Camus and Dostoevsky: A comparative approach to Dominion and Love within Notes from Underground and The Fall

Di Ronco, Davide Aldo

Universiteit Leiden

MA THESIS LITERARY STUDIES

Camus and Dostoevsky: A comparative approach to Dominion and Love within *Notes from Underground* and *The Fall*

Master's Thesis
Leiden University
Di Ronco Davide Aldo- s3024865
Supervisor: Schulte Nordholt Annelies
Second reader: Boele Otto
10 January 2022
Word Count: 28000

Table of Contents

Camus and Dostoevsky: A comparative approach to Dominion and Love within *Notes from Underground* and *The Fall*

> "Si l'absurde exigeait la mesure pour éviter le suicide de l'homme conscient de sa condition éphémère et la révolte ne pouvait se passer de la mesure pour ne pas nier ses propres valeurs, l'amour suit cette évolution cohérente entre les œuvres de Camus."[1]

The Fall by Albert Camus is a work that is completely encompassed with Christian ideas and symbolism. Whilst this thesis is not a fully theological engagement with both authors, it definitely dabbles within the realm of it. As Clamence states: "If you do not know your Bible, I realize that that will not mean much to you" [2] and this is clearly applicable and explicitly stated at the beginning of the novel. It is interesting to the degree that Camus is actively critiquing and engaging with his seemingly changed interest in Christianity.

Having a slight understanding of certain allegories and references enhances the depth of his book. Furthermore, it will foster a deeper appreciation of the juxtaposition of both authors, as I argue that the newfound "amour camusien" finds within *The Fall* a sparkle which is akin to Dostoevsky's Christian-orthodox deontological ethics. The title being an obvious reference to the biblical story of Adam and Eve; the novel's scenery being paralleled with a Dantean hell and its Nine Circles, and the main character, Jean-Baptiste Clamence, being an obvious reminder of the holy figure of John the Baptist. The work itself reads like confessions of a sinner, [3] trying to reason with sin, epiphanies, and redemption. Whereas Camus is often seen as a leading light in atheistic French existentialist literature, he never expressed the same contempt towards religion as his contemporaries like Jean-Paul Sartre. Yet there is within his ethical philosophy an intellectual interest in Christianity, whilst not fully abiding by the transcendence of it. Many commentators at the time of publication of *The Fall* associated the emergence of a newfound interest within Christianity for Camus; a Camus that was on the verge of

1 Raphael Luiz de Araújo, *Le Mythe de Némésis ; Les traces du dernier essai d'Albert Camus*, p. 2. Online < http://camuslatinoamerica.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/c.-Raphael-Ara%C3%BAjo-Texto.pdf> [accessed 13 November 2021].

2 Albert Camus, *The Fall* (London: Penguin Books, 2013), p. 9.

3 An obvious reminder to St Augustine, of which Camus was inspired. Within *Christian Metaphysics and Neoplatonism*, Camus engages with this topic at the tender age of 23. It discusses Camus' moral views regarding Greek thought and Christianity, thoughts that would accompany him throughout the entirety of his life.

embracing Christianity, not just intellectually but also spiritually.[4] He was trying to conceptualize a new value system that could fill the void of traditional religion.

An interesting development can be observed, having rejected Christianity early on in his career, and now having rejected the Sartrean idea of existential atheism, he seems to be breaching for some third, better path. In a response to a question about the religious tone of one of his plays, for instance, Camus is quoted by his biographer Todd as saying "It's true that I don't believe in God, but that doesn't mean I'm an atheist".[5]

Unfortunately, life took Camus early and we are left with only interpretations and speculations regarding his new attempt at faith. One of these speculations is to be established within this thesis, namely his emergence of a third unfinished cycle, the cycle of love within *The Fall.* [6] Camus himself comments: "Ainsi, parti de l'absurde, il n'est pas possible de vivre la révolte sans aboutir en quelque point que ce soit à une expérience de l'amour qui reste à définir".[7] A definition of love that was everpresent throughout his philosophical development. His Sisyphus and Rieux were not enough to withstand his new questioning regarding the appearance of a new faith. A writer that opted for innocence and contempt, even if it was only provisionally accepted, seemed to find no further rational grounds for his moral conundrums. The accursed questions keep calling for a more profound answer.

After having battled with the cycle of the absurd and then the one of revolt, Camus approaches an understanding of a salvific love. This engagement with love, I posit, is strongly influenced by Camus' profound admiration for Dostoevsky, a writer who himself had very harsh critiques regarding religion. Camus and Dostoevsky are in a constant one-sided dialogue, Camus being deeply moved and inspired by various novels from Dostoevsky, labeling him the real 19th-century prophet, and not Karl Marx (back cover of Dostoyevsky, *Notes from the Underground*).[8] Throughout his lifetime he made use of numerous works of his Russian existentialist friend to either conceptualize his own novels or engage with the presented ideas within his myriad of philosophical essays. Even leading up to one year prior to his demise, Camus was writing stage adaptations of Dostoevsky's *The Possessed.* This lifelong engagement finds its climax within Camus' last novel. In 1956 Camus published what many critics

4 Jimmy Maher, *Camus, The Fall, and the Question of Faith.* Online <http://maher.filfre.net/writings/camus.htm?> [accessed 09 January 2022].
5 Olivier Todd, *Albert Camus* (New York: Carroll & Graf, 2000), p. 17.
6 There are numerous discussions regarding his final cycle of love, mostly focusing on *Le premier homme* and his essays (see Mattei 2013, Sharpe 2015, Hayden 2016). This thesis argues that *The Fall* already portrayed earlier engagement with these ideas.
7 Albert Camus, *Œuvres complètes t. II,* (Paris: Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 2006), p. 1068.
8 Fyodor Dostoevsky, *Notes from Underground*, (London: Alma Classics, 2015), back cover.

acclaim to be his most Dostoevskian novel: *The Fall.*[9]

Within his cycle of love Camus delved deeper into underground problematic; creating Clamence, an underground man of the 20th century. The self-indulgent sarcastic monologue or rather proclamations from Clamence have manifold of clear-cut similarities with the Dostoevskian Underground Man and various other characters. The narratology of both works greatly embellish the desired feeling of uneasiness. Both works use implicit dialogue, addressing the readers as much as the characters within the novel. It gives them a freedom to address philosophical problems within a broader spectrum. It creates an atmosphere that invites the reader to interject his own thinking into the presented ideas and feels as much criticized as the implied interlocutor. The Underground Man and Clamence's rhetoric aims to subdue his listeners thus utilizing this rhetorical device greatly enhances this desired effect. The interlocutor becomes the fictional representation of the reader. *Notes from Underground* contains for Dostoevsky the basis of the psychological study of the human's postlapsarian struggle. Clamence's fall will inevitably make him arrive at the underground, a place where his over-conscious nature will find no rest, falling into the same categorical thinking patterns as the Underground Man. Abiding by their dualism, their dialogue follows a similar rationale, many of the claims of the Underground Man could have stemmed from the same breath as Clamence's confessions.

Both works try to wrestle with the justification of human action; action that might defy any moral or logical grounds. How do we deal with the idea of consciousness and freedom? They place their protagonists within a world that seems to have been swept of any ancient divine ordering, struggling to find reason within it. Their consciousness keeps them in their self-created hell, yet their appeal to intelligence and reasoning tries to find a solution out of this sufferance. Having no Lord to bow to, they seek to establish their own realm of dominion. Both men are conscious and lucid thinkers, yet they are limited by it within the same breath. Their reasonings bring them only misery and make them unable to feel any happiness within their life.

The story of the Underground Man and Clamence are prime examples of the perversion of revolt. Neither one nor the other have anything to ground themselves on besides violence and hatred. Instead of liberating the human, their revolt seeks to enslave them. Both are fake prophets of revolt, merely focusing on the sin and negativity of humanity, and thus, consequently, betray them. Their revolt has no positive foundation, a perversion of a value affirmative revolt. Both *Notes from*

9 Ray Davison, *Camus*: *The Challenge of Stoevsky*. (Devon: University of Exeter Press, 2001), p. 161. See also Sturm 1967 & Madaule 1960.

Underground and *The Fall* seem to lack a definite answer, mere stories of lost love and faith, yet through the veil of their respective protagonists' monologues, I would posit a positive solution. This solution is preached by both heroes, yet they cannot obtain it due to their nature. Firstly, analyzing their dominant nature through a Nietzschean lense, and then further refining it with the mimetic theory, renders visible their entrapment within their respective hell. How does the rhetoric that aims to subdue the interlocutor, entrap the main protagonists? Secondly, establishing the salvific love of Dostoevsky and subjecting it to both novels, portrays both the reason for their entrapment and posits a solution out of it. Why do both protagonists preach their salvation, yet refuse to come forth? This thesis argues that Camus' conceptualization of love within *The Fall* has strongly been influenced by Dostoevsky.

Methodological approach

Firstly, a general framework will be set to further extrapolate the underlying contextual ideas both writers engage with. The representation of dominion. This will be examined through the development of nihilism and the disappearance of "transcendental values". The 19th and respectively 20th centuries were a time of a Christian disenchantment, especially in the West, and out of it sprung a certain soul dichotomy- a religious one opposing the empirical one. Existentialism wrangles with these serious questions and offers a wide range of interesting philosophical theories which try to ground human morality. This thesis will construct this base understanding out of various Nietzschean works, but predominantly *Genealogie der Moral*.[10] Nietzsche is a perfect fit, as Camus has actively been engaged with the majority of his ideas throughout his lifetime and was actively reading *Genealogie* during his writing-process of *The Fall*. [11] The proposed foundation is further refined within Camus' *The Rebel.* This philosophical essay holds quite an in-depth dialogue regarding the creation of man-made morality. It makes numerous references to both Dostoevsky and Nietzsche within the work and tries to engage with both ideas.

This work is a stepping stone for Camus in his quest of engaging with the horrors of the early to mid 20st century; a necessary continuation of his *The Myth of Sisyphus,* and logical forerunner of *The Fall*. Camus' thought is often suspended between Nietzsche and Dostoevsky. This is most evident in Camus' revolt period. In *The Rebel*,[12] for instance, Camus' divergence from Nietzsche is almost

10 Friedrich Nietzsche, *On The Genealogy of Morals* (New York: Vintage Books, 1967).
11 James Arnold, "Camus lecteur de Nietzsche", *Revue des Lettres Modernes Paris.* (1979), p. 96. See also Camus 1989, p. 104.
12 Albert Camus. *The Rebel* (London: Penguin Books, 2013).

inversely proportional to his convergence with Dostoevsky.[13] Camus references Ivan Karamazov's (*The Brothers Karamazov*)[14] moral conundrum "everything is permitted" in order to highlight the problematic nature of Nietzsche's logic. This transitional period from his cycle of rebellion over to his final chapter of love finds its representation within *The Fall.* Camus takes from the Nietzschean universe and projects it within the Dostoevskian world, creating Clamence. Camus and Nietzsche's dialogue revolving around revolt and self-deification is essential for the understanding of Clamence. Combining both *The Rebel* and *Genealogy der Moral* enables us to get a better fundamental understanding of the psychological constellation of the main character. Establishing the master and slave relationship within *Genealogy der Moral* enables us to garner an understanding of the reigning forces which dominate Clamence. William E. Duvall within *Camus' Fall from Nietzsche*[15] offers a resourceful engagement with the various Nietzschean references in *The Fall.* Whether it be to construct structural arguments regarding stylistic overlap, or garnish it with further details regarding Camus personal input.

After having established the base understanding of how the master and slave morality is expressed within the work, we will be able to further delve into the intricacies within the comparison of both *Notes From Underground* and *The Fall.* The rhetoric surrounding their dominant nature is meticulously planned. Applying René Girard's Mimetic theory, found within his work *Resurrection from the Underground, Feodor Dostoevsky*[16] enables us to further dissect the depths the various characters have to offer. His work lay bare the dominating nature of the protagonists and portray their need for another person, thus both establishing the dominion and love aspect within this thesis. Girard renders a compact depiction of the psychology of the Underground Man, his nature which tries to subvert the other, and ultimately his self-entrapment within it. He further depicts the interplay of Nietzschean ideas within the Dostoevskian world, thus creating another point of reference with Camus. This mimetic theory can be applied to both works to garner a better understanding as to why both the Underground Man and Clamence find no salvation, yet preach of it. The mimetic theory will tie the Nietzschean rationale of Clamence's urge to become Superhuman and his rhetoric neatly together and

13 Sean Derek Illing, *Between nihilism and transcendence: Albert Camus' dialogue with Nietzsche and Dostoevsky*. LSU Doctoral Dissertations (2014), p. 215.
14 Fyodor Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov* trans. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1999), p. 26.
15 William E. Duvall. "Camus' 'Fall'—From Nietzsche." *Historical Reflections / Réflexions Historiques*, vol. 21, no. 3, Berghahn Books, 1995, pp. 537–52
16 Firstly, this idea was presented within Girard, René. 1978. *Things hidden since the foundation of the world* (London: Bloomsbury Academic). *Resurrection* is taking the theoretical approach and applies it directly to Dostoevskian dialectics.

portray how Clamence modulates his desires, plans out his speech to subject the other and preaches his "solution" of mass-enslavement.

Analyzing the dialogue of dominion, we are able to find an answer regarding both protagonists' inability to overcome their nihilistic nature, namely their highly ambivalent character which leads to their entrapment. The mimetic theory applied to Dostoevsky's *Notes from Underground*[17] gives surface to Girard's idea of doubling; also a quintessential idea within *The Fall.* The mimetic theory is important for Clamence's rhetoric as his mass-enslavement theory is based upon mirroring with his interlocutor. Clamence's job as judge-penitent, a double job as he claims, just like humans are (Camus, *The Fall* 9) offers an early insight into this conundrum. Applying the mimetic theory to Clamence's rhetoric surfaces his entrapment within his hell. It further enhances the socio-codependent factor of both protagonists which is coherent with both *Genealogy* and *The Rebel.* The analytical strand of doubling will be enhanced by *La mise-en abyme chez Camus : La métafiction et la réflexivité dans L'Etranger, La Peste, et La Chute*[18] by Marshall Bernard Woodward and *The Interlocutor in "La Chute:" A Key to Its Meaning* by Whartenby[19.] These analytical strands will help establishing how exactly Clamence's Nietzschean rhetoric is constructed and how it aims to submit the other. Additionally, it will further flesh out the doubling nature within *The Fall* and project the reason for Clamence's entrapment in his hell. Moreover, whilst the work only has an implied interlocutor, both analytical approaches help analyze any dialogue between Clamence and his conversation partner.

Both *Notes from Underground* and *The Fall* seem to lack a definite answer, yet through the veil of their dialogues, I would posit a positive mimesis; a salvific answer to the novels. This salvation is only to be obtained through the understanding of Dostoevsky's deontology of love; which opens up within the second part of this thesis- Love. One ought to analyze their mimetic desire within their expression of love, to find a solution to their hellish conundrum. Within this thesis, I postulate, in accordance with Astell Ann W. [20] that there can be a positive mimesis rendered out of Girard's theory. The presented positive mimesis takes Girard's theory further and hypothesizes an answer to the work which is coherent with the expressed Dostoevskian love concept of his later works. Clamence already

17 The theme of the double is present in all the works of Dostoevsky in the most diverse and sometimes most hidden forms. Resurrection (p*6)* . Dostoevsky literally wrote a novel called *The Double*.

18 Marshall Bernard Woodward, *La Mise-En Abyme Chez Camus : La Métafiction Et La Réflexivité Dans L'Etranger, La Peste, Et La Chute*. Washington & Lee University, 2016.

19 H. Allen Whartenby. "The Interlocutor in 'La Chute:' A Key to Its Meaning." *PMLA*, vol. 83, no. 5, Modern Language Association, 1968, pp. 1326–33.

20Ann W Astell. "The writer as redeemed prostitute; Girard's reading of Dostoevsky's "Notes from Underground".'" *Religion & Literature*, vol. 43, no. 3, 2011, pp. 186–194.

establishes a duality in regards to love quite early on in the novel. He explicitly links both aspects by stating: “That is what men are like, sir: two-faced: they cannot love unless they love themselves.” (Camus, *The Fall* 22). Clamence's idea of self-love and love for the other will be subjugated to this theory, and his doubling will be further analyzed.

Dostoevsky's faith is grounded within the individual's capability of active kindness and love. Whilst this has not been actively stated within *Notes*, it finds therein the initial spark. Firstly this chapter introduces the Dostoevskian idea of love, which is directly tied to his Christian Orthodox faith, mostly found within his *Brothers Karamzov* and further refined within Elena Namli's *Struggling with reason, Studia Theologica*[21], neatly merging his characters with his moral-theology. Dostoevsky's last masterpiece presents the readers with his embodiment of salvation, namely Alyosha, which will be used as a representative token. The anthithesis of a Dostoevskian love will inevitably lead to debauchery, an ailment which both plagues Clamence and many of Dostoevsky's characters. This arrival in debauchery is the inverse of dostoevskian love. Berdyaev, who has most accurately dissected the Dostoevskian soul, wrote within *Dostoievsky An Interpretation*[22] a deeply insightful chapter surrounding Dostoevsky's conceptualization of love as salvific answer and the reasons for which men fall into debauchery. It portrays the problematic of dualism, presented by Girard, and gives a clear representation applicable within both works. Positing the idea that the lack of said Dostoevskian love will inevitably create a self-entrapment, a duality, in a metaphysical hell and thus analyzing the dialogue of both the Underground Man and Clamence surrounding the idea of “love” we are able to find this creation of their personal hell. Their indecisiveness brings forth their duality, an inner division that freezes them. The origin of their duality can be traced back to their depictions of dominion discussed within the mimetic theory. The Underground Man and Clamence's dialogue revolving around their conceptualization of love are highly similar. Understanding their mimetic desire and applying that within their dialogue of love, their entrapment becomes clear. What exactly hinders both protagonists to accept the repentance they themselves preach?

21 Elena Namli, Struggling with Reason. *Studia Theologica - Nordic Journal of Theology*, 63:2, 197-216.
22 Nikolaĭ Beradiaev and Donald Attwater, *Dostoievsky: An Interpretation* (San Rafael: Semantron Press, 2009).

Dominion

Understanding the minds of Clamence and the Underground Man expressed by Nietzsche.

To be fully able to grasp the dialogue of our protagonists it might be of interest to get a rough estimation as to what mental changes they undertook. This would set the psychological setting for the man struggling to find truth within a world that was fundamentally changed. Both the Underground Man and Clamence battle with the duality which developed out of this predicament. Prior to the Humanism paradigm shift, man lived in a spiritual world with a given meaning to it. Carl Jung established grounds which I would like to presuppose as a point of origin. The established Western human being within the following quote had acquired notions of morality through institutionalized religious archetypes. Humans started to oppose this mystified and codified world due to his appeal to empirical thinking.

> "How totally different did the world appear to medieval man! For him, the earth was eternally fixed and at rest in the center of the universe…Men were all children of God under the loving care of the Most High, who prepared them for eternal blessedness; and all knew exactly what they should do and how they should conduct themselves in order to rise from a corruptible world to an incorruptible and joyous existence. Such a life no longer seems real to us, even in our dreams. Natural science has long ago torn this lovely veil to shreds" [23]

Although the medieval man was not fully engulfed by his religious beliefs, he was certainly not as subject to the sheer amalgamation of moral dilemmas his modern version is battling on a daily basis. Humans have lost the ability to maintain his belief in religious "facts", firstly in the west and then, slowly, everywhere else in the world. Humans literally and metaphorically speaking underwent a Copernican revolution, a paradigm shift, which made them reevaluate the established grounds for their rationale. The succession of the many great, scientists, writers, iconoclasts, and philosophers alike have enabled this shift.

As Copernicus implied, the world does not revolve around humans, and this conception was slowly drifting into the minds of Western civilization. Such a statement connotes serious reevaluations

23 Carl Jung, *Modern Man in Search of a Soul* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1980), pp 92-93.

of long-established worldviews. Man was not occupying a special place in the universe, nor was it revolving around him. In the same breath, we could argue that the rational, the empirical thinking, the scientific approach, made man place himself, in accordance with scientific discovery, in the middle of his self-constructed personal universe; a spot previously held by God. It is these aforementioned scientific discoveries that made the human on his quest to enlightenment wonder and question the validity of religious statements. Great scientists such as Galileo Galilei and Kepler drastically changed the worldview and demystified the rationale. The average human started to acknowledge the apparition of all these new phenomena and felt threatened regarding the integrity of his traditional models of reality. The mythological world has been overthrown by the empirical one; so it seems. It is exactly here that Nietzsche argues that the morality resulting out of the thousand-year-long traditions, customs and much more, should have disappeared within the same breath:

> "When one gives up the Christian faith, one pulls the right to Christian morality out from under one's feet... Christianity is a system, a whole view of things thought out together. By breaking one main concept out of it, the faith in God, one breaks the whole: nothing necessary remains in one's hands. Christianity presupposes that man does not know, cannot know, what is good for him, what evil: he believes in God, who alone knows it... it has truth only if God is the truth — it stands and falls with faith in God. If the modern Westerners [24]really do believe they know, of their own accord; "intuitively", what is good and evil; that is merely the consequence of the ascendancy of Christian evaluation and an expression of the strength and depth of this ascendancy: so that the origin of the modern morality has been forgotten, so that the highly conditional nature of its right to exist is no longer felt." [25]

Following Nietzsche's rationale, we would presuppose the notion that this theory has been confirmed, resulting, after him, in the disappearance of the aforementioned values. Nietzsche hinted in this rather sarcastic addressment to George Eliot at the idea of a religious unconscious, implying the relationship between ethics and metaphysics. The argument could be made that the Judaeo-Christian moral traditions have survived, and continue to reign over the individual. The behavioral patterns and the underlying values of Western civilization, build upon the longevity of said traditions, could not be as

24 The original citation used the terminus "The English" but the case could be made that the overlapping consensus of ideas could be gathered up in the used terminology. Moreover, this English connotation is found within *Notes* to represent similar ideas.

25 Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, *Twilight of The Idols* (New York: Penguin Classic, 1981), p. 53.

easily dissected from the soul. If we accept the notion that behavior is not fully rationally axiomatic, we must accredit it to an extent to the prevailing system which governed man for over two thousand years. After the humanist split, we experience the co-existence of paradoxical union; the ambivalent soul. On the one hand, we have the newly emerged "enlightened" individual on the other the archaic one. One is rather scientific; the other traditional. We have become atheistic in our description, but remain evidently religious-that is; moral- in our disposition. We carry on as if our experience has meaning- as if our activities have transcendent value; but we are unable to justify this belief intellectually. [26]

The idea of a certain soul dichotomy would encapsulate this idea. The image of the ever old and eternal Christian truth about man has been altered. Within widening the horizon of probability, found within the logarithmic creation of scientific questioning, a new soul was born. A soul with new doubts, new perspectives, new questions, new concepts of what ought to be good or evil; desperately trying to engage with the new relations between them. We created our own maze within our capacity for abstraction; it provides us with the ability to create accurate and descriptive information, but it hinders us in the same breath. Our belief in utility and meaning has been overthrown. Man has attained a new ground of spiritual maturity; the questioning remained the same. Whereas science could give reason to doubtful minds, faith has been undermined. The new ideas and theories which arose to make sense of our empirical reality were a severe threat to our traditional reality models. The determinate meaning was being attacked. The prevalent knowledge of science held by the leading figures of the church would not suffice for the hungry new souls. The newfound depth of the human soul could not be solved with the offered simplicity. Its mind has grown far more complicated.

The ideas of the Enlightenment era undermined the authority of the long-established institutes such as the monarchy and the church. Nietzsche argues these ideas and concepts within a multitude of his works. The concept of "God is dead and we killed him" firstly appeared in Nietzsche's 1882 collection *The Gay Science* (*Die fröhliche Wissenschaft*). However, it is most dominantly represented and associated with Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra.* He starts his argumentative strain within *Beyond Good and Evil,* arguing that there is a need for a critique regarding the moral values. He further states that what the scholars called a "rational foundation for morality" and tried to supply was, in the right light, merely a scholarly expression of the common faith in the prevalent morality; a new means of expression for this faith.[27] Nietzsche tried to elaborate on these concepts within the creation of man-

26 Jordan B. Peterson, *Maps of Meaning: the Architecture of Belief* (New York: Routledge, 1999), p. 7.
27 Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil* (London: Penguin, 1966), pp 97-98.

made sense to be found within the work *On the Genealogy of Morality: A Polemic.* Nietzsche projects the idea that there are principally two fundamental types of morality: "master morality" and "slave morality" grounded on the following principles. Master morality is established on the grounds of pride and power, while slave morality values the concepts of kindness, sympathy, and empathy. He further claims that master morality is highly subjective and is built upon pure noncritical acceptance of habit; that which is useful for the dominating group has always been defined as good. [28] He states that "the value or non-value of an action was derived from its consequences but there are no moral phenomena at all, only moral interpretations of phenomena."[29] He presupposes that nobility has a self-asserting determining factor of values- essentially being a creator of values. It is within master morality that individuals define what is good based on whether it is beneficial to that person and their pursuit of self-defined personal excellence.[30]

Nietzsche then further assumes that masters are the creators of morality, while slaves respond to the master morality with their slave morality. Their ideologies are based on the phenomena of resentment (resentment; comparable to the concept of spite within *Notes from Underground*) Opposing to the strong output of master morality, slave morality is the opposition of it. It is revolting against the oppression, construing their own morality. It does not seek to transcend their masters but to subvert them, make them slaves as well. Nietzsche states that the essence of slave morality is utility (Nietzsche, *Genealogy* 122). The "good" would result in what would be the most beneficial for the whole community, not only being limited to the strong. It is within this clash that Nietzsche sees potential for a very dangerous feature. If the grounding principles of both systems are being denuded, it is for man himself to adjust his beliefs.[31] Clamence, in the same fashion proclaims: "Ah, my dear fellow, for anyone who is alone, recognizing neither god nor master, the weight of days are awful. So one must choose a master, God being out of fashion now. Besides, the word no longer has any meaning; it's not worth the risk of shocking anyone" (Camus, *The Fall* 83).

This interplay of master and slave morality and the creation of manmade morality is

28 'Master–slave morality', *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia.* Online <https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Master%E2%80%93slave_morality&oldid=952934007> [accessed 30 April 2021].

29 Richard Schacht, *Nietzsche, Genealogy, Morality: Essays on Nietzsche's On the Genealogy of Morals* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008).

30 Robert C. Solomon and Clancy Martin. *Since Socrates: A Concise Sourcebook of Classic Readings* (London: Thomson Wadsworth, 2005).

31 Nietzsche argues about the etymological backgrounds of the concepts of good and evil, how they connoted different ideas and concepts throughout different times and slowly become ingrained in our society. He is a firm believer that morality is not separable from the culture out of which it sprung out. For the sake of this paper, I will not go into lengths about the origin of Nietzsche's argumentative strain. It could be partly compromised within Kantian deontology. Additionally, Camus also had a keen interest in etymology, as seen in his *Carnets.*

quintessential for both authors, and their ties to the expressed Nietzschean desire of dominion is a major driving force for their decision-making progress. The constant desire to dominate over the other individual finds their foundation within the presented ideas. Living in a world that "killed God", their strong wish to find a meaning without a transcendent guidepost forces them to venture out on their own. Their rebellious nature seeks to establish a foundation of morality which uses their wit and wisdom and denounces any influence outside their realm. Due to their dubious nature, they are bound to fail. This places them in an existential dilemma. After having set the foundation, Camus further delves into the problematic of the dominating nature of humanity, and therein finds his engagement with Dostoevsky. *The Rebel* is important to the degree that it clearly depicts the strong influence Nietzsche had on Camus and further introduces more of the Dostoevskian universe into his ethical philosophy. Camus explicitly engages with Dostoevskian ideas and contrasts them with the German philosopher. A philosophical engagement between these three authors can be established, and therein find the nature of Clamence and his foil character, The Underground Man. Whereas Nietzsche helps to modulate their desire to dominate, Dostoevsky will help shape his conceptualization of love. Understanding Camus ethical position regarding both authors renders a more fruitful foundation for both comparison and interpretation.

Camus, Nietzsche, and Dostoevsky: A comparison of revolt and self-deification

Camus seems to constantly wrangle with the existential idea of the "why", trying to give an answer to it, questioning both the scientific reasoning and opposing the religious sphere. As seen throughout his discourse, either presented within novels such as *The Plague* or *The Myth of Sisyphus*, or his manifold of essays, the accursed question constantly call out for an answer in the face of a seemingly absurd world. Camus partly modulated these discussions through evoking Nietzsche and Dostoevsky ranging from a multitude of citations in his *Notebooks* and references in *The Myth of Sisyphus*, to even full chapters dedicated to them within *The Rebel;* both philosophers had an undeniable influence on him.[32] He was appreciative of Nietzsche's courage and lucidity, as he confronted the freedom and absurdity of the human condition within their extremes and was still able to affirm life- an idea which is also quintessential for Camus himself. Whilst the earlier Camus [33] was

32 Illing's Dissertations renders a multifarious display of the engagement between the three authors. Additionally, his engagement with The Rebel is rich in findings.
33 Albert Camus, "Essai sur la musique". *Écrits de jeunesse d'Albert Camus.* (Paris: Gallimard, 1932).

more thoroughly engaged with the German philosopher, he would never cease to fully abolish his influence. Furthermore, Dostoevsky refined Camus' thoughts and strongly influenced him throughout his continuation. Thomas Epstein claims that "Dostoevsky was the most important case, the inspiration, idol, and obstacle needed by Camus in order to define himself."[34] Within the Camusian cycle of the revolt his dialogue with the Russian existentialist becomes more profound (Illing 19) and the interplay between the three philosophers is rendered more fruitful.

To further narrow the proposed framework into a neatly applicable form for Camus and The *Fall*, we ought to analyze the convergence of the proposed philosophers. Camus′ *The Rebel* holds quite an in-depth engagement regarding the creation of man-made morality. It makes numerous references to both Dostoevsky and Nietzsche within the work and tries to engage with the ideas. He takes the reasoning of both philosophers and therein conceives his own rationale. In *The Rebel*, Camus' divergence from Nietzsche is almost inversely proportional to his convergence with Dostoevsky (Illing 215). Camus references Ivan Karamazov's moral conundrum "everything is permitted" in order to highlight the problematic nature of Nietzsche's logic (Illing 188). This confluence is not inherently opposing Nietzsche, it rather assimilates certain aspects of his rationale and tries to enhance it. Camus' *The Fall* neatly represents this mergence in form of a novel, it takes from the Nietzschean human and throws him into the Underground- creating Clamence. The beginning of his new cycle of love finds therein a multifarious overlap between all three thinkers. This chapter will mostly focus on *The Rebel* discussion between Nietzsche and Camus as it lays an important foundation for two crucial concepts. The Nietzschean-influenced dialogue is important to establish Clamence's modus operandi- his idea of enslavement. Additionally, this work further conceptualizes the socio-codependent part within Camus' philosophy, comparable to the Nietzschean idea of bad conscience.

The Rebel is a stepping stone for Camus in his quest of engaging with the horrors of the early to mid 20st century; a necessary continuation of his *The Myth of Sisyphus,* and logical forerunner of *The Fall*. It deals with the metaphysical and historical development of revolts within a society and tries to lay a foundation for it. Camus agrees with Nietzsche's prophecies of the advent of nihilism[35] and recognizes the birth of the kingdom of men. In the same breath as Nietzsche, he poses the moral conundrum of justice without grace. He also acknowledges the sheer will to power humans possess, which is influenced by "scientific certainties" (Western philosophies as previously mentioned):

34 Thomas Epstein, "Tormented Shade: Camus' Dostoevsky." *The Originality and Complexity of Albert Camus' Writings* (New York: Palgrave, 2012), p. 146.
35 Friedrich Nietzsche and Walter Arnold Kaufmann, *The Will to Power* (New York: Vintage Books, 1968), preface.

> "The last representation of the struggle of justice against grace, it takes over, without having wanted to do so, the struggle of justice against truth. How to live without grace- that is the question that dominates the nineteenth century. "By justice", answered all those who did not want to accept absolute nihilism. To the people who despaired of the Kingdom of Heaven, they promised the kingdom of men. The preaching of the City of humanity increased in fervor up to the end of the nineteenth century when it became really visionary in tone and placed scientific certainties in the service of Utopia. But the kingdom has retreated into the distance, gigantic wars have ravaged the oldest of countries of Europe, the blood of rebels has bespattered walls, and total justice has approached not a step nearer. The question of the twentieth century- for which the terrorists of 1905[36] died and which tortures the contemporary world- has gradually been specified: how to live without grace and without justice?" (Camus, *The Rebel* 172)

The discourse within *The Rebel* presupposes certain foundations which certainly found their way into the heart of Clamence and are representative of the conundrum presented by Nietzsche. Camus' vision of the wicked spiel of killing God and trying to build a new church is essentially Clamence's attempt of preaching mass enslavement, a collective asceticism:

> "Then, the only kingdom which is opposed to the kingdom of grace must be founded, namely the kingdom of justice, and the human community must be reunited on the debris of the fallen City of God. To kill God and to build a Church is the constant and contradictory purpose of Rebelion. Absolute liberty finally becomes a prison of absolute duties, a collective asceticism, a story to be brought to an end." (Camus, *The Rebel* 57) [37]

Camus' comments within *The Rebel* further established the idea of socio-codependence: the core idea

36 *Les Justes*, referencing the assassination of a Czarist official in 1905, is another play by Camus. As an aside, the juxtaposition of religious ideas and justice was also strongly represented within *Les Justes*. The same mirroring is uttered by Stepan who proclaims: "Il a l'âme religieuse, pourtant. C'ést cela qui nous séperait. Je suis plus âpre que lui, je le sais bien. Pour nous qui ne croyons pas à Dieu, il faut toute la justice ou c'est le désespoire." (p. 90).
especially the 4th act raises interesting questions regarding Faith and Justice; an ongoing theme within Camus' works.
37 Camus *The Rebel* (92) also presents the idea of self-deification. Interestingly enough, Clamence here shows compassion for a misunderstood Christ, one whom preaches compassion and love for their neighbor. This misunderstanding made man end up on the cross, trampling on the heads of his kin. "We'll get rid of that in one fell swoop, on the cross! But too many people are now climbing up on the cross just so that they can be seen from further away, even if in doing so they have to trample a little on the one who was already been there for so long. Too many people have decided to do without generosity in practicing charity, Oh, the injustice that has been done to him: it makes my heart bleed."

of a need of a social reliance to base our human values on. We need something outside of the self to construct our own self. The same ideas are both echoed within the rhetoric of our main protagonists and supported by the mimetic theory. Combining both the idea of a rebellious nature which tries to constantly "build a church" and the dependence of other consciousnesses to create a value, a dilemma is created, a Sartrean hell- a constant need for affirmation by another consciousness to construct the self. Inherently, this construction is extradited to judgment, thus being highly critical for Clamence. Camus claims that: " He must be acknowledged by other men. All consciousness is, basically, the desire to be recognized and proclaimed as such by other consciousnesses. It is the other who begets us. Only in association do we receive a human value, as distinct from an animal value" (Camus, *The Rebel* 90). Nietzsche within *Genealogy* emphasizes on the societal pressure, claiming that it has an altering effect on the human. Bad consciousness emerges out of human's entrance into society. In society, however, man was divorced "from his animal past" and plunged "into new situations and conditions of existence." echoing Camus' claim (Illing 108).[38] Nietzsche attributes a degree of sickness to his consciousness that is produced within the society. He claims: "I take bad conscience to be the deep sickness into which man had to fall under the pressure of that most fundamental of all changes he ever experiences – the change of finding himself enclosed . . . within the sway of society and peace." (Nietzsche, *Genealogy* 56).

Camus laid a further foundation, combining the need for others and happiness. Moreover, he states: "The human being needs happiness and, when he is unhappy he needs another human being (Camus, *The Rebel* 192). Additionally, he adds an ambivalence to this idea stating: "Those who reject the agony of living and dying wish to dominate." "Solitude is power" says Sade. Power, today, because for thousands of solitary people it signifies the suffering of others, bear witness to the need for others." (Camus, *The Rebel* 193) We have either the self which cures himself through others or the self which stays solitary and seeks to subjugate the other. The one and the other are intrinsically bound to the "need for others"; both cure and dominion. This need for others is essential to degree that there seems to be a clear defining factor of the self which is inherently bound to something outside the self. Man, for Camus, is not a species of total social isolation, but one with a social need, either in solitude or dominion. What the human cannot find in happiness they seek to claim in dominance. It is exactly this dominance, strongly influenced by Nietzsche, that Clamence reigns in.

38 For further parallels, read chapter "Nietzschean Resentment in The Fall and Notes From Underground". It portrays both protagonists overlap within societal pressure.

Clamence as a Nietzschean Hero

> "The Fall reveals Camus as a psychologist. For the first time he deals directly and seriously with the psychological make-up of men." [39]

Camus used Nietzsche's ideas and concepts to modulate his antihero, or as he labels him within the epigraph a "hero of our time". William E. Duvall within *Camus' Fall from Nietzsche* engages with the various Nietzschean references in *The Fall.* He even portrays a mirroring of structures of *The Fall* and *The Genealogy of Morals ,* stating that Camus' text doubles and mirrors the one of Nietzsche (Duvall 14). Duvall is also ascribing characteristics such as the Nietzschean noble to the prelapsarian Clamence (5), a noble which will turn after his fall. Clamence represents all that Camus, as he showed in *The Rebel*, struggled to combat in the mid-part of the twentieth century-excess leading to nihilism, cynicism, and enslavement or servitude (Duvall 9). Active readers of Nietzsche will have undoubtedly recognized the manifold of inter-textual references and vocabulary used. Various of Clamence's claims read like strongly inspired Nietzschean aphorisms, dwelling on the exact same themes. Clamence reads like a novelized character of certain of these ideas, even claiming that he felt something of a superman (Duvall 19).

To no surprise, these similarities are not a byproduct of mere chance. James Arnold noted that Camus was in possession of *Genealogy* (104) and there were quotations in the Carnets III , which would suggest that Camus was reading the aforementioned work in late 1953 and early 1954, which perfectly coincides with the writing of The Fall. Nietzsche's ideas are quintessential in the understanding of the mindsets which reign over the individual and the society. Walter Kaufmann further suggested that Clamence is an embodiment of the will to power of the weak: "Camus' last novel, *The Fall*, for example, is a veritable case history of the will to power of the weak who, as a last resort, derive a sense of superiority from their insistence that they are unworthy and guilt-ridden-adding that they are better than other men who refuse to admit that they are no less guilty."[40] His true nature comes to surface once his he realizes that his vision of himself does not accord with reality. Not being able to accept himself he seeks to subject everyone surrounding him. He thus seeks to dominate, finding his superiority within this attempt of escapism.

Initially, Clamence claims to be able to satisfy his inner needs. He raves about his deeply felt

39 Thomas Hanna, *The Thought and Art of Albert Camus* (Chicago: H. Regnery Co., 1958), p. 165.
40 Walter Kaufmann, *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*, 4th edn. (Oxford: Princeton UP, 1974), p. 422.

nature and his harmonic relationship with his surroundings. His early boasting about the numerous good deeds he conducted seem rather empty. The whole first chapter has a sour undertone, as every seemingly helpful action is not done out of generosity, but rather a twisted and perverted attempt of self-gratification. He wants to be a master of his own generosity, constantly looking for possibilities to project that idea since he seemed to gain a greater pleasure from it (Camus, *The Fall* 15). He wanted to feel above the human ants, feeding himself with benevolent pride, feeling the likeliness of a superman (Camus, *The Fall* 19) But his love of life is not a joyful Hellenic idea but rather lust for power, the deification of himself, bound to find its limits. He soared until one evening, the time of "his fall" (Camus, *The Fall* 19). Clamence, gaining consciousness after the drowning incident, slowly peels away his layers, as his self-deceit does not stand a chance against his own reasoning. His lack of action, saving the drowning woman, changes his self-perception. Acute self-awareness torments Clamence, realizing that he is not what he claimed to be. Whereas he seems a sort of a "positive" underground man at first, he slowly climbs down from his heights, becoming increasingly aware of himself and his actions." Consciousness and hyper-self awareness, being too acutely aware becomes a sickness" (Dostoevsky, *Notes* 11), makes it so that you become stagnant. "You will not be able to change as there is nothing to change into. It would even allow to feel comfortable with villainous acts" (Dostoevsky, *Notes 11*)." It places the self above the others; others that have not reached the same level of self-awareness and "intelligence" as both protagonists. This refined consciousness leads both men to a condemnation of their own life and nature.

Clamence took the idea of dominion further, as he assimilates the reasoning influenced by Nietzsche. His solution to the dilemma, whilst not optimistic, is the proposed idea of "nobler self-slavery", a disenchanted idea of the Grand Inquisitor parable. [41] He actively preaches a mass submission, to give up freedom for a wicked idea of subjugation. Clamence is exactly trapped within this dilemma, he cannot overthrow the whole of humanity, he tries to constantly place himself above the others, either by judging them or by constantly trying to project his "superior" virtue, yet he actively seeks out company. Within his many tirades about love and companionship, he actively wishes to escape his lonesomeness yet his dialogue of love is heavily tainted by his desire to be a dominating force. "Sympathy, which was necessary for his enjoyment of life," (Camus, *The Fall* 23) constructs this codependency of his character. His played role is highly dependent on his fellow's respect and acceptance. He cannot be "laughed at"; cannot endure this sensation of mockery again, neither in social

41Dostoevsky's Christian-orthodox Deontology will refer to this parable. Stylistically and thematically they are similar. See Davison for further parallels.

situations nor ones that require courage. Being a well-known lawyer in Paris, actively practicing law for a seemingly “noble” cause, constantly trying to project his moral superiority and his knack for social justice, seems to be nothing but a mere mask. The grounding of the flaunting of his social aptitude is not to be found within virtue but rather in a creation of a social self; a self which he sees above the human ants. It's rather ambiguous as his deeds seem to not be motivated by the diminishing of sufferings, but rather has the self as a driving force. Exulting in a social display of his pseudo virtuous behavior, he would yet again create a superior role of himself. He could thus show his moral superiority and attempt to quench the thirst of the constant need to feel above the others. Clamence would actively hope for misfortune to happen, the likes of buses breaking down, just to jump at the occasion, show the world that he is a righteous man able to help. His oughtness is constructed invertedly; not for the other, but for the self.

After his lack of action, his fall, represented through the drowning incident, his perception changed: “After all, I have been known to make a more disinterested use of freedom and even imagine how naive I was – to defend it two or three times, of course without going so far as to die for it.” (Camus, *The Fall* 83). It would of course be impossible for Clamence to sacrifice himself for a greater idea, both as a pope or a judge. His self-worth is beyond any communal idea, nor can he deal with the consequences of his lack of action. Evidently, he recognizes this duality and throws it at the face of the world. He thus posits his solution to his moral conundrum: “So, in philosophy as in politics, I'm in favor of any favor that denies innocence to Man and every practice that treats him as guilty. Dear fellow, in me you see an enlightened supporter of slavery. Honestly, without it, there can be no definitive solution.” (Camus, *The Fall* 82). Clamence couldn't escape the ever calling laughter which mocked him and constantly reminded him that he was lacking courage. The only way out of this conundrum was to render everyone around him as culpable as he was. For him, the daunting pressure of freedom was to heavy to bear, as it entails a sentence at the end; a judgment he can not endure. Clamence thus calls for a subjugation, as his sinful model of the human can never transcend their path out of this misery. He falls from freedom and nobility into a form of enslavement, he has become Nietzsche's model herd man (Duvall 8). He can become neither Übermensch, nor slave so he tries to create a condemnation, a hell, in which he can be master of his own morality; a mass culpability all united, but on our knees, heads bowed (Camus, *The Fall* 85.) He sought to elude judgment, and his most helpful tool was judging others, making the other confront their own lack of innocence and thereby hiding his guilt. Clamence tries to escape the laughter and social mockeries, whom have “an

irresistible urge to judge" (Camus, *The Fall* 49), yet to no avail. Clamence does not feel in social situations as he constantly feels judged by his peers. His reasoning out of this hellish conundrum would be to invert the argument, like Copernicus, self-accusation with the final goal to accuse the rest of humanity:

> Since one could not condemn others without at the same time judging oneself, one should heap accusations on one's own head , in order to have the right to judge others. Since every judge eventually becomes a penitent, one had to take the opposite route and be a professional penitent in order to become a judge. (Camus, *The Fall* 86)

His tactical approach yet again shows his subjugating nature, he wants to render everyone on the same plane, accuse everyone in order to create a universal guilt, just like the Underground Man claimed that he had been humiliated and now he wants to humiliate others (107), a power-play to seek out revenge. Like the self-proclaimed Saduccee, he denies the idea of the immortality of the soul and thus also the resurrection after death. Innocence is nonexistent in his domain, and thus he pities without absolving and gives no forgiveness (89)

But through the dialogue within *The Fall* and Clamence's engagement with the interlocutor, I posit that a salvific idea could be presented. Clamence creates his own anti-thesis, he clearly states throughout the novel which pathway would lead him to salvation, a solution to both save himself and the drowning woman. Yet he is not willing to accept it, claiming it will forever be too late for him (Camus, *The Fall* 92). The Underground Man, through mimetic theory, also crystallizes out his repentance and modulates his salvation in the same fashion as Clamence. Dostoevsky's vision of salvation, whilst not clearly established within Notes, finds therein the initial idea. Through the mimetic theory and my postulated solution, we will be able to further establish parallels between both works and neatly tie them together in the conceptualization of Dostoevskian deontology of love.

Mimetic theory: the desire for the other

To further grasp the dominion dialogue, we ought to understand how the characters construct their world filled with desires, goals, ambitions, and much more. We outsourced this thought firstly into the aforementioned concept of the interplay between slave and master morality, yet it seems to be lacking a certain depth when it comes to intrahuman exchange and conflicts. Utilizing the mimetic theory will enable us to garner an understanding as to how the respective protagonists engage with their interlocutors. The parallel thinking of both Clamence and the Underground Man can be subjugated to their mimetic display which is represented throughout the respective novels. Establishing the foundations of this theory will be beneficial in the understanding of Clamence's rhetoric of mass-enslavement. Moreover, It portrays both their desire to dominate and their need for love. Additionally, Girard's engagement with the idea of doubling, a reoccurring concept within *The Fall*, will help in the understanding of Clamence's entrapment.

René Girard offers a deeper insight into the constellation of human desires and how we model them. Within his works, he tries to assess a multitude of human factors which influence us. He engages with the idea of how far do humans assemble their moral judgments and desires through group mentality and interaction. It presupposes the notion that language, and especially the exchange between two interlocutors, fosters a self-reflective attitude. It is within this interaction that both participants are enabled to evaluate their established concepts of oughtness, compare them, and play them out. Girard said: “that man is the creature who does not know what to desire.” [42] Mimetic theory's key concept is that human desire is not a linear or autonomous process but a collective one. We desire certain things because they are in turn a desirable object for others, humans and animals alike learn from imitating. He then postulates two different kinds of mimesis, non-acquisitive mimesis (such as learning beneficial skills from the «other»), and acquisitive mimesis (desiring objects, power, money etc.). He suggests that we rely on mediators or models which will guide and show us what and who to desire. The inherent problem herein lies within the potential conflicts caused by imitative desire; a competition for the same object. Instead of being direct and autonomous, our desires are derivative and triangular. We design our model of desire through the other. We copy the revengeful desires and actions of our rivals. Individual distinctions are lost and the two become one in violence. Girard calls this “doubles”. This is similar to the aforementioned problematic regarding the ordering of the reigning factors. We lost our “transcendental guideposts” and must now rely on our subjective experience. The problem within mimetic desire is that it causes mimetic rivalry. The proliferation of imitation creates competition for the same value of object, ultimately resulting in mimetic rivalry. The ambivalence of self-creation is trapped here. Not only is

42 René Girard et al., “Generative Scapegoating.” *Violent Origins: Walter Burkert, René Girard, and Jonathan Z. Smith on Ritual Killing and Cultural Formation*, (California: Standford UP, 1987), p. 122.

the self-created by assessing values through the lens of others but it is in the same breath limited by it. It renders the self immovable. The idea of immovability, the self-entrapment, is prevalent for Clamence, as he is frozen in the innermost circle of a Dantean Hell, the same rhetoric which freezes the Underground Man. Whilst both protagonists are aware of the potential salvation thanks to the other, they completely limit themselves through them. The Sartrean concept of "L'enfer c'est les autres", entails the idea of an entrapment of the self due to the dire need for another person; a person through which we are able to construct ourselves. This philosophical idea is crucial for his philosophy. [43] Sartre himself commented on his often misunderstood citation and further elaborated on this point.

> "Hell is other people" has always been misunderstood. It has been thought that what I meant by that was that our relations with other people are always poisoned, that they are invariably hellish relations. But what I really mean is something totally different. I mean that if relations with someone else are twisted, vitiated, then that other person can only be hell. Why? Because. . . when we think about ourselves, when we try to know ourselves, . . . we use the knowledge of us which other people already have. We judge ourselves with the means other people have and have given us for judging ourselves. Into whatever I say about myself someone else's judgment always enters. Into whatever I feel within myself someone else's judgment enters. . .. But that does not at all mean that one cannot have relations with other people. It simply brings out the capital importance of all other people for each one of *us*.[44]

It is exactly this hell that both our protagonists find themselves in. Whilst they seek to dominate every person they get in contact with, they still rely on said person. Without someone besides themselves, they have to retreat into their underground and constantly be shamed. They need another person to construct their vision of grandeur, yet it is exactly this social need which constantly ridicules them. Clamence cannot laughed at, yet he constantly raves about his superior character. He actively needs people to subject, otherwise his consciousness conjures up mockery. Without an interlocutor, he is lonely in his hell of shame, a gruesome idea for him.

---

43 Sartre was in a constant dialogue with Camus and there are seemingly direct mentions of Sartrean ideas within *La Chute*. Camus must have been aware of the discussed ideas, as numerous critics claim that he was criticizing Sartrean ideas within the novel.

44Kirk Woodward, *The Most Famous Thing Jean-Paul Sartre Has Said*. Rick on theatre. Online <http://rickontheater.blogspot.com/2010/07/most-famous-thing-jean-paul-sartre.html> [Accessed 07 January 2022].

Mimetic entrapment of Clamence and The Underground Man

Girard argues within *Resurrection from the Underground* that the underground hero is as selfish as he can possibly be, yet it is exactly where his trouble lies; he can not be sufficiently selfish. His overwhelming mimetic desire just forces him to gravitate around the pettiest of human beings. His motivation seems to be strictly based upon his self-interest, yet being fueled by his self-hatred it is constantly overthrown; landing in the same arms of the people that mistreated him. Our hero divinizes these people whilst simultaneously depicting them as complete nonentities, labeling them vastly inferior to himself in intelligence. Girard beautifully dissects this within the following lines:“

> The dramatic part of Notes shows us how “enlightened self-interest”, at the very moment when it should triumph, is likely to be replaced by its exact opposite, a most bizarre law of “ unenlightened self-enslavement,[45]“ we might say, or of “obscurantist other-interest […]” What this addiction really entails is clear; underground people are irresistibly attracted to those who spurn them and they irresistibly spurn those who are attracted to them, or even those who do no more than treat them kindly.[...] (thus) exasperated mimetic desire insures a maximum amount of misfortune to those who surrender to it. When pushed far enough, the mimetic obstacle addiction compels human beings to behave in a manner diametrically opposed to anything even remotely reminiscent of their “ enlightened self-interest. This, I believe, is what Dostoevsky is trying to prove“[46]

The problematic with the entrapment lies within the freezing nature of it. The rivalry due to the judging nature of the mimesism, renders the individual in a negative state which seeks to challenge his interlocutor. It makes the person brood in resentment, constantly rummaging in their own mind, and hinders them to absolve their problem. Sandor Goodhart[47] observes that “the desires of the protagonist in Dostoevsky’s Notes from Underground are borrowed from the ‘man of action’ his friends are celebrating and the ‘bad literature’ he has been reading”. It is probably the same modern men that Clamence attacks within his many speeches. “They 'll be able to sum up modern man in a single sentence: he fornicated and read the papers” (Camus, *The Fall* 5). Zeroing in on the ‘man of action’, the Underground Man[48], who sees himself as a man of acute consciousness, regards him as both a model and a rival; he is the “so-called spontaneous and decisive people” who completely

45 This unenlightened self-enslavement is strongly reminiscent of Clamence form of self-enslavement.

46 René Girard and James G Williams, *Resurrection From The Underground* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2012), p. 81.

47 Sandor Goodhart. “Reading Religion, Literature and the End of Desire: “Mesonge Romantique Et Vérité Romanesque” at Fifty”. *Religion & Literature* 43.3 (2011): 150–158. [Accessed 20 December 2020].

48Some scholars prescribe the same notion as Hamlet to the underground man, a hero who is prevented from taking revenge due to his overthinking and taking into consideration all the variant alternatives

lack the “excessive awareness” (Dostoevsky, *Notes* 9-10). Clamence, in the same breath admires those who are decisive, those whom engage in this heroism in the depths, but he could not do the same (Camus, *The Fall* 77). Both actors’ indecisiveness to action are torturing them throughout the respective novels. Clamence's clearly depicts this idea within his final words of the novel. He actively wishes to have a second attempt at self-redemption. He proclaims: „Young woman! Throw yourself in the water again so that I might have once more the opportunity to save us both!“ Yet he is acutely aware that it will always be “too late” ; an idea he is even thankful for. (Camus, *The Fall* 92).

Girard refers to the nature of desire, which “refuses to understand why the model changes into an obstacle, but it sees clearly that this change always takes place.” [49] This idea is already developed early on in the novel, particularly evident in Chapter Three, in which Dostoevsky uses the reoccurring concept of “an intensely aware mouse” to represent the Underground Man, who “sometimes gives up so completely, that he genuinely considers himself, with all his intense awareness, to be a mouse and not a man” (12).

> “Wretched mouse!… there has collected round it some sort of fatal swill, a kind of stinking slurry consisting of its doubts, of its worries and finally of the spittle which rains on it from the spontaneous decision-makers, in the shape of judges, dictators and so on, standing triumphantly round it, roaring with laughter at the top of their healthy lungs” (13).

This passage is comparable to what Girard calls “masochism” elaborated on within *Things Hidden since the Foundation of the World*; “The only people who are qualified to guide us in the choice of our desires are the rivals who prove invincible and the enemies who cannot be disposed of”, as “the secret of the success… must be in the possession of the other, since he knows so well how to… bring out my own inadequacy when confronted with this unalterable being.” (Girard, *Things 328)* It becomes more evident that there is a dire need of “codependency” as previously expressed by Sartre.

The same Nietzschean concept of creating a slave morality is at play here, only broadened to encapsulate the constant need of affirmation. Clamence, following the rationale presented by Girard, claims at various instances that he needs sympathy for the enjoyment of his life (23). This idea is further enhanced within the mimetic chapter regarding the interlocutor. He is creating his confident self out of the affection and recognition he desperately requires from the others. Within the juxtaposition between the mouse and the “judges, dictators and so on” we are able to clearly recreate this idea. The underground man states himself that “of such a man he is green with envy”

49 René Girard, 2016. *Things Hidden since the Foundation of the World* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016) pp. 327-328.

(12), yet he calls them “stupid”. He despises them, yet he is also envious. Clamence also labels humans as below him, yet he requires them to project his pseudo virtuous behavior.

Further parallels can be established if we compare how both novels display of social interaction. Whilst both works seem like rather long monologues, the social interaction is nevertheless present. The second part of the *Notes from Underground* portrays the Underground Man and his wicked rhetoric cast into the world above the floorboards. It fails, as it must, due to his sheer ambivalence in character. His maniac episodes constantly conjure the most absurd of interactions. On a night stroll, our main protagonist, after seeing someone being thrown out a tavern window, desires a fight for himself. Looking for a fight, he enters the tavern just to get casually picked up and moved aside by an officer. Our “hero” proclaims that he lacks “the moral courage” to challenge the officer so he internalizes his resentment. Insulted and injured, the Underground Man becomes obsessed with planning out his revenge, going into insane lengths (borrowing money to look like the officer's social equal, stalking the officer, attempting to write a letter and much more) to fulfill his perfect plan: bumping into him. Because then the officer would inevitably have to acknowledge his existence.

After a long internal battle, the Underground Man finally succeeds in bumping into the officer, who doesn't even seem to notice him. The Underground Man initially feels that this put both of them on equal footing, yet he regrets it merely three days after. This is our typical mimetic desire, agonizing introverted self-reflection which honors and shames the officer simultaneously, dragging out for months without any acting. He wants to be seen as equal, attempting to acquire it through the most twisted means. Both actors are desperately trying to prove themselves that they possess moral courage, yet it is apparent that it is rather a lofty idea than a concrete reality. This engagement is clearly mirrored within *The Fall* as Clamence finds himself humiliated in front of others within the bike scene. One day, Clamence was driving and he hesitated to accelerate once the light turned green since a bike had blocked his path. This resulted at him being honked at, Clamence getting angry, and leading to an altercation between him and the biker. The setting seemed rather uncomfortable for Clamence, as passerby further shout at him, and additional cars started to honk. He wanted to revenge himself, not be publicly denounced as a pathetic creature, and take up a fight with the biker that insulted him. He was aching for revenge, brooding in bitter resentment and playacting out his revenge “a hundred times” (Camus, *The Fall* 34), yet the biker has just drove of. His image of himself changes after he “climbed down in public”, suggesting that he only now equates himself to other humans. His dream of “being a whole man”, one that would be “respected both personally and professionally” (Camus, *The Fall* 34), has been shattered and it is thus no longer possible for him to nurture said fine image of himself. He had been publicly humiliated. He does not want to be intellectually superior anymore but wishes to become an angry master who wants to strike any wrongdoer regardless of any laws.(35). He has sweet dreams of

oppression within him and wants to dominate (35). Clamence's social-self is taking a tumble, and he can no longer accept his former role.

Further comparative grounds can be established by juxtaposing both novels depiction of relationships. After having dreamed for months below the floorboards, the Underground Man is looking for social interaction, as he longs to converse about the myriad of books he read. At an evening with old school acquaintances, to which he has forced his friends to invite him, the Underground Man's inner mimetic chaos is surfacing. He goes to the dinner dreaming of "getting the upper hand, of sweeping the floor with them, of forcing them to admire him if only for his “lofty thoughts and indisputable wit”. The planned get together inevitably falls into chaos due to the drinking and the overall very dense atmosphere. His acquaintances leave, and our hero is brooding new ideas. He taunts his 'friends' whilst in the same breath asking for their forgiveness. But in a moment of honest perception, he recognizes that "They won't go down on their knees to ask me to be their friend. That's an illusion, a cheap, romantic fantastic, horrible illusion [...] And so I must slap Zverkov's face! I'm obliged to. That is my decision; I'm dashing off to slap his face. (Dostoevsky, *Notes (74)*. “Either they recognize him through his wit or by brute force. Whilst sitting in his cab, the Underground Man recognizes that they will not surrender to him, immediately creating a more wicked fantasy. He dreams of being sent off to prison for having bitten Zverkov and having spit in his face; and after fifteen years of imprisonment, he would confront him: I'll follow him in rags, a beggar. I'll find him somewhere in a provincial town. He'll be happily married. He'll have a grown-up daughter... I will say: “Look, you monster, look at my sunken cheeks and at my rags. I have lost everything-career, happiness, art, science, the woman I love-and all because of you. Here are the pistols. I've come to unload my pistols- and... and I forgive you.' Then I will shoot in the air and I'll never be heard of again” (Dostoevsky, *Notes* 77). He tries to seek domination in humiliation, through his false sense of forgiveness he tries to yet again show virtuous behavior. He tries to find superiority, playing out the mimetic rivalry, yet finding the only way to show off his superiority in a forced sense of pity. He is caught in that “damned consciousness”- between a reality he cannot accept and dreams which his consciousness insists on showing up as improbable and unreal.[50] Clamence also realizes that his rootless moral projections find no soil within the real world. He is fully aware that his played out virtue-signaling is essentially an attempt to find recognition. His duality does not render him any real connections within the world. Clamence actively acknowledges his dubious character by stating: “Being obliged to conceal the depravity in my life gave me a cold manner which was confused with a virtuous one, my indifference won me love and my selfishness ended in acts of generosity.” (Camus, *The Fall* 53) Clearly depicting his

50 Edward Wasiolek, “Aut Caesar, Aut Nihil: A Study of Dostoevsky's Moral Dialectic.” *PMLA*, vol. 78, no. 1, 1963, pp. 89–97. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/461229. Accessed 25 May 2021.

empty character. The sympathy he acquires is not an amicable one, since his character is nothing but a mere mirror. He steadily grows aware of these lies, eventually wanting to destroy his 'flattering reputation" (Camus, *The Fall* 58) His relationships in his world are very tainted, he claims :"I saw only superiority in myself, which explained my benevolence and peace of mind. When I did care for another person, it was out of pure condescension, freely conceded, and all the merit was mine. I would rise by a degree on the scale of self-love" (31). He clearly is aware that his creation of self-love is faulty, it is just a role enactment. Clamence claims in a rather sarcastic tone: "The heart of it lay in the painful and resigned assertion that I was nothing, it was not worthy becoming attached to me, my life was somewhere else and not connected with ordinary happiness[...] it was too late. I kept quiet about the reasons for this crucial lateness, knowing that it is better to go bed with a mystery"(38) He equates this to playing a part, similar to a theater play, and every participant is faced with a masquerade. Later on he explicitly states his malcontent was due to his lack of self-forgiveness, he references the drowning incident which conjured this feeling of constantly being judged. Since he can not forgive himself he seeks a way out. Interestingly enough, Clamence here yet again brings up duality in regards to his feelings:

> "I spent my whole life under a dual sign and my most weighty actions were often those in which I was least involved. Wasn't this after all, the thing that I could not forgive myself? And wasn't it this, just to add to my folly, that made me react most violently against the judgment that I felt at work in me and around me, forcing me to seek a way out" (55)

Moreover, he continues the dialogue of duality and claims that his relationships were nothing but lies until he could stand it no longer: "Since I was a liar, I would demonstrate the fact and throw my duplicity in the face of all those idiots" (56). Clamence clearly identifies the issue at hand and becomes more self aware. He rejects these empty connections and reassures the reader that he wants to find a way out this hellish judgment. [51]

51 Further examples in chapter 4 of *The Fall*

Positive mimesis in Notes from Underground

Brooding in resentment, the Underground Man arrives at the final episode of the mimetic display, and ultimately the solution to the presented dilemma. Arriving at the brothel he is unable to find his acquaintances, everyone else had retired, yet he finds Liza, the key to the novel. As Girard observes, "Notes from the Underground […] has no conclusion." [52] Whilst the reader has to agree that the novel ends rather abruptly, offering no direct salvation, the case could be made that we are able to find a heroine to the story. Within *Resurrection from the Underground,* Girard sees Liza as nothing but a "sacrificed woman", yet through further analyzing I would like to make the case that she is the actual heroine of the novel. Further analyzing her relationship with the Underground Man within the novel will lead to a salvific notion. Why was the Underground Man not able to overcome her with his mimetic entanglement, and how did this lead to a salvation for his hell?

Girard creates the idea that the Underground Man's confessions are projected onto Liza: he exercises the same tyrannical power over her that he felt in Zverkov. He wishes to take the place of his tormentor; someone has to pay for the pain that he has suffered and it seemed like circumstances had provided him with Liza. He insults and humiliates her just as he has been humiliated. If the Underground Man cannot reach his goal by fear, he tries it with emotional manipulation. "And how few, how few words were necessary" I thought in passing."What a small dose of idealism (an assumed idealism at that, bookish, invented) was needed instantly to turn an entire human soul so that it chimed with one's own. There's virginity for you! There's fresh soil for you.!" (Dostoevsky, *Notes* 98). The Underground Man continues to torment Liza with his tales of the horrors of prostitution. He tells her that she will never be able to buy her freedom and would only get deeper and deeper in debt to her contractor. During the coffin scene, where he tells a story of a deceased prostitute that was dragged out from the basement of a defective house, the Underground Man pushes it to the extremes, anticipating the same faith for Liza. He tries various ways to manipulate her, either by logic or by emotional appeals. He constantly tries to evoke strong feelings within her, only to emotionally subdue her. Interestingly enough, he finds himself emotionally moved throughout his attempts, even blushing. (88) Surprised by Liza's emotional weeping in response to his vivid depiction of her death, the Underground Man, in a moment of self-forgetfulness, gives the girl his address. He wants to help her escape the life of prostitution— Astell labeling this "a life that he clearly sees as mirroring his own in its constant indebtedness, its enslavement to the pleasure of others, its recognized degradation and lovelessness". (Astell 190) We have an ongoing parallelism in which Liza continuously realizes the horrors and dangers of her worlds, laid out by her tormentor. The Underground Man even states: "And does it mean that she is capable by now of certain thoughts? 'Damn it all, that's curious, here's -a kindred spirit'" (84)

52 René Girard. *Deceit, Desire, and the Novel* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), p. 309.

This scene is a good indicator of Girard's mimetic theory, and other underlying ideas of mirroring. Having given her his address before leaving the brothel, he turmoils himself throughout his walk back, he is afraid to face the "filthy truth" of his own "bookish sentimentality "The Underground Man affirms himself that he is emotionally moved:" Why dishonest? In what way dishonest? Last night I was speaking sincerely. I remember that the feeling within me was genuine... it was precisely these noble feelings that I wanted to awaken in her... if she wept a little, then that's good, it will have a favorable effect on her" (98). This is strongly reminding of Clamence who also tries to inject ideas of love in others, with the same goal of dominating them. "I nourished romantic ideas in others because our women friends have one thing in common with Bonaparte[53], which is that they always think they will succeed when others have failed" (Camus, *The Fall* 37). Both protagonists have a twisted reality in regard to love. They are implementing love through their mimetic desire, a desire fueled by the dire need to constantly dominate.

The Underground Man is agonizing himself for three consecutive days until Liza makes an appearance at his doorstep. He is trying to manage his maniac episodes, yet he has to burst out at the first "offended dignity" (Dostoevsky, *Notes* 107) he felt. He goes into a detailed description as to why he pretended to be a heroic figure in front of her. Revealing that everything was just a mere cruel game of his, torturing out of revenge "I have been humiliated, so I wanted to humiliate; they reduced me to a rag, so I wanted to show my power" (107). The interesting part of the analysis lies within this interplay of our doubles. Analyzing Liza's reaction to these harsh statements guides us through her revelation. She reacts in a diametrically opposed manner to the self-invented daydreams of the Underground Man, who was used to "think in terms of books" (109). She recognizes his sheer unhappiness and succeeded by now in corrupting myself morally so much, and have become so out of touch with "real life", that at the moment I was capable of reproaching her and shaming her for having come to me to listen to "pathetic words", and I never guessed that she came not at all in order to hear pathetic words but to love me because, for a woman, love compromises all resurrection, all salvation from any kind of destruction, all regeneration and, indeed , can only express itself in those terms." (111). [54] The young woman, who has left the brothel behind and who refuses to respond to the underground man's revilement of her with either hatred for him or self-hatred, offers the underground man in the form of her compassion a model for positive mimesis, an Alyosha-like salvation. As Joseph Frank writes: "Liza's complete disregard of her own humiliation, her whole-souled identification with his torments—in short, her capacity for selfless love—is the only way to break the sorcerer's spell of ego-centrism." [55]

53This sentence in particular reminds one of Raskolnikov as he follows the same rational. Additionally, Clamence here produces a heroine character.

54I have underlined parts of the quotation due to their weight they carry within the general discussion. I claim that that this is indeed a marker of Dostoevskian deontological love [see Love chapter] and thus render it s juxtaposition with *The Fall* possible.)

55 Joseph Frank. *Dostoevsky: The Stir of Liberation, 1860-1865* (Oxford: Princeton UP, 1986), p. 344.

Clamence's mimesis and doubling

Clamence undergoes psychological changes throughout the novel, embodying various Dostoevskian characters. His variety reaches from a likenesses to main characters such as Raskolnikov or The Underground Man , to side characters such as Svidrigailov or Marmeladov (*Crime and Punishment*)[56] and many more. This effect is produced through his engagement with his interlocutor, which neatly present a multitude of ideas and critiques. This will inevitably render the essence of Clamence's characteristics rather volatile, changing and adapting throughout the novel. *The Fall* reads like wicked Bildungsroman, Clamence adapts, deceives, and changes throughout his fall. Starting from a seemingly rather self-assured character, to a sick individual preaching in his bed. He will inevitably end in a small room, just like The Underground Man, preaching of a salvation he can not obtain. Interestingly enough, the reasoning for his inability to access said salvation is remarkably akin to The Underground Man's ineptitude. Elizabeth Trahan's *Clamence vs. Dostoevsky: An Approach to La Chute* gave within her conclusion the following view regarding the development of Clamence:

> Clamence, by trying to combine his characteristics with those of a whole group of other Dostoevskian characters, as well as reflecting a good many other themes and causes close to Camus' heart, becomes a composite rather than an entity, a void behind his mask rather than an essence. [57]

Whilst, I mostly agree with the statement, I do believe that there is a Camusian essence within Clamence, namely his presentation of salvific love. Camus seems to have modulated this solution in a similar manner as Dostoevsky did in various novels. Firstly we ought to analyze his general entanglement within the mimesis, namely his doubling, to get at the heart of his entrapment.[58] Analyzing his dialogue of dominion might hide the key to solving it. *The Fall* is a constant dialogue of duplicity, Clamence sheer ambivalence is presented within a multitude of instances. The idea of Judge-penitent, judging the interlocutor just to protect himself from judgment, represents this inner dualism of Clamence. He is confessing his own sins (he is penitent), whilst condemning society for theirs (his role of a judge); a “double job” as he claims, “just like humans are” (9). His doubling emerged out of his realization after the drowning accident, his fall, to which the novel alludes quite early on. After being haunted by laughter, he tries to calm himself down with some water from his bathroom. Looking into the mirror he encounters himself as a double: “My face smiled back at me

56 Fyodor Dostoevsky. Crime and Punishment, trans. by David McDuff (London : Penguin Books, 2003).
57Trahan, Elizabeth. “Clamence vs. Dostoevsky: An Approach to La Chute.” *Comparative Literature*, vol. 18, no. 4, [Duke University Press, University of Oregon], 1966, p. 350
58See page 38 *The Fall* and chapter: Mimetic entrapment of Clamence and The Underground Man.

from the mirror, but it seemed to me that the smile was double" (Camus, *The Fall* 25); "A laugh that slowly nested somewhere inside of him" (27), he became his own double. He is judging and condemning himself, his inner dualism haunts him and is a constant reminder that he was a coward at a time that required bravery. The laughter is quintessential in the construction of his doubling, as it is a constant hindrance in his self-acceptance. Characteristically speaking there exists a discrepancy between the presented self, the noble and virtuous lawyer, and his inner self which is a selfish and judgmental being. Clamence does not want to accept a version of himself that was a coward and not able to rescue the woman. His struggle exists within his inability to "to line up his social image with his authentic self."[59] He finds some sort of peace within this doubling, as this ambivalence makes him oscillate between extremes, yet never having to settle for one.

The novel is in a constant struggle of the aforementioned lack of self-acceptance. The ongoing monologues of Clamence constantly portrays struggles of accepting past mistakes and condemnations. Whilst he tries to find a solution through various acts of either debauchery, pseudo virtuous spiel, or mass condemnation, he finds no rest in any of them. The many acquaintances Clamence has made throughout his life found no real roots within him, as the presented character of Clamence was just a mere mask. He was not able to establish to gather any meaningful relationships, as his self is nothing but an illusion. The constant condemnation of the others evidently renders him alone, only admirers surround him, which eventually see behind his masquerade. He sees that he can neither be fully virtuous, nor the opposite. Slowly drifting away in delirium, the people surrounding him notice his mental deterioration. Inevitably, Clamence could no longer accept himself as it is constructed of lies. He became aware that he is not the man he thinks to be: „The day came when I could stand it no longer. My first reaction was wild and confused. Since I was a liar, I would demonstrate the fact and throw my duplicity in the face of all those idiots before they even discovered it" (56). This realization makes him ponder about himself and shortly after, Clamence elaborates on his idea of transfer of guilt and mass-enslavement.

Clamence's mimetic entanglement is the condemnation of all, his inability to become a master of his self forces him to level everyone around him. He devolved from a seemingly virtuous man, the noble lawyer from Paris who proclaims to jump at every opportunity to behave morally righteous, to a devilish creature which preaches mass-enslavement in his newly built church in Mexico City. As soon-trouble arises, he tries to drown it with his wicked theories of mass-culpability. Having worked as an actual judge, and thus having acquired a deep proficiency regarding rhetoric, Clamence portrays no shortcoming of his intellectual skill. Through his meticulously planned accusations, "I go subtly, with lots of nuance and digressions, adapting what I say to my listener," (Camus, *The Fall* 88) he spews a rhetoric of entrapment whilst connecting it to his interlocutor.

59 Jean Franco. "Conversations and Confessions: Self and Character in The Fall and Conversation in the Cathedral." *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 19/ 4 (1997): p.452-468

There are various instances of this doubling within his speech, to various degrees of accusation. Clamence would present an idea, or label, to his interlocutor, give reason as to why he would have these specific notions about said topic, and then either refer to himself or his talking partner to it. His rhetoric is a planned-out composition, every word carries weight and suggests more than the mere surface suggests. Stating: "And do you share your wealth with the poor? No? Well, that means you are what I call a Sadducee" [60] (7) only to label himself a Sadducee mere seconds after shows one of the earliest examples. He lays bare certain intricacies such as his disdain for the idea of resurrection(see footnote) within these statements. Adding these comments throughout the novel, the reader is invited to delve deeper into the dialectics of Clamence. *The Fall* possesses an abundance of nuanced accusations and jabs neatly hidden away. His rhetoric tries to make a statement about his interlocutor, yet it does possess a self-revealing characteristic. *La mise-en abyme chez Camus : La métafiction et la réflexivité dans L'Etranger, La Peste, et La Chu*te by Marshall Bernard Woodward further enhances this notion of entrapment within duality. Within his meticulous analysis of Clamence's rhetoric he proposes the following theory:

> "La manière dans laquelle Clamence achève son jugement est clé pour comprendre la mise-en-abîme dans *La Chute.* Clamence se rend au lecteur, et puis, il mont : dans sa capacité de narrateur, il se met sa forme comme protagoniste sous les yeux critique des deux lecteurs (interlocuteur, lecteur) en tout disant, en s'ouvrant complètement. En fait, ce que Clamence fait c'est de se mettre dans l'abîme. Comme narrateur, il crée un récit encadré dans lequel il met une réflexion de lui-même, un doublement du soi qui existait." (Woodward 65)

The entirety of Clamence's entrapment relies on having an interlocutor listen to him and abide by his proposed ideas. He meticulously lies and deceives within his speeches, trying to resemble with whomever he converses. The stylistic choice of the novel, the narratology of the implicit dialogue, greatly enhances this effect. Woodward further explains that the reflexivity is possible "grâce à l'obsession des doubles et des miroirs"(67). Clamence shows his reader that he can "tout renverser et tout réinterpréter dans sa propre vie, mais ce ne pas jusqu'au moment où Clamence force le lecteur d'aller lui-même dans l'abîme d'introspection qu'il se rend compte de la trahison de Clamence" (67). Clamence's rhetoric actively creates moral positions and lures his interlocutor within them. If they follow his entrapment and descend into this duality they will evidently remain

60 Sadducees are members of a Jewish sect or party of the time of Christ that denied the resurrection of the dead, the existence of spirits, and the obligation of oral tradition, emphasizing acceptance of the written Law alone. The resurrection of Lazarus, the moral theological reasoning and solution presented within *Crime and Punishment* is diametrically opposed to these concepts. John The Baptist despised both the Sadducees and Pharisees, labeling them a brood of vipers within Matthew 3:7. and further stating that they are the sons of the devil within John 8:44. Clamence claims himself that he has a knowledge of the bible, which makes such statements even more interesting for analytical purposes. Overall, *The Fall* presents an abundance of biblical references, ranging from allegories down to the exact garbs Clamence wears. I would wager that further research within its many biblical references would be very beneficial to establishing his character. Definitions from Oxford Languages

there alone. “Clamence n’était jamais là, ou bien il est déjà parti – ce que le lecteur a suit était une duplication narcissique du narrateur qui reste sans jugement. En accusant le lecteur et l’interlocuteur, Clamence s’enlève dehors de l’abîme en même temps qu’il réduit la capacité littéraire du lecteur” (67). This further projects the proposed mimetic entanglement of Clamence. He tries to heap his self-accusation onto the other, so they can suffer the same fall as he did, stating that the more he accuses himself, the more he has the right to judge the other. This thought process will inevitably lead to the other judging himself which would relieve him by that much more (Camus, *The Fall* 88). He presents a faulty self which incites his listeners to align with this presented idea of a sinful humanity. Clamence's rhetoric of doublement finds its climax within the last chapter of the book, stripped of any mental escape he comes to his last resort. He states that he builds up a portrait of everyone and no one. In short a mask […] the kind that makes you exclaim: “Look, I have met him!” […] the case for the prosecution is over, while at the same time the portrait that I offer my contemporaries becomes a mirror. (Camus, *The Fall* 87). He condemns himself to an extreme only to throw it at the face of others. Clamence is trapped within his consciousness and sees no escaping from this conundrum. The ultimate statement clearly represents this idea of his desire for duplicity and his rhetoric of entrapment:

> In sackcloth and ashes, slowly tearing out my hair, my face ploughed with scratches, but sharp-eyed, I stand before the whole of humankind, going over my shameful actions, ever-conscious of the effect I am having and saying: ‘I was the lowest of the low’. Then, imperceptibly, my speech slips from ‘I’ to ‘we’. (87)

Postive mimesis in The Fall

Whilst the mimetic desire of the Underground man has already been compared to Clamence and certain similarities have already been established, further analyzing the rhetoric enables the reader to crystallize out the methodical approach of Clamence's speech which he tactically hides, and, additionally, find therein a solution. The subtlety of the mimetic desire is expressed neatly within the thesis *The Interlocutor in "La Chute:" A Key to Its Meaning* by Whartenby. Through the methodical dissection of every interaction within the novel the evolution of Clamence becomes clear. The analytical approach to the lexical field of Clamence shows a broad nuance of this mimetic entrapment. The following sections will mostly focus on the last day's conversation, as it both renders his mimetic rhetoric visible and postulates an answer.[61] The last chapter of *The Fall* is of further importance due to the change in the relationship between the interlocutor and Clamence.

61 This answer is coherent with the Marmeladovian salvation presented within this thesis. See chapter Marmeladov and Clamence -buffoons of salvation.

Whereas the interlocutor was rather held back throughout the majority of the work, he seems to have grasped a deeper understanding of the game at play. Clamence's spiel has been lifted and he seems rather desperate and his true self emerges.

Clamence has accepted his duplicity, (89) claiming that that is where he found comfort and thus wants to lure others into it. He tries to create a webbing of thinking patterns and ideas, as he said himself, inspire ideas in others to trap his listeners within them. Whilst constantly elaborating the reasoning behind his ideas and further exampling why there are no solutions for others, he actively entraps his interlocutor within his rhetoric. The judge penitent's tool is this spewing of mass-culpable rhetoric, his profession of judge became twofold. He is building up a portrait of everyone and no one (87) claiming it to be "both himself and a mirror of his contemporaries" (87). He adapts his speech meticulously to fit his needs. If the interlocutor can be persuaded to accept the degrading portrait as a mirror, Clamence achieves his purpose and can reassert his superiority by listening to that confession (Whartenby 7): "Try it. You may be sure that I will listen to your own confessions, with a great feeling of fraternity" (Camus, *The Fall* 88). Once his interlocutor starts self-confessing, Clamence has won. He made the other compel to his dialectic, feeling a final sensation of superiority again. Clamence lures his listeners into a trap of self-accusation, since this is the only way to not be alone in his judgmental state. He creates scenarios about himself, renders them equal to his interlocutor, and thus hopes to level him.

Whereas Clamence might have been more successful beforehand, in the last chapter the interlocutor sees through this rather obvious endeavor. This specific attempt of entrapment of Clamence was met with laughter, a crucial factor for the protagonist, and thus the dialogue drastically changes. "Don't laugh!" (Camus, *The Fall* 88) he proclaims after having asked his interlocutor to confess. His conversation partner seems to be able to see through his plan. Admitting that the interlocutor was a difficult customer (88), his whole edifice collapses. Laughter, which is daunting for Clamence, arises and his tonality changes. Whereas we had a Clamence who seemed rather sure about himself and his ideas, we now recognize that he is doubting his presented world concept. At a pivotal point of the novel, our main protagonist has a partial awakening. Clamence comes to the realization that his solution of mass-enslavement is not ideal and that he has to change his life. He is actively disliking his life and wants to find an escape out of this conundrum. He thus posits his solution: (90)

> "Mais quand on n'aime pas sa vie, quand on sait qu'il faut en changer, on n'a pas le choix, n'est-ce pas? Que faire pour être un autre? Impossible. II faudrait n'être plus personne, s'oublier pour quelqu'un, une fois, au moins" (Whartenby Page 7).

This dialogue displays the essence of Clamence and is of utmost important- The idea of forgetting oneself for another person is posited as a solution to the problem of not liking your life. He asks his interlocutor for a solution, a salvation for a man 'who lost the holy innocence of forgiving himself" (Camus, *The Fall* 90) It is tempting to consider the interlocutor's verbal intervention as a helpful suggestion. The interlocutor suggests possibly to become someone else, as indicated stylistically by a question reflecting an answer to "n'est-ce pas?". This is then followed by Clamence's "Impossible." The proposed salvation is rejected because Clamence could never forget himself for another, nor could he forgive himself (90). As previously discussed within the dialogue concerning the inability of love, his "solution" of debauchery is impossible as it is essentially not a real love, but only his mimetic desire to dominate. His proposed salvation which he deems only possible within the "s'oublier pour quel q'un d'autre " is followed by the descendance of doves. This juxtaposition neatly combines a self-less love with a salvific answer to his fall; a holy spirit -the dove allegory[62]. I would suggest that Clamence, just like the Underground Man, is well aware of his own salvation, he has been aware of it since the very beginning, and the final descendance of the doves in concordance with the rather strong Christian imagery further enhances this statement. Clamence refuses to come forth whilst preaching his own salvation. This projection of a salvation is mirrored within The Underground Man's salvation of Liza.

The Dantean Hell of the Amsterdam canals

Clamence within multiple instances equates the canals of Amsterdam to a Dantean inferno."Have you noticed that the concentric canals of Amsterdam are like the circles of hell?"(P.10) Whilst this depiction further adds to the overall uneasiness of the novel and somber atmosphere, there is a deeper connection to the metaphorical workings of said statement. The hell in question is rather an allegory, it is representative of the journey of the soul towards God. The inferno is a construction of nine concentric circles of torment, through which the soul must venture and thereby recognize and reject their sins. The specific individual is attributed a circle depending of his sin and his punishment is individualized. The idea of contrapasso: the poetic justice of Satan[63] punishment either resembling or contrasting with the sin itself.

Moreover, taking into consideration the references to the Dantean hell, it shows yet another coherence with Dantean imagery. Clamence's "Mais comment? Ne m'accablez pas trop," indicates that the interlocutor may be taking his revenge by heaping abuse upon him. (Whartenby 8). It seems apparent that the person who has just laughed Clamence's "system" into its deserved

62 See Marmeladov and Clamence -buffoons of salvation chapter.

63 "Dante's Satan." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Online. [Accessed 1 Jun. 2021].

place, now berates the individual who has attempted to entangle him in a malicious trap. This projects on the idea that this interplay of preaching mass enslavement resulting in getting laughed at, creates an entrapment for Clamence. Whartenby sees within this repetitive cycle of ridiculing and being ridiculed a devilish circle. He presupposes the notion that Clamence is doomed for eternal repetition of preaching the same rhetoric, guiding lost travelers swept ashore and coming to a halt in Mexico City; his own frozen lake.

> "If, as I believe, Camus offers us the interlocutor as a representative reader, we must infer that Clamence has told and is to repeat his story endlessly, only to be greeted with ridicule. Such an interpretation would create for Clamence a new circle in a very Dantesque hell where he is condemned to a repetitious, ignoble activity, from which hope is completely withheld." (Whartenby 8)

Further metaphorical analysis of the Dantean Hell justifies this entrapment and perfectly coincides with the idea of contrapasso. What propelled Clamence into the depths of this hell is dependent of his sin, namely the self-deification paired with his incapacity to love. Virgil, Dante's guide through Hell, [64] tells Dante "that the inhabitants of the infernal region are those who have lost the good of intellect; the substance of evil, the loss of humanity, intelligence, good will, and the capacity to love" (8). Clamence is trapped, exactly like the Underground Man, within his hellish creation of a loveless hell, frozen within the middle, unable to move and brooding in debauchery and self-centeredness. They cannot separate the idea of love with the one of the ego. Wanting to usurp God, they become godlike but at the farthest distance removed from God, thus punished through contrapasso; like Dante's Satan in the frozen lake at the very center of hell. Both characters express their freedom in terms of their duality. The hyper-aware protagonists conjure up imaginative deficiencies, which limit them. Their ambivalence hinders them in any sort of true commitment, a dire need to cling onto the self as to not give up their freedom. They rather abide by their own internal sense of the real which is unable to provide positive criteria for an authentic self. Both heroes are well aware that they can find their authenticity only through the other, yet the other seems to pose as deficient. They do not want to subdue themselves to someone else. They cannot believe the proposed answer, nor do they want to risk their freedom to be loved. Both antiheroes ended up having insulated themselves completely from the outside world to live out their own limitless freedom; alone, sick and weeping in their freezing rooms. [65]

64 Certain scholars attribute Virgil like characteristics to Clamence, guiding his interlocutor through the Amsterdam hell.

65 Ji Hyun Park, *An existential reading of Camus and Dostoevsky focusing on Camus's notion of the absurd and Sartrean authenticity.* MA Thesis (2007), p. 37.

Love

Dostoevsky moral theology of love

> In as far as you advance in love you will grow surer of the reality of God and of the immortality of your soul. If you attain to perfect self-forgetfulness in the love of your neighbor, then you will believe without doubt, and no doubt can possibly enter your soul. This has been tried. This is certain. (Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov* Part 2, Chapter 4, 48)

Dostoevsky constantly wrangles with the question of religion and doubt. Many of his novels depict characters that have to undergo excruciating hardships to finally find a light. Dostoevsky's conceptualization of faith is a thoroughly interwoven idea which was evolving throughout his life. It would surpass this paper by a magnitude detailing the complex intricacies of his faith and religious engagement. Yet, understanding how Dostoevsky modulates his salvation enables a comparison between The Underground Man and Clamence. I claim within this thesis that Dostoevsky salvific love had a clear impact on how Camus modulates his own understanding of a solution to the existential question of humankind. To be able to understand Dostoevsky 's human and his deontological ethics, we ought to start analyzing their faith. Dostoyevsky has a thoroughly complex interwoven ideal of morality and his personal concept of religion.[66] *Notes from Underground* tackles the problematic relation between suffering and rationalism, yet it seems to be lacking a satisfying answer to it. The examination of moral consciousness that *Notes* inaugurated will only later attain profounder levels. It is within his last masterpiece *The Brothers Karamazov* that Dostoevsky took his established reasoning from *Notes from Underground* and answered it. This work is a very complex and lengthy work, which entails a variety of ideas and concepts. One of these ideas would be the construction of moral values through a theological scope. Dostoevsky is dealing with a special kind of issue which he calls *proklyatye voprosy*, or ‘‘accursed questions’’. These stand for questions that cannot be satisfactorily answered, but which, nonetheless, call for answers from human beings. The most important of these accursed questions concerns the existence of God, and moreover, the linked moral system within it. Elena Namli, within her essay “Struggling with reason; Dostoevsky as moral theologian”, made fascinating discoveries regarding the complex and vast cosmos of Dostoevsky's concept of faith. She constructs a viewing of Alyosha, the hero of *The Brothers Karamazov,* that neatly combines Dostoevsky's moral theology with the novel. It portrays the loving salvation of Alyosha, thus being a token representative of Dostoevsky's faith.

66 P. H. Braziers, *Dostoevsky: A Theological Engagement* (London: Pickwick Publications, 2016).
Berdryaev's account of *Dostoevsky.*

Dostoevsky believed that as a Christian he could put the case against God and his faith even more strongly than an atheist could. In *The Brothers Karamazov*, Dostoevsky deliberately sets out to project his existentialist side. Within this work, the author devotes two long chapters about the horrors of children suffering, and the idea that freedom might not be the most ideal for us. Dostoevsky had an interesting take regarding his arrangement of the reining factors within his religious concept. For him, the concept of responsibility is a core part and ever occurring ideal within his novels. He saw his enlightenment, how God comes through to the person, not through a commanding and overwriting force but rather in humility. He expected to find it within the disguise of the humbles. (A classic reoccurring theme found within eastern European literature, yet here it is different from the typical orthodox faith.) The polyphonic[67] prose within the novel are the key to deconstructing his view. Their voices are allowed their full range, allowing every argument to enroll, hence leading to the Great Inquisitor dialectic -the ultimate blasphemy. The representative of the Church and Jesus confront each other. Two universal principles confront one another: freedom and compulsion, belief and disbelief in the meaning of life, Christ and Antichrist, divine love and humanitarian pity. To be able to grasp the underlying principles of what his faith entails and how it is played out, we have to look at the "*The Brothers Karamazov*". When *The Brothers Karamazov* is read as a critique of rationalism and the three brothers are interpreted as three distinct models of struggle with reason, a revision of the meaning of the question of God's existence can function as a key to the riddle of Alyosha and thus to the theological message of the novel as a whole. Dostoevsky portrayed his anthropocentric religion within the character of Alyosha, which is able to be distilled out of the comparison of the struggle of Ivan with the Grand Inquisitor. (Namli 198)

"The Grand Inquisitor" is a brilliant parable inside the novel itself, through which the reader can get a deeper understanding of the theological background. It is told by Ivan, who in conversation with his brother Alyosha, argues and engages with the debate of the possibility of a personal and benevolent God. The main part of the tale is devoted to the Inquisitor explaining to Jesus why his return would interfere with the mission of the Church. He wants to hinder Christ from overtaking their established system. A system robbing humans of the freedom of distinguishing between right and wrong, for the sake of saving humans from the burden of free choice in the uncertain world. The Inquisitor will be a self-martyr, spending his life to keep choice from humanity, quasi deifying himself and proposing himself as a balancing act between redemption and enslavement. He claims: "They will marvel at us and will consider us gods because we, in standing at their head, have consented to endure freedom and rule over them-so terrible will being free appear to them at last." (P.331) He further adds that: "But only he can take mastery of people's freedom who is able to set their consciences at rest" (P.332). He proposes a sort of enslavement

67See Bakhtin's account on Dostoevsky's prose. Wikipedia contributors. "Polyphony (literature)." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 20 Dec. 2021. Web. 8 Jan. 2022.

under his reign as to deal with this terrible burden of freedom:" Rather make us slaves but feed us" (Davison 173) -an idea which strongly influenced Camus depicted in Clamence's long rants about freedom and his proposed enlightened enslavement. *The Brothers Karamazov* is equally engaged within Clamence's dialogue. His dialogue regarding freedom and slavery harshly echoes the logic of the Grand Inquisitor; equating freedom to too heavy of a burden to carry(P83)thus positing the idea of self-enslavement, true freedom as Clamence claims. The Grand Inquisitor proposes a subjugation in order to escape the exigencies. Essentially he states that Christ should have given people no choice, but instead taken power and given people a sense of security instead of his gift of free choice; metaphorically speaking exchange the promised heavenly bread with an earthly one. The burden of free choice and the intertwined oughtness are hard limiting factors for both Camus and Dostoevsky's protagonists, as it entails an active partaking in creating a better world, a world in which their ego-centrism can't reign.

It would not be a far-fetched rational to ascribe Nietzschean characteristics to this reasoning, and thus tie the rationale to *The Fall*. The core fundamentals of Clamence's vision of a master-race assuming the burden of freedom and guilt for the enslaved are clearly at play here (Davison 173). Clamence lived out experience as pope, or his manifold of critiques regarding faith and religion, give no shorting of further comparative grounds. Camus made various claims within *The Rebel* which are reminiscent of the Grand Inquisitor parable and portrayed thinking patterns that found their way into Clamence's heart. He described characteristics of the "hero of our time".

> "Seventeen eighty-nine does not yet affirm the divinity of man, but the divinity of the people, to the degree in which the will of the people coincides with the will of Nature and of reason. […] Eternal principles govern our conduct: Truth, Justice, finally Reason. There we have the new God. The Supreme Being, […] is only the ancient god disembodied, peremptorily deprived of any connection with the earth, and launched like a balloon into a heaven empty of all transcendent principles. Deprived of all his representatives, of any intercessor, the God of the lawyers and philosophers only has the value of logic." (Camus, *The Rebel* 74)

This rationale is also present in the parable. The Grand Inquisitor tells Christ:

> Instead of taking over men's freedom, you increased it still more for them! Did you forget that peace and even death are dearer to man than free choice in the knowledge of good and evil? [. . .] Instead of taking over men's freedom, you increased it and forever burdened the kingdom of the human soul with its torments. You desired the free love of man, that he

> should follow you freely, seduced and captivated by you. Instead of the firm ancient law, man had henceforth to decide for himself, with a free heart, what is good and what is evil, having only your image before him as a guide . . .” (Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov* 254)

Alyosha, Dostoevsky's embodiment of salvation

Notes has rendered a lengthy dialogue critiquing determinism and enlightened self-interest, fending of a morality system solely based upon the value of logic due to the human chaotic and incalculable nature. *The Brothers* take it beyond, and through further engagement with the novel, especially in regards to the character of Alyosha, creates a clear contrast to Nietzsche's views. We are able to crystallize out the nature of Dostoevsky's counter rational to the burden of freedom and the inherent call for an answer. René Girard inverted the argument of Nietzsche and thus establishes the grounds for Dostoevsky's counter rationale. He had a rather harsh description for the reasoning stating;

> The Inquisitor does not confuse the message of Christ with the psychological cancer to which it leads, by contrast to Nietzsche and Freud. He therefore doesn't accuse Christ of having underestimated human nature, but of having overestimated it, of not having understood that the impossible morality of love necessarily leads to a world of masochism and humiliation.” (Girard, *Resurrection* 61)

The youngest and most complex of the characters, Alyosha is actively engaging with this reasoning and gives a prophetic answer to the Grand Inquisitor. A character often misunderstood, falsely represented, or even labeled a failure of a character by some interpretations yet, proclaimed as the hero of the story by Dostoevsky himself. The character is already early on described as being a “realist”, Alyosha was even more of a realist than the rest of us. [. . .] In the realist, faith is not born from miracles, but miracles from faith.” (Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov* 26). He represents the ambiguity within morality and faith and through his discourse and doubling tries to disentangle that phenomena. Alyosha differs greatly from Ivan, as he does not fully ground himself to reason. He actively seeks out volitional relations to other human beings, animals and God. According to Elena Namli's interpretation, she argues that Dostoevsky presupposes that reason can guide human acts only in situations that are possible to understand and control. Yet the same reason proves that neither understanding nor control is possible in situations which are most crucial for morality and which demand acts of responsibility and love on the part of human beings (Namali 214). It describes the notion of taking active participation in the creation of morality. Alyosha’s creation of

“the garden of Eden” is about transforming this world. It is an active effort, not residing in self-created hindrance, as his counterparts do. It is these characteristics that we are able to find within Alyosha and thus be rendered able to disentangle the question of these ‘accursed questions.’ If we ought to look at the philosophical idea of Alyosha’s character, as a critique of reason, and his innate concept of “volitional decision” as a guide, we come to deduce that oneself should feel responsible for acting. Gibson extends Alyosha's comments with further interpretation: "and if we felt that responsibility keenly enough we could abolish suffering for the future.”[68] To act without asking for any meaning leads to the meaning one never can find through rational investigations. In a sense, Alyosha realizes the idea of the Grand Inquisitor, namely that since there is no order in the world, one should invent it. Alyosha differs from this rational in the sense that he is focusing on the other. He is not actively looking for a foundation of meaning. Meaning is not an attainable goal but rather meaning arises as an effect of this position. It is within taking up all responsibility, that meaning is created. It is within his call to action, acting like there is no god responsible for the world, that he experiences the presence of God. Dostoevsky's God is a deity reliant on human faith, as he lives and dies depending on the belief. It seems to suggest that one’s moral position, the acting out, is crucial to the very existence of God. By belief, Dostoevsky means the volitional decision to recognize all moral responsibility as entirely one’s own. Gibson agrees, stating, "The answer is to go forward from theory to practice: and Dostoyevsky distinguished in the end between the yearning love which does nothing and submits, and the active love which has the power to save.” (Gibson 176)

A comparison of love in Clamence and The Underground Man

Pride goeth before destruction, And an haughty spirit before a fall. [69]

For Dostoevsky, love is the highest virtue- the core concept of his Christian world model. The importance lies within selflessness, the second teaching of Jesus of loving your neighbor. To be able to acquire the gift of love, a person must oppose his self-assertive nature and opt for its opposition: to serve the other despite no personal gain. If the love for the neighbor and the love for God coincide within a human, Dostoevsky argues that the eternal question of the „why“ will find an answer. His idea of love, the total submission in love, is always weighed with the religious understanding of it. Both are tied to Dostoevsky's idea of transcendent morality. If the freedom of choice is not secured within a frame of reference which surpasses the singular human idea, it will inevitably end in nihilism; in the creation of man-made morality expressed by Nietzsche.

68 Alexander Boyce Gibson, *The Religion of Dostoevsky* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1973), p. 169.
69 Proverbs 16:18 — King James Version (KJV 1900)

Dostoevsky's view of a loving soul has experienced the depths of hell, hardship, and suffering, yet is able to go beyond them. It is an active partaking in the affirmation of life, despite the chaos, which seems for him an answer to the ever questioning why of existence. Within his transcendental vision of love, the human is able to feel a sensation of fulfillment regardless of any hardship. Love for him has not merely a self-affirming nature to it, but is also able to be seen as a healing force which purifies the soul, as presented in *Crime and Punishment.* Svidrigailov's suicide, a foil character of Raskolnikov, is projecting the idea of Dostoevsky's thesis that it is impossible for man to set himself above others. There can be no Übermensch, no self-deification, who is allowed to be above the law. Sooner or later, every person needs authentic human warmth and companionship. As suicide[70] is not an option for either writer's rebels, they have to go beyond, delve deeper within the depths of existentialism.

Dostoevsky's faith is grounded within the individual's capability of active kindness and love. Whilst this has not been actively stated within *Notes*, it finds therein the initial spark. Positing the idea that the lack of said Dostoevskian love will inevitably create a self-entrapment in a metaphysical hell. Analyzing the dialogue of both the Underground Man and Clamence surrounding the idea of "love", we are able to postulate this creation of stagnation due to their duality. Their indecisiveness brings forth their ambivalence, an inner division which freezes them. The origin of their duality can be traced back to their depictions of affections. Both Clamence and the Underground man view love as a dominating game, as seen in their desire for dominion, a tool for self-enrichment and power. Their mimetic desire has a constant need to subdue their partners, yet through the veil of both author's sentimental outpourings, there seems to be a glimpse of a human need. There is a clear evolution in regards to this expressed need within both novels. Both protagonists proclaim their superiority quite early on within the respective novels, yet through the unfolding of the novel, a need for a certain codependency can be established. Whilst it always ends in dominion, these characters seem to constantly struggle for validation outside of themselves. Yet, as soon as they attain it, they will cast it away, like a wicked game. The Underground man gave a rather bleak definition of his kind of love:

> [...]it is incredible to be as spiteful and stupid as I was; it may be added that it was strange I should not love her, or at any rate, appreciate her love. Why is it strange? In the first place, by then I was incapable of love, for I repeat, with me loving meant tyrannizing and showing my moral superiority. I have never in my life been able to imagine any other sort of love, and have nowadays come to the point of sometimes thinking that love really consists in the right- freely given by the beloved object-to tyrannize over her. (Notes Page111)

70 Camus' main serious problem in The Sisyphus Myth

Clamence adds onto this dialectic with his own wicked statement:

> "Besides whatever might have been the apparent confusion of my feelings, the result for me was clear. I kept all my affections going around me, in order to use them when I wished. So, by my own admission, I could not live unless all creatures throughout the world, or the greatest possible number, were turned towards me, eternally vacant, deprived of independent life, ready to respond to my call at any moment, in short, condemned to sterility until the day when I might deign to shine my light upon them. In short, for me to live happily, all the creatures whom I chose had not to live at all. They were only to receive life, from time to time, at my good pleasure." (43)

Both dialogues still revolve around themselves as a driving force of love. Whilst Clamence seems to have a deep ego-centrism, a played-out love for the self, it rather resembles a strong sensation of pride, namely the same pride that entraps the Underground Man. His unreadiness is immediately made apparent as his rhetoric falls into the same dialogue of dominance again, he sees friendship as absent-minded or at least powerless. (21) Sympathy is his limit as it carries no commitment (20) -a reoccurring ailment and limiting factor of Clamence and the Underground Man. Since there is no personal gain besides played-out sympathy, it is only through death that he can construct a feeling of love for the other. He claims that only death renders him freedom, an escape from the judging nature of humans which makes him unable to act out for the sake of others. He modulates love within his vision of death, that we can only fully appreciate the other once he has departed. This would leave much room for them in his heart (22). At his leisure, he could find time for them, between his acts of debauchery, and thus not be dependent on the other, not demanding active love. It is a love where he can regulate the amount of input he would like to distribute.

It is exactly this pride that opposes salvation presented by Dostoevsky. René Girard within his final chapter, fittingly named resurrection, gave the heart of the problematic which freezes and traps the individual within his hell. "It is always human pride which will eventually oppose the universal vision of a communal God; pride which will separate us from ourselves and others." (Girard, *Resurrection* 72-75). Girard argues that the expansion of egocentricity will inevitably lead to an underground „other-centeredness" that does not possess an altruistic nature in the slightest, even though it often masquerades as altruism. Clamence pseudo virtuous behavior neatly fits into this category and his concept of love is diametrically opposed to a cleansing love. The denial of transcendence will feed individual pride which will eventually result in self-sovereignty; essentially mirroring Nietzsche's presented theoretical ideas (72-75).

Clamence already establishes a duality in regards to love quite early on in the novel. He explicitly links both aspects by stating that: "That is what men are like, sir: two-faced: they cannot

love unless they love themselves." (Camus, *The Fall* 22). His construction of self-love is a twisted reality as his emotional impulses always turn inwards, towards himself, and he is the one that pities. Clearly lacking any depictions of self-acceptance, or real self-love. Further adding that it is wrong to say that he has never loved. In his life; he had at least one great love, always with himself as the object." Resulting in the ultimate statement that he looked "solely for objects of pleasure and conquest." (36) His coveted desire to subject anyone within his dominion of love, a cult-like idea, which has him as a token of adoration. This clearly indicates his deep misunderstanding of self-love. He claims that he is looking for some sort of freedom within his debauchery (37) - a freedom that has no commitment. This rhetoric finds its heart within his confession of being "not worthy becoming attached to" (38), thus engaging relationships as sort of an act. He states that:" I lived my part, so it's not surprising that my partners, too, started to act their roles", depicting it as a play-like role. This excerpt ends with a final twist, redirecting any form of potentially outgoing love back towards himself. He could feed his desire for debauchery and the love of himself: "So I had won, indeed, doubly so because, apart from the desire that I felt for them, I was satisfying my love for myself by proving my exceptional abilities on every occasion" (39).

Clamence seems to merely seek refuge in women, yet he even goes so far as to state that women are what remains to us of the "earthly paradise". They do not condemn any weakness, they rather humiliate or disarm the strength. (62). This idea is strongly mirrored within *Notes* as the Underground man claims : „I never suggested that she came not at all in order to hear pathetic words but to love me, because for a woman, love compromises all resurrection, all salvation from any kind of destruction." (Dostoevsky, *Notes 109)*. Both their dialogue present a love tied to a female salvation. They are very aware of their salvation, yet they can not accept it. Clamence is even claiming that he was experiencing the need for love, (Camus, *The Fall* 62) a disgusting idea after him. Since he needed to love and be loved, he thought he was in love (62) trying to find an escape in women- especially mistresses which stands for another empty love affair ending in debauchery. His problem resides in the idea that the romantic press teachers you to speak about love, yet it does not offer how to make it (P63) He would try look for this promised bookish love, a love which he had never encountered (idem), elsewhere. He is struck by the same perplexity as the Underground Man:

> I was so accustomed to think and imagine everything from books, and to picture everything in the world to myself just as I had made it up in my dreams beforehand, that I could not all at once take in this strange circumstance. What happened was this: Liza, insulted and crushed by me, understood a great deal more than I imagined. She understood from all this what a woman understands first of all, if she feels genuine love, that is, that I was myself unhappy. (Dostoevsky, *Notes* Part II, Chapter 9, 4)

Both clearly lack a lived-out experience of love, an active love which involves a form of commitment for the other. Their attempts of establishing a connection ultimately end in debauchery. The protagonists only ever deal with love in a hypothetical manner, a read rather than a real experience. The limiting factor of Clamence surfaces yet again: "As he has only been loving himself for more than thirty years. […] he remained hovering on the brink of passion (63). His presented solution ,women and alcohol, "true debauchery", liberate him because they create no obligation; (65) yet another account of an obligation-less love for Clamence.

Clamence's escape in debauchery

There is a coherent display of Clamence's wish to live in pure debauchery. Whether it be alcohol or women, he is constantly in the need of a suppressant for his plaguing mind. Trying to escape laughter, Clamence opts for various remedies to drown this feeling. Coincidentally, the same ailments befall over the Underground Man and many other Dostoevskian heroes. Debauchery is an reoccurring ailment in his world, and is strongly linked to both duality and lack of love sprung out of the burden of freedom. Berdryaev, a renown Russian philosopher whom accredits a considerable amounts of his spiritual understanding to Dostoevsky and dedicated whole works to him, took this reoccurring idea of debauchery and analyzed it. He proclaims that the duality of a person renders them frozen and he equates this entrapment to debauchery. He claims that Dostoevsky teaches us that wanting everything without limits and a careless approach to human nature is hellish. Having this unquenched thirst to strive to no end is equivalent to complete weakness.[71] Berdyaev critically discusses the notion of division within his Chapter on Dostoevskian Love claiming:

> "Inner division wears away personality, and this division can be overcome only by making a choice, by selecting a definite object for one's love, whether it be God as against Satan, the image of our Lady as against Sodom, or one particular woman as against the unnumbered all other women. Debauchery means the absolute inability to choose among many attractions, it results from the alienation of freedom and the will's balance; from the fall into nothingness that is the penalty of not having the courage necessary to maintain the reality of one's being." (Berdiaev 123-125)

Moreover Berdyaev enhances this idea by commenting that : "self-will begets inner division which will inevitably lead to debauchery. In the divided, dismembered depraved man, shut up in himself,

71 These ideas are beautifully encapsulated within Stavrogin. He inevitably became unable to love. Moreover, Camus was actively directing and writing the stage adaptation of *The Possessed* parallel with writing *The Fall.*

ability to join with another creature is dead; his own self begins to break up; he no longer seeks in love another being different from himself, but just seeks love. Real love is what one bears towards another; debauchery is love and affirmation of self[...] the most frozen isolation to which a man can condemn himself (Berdiaev 123-125).

Clamence truly follows this rationale to an extreme and proposes his solution to the problem of debauchery. He essentially creates an Dostoevksian anthithesis of love. :

> "Despairing of love and chastity, I finally decided that what remained was debauchery, which can very well replace love, suppress laughter, restore silence and, above all, confer immortality. You see, at a certain degree of lucid intoxication, lying between two whores, emptied of all desire, hope is no longer a torture: the mind dominates all ages and the pain of living is forever past. In a sense, I had always a life of debauchery, since I had never ceased to desire immortality. Was this not the essence of my character and also the outcome of the great self-love that I spoke off? Yes, I was dying to become immortal. I love myself too much not to desire that precious object of my love should never vanish." (64)

Yet even in this total debauchery, he is limited by an „obstacle in himself" (66) It was coincidentally his liver, the same ailment that the Underground Man suffers from within the opening lines of the novel, that seems to be the limiting factor. He cannot drown his misery enough within debauchery and has to deal with the consequences of his consciousness and the laughter. Slowly but surely, Clamence runs out of mental hiding places and has to retreat into his small coffin-like room.

Comparison of Dostoevsky's Hell and Clamence's inferno

Clamence's innability to love can further be explored through the Dostoevskian universe, and additional ties regarding a hellish entrapment and love can be established. Dostoevsky established clear grounds which define hell, and through the character of Zosime he has a voice which establishes a core fundamental of his deontology. It enhances the idea of active Dostoevskian love and refines it with a principle of truth. This character is essential in *The Brothers Karamzov* as he acts a wise voice. The priest Zosime's definition of hell; "the suffering of no longer being able to love" originates from self-deceit and lies. If the individual believes in their own lies, they will inevitably end up in debauchery. Zosime tells the elderly of the Karamazovs, who asked him about the merit of eternal life the following:

> "Above all, do not lie to yourself. A man who lies to himself and listens to his own lie comes

> to a point where he does not discern any truth either in himself or anywhere around him, and thus falls into disrespect towards himself and others. Not respecting anyone, he ceases to love, and having no love, he gives himself up to passions and coarse pleasures (debauchery), in order to occupy and amuse himself, and in his vices reaches complete bestiality, and it all comes from lying continually to others and to himself." (Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov* 63)

Clamence rejects exactly these premises, he dismisses the distinction between truth and falsehood and raises the argument for the superior half-light of lies, opposing to the blinding light of truth: "Like light, truth dazzles. Untruth, on the other hand, is a beautiful dusk that enhances everything" (Camus, *The Fall* 75). His reasoning is diametrically opposed to Zosime's merit of eternal life, and Dostoevskian deontology represented within Alyosha, Sonya, and to my proposed heroine Liza(see Positive Mimesis in *Notes from Underground*) . He ceases to respect and love mankind and thus falls into sin. Clamence loses the power to love because of the distrust of others generated by his own deceit and lies (Davison 169-170). His whole dialogue and attempt of subjugation is built upon his deceitful nature. He can not accept himself, nor love himself, he became the exact duality which he proposed earlier on.

Since Clamence actively claims to have accepted his duplicity (Camus, *The Fall* 88) he is unable to love himself, his duality keeps him from both a love for himself and for his surroundings. Clamence struggles with the idea of freedom, it is an overwhelming force that will be intolerable for him. He became aware that freedom requires active partaking in change and thus entails also the potential to err. Erring, and consequentially being judged and laughed at is unbearable for him. Whilst he claimed that he defended freedom a couple of times, he explicitly adds that he would "of course not go as far as to die for it" (83). Clamence does not want to accept the image of himself which let this woman drown, an image of Jean-Baptiste Clamence who was a coward at a time that required an active hero. He thus has to revoke freedom and total innocence and find a wicked replacement. Freedom, seems like a devilish device for him, as it is "too heavy to bear if you love nobody" (83) With accepting real freedom, one also has to accept free choice, responsibilities, and the consequences of actions. Thus claiming that the "comforts of slavery are equal to true freedom" for him (85).

At the core of Clamence's philosophy lies the idea of individual guilt. It is impossible to attain universal truths and innocence, we can only be certain of guilt because:"In any case, we cannot be certain of anyone's innocence, while we can confidently pronounce everyone guilty. Each man bears witness to the crime of all the others: this is my faith and hope" (69). There is a strong interplay between the self and the other, essentially creating a self-critical approach due to the constant judgment of the other. Clamence needs everyone to be as guilty as he is. Davison further

remarks that Clamence thus both echo and pervert the basic propositions of what Camus calls “le communisme spirituel de Dostoevsky … la responsabilité morale de tous” (Davison 168). The moral responsibility for all seems to be the perverted antithesis for Clamence, who claims that he believes only in sin and not in grace (Camus, *The Fall* 84) and that there can be no innocence otherwise his argument would take a tumble (69). [72] Zosima and Clamence seem to clash within their ideologies who claims that: “each of us is guilty before everybody for everyone and everything... remember that you can be nobody's judge... Hold firmly to this belief; for it is upon this that rest the hope and faith of saints” (Davison 169). Davison further compares Zosime's argumentative lyricism with the one of Clamence. It juxtaposes Christian love and justice, represented within the mirroring of Alyosha and Zosime, and perverts it, essentially creating an underground antithesis. Clamence presents us with a lyricism of conflict and rootless solitude, a world where we are all guilty“ In that case, as we are all judges, we are guilty before each other, all Christs in our lousy way, crucified one by one, and always without knowing.” (73) He immediately adds a solution to this dilemma stating in a wicked manner: “Or we should be if I, Clamence, had not discovered the way out, the only solution, in short, the truth...” (73).

Not being able to withstand any form of sentencing he rather abides by his proposed solution of mass-enslavement; an attempt to escape. He further gives reason as to why it is impossible for him, stating: “At the end of every freedom there is a sentence, which is why freedom is too heavy to bear, especially when you have a temperature, or you are grieving, or you love nobody.” (83). The Underground Man knew this very well and argues along the same lines: “For if you love, you can live even without happiness. Life is sweet even in sorrow. It’s good to be alive, however hard life is” (Dostoevsky, *Notes from Underground* 177). Moreover, Clamence claims that he dreamt of “a complete love, of the whole body and heart, day and night, in one continuous embrace, sexual pleasure and emotional exultation, for five years on end, and after that, death. Alas!” (Camus, *The Fall* 85) but quickly realizes that this is an impossibility for him as he has not changed his way of live: “he still loves himself and he still uses other people” (88). He actively opts for debauchery and self-preference, only obtainable within his realm of mass-enslavement. Because for him this freedom was too frightful. “I too learned that I was afraid of freedom. So: long live the master, whoever he may be, to replace the law of heaven” (85)

Analyzing the dialogue surrounding love clearly expresses a desire of both protagonists to

72Theologically speaking, it would be of interest to further delve into the Christian orthodox faith and the representation of the original sin. Humans in eastern perspective are not born with Adam and Eve's guilt. It does not comport with Augustine's doctrine of original sin: Human nature is fallen, but not totally depraved. Ancestral sin is accepted, but not ancestral guilt. Clamence's innate innocence which he proclaims humans must possess -otherwise his whole theorem would fall apart, is thus not applicable to the same degree. If we then further take into consideration the salvific answer presented by Dostoevsky, which was heavily influenced by Eastern Orthodox faith, it might bridge certain gaps. It would not matter to the extent that Camus rejects transcendental creation of meaning, yet it might change the base argument of Clamence. If there could be a human free of sin, it would be interesting to see his theory take a stumble. Especially a later Camus who seemed to move towards a more spiritual engagement. Source : PH Brazier within his Dostoevsky : A theological engagement

find a solution to their dilemma. The salvific answer is finalized by comparing Clamence with another of Dostoevsky's character, namely Marmeladov. This final comparison will portray yet another stylistical overlap within Dostoevsky.

Marmeladov and Clamence -buffoons of salvation.

Dostoevsky's dialogue of salvation is often neatly hidden away in his works and does not shy away from appearing both in the mouths of either saints or buffoons. He explicitly chooses dubious characters to portray the idea that his vision of Christ's message has universal appeal. Some of these buffoonish characters hold within their dialogue a deeply insightful message. Neatly tucked away, seemingly hiding through a veil, they reveal the solution of the entirety of a novel at the very beginning. Such is the case with Marmeladov, whom in Crime and Punishment, shapes the salvific message of the novel. His role within the novel is twofold. Firstly, through him, Sonya's character attains a more profound depth, helping the shaping of her holy character. Marmeladov heaps suffering onto his family, yet Sonya carries on supporting them through forced prostitution. Her selflessness is enhanced through the sheer misery she has to endure due to others, projecting her humility. Secondly, the early confessions within the drinking-den set the premise for the salvation, the spiritual awakening of Raskolnikov, which is only later to be attained. Sonya's portrayal of her selflessness and sufferance for the sinning of others, neatly ties in within the idea of Dostoevskian salvation. It will enable the reader to contrast Raskolnikov, a character which also strongly reminds one of Clamence, to Sonya and thus extrapolate his repentance. Camus was well aware of these buffoons and explicitly addressed this thematic within *L'été*, which will be beneficial to lay a foundation for comparison between both Marmeladov and Clamence;

> “Pareils à ces bouffons de Dostoïevski qui se vantent de tout, montent aux étoiles et finissent par étaler leur honte dans le premier lieu public, nous manquons seulement de la fierté de l'homme qui est fidélité à ses limites, amour clairvoyant de sa condition.” [73]

Ray Davison who conducted research regarding both Dostoevsky and Camus, gave interesting grounds for a comparison between Clamence and Marmeladov (178-179). [74], Arguing that there is coherence within the stylistic depictions of both. Their introductory dialogue has major characteristic overlap and is rich in comparative stylistic choices. Both introductions of the respective characters with their interlocutors, Clamence and his unnamed counterpart, and

73 "L'Exil d'Hélène," L'Eté, Pléiade-Essais, p. 85.
74 See also Ray Davison “*Clamence and Marmeladov: A Parallel.* ” *Romance Notes*, vol. 14, no. 2, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill for its Department of Romance Studies, 1972, pp. 226–29.

respectively Raskolnikov and Marmeladov, resemble each other both in tone, speech, and within certain aspects of the vocabulary. Additionally, both Clamence and Marmeladov unburden themselves in public places, one in the Mexico City bar, the other in a cabaret, drunkenly looking for company. I would like to further refine this parallelism by analyzing both dialogues. Positing the idea that both interlocutors present a salvific idea which is tied to a selflessness towards another being.

Elissa Kiskaddon within *Dostoyevsky and the Problem of God* neatly summarizes Raskolnikov and his struggle with finding a salvation. This short resume is strongly reminiscent of Clamence's fall. She states that Raskolnikov is unable to accept himself after the murder took place. His wicked rhetoric presents him some form of reasoning for his heinous act, yet he is fundamentally not able to fully erase his sense of guilt. Initially, he attempts to continue life, enjoying his clever trick, and concluding from his experiment that he is a superman. Raskolnikov becomes a double, a *raskolnik* meaning schismatic, embracing the nature of his name. It is through the humble Sonya, as Marmeladov predicted, that Raskolnikov will find an end to his suffering. She takes apart his intellect by reducing him to the base level of his soul, and it is here that he recognizes he is guilty of his crime. Dostoevsky dissolves the superman theory by condemning the involved characters to mental suffering until they recognize the truth and light of Christianity.[75] [76]

Marmeladov, like John the Baptist, foretells of a salvation that is yet to come. He is unable to confront his problems and change his situation. He resorts to heavy drinking and pawning of his family belongings, to a degree that they will suffer of the terrible cold without appropriate clothing. Like Clamence, he seeks to find refuge within debauchery. He proclaims that he is drinking to suffer (a Christian idea which presupposed the notion that through suffering they will find their salvation.), and his illness hinders him from his desire to be a better father. Raskolnikov meets this shady individual in a cabaret as he is publicly denouncing himself. His drunk [77] confessions, which are often overlooked due to the imminence of the actual murder, set the mental premise for salvation within the novel. His dialogue, which seems like a drunken rant, has neatly hidden within it the key to this novel: [78]

> "He will pity us Who has had pity on all men, Who has understood all men and all things, He is the One, He too is the judge. He will come in that day and He will ask: 'Where is the

75Elisssa Kiskaddon, *Dostoevsky and the Problem of God*. Online <https://community.middlebury.edu/~beyer/courses/previous/ru351/studentpapers/God.shtml> [accessed 16 December 2021].

76 This light is introduced in *Notes from Underground*, deepened within *Crime and Punishment*, enhanced within *Demons*, and finds his full dialectical range within *The Brothers Karamazov.*

77The idea of being drunk (the initial title of the novel would have been the drunkyards) and confessing is clearly depicted within Clamence. His church, the bar in Mexico, sets the stage for his many drunk admissions.

78 Lecture - Professor Michael Katz – Youtube engages with both the idea of drunkenness and the prophetic nature of Marmeladov.

daughter who gave herself for her cross, consumptive step-mother and for the little children of another? Where is the daughter who had pity upon the filthy drunkard, her earthly father, undismayed by his beastliness?' And He will say, 'Come to me! I have already forgiven thee once…. I have forgiven thee once…. Thy sins which are many are forgiven thee for thou hast loved much….' And he will forgive my Sonia, He will forgive, I know it … I felt it in my heart when I was with her just now! And He will judge and will forgive all, the good and the evil, the wise and the meek…. And when He has done with all of them, then He will summon us. '[...] And we shall all come forth, without shame and shall stand before him. [...] And He will hold out his hands to us and we shall fall down before him … and we shall weep … and we shall understand all things!" (Dostoebsky, *Crime and Punishment* 29-30)

The Fall heavily borrows from the Dostoevskian universe and presents us with a similar problematic. Our main protagonist meets his nameless interlocutor within a shady establishment within the midst of a Dantean Hell. Clamence, after having berated his interlocutor with his pseudo virtuous spiel, starts drinking with his new acquaintance. The useful profession of judge-penitent which he practices for some time already in Mexico City, firstly consists of making public confession as often as he can(p87)- pareils à ces bouffons de Dostoevsky. Needing a drinking partner for sympathy(P20), he clings onto his freshly met interlocutor and lays bare his heart. Clamence is practicing his wicked rhetoric early on and clearly boasting until he mentions the faithful evening of his fall. Both the tonality and range of topics start to adjust to more serious matters, Clamence stops flaunting his grandeur and his Nietzschean noble character. He is actively seeking help and thus engages in yet another tirade about the need for friendships and commitment.

This rant is shortly followed by an utmost important anecdote, which strongly mirrors Marmeladov's rhetoric and explicitly states a salvation. Whilst discussing the idea of sleeping on the floor for someone else's sake, a friend whom was put in jail, Clamence neatly combines self-forgetfulness with redemption and love: "You see, I was told about a man whose friend was put in jail and who slept on the floor of his bedroom every night so that he would not be enjoying a luxury that had been denied to the friend whom he loved. (Camus, *The Fall* 21). This statement establishes the fundamentals of the salvific answer, a dialogue of selfless love for the other. A salvation for which he is not ready yet as he claims: "Am I capable of it? Let me tell you, I'd like to be and I shall be. Yes, we'll all be capable of it one day and that will be our salvation. "(21) Interestingly enough, Clamence also changes from an "I" perspective to a "we" perspective, yet this time around it is positively connoted, opposed to his mass-culpability rhetoric within his dialogue of dominion. The same metaphor will be used again at the very end of the novel and be further enhanced by strong biblical imagery. Clamence explicitly links the idea of salvation with selflessness and love (Camus,

The Fall 72 & Davison 179).

Clamence obviously understands the message of Christ, yet he seems to carry some resentment within him. As the Lord gave humans the burden of freedom and seemingly left humans alone to deal with it. Clamence criticizes the fake believers that clearly misunderstood the message of Christ and took it upon themselves to carry out the judging. Yet, he himself does not abiding by the proposed premise of a non judging nature. The judge-penitent clearly has a strongly judging character and constantly tries to be above the human ants. The following paragraph seems like a mockery both to the newfound judging nature of humans that have lost their connection to the Lord, and himself:

> "But have no fear, nowadays their Lord is no longer in the attic or in the cellar. They have hoisted him up on the bench, in the depth of their hearts, and they smite, above all they judge, they judge in his name. He spoke gently to the sinner: "Neither do I condemn thee." No matter, they do condemn, they absolve no one. In the Lord's name, here are your dues. Lord? He didn't ask for so much my friend. He wanted to be loved, nothing more. Of course, there are some people who love him, even among the Christians. But not a lot.[...]And then he went away for ever, leaving them to judge and condemn, with a pardon on their lips and a sentence in their hearts"(Camus, *The Fall* 72)

Within the last pages of the novel, Clamence, in his fanatic final outpourings, is in an intensive dialogue with his interlocutor and portrays a final overlap with Marmeladov's salvation. He found refuge in his small room, drunk and fighting an illness. After the interlocutor has seen through his theory of mass-enslavement Clamence explicitly claims that he would like to change his life, asking how to be someone else[79] Seemingly at his wit's end, he notices the snow falling and equals it to "dear doves"[80] descending "at last" upon the earth. This obvious allegory is directly placed after an important discussion regarding the idea of "forgetting oneself for some else as a solution to his existential conundrum" (90). His choice of words suggests a welcoming attitude towards this "evangelion" and Clamence states: "Everyone will be saved no? Not only the elect? (91) proclaiming like a drunk Marmeladov and reuttering the solution presented at the very beginning of the novel. He continues: "And you will sleep on the ground every night from now on, for my sake. The full works, huh? "(91).

79 This is further discussed within the mimetic doubling of Clamence, see Positive Mimetic proposed by the Interlocutor.)

80 In Christianity, the sign of the dove was a prearranged sign by which John the Baptist would recognize the Messiah. According to *Matthew 3:16*, during the Baptism of Jesus the Holy Spirit descended like a dove and came to rest on Jesus. There are multiple instances of dove references within *The Fall*, yet they only come down at the very end of the novel. 'Christian symbolism', Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 19 October 2021, 08:19 UTC, <https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Christian_symbolism&oldid=1050678747> [accessed 17 November 2021]

As he must, he denies this salvation,a kind of salvation that would only be possible through a miracle, a heavenly chariot which would carry him off. [81] Yet he does not believe in the heavenly chariot nor any burning snow, he cannot be both a man who would both forgive himself (91) and sleep on the floor for others. He drastically varies from Marmeladov here, as they are both aware of their sins yet Marmeladov accepts it and is actively repenting. Clamence actively preaches the antithesis of salvation. On his throne, he teaches a religion that pities without absolving and that understands without forgiving.(89). Throughout the novel, it is made evident that the proposed idea of enlightened self-enslavement provides no grounds for development. Clamence still used people for his own benefit, resides in total debauchery and refuses to come forth. He creates the exact antithesis of Dostoevskian love by stating that : No, what we like in our friends is fresh death, painful death, our own feelings, in short, ourselves (21). It is not a dialogue of love for the neighbor nor something above himself. His constellation of love, as seen beforehand, is one of dominating the others and deep ego centrism. For a man that despised both God and theology to the extent that Clamence proclaimed it , he sure does hope for a salvation. His self is trapped within a dilemma, he can not produce a leap of faith, really believing that salvation is a possibility for mankind, yet he desperately clings to hope. His solution as a judge-penitent seems to be nothing but a mere makeshift solution. His lack of commitment due to his duality entraps him. He is acutely aware of his own conundrum, yet he claims himself that he refuses to come forth. His love which has himself as first place will hinder him. His self proclaimed duality comes from the exact fact that he can not love himself. He cannot accept that he was a coward in a time that needed a hero.

81Interestingly enough, Marmeladovs also gets “carried off” by a chariot. After having proclaimed his heavenly message about salvation, he is taken into the beyond by getting run over by a chariot.

Conclusion

> "If I had to write a book on morality, it would have a hundred pages and ninety-nine would be blank. On the last page I should write: "I recognize only one duty, and that is to love."
> **— Albert Camus,** Notebooks 1935-1942

Camus lifelong engagement with Dostoevsky has undoubtedly left a very strong imprint on the thought development of the French existentialist philosopher. Whereas his earlier works were majorly influenced by Nietzschean thought, his final phase, namely the cycle of love, transgresses the German philosopher and edges closer to uniting with Dostoevsky's moral deontology. His Sisyphus further evolved through *The Rebel,* and his last phase is still captured by the same fiery essence of this spirit. This transformative period was a relentless pursuit of meaning, eagerly trying to answer the existential questions despite any hardships. Finding a deep inspiration within the gripping tragedies of Dostoevsky, he creates his own Underground Hero, Jean-Baptiste Clamence, a religious figure, and sends him on a quest of seeking answers. Camus' most Dostoevskian work *The Fall* heavily borrows from the Russian existentialist universe and projects the hero within a very similar conundrum. Both writers give a beautiful dialogue of positing love as a solution to the accursed questions of nihilism. Dostoevsky's faith being a complex and evolving idea throughout his many master works, finds it s birth in *Notes from Underground,* and it's heart in *The Brothers Karamazov*. Whilst an earlier Camus diametrically opposed the idea of a meaning outside of the individual, essentially labeling Dostoevsky's leap of faith a philosophical suicide, his final cycle approached a new dialogue of religious ideas. As a fellow author which also was harshly questioning Christianity and did not abide by the conventional rules, Dostoevsky was a perfect pairing. Camus' ongoing dialogue with Dostoevsky has strongly influenced how he modeled the questions of love, justice, and faith within this novel; rendering *Notes From Underground* as a perfect soil for a comparative analysis.

Having analyzed both works through the lense of a Dostoevskian deontology of love enables to establish clear similarities between both authors and their respective attempt at answering the advent of nihilism. To understand the psychological makeup of both heroes, this thesis utilizes Nietzschean concepts, as it was very fruitful in similarities between the three authors. Both protagonists find an entanglement due to their Nietzschean nature which forces them to dominate. The constant played-out mimetic rivalry entraps them within their duality. Both works have clear ongoing parallelism in the depiction of these aspects. Living in a world that "killed God", their strong desire to find a meaning without a transcendent guidepost forces them to venture out on their

own. Their rebellious nature seeks to establish a foundation of morality which uses their wit and wisdom and denounces any influence outside their realm. Having encountered hardship, both protagonists became bitter and resentful denouncing any salvation found within camaraderie. Yet through the veil of their dialogue a clear social codependency can be established. Both Clamence and the Underground Man cling onto their respective interlocutors. Whether it be to try and established a wicked spiel of rhetoric entrapment, another tool to show their supremacy, or to seek appraisal and further feed their pride and ego. Inherently, their self worth is intrinsically tied to a social factor. As discussed within the paralleling of their dialogue regarding love and dominion; both men display a clear need for the other. Their conceptualization of self-worth is integrally intertwined with the validation through another individual.

They desperately seek a salvation, a way out of their underground in Hell. Clamence and The Underground Man 's dialogue are highly similar regarding their conceptualization of a presented salvific love, a solution they can not reach. With the aid of Gierard's mimetic theory we were able to further delve into the rhetoric and the specific characteristics of the dominating game within the interplay of love. The constant desire of both protagonist to dominate over the other, their mimetic rivalry, hinders them from accepting their presented salvation of love. Clamence and The Underground Man both modulate a clear escape out of their conundrum, yet they both seem trapped. Clamence's proposed salvation revolves around self forgetfulness for another individual, as he metaphorically established, a sleeping on the floor for another loved one; yet he refuses to accept it and come forth. The Underground Man in the same breath modulates a whole salvation within the character of Liza, yet his spiteful character hinders him in attaining his goal. Both protagonists constant dialogue of love and the respective salvific nature of it are established in the same manor. Both protagonists inability to attain their presented salvation due to their mimetic entrapment is also highly similar.

Essentially, Clamence can only work as a judge-penitent, a role, defining boundaries of morality yet he can not actively partake in the creation of oughtness. Whereas it takes an active participation, like Alyosha, to create a meaningful life, Clamence and The Underground Man rather hypothesize and brood in resentment. A dialogue of love that would go against their underground thesis of a holy spirit of the self. A salvation that knows an active love for the other and does not place the self in the center. It is within taking action in crucial moments through which they could ascend, not by being a sole admirer of “the hero in the depths”. Clamence will remain like John Baptiste, a prophet in the desert who can not live in a society. Or rather, a false prophet who invites his listeners to the same empty desert, calling for a subjugation to his proposed enlightened self-enslavement. Yet he is a prophet without redemption, and whilst being well aware of his salvation he refused to come forth(P91)and preaches the exact antithesis. He is afraid to jump in the water, unable to give himself a second chance. He rather resides in eternal damnation within his own hell,

doomed to be constantly laughed at. He can not accept the idea that, for a salvation which is to come, “Jesus must become greater; I must become less.”(John 3:30) as proclaimed by his namesake in the bible. His ego-centrism refuses to give up any high-ground, he wants to be constantly above others, even in the face of death.

Theologically speaking he might project the coming of Christ, an ideal he can not fulfill himself. Clamence, just like John Baptist might be exactly this, the forerunner of Christ. He prepares the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. “Prepare the future generations and let them be baptized not with water but the holy spirit.” (Mark 1:3) His Marmeladov-esque proclamations of the exact baptism and holy spirit represented by the clear overlap with the dove allegory further enhances this idea. Whether it would be a holy spirit of love, dissected from a spiritual notion as Dostoevsky presented. A rebellion of love for the self and the other, might have been the final dialogue of Camus. Maybe be able to accept a love in spirit, a transcendental idea of love, a love which counteracts the rebellious force that deifies itself to the degree of total nihilism.

Possibly within the final dialogue of Camus, we could have appreciated a phase of love which could have been further exploited within *Le Premier Homme.* Unfortunately, Camus early demise only renders a multifarious interpretational discussion regarding this cycle possible with no clear answers. It would be interesting to subject *Le Premier Homme* through the same lens of the Dostoevskian influence regarding his love and salvation. The Chapter of *Le don de l'amour* by Jean Francois Mattéi Aseyn agrees with the strong emergence of a Dostoevskian influenced parallelism of Camus conceptualization of religion, justice, and love. When talking about *Le Premier Homme* he suggests a clear continuation of the justice and love dialogue found within *The Fall.* He explores both “l'inéluctabilité de la justice[...]et la puissance de l'amour” (85) A sort of love incarnated within maternity (85). Camus fuses these ideas within his usage of the mythological Nemesis; a merging of justice with the concept of love. Camus' demystified christian moral theology was to be explored within *Le Premier Homme,* which might suggests a partial separation from Dostoevsky and the creation of a subjective value system. His unfinished work “s'agit d'une véritable nativité chrétienne sans christianisme” (Mattei 104) creating his main character Jacques Cormery (another reference to Jesus Christ) un “dieu soit loué; Tu es un chef” (105). Camus' version of the transcendental could be a motherly love he is trying to explore in his final cycle. His creation of oughtness is further enhanced by his christian engagement, to the degree of equating his mother to a christian figure within his final unpublished work.

This thesis strongly argues that the Dostoevskian theology of love influenced exactly the shaping of Camus' appreciation for this refined thought. The idea of love itself was enhanced throughout Camus development as a writer, and always remained a center point to his ethics. Whereas it might have posed as a salvation for Paneloux within *The Plague* he now proposes his own Copernican switch. Since he refuses to abide by the doctrine of a heavenly figure, he therein

places his own transcendent figure. Camus takes a carcass Christianity , disemboweled of the transcendent, and therein places an ethic system-his Nemesis. Both Camus and Dostoevsky suggesting that there needs to be something outside the self, either God or a Nemesis, to counteract the rebellious force that deifies itself to the degree of total nihilism. Beautifully enough, both authors seems to have introduced a transcendent idea of love to counteract this devilish act. Whereas Camus denounced being an atheist, his newfound belief system was strongly inspired by Christianity, and undoubtedly, Dostoevsky.

Bibliography

"L'Exil d'Hélène," L'Eté, Pléiade-Essais,

Arnold, James. "Camus lecteur de Nietzsche." *Revue des Lettres Modernes Paris* 565-569 (1979): 95-99.

Beradiaev, Nikolaĭ and Donald Attwater, *Dostoievsky: An Interpretation* (San Rafael: Semantron Press, 2009).

Camus, Albert, *Carnets III* (Paris, 1989).

Camus, Albert, *Œuvres complètes t. II,* (Paris: Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 2006).

Camus, Albert. *The Rebel*. (London: Penguin Books, 2013).

Davison, Ray, *Camus*: *The Challenge of Dostoevsky* (Devon: University of Exeter Press, 2001).

Davison, Ray, *Camus*: *The Challenge of Stoevsky.* (Devon: University of Exeter Press, 2001), p. 161. See also Sturm 1967 & Madaule 1960.

Dostoevsky, Fyodor, *Notes from Underground*, (London: Alma Classics, 2015).

Duvall, William E. "Camus' 'Fall'—From Nietzsche." *Historical Reflections / Réflexions Historiques*, vol. 21, no. 3, Berghahn Books, 1995, pp. 537–52

Duvall, William E., "Camus' 'Fall'—From Nietzsche." *Historical Reflections / Réflexions Historiques*, vol. 21, no. 3, Berghahn Books, 1995, pp. 537–52.

Edward Wasiolek, "Aut Caesar, Aut Nihil: A Study of Dostoevsky's Moral Dialectic." *PMLA*, vol. 78, no. 1, 1963, pp. 89–97. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/461229. Accessed 25 May 2021.

Frank, Joseph. *Dostoevsky: The Stir of Liberation, 1860-1865* (Oxford: Princeton UP, 1986).

Gibson, Alexander Boyce, *The Religion of Dostoevsky* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1973).

Girard, René and James G Williams, *Resurrection From The Underground* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2012).

Girard, René, and James G Williams, *Resurrection From The Underground* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2012), p. 81.

Goodhart, Sandor, “Reading Religion, Literature and the End of Desire: “Mesonge Romantique Et Vérité Romanesque” at Fifty”. *Religion & Literature* 43.3 (2011): 150–158. [Accessed 20 December 2020].

Hanna, Thomas, *The Thought and Art of Albert Camus* (Chicago: H. Regnery Co., 1958), p. 165.

Hayden, Patrick. *Camus And The Challenge Of Political Thought*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2016, p. 19.

Illing, Sean Derek, *Between nihilism and transcendence : Albert Camus' dialogue with Nietzsche and Dostoevsky*. (2014). LSU Doctoral Dissertations.

Jean Franco. “Conversations and Confessions: Self and Character in The Fall and Conversation in the Cathedral.” *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 19/ 4 (1997): 452-468..

Kaufmann, Walter, *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*, 4th edn. (Oxford: Princeton UP, 1974).

Kirk Woodward, *The Most Famous Thing Jean-Paul Sartre Has Said*. Rick on theatre. Online <http://rickontheater.blogspot.com/2010/07/most-famous-thing-jean-paul-sartre.html> [Accessed 07 January 2022].

Luiz de Araújo, Raphael, *Le Mythe de Némésis ; Les traces du dernier essai d’Albert Camus*.

Maher, Jimmy, *Camus, The Fall, and the Question of Faith.* Online <http://maher.filfre.net/writings/camus.htm?> [accessed 09 January 2022].

Nietzsche, Friedrich (1967). *On The Genealogy of Morals*. New York: Vintage Books.

Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm, *Beyond Good and Evil* (London: Penguin, 1966)).

Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm, *The Will to Power* (New York: Vintage Books, 1968).

Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, *Twilight of The Idols* (New York: Penguin Classic, 1981)

Park, Ji Hyun, *An existential reading of Camus and Dostoevsky focusing on Camus’s notion of the absurd and Sartrean authenticity.* MA Thesis (2007), p. 37.

Pereson, Jordan B., *Maps of Meaning: the Architecture of Belief* (New York: Routledge, 1999).

René Girard. *Deceit, Desire, and the Novel* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), p. 309.

Schacht, Richard, *Nietzsche, Genealogy, Morality: Essays on Nietzsche’s On the Genealogy of Morals* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008).

Sharpe, Matthew. *Camus, Philosophe: To Return To Our Beginnings*. 2015

Solomon, Robert C. and Clancy Martin. *Since Socrates: A Concise Sourcebook of Classic Readings* (London: Thomson Wadsworth, 2005).

Sturm, E,m *Conscience et Impuissance chez Dostoïevski et Camus* (Paris, 1967).

Todd, Olivier. *Albert Camus*. Carroll & Graf, 2000, p. 17.