episode illustrates the fact that the persecution coming from within himself grows ever more frequent.

Another indication of Raskolnikov’s growing estrangement from those around him is the apparent change in his character. Another hint of Raskolnikov’s growing detachment from people around him is his change of personality. He avoids interacting with Razumikhin, pulls away from his mother and sister, and no longer is able to interact normally with other people. Gary Rosenshield claims that Dostoyevsky always associates moral transgression with the isolation from the human community (Rosenhield, 2003). This is very apparent in Raskolnikov’s behavior following the murder. The idea of superiority and independence yields loneliness and alienation.

Dostoyevsky illustrates that Raskolnikov’s “collapse” is from a psychological root, rather than a joint one, through his use of these three techniques: fever, paranoia, and alienation. The crime thematically supplants the basic contradiction his ideology didn’t allow: To transcend the moral becomes paired with an invincible requirement for moral consistency. No liberation has come, just fragmentation, which paves the way for dreams, confessions and moral set-downs, the things that follow.

Dreams, Repression, and the Return of the Unconscious: The significance of dreams in *Crime and Punishment* lies in their ability to reveal aspects of Raskolnikov's mind that cannot be conveyed through logic—this makes them one of the most powerful psychological tools in the novel. He always seeks to rationalize what he does in terms of the exceptional man *mutisma*, but his dreams expose him to fears, moral senses, emotional reactions that defeat this intellectual argument. Therefore, Dostoyevsky does not just employ dream imagery in a symbolic manner; he uses it as a technique of a story to let repressed truths emerge to the surface.

The most important dream is the one set before the murder in which the old mare, beaten by the drunk peasant Mikolka ([2], p. 113), cries out in distress. In the dream, the young Raskolnikov witnesses a crowd mercilessly whipping the exhausted animal until it collapses and dies. Shocked at what he sees, he throws his arms around the horse's bleeding head and cries. In its emotional intensity the scene is striking because it makes us see in Raskolnikov's character a side of his nature causative of his goodness and empathy, which is directly in contrast with the utilitarian logic that he comes to use at a later stage. While he makes a conscious assertion that some lives might be lost for a larger good, the dream speaks to an innate antipathy toward violence and pain.

This is a common dream that has been seen as one of the explicit examples of the novel's unconscious struggles under psychoanalytic criticism. Richard B. Lower would say that it is a symbolic preview of the murder itself, revealing Raskolnikov's moral misgivings, which he is neither aware of nor acknowledging in his consciousness at the time ([10], pp. 731–738). The horse can be read as an image of the Fallen Innocent and Mikolka's inhumanity anticipates Raskolnikov's future act of inhumanity. Notably, the dream takes place before the murder—before the moral struggle that is at the heart of the novel.

The dream further disturbs Raskolnikov's notion that he is an extraordinary person. In the first moments after waking up, he recoils from the prospect of enacting his plan, and asks, "Good God! Can it be, can it be, that I shall really take an axe, and that I shall strike her on the head? (p. 116). This very moment is important because it reveals an enormous imbalance between ideology and emotion.

Cognitive dissonance theory may be used to describe the horse dream when it comes to the issue of a conflict between Raskolnikov's thoughts and his conscience. The conscious mind still accepts a theory to justify transgression, while the dream has other values that are hostile to such violence. This is because the tension is at a more fundamental, psychological, level, and cannot be solved through rational argument. As Bakhtin states, Dostoyevsky's characters have contradictory voices and inner dialogues [1]. The dream is one of those voices, saying something moral, something that Raskolnikov's ideology cannot help but hear.

Dostoevsky himself depicts the unconscious as an energy that constantly undermines intellectual self-deception. When Raskolnikov talks of the horse dream, he demonstrates that his subconscious is quicker to acknowledge the reality of what he considers "evil" than his conscious thought is. Unrealistic expectations did not accompany the dream, but rather, the dream brings to

light the unworkability of accommodating the extraordinary man theory with the moral sensibility still satisfied in the subconscious.

Sonia, Conscience, and Moral Reconciliation: While Raskolnikov's dreams suggest that he is plagued by the uncomfortable awareness or guilt, Sonia Marmeladova embodies the outside moral presence that begins to translate that feeling into self-realization. Sonia provides a moral foil to Raskolnikov's theory of the extraordinary man throughout the novel of *Crime and Punishment*. Sonia is a compassionate soul, humble, and spiritually resilient where he values intellectual excellence and willpower. She is not only a sympathetic character, but also a character who casts doubt on the ideas that underpin Raskolnikov's psychological split.

While Porfiry attempts to talk to Raskolnikov logically and press him mentally, Sonia brings in the moral appeal, one element that is not sufficiently covered by Raskolnikov's theory. Dostoyevsky not only portrays her as having fewer moral attributes than the protagonist, but also as socially marginalized and forced to work as a prostitute for her family. This contrast is a blow to Raskolnikov's idea that value is measurable in terms of power, achievement, or history. Sonia is truly valuable not because of her superiority, but due to her empathetic and selfless nature.

The turning point of the relationship is when Raskolnikov tells her about the murder. Remarkably, he selects Sonia instead of any authorities to receive the first of his confessions. This action conveys a sense of non-conscious awareness, that his issue is moral, and not judicial. It's a contrasting reaction from the one he was hoping for about the condemnation. She does not reject him, rather offers him consolation and pain, which sets the stage for true examination. She tells him to "Go at once, this very minute, stand at the crossroads, bow down, first kiss the earth which you have defiled, then bow down to the whole world and say to everyone (out loud): 'I am a murderer!' ([2], p. 542). This instruction is valuable, as it changes the perspective of punishment away from a legal corrective, and towards a moral recognition. For Sonia, there is no such thing as redemptive acts if they stem from deception rather than from rectification.

In a psychoanalytical light, Sonia can be understood as the personification of the moral force that Raskolnikov ceaselessly strives to deny. The concept of the superego by Freud has focused on the importance of internalization of ethical norms, and the formation of internal feelings of guilt if it is transgressed. Sonia is the presence of the moral voice. She, unlike Porfiry, does not reveal contradiction by argument, but rather existing in her, Raskolnikov comes to the discovery of the contradictions which exist in him. It's helpful here to consider the difference between shame and guilt, as described by Deborah Martinsen. She claims that Dostoevsky does not offer the idea of instant repentance, but rather one of self-recognition which is essential to moral renewal. Through this, Sonia introduces new ideas into Raskolnikov's life, and helps him realize he must examine his past deeds and come to a better understanding of right and wrong.

In the Epilogue the importance of Sonia becomes even more apparent. Raskolnikov's theory is the one he held on to as a first, but his friendship with Sonia starts to weaken his grasp, one by one. Dostoyevsky does not talk about a sudden conversion, but rather the start of a hard leap into the moral realm. He was "seized and flung at her feet" (p. 714) which demonstrates the breakdown in ideological isolation, and the restoration of human contact. Sonia's involvement in

the change proves that all the problem could be solved with reason alone wouldn't be enough for Raskolnikov's crisis. The "extraordinary-man" theory is flawed since it overlooks the moral and personal aspects of human life.

Dostoyevsky thus puts forward Sonia as a more than a representation of Christian redemption. She is the catalyst of the movement towards reconciliation of a broken consciousness. However, through confession, responsibility and human solidarity, Sonia gives an alternative sense to the logic of exceptionalism which has dominated Raskolnikov's actions. Her coming shows that healing in the wake of the problems of ideology cannot take place until ideological self-justification is supplanted by moral accountability.

The Limits of Psychoanalysis: Beyond Freud: Freudian psychoanalysis becomes useful if we want to understand the psychological aspects of Raskolnikov's afflictions. Guilt appears in a variety of dreams, anxieties, paranoia and self-punishing modes of action, yet all line up with Freud's notion that repression of moral conflict remains unconscious. The horse dream, recurring feelings of mental anguish, and ultimately the confession, are all signs that the unconscious mind was slowly overcoming the rationalization of the individual's mind. Psychoanalysis helps to reveal significant aspects of the inner conflict of Raskolnikov in this regard.

But Freud's theory fails to account for the complexity of Dostoyevsky's chief character. A drawback with psychoanalytic reads is to simplify moral and philosophical issues to psychological mechanisms. Raskolnikov's crisis is not only caused by the desires that are suppressed and the unspoken guilt he feels, but also by an ideology that he has, and expresses, deliberately. His extraordinary-man theory is a theory in philosophy that attempts to redefine the relationship between the moral, the powerful and the historical progress. The novel thus poses questions that go beyond the individual psychology.

A few Dostoyevsky scholars have pointed out this limitation. Joseph Frank proposes that the novel be read in the context of nineteenth-century Russian ideas about utilitarianism, nihilism, and radical individualism. Raskolnikov's crime does not simply stem from irrational passions but occurs when he is trying to prove out a theory against any existing circumstances. Mikhail Bakhtin similarly stresses that Dostoyevsky's fiction is essentially dialogic, that is, sets in motion competing set of ideological voices rather than brings characters to a psychology of a case [1]. This view implies that the novel has a philosophical content which goes beyond the scope of the psychoanalysis.

With regard to this, Festinger's Cognitive Dissonance Theory has a major benefit. Freud is mainly concerned with the unconscious processes, but cognitive dissonance would address how psychological uneasiness can develop when beliefs and actions are incongruent. This suffering is heightened because Raskolnikov conflictingly acts in a manner that is in contrast to the values that still exist in his consciousness. He feels that exceptional people have the right to violate ethical limits, but his reaction to murder shows that he still sees limits. This dissonance leads to anxiety, the justification of self and psychological instability throughout the novel.

In addition, on the ability to defend his theory even as the theory is proven wrong, Raskolnikov's cognitive dissonance is explored. Instead of dropping the ideology totally, he takes

steps to justify the crime in order to maintain an identity. His eventual “guilty” confession is therefore not just a release of the suppressed guilt but a slow process towards easing an untenable dichotomy of belief and experience.

All around, Dostoyevsky depicts Raskolnikov’s crisis as psychological, moral, and ideological one. While Freud’s theory is a good explanation of the mechanism of guilt and repression, it fails to explain the intellectual justifications to commit the crime. Therefore, through the use of psychoanalytical theory and the Cognitive Dissonance Theory, it becomes possible to have a more roundabout display of Raskolnikov’s fragmentations. Such an attitude acknowledges that his pain can be caused by various factors, including ideology, conscience, and psychological conflict.

CONCLUSION

The novel *Crime and Punishment* by Fyodor Dostoyevsky is one of the most illuminating studies into the dichotomy between ideology, morality and the psychological struggle. This study has advanced the idea that guilt of any kind is not sufficient to explain Raskolnikov’s ordeal but, rather, it is a result of the conflict between Raskolnikov’s theory of “extraordinary man” and the moral sensibility which informs his activities. The paper has applied both Freudian psychoanalysis and Leon Festinger’s Cognitive Dissonance Theory to the novel, which have shown that Raskolnikov is psychologically divided for a very long time before the murder and starts to feel a greater sense of dissonance as he begins to cling to a set of beliefs that contradict his moral principles.

The analysis showed that the extraordinary-man theory is essentially a way of rationalizing immoral behavior in a way that abstracts it from the real world, but Dostoyevsky constantly reworks it to expose flaws in its logic. The murder causes much anxiety, fever, paranoia, and alienation for Raskolnikov, presenting a clear sign that ideology has failed to function as a moral cipher that can hide responsibility and guilt. In the same way, the horse’s dream points to an unconscious suffering that poses an appeal against violence before it even happens. Through her experience, once again it is evident that psychological reconciliation is possible only in a connection that is inter-human in the face of confession and accountability.

Freudian psychoanalysis sheds considerable light on the workings of repression and guilt-ridden unconsciousness, but the study has revealed that even this doesn’t account for the ideological aspects of Raskolnikov’s dilemma. Cognitive Dissonance Theory provides a more detailed description of the conflict between belief and behavior, and explains why Raskolnikov’s subsequent attempts at self-exoneration actually increase his discomfort and speed up the process of disintegration. Here Dostoyevsky represents crime, not only as a legal offence and moral wrong, but as a psychological split created when there is a breakdown in the systems of thought and living within.

Ultimately, as *Crime and Punishment*, shows, human beings are not exempt from moral responsibility by invoking abstract concepts of exceptionalism. Raskolnikov’s search exemplifies the fact that its rational belief without moral awareness is not a path to freedom, but a path of

disintegration. His eventual turn toward confession and salvation marks Dostoyevsky's perception that the only way to come to a proper understanding of oneself starts with humanity.

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