

## **TYPES OF RATIONALITY – GENESIS AND OVERCOMING OF ALIENATION (THE CONTRADICTION)**

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**Abstract.** This paper makes reconstruction of Dostoevsky's idea of "Devils", as well as Camus' understanding of existential absurd through Kant's transcendental logics. The following types of rationality are justified: classical and non-classical, as well as their gnoseological relation. The thesis that the absurd is determined by the substantial form of thinking of classical rationality is argued. Accordingly, the "Devils" are interpretation of the substantial thinking and their overcoming is accomplished through the transcendental interpretation of human existence. The thesis that Dostoevsky's conceptualization is a transcendental form of thinking, whereas Camus remains in the interpretative boundaries of substantial (non-phenomenological) thinking is also argued.

**Keywords:** classical type of rationality; non-classical type of rationality; grounds of the absurd; absolutization of existence; phenomenologization of existence

If Man cannot determine the purpose of his activity and the means of achieving it, he is not free since his purpose is predetermined by an essence beyond him. In this case the system of his activity is determined *a priori* and Man can have no other functional characteristic but that of an agency in the achievement of another's purpose.

According to the Bible, Man does not have a preliminary connection with God. This connection exists for God only – in this sense the faith which Man must discover in himself is predetermined. Jesus is God in human form, i.e. God-Man, and he must become the agency whereby Man discovers the Faith which will turn *him* into an agency.

Consequently, I will formulate the problem in the following terms: if Jesus is an agency of God the idea of whom is non-existent in Man's consciousness, then Man also turns into an agency of the Essence beyond him. However, if Jesus is not an agency, Man cannot become an agency either since it is impossible to have the miracle of the resurrection and to cultivate the faith which would make Man non-free.

If God-Man is God, as a Man he should have Faith in the existence of the Es-

sence beyond him; if he is a Man, he does not a priori have the Faith which makes him non-free.

Does there have to be a mediator between Man and God? The answers ensue from another question, namely: does Jesus have predetermined Faith which he must cultivate in Man or must Faith be inferred as a consequence of its rational argumentation? If the second part of this question proves true, this could imply that predetermined faith does not exist. In this case God could still exist, but as a consequence of rational argumentation.

Man's attitude to predetermined Faith, an immediate expression of an Absolute Essence, has no rational argumentation. Every rational explanation of a definite essence has a logical description.

There are many types of logical description but the simplest version of the logical argumentation of God's existence is provided by two-valued classical logic. This is the so-called Aristotelian logic which contrasts every proposition with two values only: truth and falsity. The form of proof in this logic is expressed through the law of the excluded middle. According to the type of rationality where proof is construed through classical logic, the proof of God's existence should be formulated in the following terms: God exists or God does not exist! It is obvious that this logical formulation of rationality assumes, albeit hypothetically, the possibility of God's non-existence. Of course, this assumption will be refuted but the important point is that the logical form is necessarily based on doubt about God's existence. This doubt is inadmissible under the First Commandment; consequently, predetermined Faith does not allow rational argumentation.

Doubt is the genesis of rationality and therefore it is expressed in logical form through the law of the excluded middle, the basic mechanism of proof in the structure of classical thought. This means that existence necessarily must get rational argumentation. The existence of particular essences, God included, may be affirmed only after the general proof of existence. What is important in this case is that Man has a particular type of rationality (so far as this is the classical mode of thinking) through which he can give logical and epistemological arguments for the existence of God. In this version Faith in God is a consequence of the rational mode of thinking.

Clearly, the argumentation of Faith through rationality refutes the existence of predetermined Faith (which does not mean, however, that it refutes the existence of God) since it is based on doubt.

The law of the excluded middle – which is the first, albeit not the only logical form of rationality and which should prove the existence of a particular essence – rests on doubt formulated in thinking as a disjunction of a definite proposition and its denial. The most elementary logical form of thinking is always construed from the assumption of an alternative.

However, in the Gospel according to St Matthew the crucified Christ cries out at the time of greatest trial: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

[Math. 27: 46], which means that he casts doubt on predetermined Faith. Hence the affirmative answer of the question: does Jesus feel doubt? Consequently Jesus can rationally motivate Faith in God but refutes predetermined Faith.

In this connection it is necessary to clarify the structure of reason since it can both motivate and refute Faith. In my construct this is an essential problem through which the essence of the notions of Man, God, Man-God and God-Man are revealed. They will be motivated through the structure of reason which is explicated through the types of rationalities.

The type of rationality is determined through the relation between epistemology and logic.

The first main form in which human thinking and cognition emerged is the classical form. The logic of classical thinking was created by Aristotle. Kant called classical logic “general”, while Hegel conceived of it as traditional formal logic. What is most typical of it? The essence of this logic is encapsulated in the laws of contradiction, of identity, of excluded middle and of sufficient reason. The basic formal requirement of classical logic is that thinking should not be contradictory. This requirement is specifically expressed in that no proposition and its denial may be inferred from the axioms of classical logic by the rules of inference and the four fundamental laws. Classical thought may cognize every object which does not include mutually incompatible characteristics. Consequently, if the existence of God should be rationally motivated through the logico-epistemological system of classical thought, the requirement of non-contradiction should also be applied to it as an object of study. Let me note that no type of rationality, be it classical or non-classical, allows the existence of an object with mutually incompatible-characteristics.

The type of rationality consists of two elements: a logical and a epistemological one. Logic describes the formal structure of thinking and the requirements for its functioning. In this connection, thinking may operate with objects, whatever their origin and content. Every object of thought which has a formal logical non-contradictory description has meaning. As regards epistemology as an element of the type of rationality, the essential question which it should solve is: can every non-contradictory object of thought be cognizable, i.e. does it have real content? Every logically motivated object of thought to which a particular reality corresponds is said to have sense. Thus the type of rationality may be defined as a kind of existing relation between meaning and sense or as a relation between logic and epistemology. This necessitates answering the question: how can the classical type of rationality be defined? The answer: every logically non-contradictory object of thought must necessarily be cognizable. The existing relation between meaning and sense is a relation of the identity between them.

This proposition may be formulated in another version as concurrence between epistemology and logic. Since the object of cognition is usually revealed through

a particular theory – ontology, the identity of epistemology and logic may be expressed as an identity between existence and thinking.

The identity between existence and thinking is the fundamental principle of the classical type of rationality. Using the classical type of rationality, Man can therefore substantiate the idea of God's existence logically and epistemologically, and evolve theories of the world based on this idea.

According to the Bible, God is a perfect essence while Man is imperfect; God is infinite, Man and the world – finite; God is eternal, Man is transient. These are but some examples and it is not hard to perceive the most fundamental definition of God: God is infinite in his wisdom, patience, love, etc. Consequently, God is infinite. To discover the rational in reality, the theories of the world created through the classical type of rationality must necessarily rest on the idea of infinity. Precisely the logical and epistemological rationalization of this idea makes man an intelligent being. Depending on the types of rationalities there are different types of infinity. The infinity which is the object of study of classical rationality (from the premise of the identity between epistemology and logic) is called classical or actual infinity.

Which are the most important distinctive features of this infinity?

Actual infinity is predetermined and complete. Man must only discover what already exists. The logic which describes the forms of thinking that create scientific theories with actual infinity as a prerequisite is based on the law of the excluded middle. This is so because if one must give logical proof of the existence of a certain hypothetical object assuming that all objects exist a priori, one must ask the following question: does or doesn't this object with definite properties belong to the a priori existing set of objects? In this case one may necessarily assume the proposition that God has created, independent of Man, the infinite set of all objects. Their existence is always actual for God; for Man, it may be hypothetical only in the logical form of classical rationality. The idea of actual infinity limits Man's creative potential since the world is created by God as a complete infinity of objects, properties and relations. Within this view the subject may indeed infinitely develop his cognitive activity, but through it he may only establish the existence of what has already been created by God. Man cannot create anything which does not exist a priori. Man's creativity must understand God's creation.

It turns out, however, that the logico-epistemological structure of the classical type of rationality is not universal. As I have already noted, the idea of classical rationality rests on the relation of identity between epistemology and logic, meaning and sense. This relation is based on the idea of actual infinity which is equivalent to the idea of God. This concept of God entails that actual infinity and the classical type of rationality must be unique. Consequently, one might expect that if actual infinity is not universal, there must be at least one other type of rationality which is not logically or epistemologically based on the idea of God's existence. The indiscriminate use of actual infinity necessarily breeds contradictions. Using

the law of the excluded middle (an essential logical form of proof in the classical type of rationality), contradictory propositions on the properties and relations of particular objects do not emerge in finite sets since every object in a finite set may be established to have or to lack a particular property after a definite, finite number of checks. If the set is infinite, then obviously it is impossible to check each existent object which is an element of the actual infinity. A law whose application to finite sets creates no problems whatsoever, is extrapolated on infinite sets. On the one hand this extrapolation does not mean that all propositions of the classical type are contradictory but on the other, it shows that classical rationality is limited since the operation with infinite sets does not rest on a logical law which immanently belongs to the notion of actual infinity. In this sense the logical proof of cognition based on the concept of actual infinity is genetically bound with the notion of finite sets and is its consequence.

This can substantiate the proposition that the notion of infinity in classical rationality is not fundamental, and that it is limited. This means that the use of actual infinity as a universal notion, i.e. without limitations, must necessarily spawn contradictions in the classical type of rationality. Kant was the first philosopher to prove the necessity of these contradictions. His remarkable antinomies of pure reason show that proceeding from classical rationalism, one might give equally convincing logical arguments for both the finiteness and infinity of the world; the existence of absolute determinism and absolute freedom; the existence of an absolutely necessary essence and the non-existence of an absolutely necessary essence, etc. (Kant, 1968: 294 – 381).

In his moral philosophy, Kant assumed the existence of God as a necessary reason for the ethical definition of Man. However, this necessity does not ensue from his theoretical philosophy.

The following conclusion may be formulated on the basis of the above: the notion of actual infinity cannot be considered absolute because, first, it is not fundamental while its rationalization is based on the notion of finiteness and second, actual infinity yields paradoxes.

This conclusion necessarily entails that the classical form of rationality is not the only form of human rationality. It turns out that as a finite essence of classical rationality God is still a limited notion.

This raises the question: which are the notions of infinity and rationality that limit the classical notions? The absolute notion of actual infinity is replaced by the notion of potential infinity. The qualitative definition of potential infinity which distinguishes it from actual infinity is that the infinite set of possible objects of scientific cognition is not given *a priori*. The objects of cognition emerge in the process of cognition itself and this process may continue indefinitely. The notion of potential infinity yields a new notion of non-classical rationality which differs from classical rationality.

Non-classical rationality is construed from the notion of potential infinity. The immediate consequence thereof is that Man does not cognize what has been created a priori but what is created in the process of thinking. This rules out the necessity of using the law of the excluded middle since an infinite set of all possible objects of cognition actually does not exist; nor is it possible to define the logical proof through the formulation: the object A either exists or does not exist. However, this form of proof is unacceptable according to non-classical rationality and potential infinity.

The elimination of the law of the excluded middle means that the notion of potential infinity is defined independently of the notion of finiteness. It ensues therefrom that potential infinity is more fundamental than actual infinity since the latter depends on the notion of finiteness and cannot be considered a real notion of infinity. This yields a non-trivial result whereby the notion of actual infinity is limited by the notions of finiteness and potential infinity.

The limiting of actual infinity necessarily leads to the overcoming of the absolutism of classical rationality. The absolutization of a system is admissible only within certain boundaries, because beyond them the absolute system yields necessary contradictions.

The limitation of the absolute system of knowledge is effected by potential infinity and non-classical rationality created on its basis. In other words, nonclassical rationality criticizes the tendency to absolutize one type of thinking, inherent in classical rationality. Absolutism in the theory of cognition and logic was first criticized by Kant in his *Critique of Pure Reason*. Consequently, if actual infinity and classical rationality create an absolute system of cognition and reveal the absolutism of the notion of God, potential infinity and non-classical rationality create a theory of cognition which contains a limitation or critique of absolutism and the notion of God, and may be defined as relative. In contrast to classical rationality whose essence is the absolute identity of epistemology and logic, meaning and sense, the essence of non-classical rationality is expressed relatively rather than through the absolute identity between epistemology and logic.

An important conclusion necessarily ensues from the above: it is impossible to create a universal logico-epistemological system because the absolute system contains necessary contradictions. Absolutism is overcome through the relativity of the non-classical type of rationality.

These reasonings are necessary to formulate the rational notion of Man. Reason contains two types of rationality: classical and nonclassical. Through classical rationality, reason creates and provides logical and epistemological argumentation of the notion of God and classical science. The notion of God as an absolute notion is limited and the relative system of nonclassical science is built through non-classical rationality. Since non-classical rationality refutes the law of the excluded middle as a basic form of proof in classical rationality, the two types of rationality

may be said to have a negative, but non-contradictory connection. Consequently, the notion of Man as a rational being is not contradictory and contains both actual and potential infinity.

The main purpose of my theoretical study is to compare the notions of God and Man. Two necessary and non-trivial conclusions ensue from the relation between the types of infinities and rationalities:

Since the notion of God is based on actual infinity and classical rationality, the notion of Man as a rational being is more general than the notion of God.

Man creates rationally both the absolute notion of God and its limitation through the critique of absolutism affected by non-classical rationality.

It is particularly important that God is not an absolute essence beyond Man. He does not predetermine his activity or turn him into an agency for the achievement of his purpose. God is an immanent and inseparable essence in relation to Man - the result of Man's rational activity in the form of classical rationality. Therefore Man cannot destroy the idea of God but he can limit it necessarily.

These conclusions entail that the notions of Man and God are commensurate.

Classical rationality has a necessary, negative and non-contradictory connection with non-classical rationality since the notion of actual infinity is a pseudo-notion of infinity, whereas potential infinity is the true notion of infinity.

The definitions of the notions of Man and God through the types of infinities and rationalities are necessary in my construct to define the notion of Devils and to answer the question. Why can Jesus cast out Devils? To specify the answer, it is necessary to define the rational reason for the emergence of devils. The answer of the questions will directly imply that 1) the notion of Man (which I have shown to be identical with Jesus) is more general than the notion of devils; 2) in my terminology, casting out devils is equivalent to their limitation or critique. In order to be limited, however, they must not be independent of, but immanent to the notion of Man. Only in this case could Jesus cast the devils out (as described in the Gospel according to St. Luke).

This entails that the notion of Devils should be treated as an element of the rational structure of the notion of Man.

The essence of my thesis may be formulated through the following proposition: the notion of Devils is equivalent to the unlimited or absolute notion of God. Since the notion of God is genetically bound with classical rationality, the notion of Devils should be also explicated through this type of rationality. It is thus included in the notion of Man, whereas non-classical rationality must be the mechanism which will limit it.

My thesis links the notion of Devils to that of God. This necessitates reviewing the notion of God according to the types of rationality. Assuming that there exists classical rationality only, the notion of God necessarily denotes an absolute essence since there is no other type of rationality which might limit it. But the absolutiza-

tion of classical rationality, as shown in Kant's system, yields necessary logical contradictions since it rests on the notion of actual infinity. Assuming that as an absolute essence the notion of God is based on the absolutization of classical rationality and actual infinity, this notion should prove necessarily contradictory. In this case it could yield false propositions both in the scientific and social spheres. If we have to assess the social significance of contradictory propositions inferred from the absolute notion of God, we could define them through the moral notion of evil saying that they have no moral worth. This entails the substantial conclusion that an Absolute system cannot be a rational reason for the creation of socially universal ethical laws because its immanent contradiction provides no criterion for the differentiation of the moral categories of good and evil. This justifies the proposition that the Absolute notion of God cannot be a theoretical reason for the creation of ethical legislation. As I have shown, the second notion of God is not absolute but relative since it is limited by the notions of finiteness and the true notion of infinity: potential infinity.

Since non-classical rationality criticizes the Absolute notion of God (which I use as a synonym of every absolute system) this makes possible the elimination of the logical contradictions which it necessarily yields. In this sense the Relative notion of God may be regarded as equivalent to the requirement of a necessary critique-and-limitation of the Absolute notion of God, and acquires a positive function in the structure of human rationality. In this case non-classical rationality and the Relative notion of God may be assumed to be the necessary reasons for the creation of ethical legislation.

On the basis of my thesis whereby Jesus is identical with the notion of Man and therefore limits the Absolute notion of God, I can necessarily motivate the idea that Jesus expresses a relative ethical stand which is a fundament of moral legislation. The universal ethical law of Jesus is formulated in the Gospel according to St. Matthew (7: 12): "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."

This sheds light on the immediate link between the ethical law of Jesus and the categorical imperative of Kant construed on the basis of the relativity of nonclassical rationality. Kant's categorical imperative, a premise for the creation of a moral system of society, goes: act in such a way that the maxim of your will becomes a reason of universal legislation. The essence of the imperative and the ethical law of Jesus is in that Man himself determines his will through the critique of every possible absolute system. In this case the critique specifically refers to the Absolute notion of God.

The definition of the two notions of God clearly shows that the Relative notion of God results from the critique of the Absolute notion of God by non-classical rationality. The Absolute notion is immanently contradictory and therefore cannot yield ethical theses – laws. The ethical equivalent of the aforementioned contradic-

toriness may be denoted by the notion of Evil. It is clear that the notion of Evil is a consequence of the Absolute system which predetermines human will, i.e. makes Man dependent, non-free.

Dostoevsky uses the notion of Devils [his novel *Byesy* has been translated in English as *The Possessed*, *The Demons* and *The Devils*] to denote all ethical shortcomings of Man which breed negative social phenomena. Interpreting verses 32 to 36 from Chapter 8 of the Gospel according to St. Luke (casting out devils from the possessed) through the words of his protagonist Stepan Trofimovitch, Dostoevsky defines the devils as all ulcers, miasmata and corruption in 19th century Russian society (Dostoevsky, 1956: 596). In my construct this means that the social phenomena cited by Dostoevsky can be regarded as the result of the contradictoriness of the Absolute notion of God. These social models do not reveal the actual mechanisms of social development and can therefore be qualified as social illusions.

Consequently, the devils are the illusory models which interpret the social aspect of the contradictory nature of the notion of Absolute system or God. The concrete emergence and argumentation of the notion of Devils is expressed as follows: Classical rationality – actual infinity – absolute notion of system-God – necessary contradictions and false propositions – ethical notion of Evil – Devils. The ultimate definition of the notion of Devils is equivalent to the initial one. However, it is now specified through the genetic mechanism of its origin.

In my construct, casting out the Devils (to use Dostoevsky's terminology) must show the contradictory, illusory nature of the social models created by the main characters in the novel: Shatov, Kirilov, Pyotr Verhovensky, Stepan Trofimovitch, etc. This illusoriness is proved by the revelation of the models as versions of the Absolute notion of God. The illusoriness is overcome by the the relativization of the notion of God through criticism of non-classical rationality. The notion of God may be said to have a positive function in the system of rationality only when it bears a relation to non-classical rationality, i.e. when the notion of God is limited or relative.

My rational explication of the notions of God and Man aims to show the greater generality of my concept in comparison to Dostoevsky's. To draw this comparison, I will examine the essence of being according to Dostoevsky. The writer's thesis is formulated by Stepan Trofimovitch who says on his deathbed: "The one essential condition of human existence is that man should always be able to bow down before something infinitely great. If men are deprived of the infinitely great they will not go on living and will die of despair. The Infinite and the Eternal are as essential for man as the little planet on which he dwells... hail to the Great Idea! The Eternal, Infinite Ideal... They don't know, they don't know that that same Eternal, Grand Idea lies in them all!" (Dostoevsky, 1956: 604).

In my construct the "great, eternal, infinite idea" is equivalent to the rationalization of infinity. The quotation shows that in Dostoevsky's case 1) infinity is imma-

ment in Man; 2) the notion of man is defined through the rationalization of infinity – the Great idea; 3) only the rationalization of infinity as an essence of Man is an actual reason to cast out the devils.

Dostoevsky uses the notion of infinity without defining it as actual and potential.

Dostoevsky shows the link between thought (rationality, in my terminology) and infinity in an abstract manner only, without revealing the mechanism of their relation. This mechanism is genetic and that the types of infinity determine the types of rationality – classical and non-classical.

Dostoevsky descriptively defines the notion of the devils as illusory social models and ethical vices of Man, but the devils are necessarily born of the immanent logical contradictoriness of the Absolute notion of God.

Dostoyevsky's characters either admit or reject the existence of God, or are indifferent to the issue. The idea of God necessarily exists in Man but can be limited through non-classical rationality which eliminates its contradictions.

Dostoyevsky's conception is descriptive, but also genetically reconstructed the image system of the novel can be meaningfully enriched and considered as interpretation of transcendental form of thinking.

Dostoevsky affirms that the Devils can be cast out if infinity becomes the fundamental of human rationality and if an ethical system of existence is created on this basis. However, the Devils are born of the contradictoriness of a pseudo-notion of infinity such as actual infinity and that they can be overcome (cast out) through potential infinity only. It is obvious that the argumentation and rejection of the notion of Devils is possible only after the qualitative definition of infinity.

The obvious conclusion which ensues therefrom is that the use of just the general notion of infinity entails a real methodological possibility of the emergence of a contradiction in the reconstruction of the novel. To rule this possibility out, I will adhere to the qualitative definition of Infinity assuming as logically necessary the thesis that. Dostoevsky does not use the general notion of Infinity but one of its forms, potential infinity, to reject the Devils.

I believe that the above exposition gives me enough reason to affirm that Dostoevsky intuitively perceived and used the positive function of the notion of Infinity. On a theoretical plane, this positive function is expressed in the critique by non-classical rationality of the absolutism inherent in classical rationality. In this case, this is the Absolute notion of God, therefore the moral aspect of the positive function of potential infinity should be expressed as a criticism of the ethical system constructed on the basis of the Absolute notion of God.

Dostoevsky makes a conceptual study aspiring to show motivated suicide as the result of the rationalization of the notions of Man and God. Suicide is thus rationalized; it turns into a notion and no longer seems an irrational act. Only the conscious, i.e. theoretically motivated suicide can be the aesthetic equivalent of non-classical rationality's criticism.

Camus, for instance, uses the notion of “metaphysical suicide” (Camus, 1942: 71) to denote conscious suicide and differentiate it from the impulsive act. In my concept, rational reasons for suicide may be justified through classical and nonclassical rationality. I can reconstruct the motives of suicide according to those two types of rationality. Dostoevsky’s novel features two suicides, Kirilov’s and Stavrogin’s, each with a different motivation. According to Camus’s study, Kirilov’s suicide is metaphysical. This definition of his suicide is correct but I think Camus’s proposition that Kirilov leaps from the absurd towards the irrationalism of existentialism by committing suicide, is wrong. My version motivates Kirilov’s suicide through classical rationality – in this sense, Kirilov’s suicide cannot be a rejection of Absolute Morality.

The main question which Kirilov has to solve is: is there or isn’t there a God! According to classical logic, this question formulates the problem: if God exists, my will is dependent on him; if God does not exist; I am independent of an alien will and absolutely free. The notion of absolute or unlimited freedom turns its subject into an Absolute Essence.

The notion of God exists only if it is assumed to be identical with the notion of Man. Precisely this is the essence of the rational reason for Kirilov’s suicide. His words “*If there is no God. Then I am God*” (Dostoevsky, 1956: 561) indicate that the act of suicide must prove that God does not exist which immediately implies that Man is God, i.e. Man = God. This identity may be formulated as follows: the notion of God exists only if it coincides with the notion of Man. In this case the notion of Man is absolutized and according to my construct, should be rationalized through a classical type of rationality being necessarily contradictory as every Absolute notion.

The essence of this concept is revealed through Kirilov’s statement whereby the most important thing is to understand the process of God-Man’s transformation into Man-God. But there is no principled difference between the two notions since the Absolute notion of God is refuted through the absolutization of the notion of Man. In this sense, the two notions are defined as absolute and therefore contradictory. The rejection of the Absolute notion may have a positive function only if it shows the limitation of this notion. The positive function of rejection, as I have already shown, is effected through non-classical rationality. This implies that Kirilov’s concept of the essence of existence is described by classical rationality only. The interpretation of this concept makes the notion of Man contradictory, absurd. Examining Kirilov’s suicide from this theoretical stand, I have reasons to affirm that:

His suicide which is an act rejecting the Absolute notion of God, actually affirms it by identifying it with the notion of Man.

One might say in a rational sense that suicide in this case is a pseudo-notion because it does not limit the Absolute notion, i.e. it lacks a relative function.

Suicide is determined by the theoretical motivation which propels it. Hence it is far from obvious that the very act of suicide rejects the existence of God or that it is

a revolt of the individual against the Absolute Essence which determines his existence. If motivated by classical rationality, suicide substitutes one Absolute Essence for another. Since these essences are contradictory and therefore logically equivalent, their interpretations should also be equivalent. Therefore when motivated by classical rationality, suicide rejects the independent notion of God to make it indistinguishable from the notion of Man, i.e. God and Man are identical.

It ensues therefrom that Kirilov's suicide is motivated by a theoretically contradictory stand which renders it meaningless. Kirilov's revolt against God is doomed to failure. Kirilov fanatically aspires to destroy God beyond him rather than discover and limit God within him. His position is wrong because he bases his concept on Absolute Atheism.

In my view, Absolute Atheism is wrong because it is impossible to reject the notion of God completely, in both logical and epistemological terms. However,

Absolute Theism is equally wrong because the assumption of the Absolute notion of God is logically and epistemologically impossible. That is why suicide based on the fallacy of Absolute Atheism cannot reject the fallacy of Absolute Theism.

It is obvious that Kirilov's stand cannot justify the creation of Absolute Morality and that is precisely why I will define *his* suicide with the term of pseudo-murder. To justify the creation of Relative Morality, suicide must limit the contradictoriness of Absolute Essence whatever its concrete form may be – God or Man-God. It should not reject his existence but include critique by nonclassical rationality. Such a theoretical requirement may be concretely fulfilled if the suicide is revealed as an interpretation of the thesis I have motivated, whereby the existence of God is irrefutable but God must necessarily be limited. This overcomes the contradictoriness of both Absolute Atheism and Absolute Theism. Kirilov's behaviour seems paradoxical – at face value only. His behaviour is meaningless! As I noted, this meaninglessness is a consequence of the contradictory nature of the concept of Absolute Atheism. The contradictoriness of Absolute Morality may logically yield mutually exclusive propositions. Kirilov comes to this contradiction because he unquestionably accepts the moral ban, "Thou shalt not kill", in its biblical version, yet nevertheless agrees to be an indirect accomplice to Shatov's murder. The subsequent contradiction is insolvable for Kirilov. His suicide merely expresses this contradiction without overcoming it.

Dostoevsky reveals this equivalence through Kirilov's indifference to the formal motive of his suicide. I think that the above clearly shows the correspondence between my construct and Dostoevsky's aesthetic interpretation.

I would like to dwell on Camus's concept of the absurd since this is the basis of his construct of the novel *The Devils*. The essence of his concept of the absurd is set out in *The Myth of Sisyphus* where Camus qualifies Kirilov as an "absurdist hero with this major difference that he nevertheless commits suicide" (Camus, 1942: 144). Kirilov is an absurdist hero if the terms of absurd and contradiction are

regarded as synonyms. In this case suicide is meaningless due to the contradictory nature of the theoretical motive. Respectively, Kirilov's revolt against God is also meaningless.

The main problem in Camus's case may be formulated as follows: revolt, which is necessarily meaningless, would mean something only if it is not interrupted. Suicide destroys the subject of revolt which naturally interrupts revolt itself and is therefore unacceptable from the stand of the absurd.

What is the essence of the concept of absurdity? Camus's concept, as well as that of West-European philosophy since the mid-19th century, rests on Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* which shows that absolute rationalism contains necessary logical contradictions. In my critique absolute rationalism is equivalent to the classical type of rationality. Camus believes that Man has an inborn inclination towards a rational explanation of the world or as he calls it, the cry of the heart: I want to have everything or nothing explained! (Camus, 1942: 44). However, reason is contradictory and Man necessarily comes up against the irrational. Reason is limited by the irrational, by "absurd walls", to quote Camus. The immanent logical contradictoriness of absolute reason genetically determines the existence of the irrational.

Camus introduces the notion of absurdity to denote the existence of the necessary relation between the rational and the irrational. It is not hard to see that in the terminology of my construct the notion of absurdity is equivalent to the logical contradictoriness of the classical type of rationality. Obviously, from the stand of absurdism it is impossible to eliminate Reason and describe existence through an irrational concept only.

As a philosophical stand, however, Absurdism has vital theoretical flaws. Within the context of my concept I believe they are the following:

Camus proceeds only from the notion of classical rationality or, in Kant's terminology, of Pure Reason.

Camus accepts the limitation of reason only in the form of its self-limitation, as an immanent contradictoriness. He thinks Absolute Reason and its contradictoriness really exist determining the essence of Man who, for his part, should resign himself to this reality and accept it as natural. Existentialism rejects the explanation of reality due to the contradictory nature of Absolute Reason, and makes 'a leap' (to use Camus's excellent metaphor (Ibid., 52) into the transcendental. Camus resigns himself to the absurdity which ensues from the-contradictory nature of Classical Reason. This raises the question: is there a way out of the absurdity we live in? Can we eliminate the Absurd Walls?

Camus's philosophical stand itself is not original since it rests on just part of Kant's concept of cognition and uses only the antinomies of Reason without arriving at the idea of the Critique of Reason. Kant criticizes Reason through the solution of antinomies. Unlike Kant, Camus does not find a solution to paradoxes. Camus's

stand, which he justifiably calls philosophy of the absurd, nevertheless provides an interesting answer to the aforementioned question. Indeed, how can one find any meaning in the meaninglessness of being! The answer to any question we ask and motivate through Reason (there is no other way of motivation, according to Camus) would be contradictory. Since we cannot establish the truth, it is all the same whether we claim that God exists or does not exist, whether the world has a beginning or is infinite, etc. In this situation, Camus succeeds in formulating his original principle that if the answers are meaningless, then only the questions have meaning. Man can ask about the essence of everything that interests him without seeking an answer. Every act inspired by the answer to a certain question would mean a leap into irrationality. This, however, is inadmissible for Camus and he builds a model of the world where the essence of being is characterized by the Absurd. This is the world of the Man who asks questions, every question inspiring a sense of absurdity. This is the individual's challenge to reality, his constant revolt which keeps his consciousness awake and stops him from making the absurd leap. The meaning of Absurd Freedom is in that the individual must avoid leaping into the irrational and reduce meaninglessness.

What should Man do in this situation? Camus's answer is simple and absurd: nothing! For due to the contradictory nature of Reason, every act propelled by will is a transition towards the irrational. Man does not have a rational reason for his will and must remain passive. If he should act by predestination like Sisyphus, for instance, then Camus believes Man must, like Sophocles's Oedipus and Dostoevsky's Kirilov, say that everything is allright! (Camus, 1942: 166 – 167). Notably, Camus himself shows the logical inconsistency of his concept. What does "everything is allright" mean in terms of ethics? A lack of a criterion drawing the line between a moral and immoral act, i.e. the contradictoriness of Reason blots out the difference between truth and falsity. That is why one can just as well say that everything is all wrong! The absurd is acceptable only as an intellectual state because any action destroys it, propelling it into the irrational.

If Man's activity is predestined, his revolt should be expressed through the intellectual rejection of this predestination. Camus calls this intellectual act scorn for fate. Sisyphus must roll his rock uphill forever because this is his divine punishment but he inwardly rejects his fate. Sisyphus is irrational in his actions, but they have been forced on him so he can consciously reject them thus attaining his absurd freedom. If Man defines his fate himself, he must reject every action; if his fate is imposed on him by God, this dooms him to action and Man must reject and scorn God. Only thus is the sense of Absurdity and Absurd Freedom revived. Absurd Freedom determines happiness. Since Sisyphus rejects the gods, we must conceive of Sisyphus as being happy, according to Camus (Camus, 1942: 168).

Obviously in the light of the Absurd, Kirilov should not have committed suicide because this is an action determined by his own will. The mainstay in the concept

of the Absurd is not to allow “a leap into irrationality”; should this leap be allowed, as in the case of Sisyphus, it should be rejected. The Quest of the concept is best formulated by Camus: being is deceptive and eternal (Ibid., 152). The only way out of the irrationality of action is the constant asking of questions which genetically determine the revolt in consciousness. This way out keeps alive the only hope of discovering some meaning in the meaninglessness of being.

The most important feature of the concept of Absurdism is resignation to the contradictoriness of Reason, as well as the fact that this contradictoriness does not become a reason for a transition to an irrational rationalization of being. Reason (as contradictory) is self-limited; to find a way out of this contradictoriness, one must discover a cognitive structure which is more general than Reason and limits it. The self-limitation of Reason ensues from Reason itself, whereas a new cognitive structure must be built to define the limitation. Camus did not succeed in formulating the process of limiting Reason. Irrationalism is not a limitation of Reason because the transition to irrationalism is inadmissible, according to Camus.

In the concept of Absurdism one can analyze only the self-limitation of Reason - not its limitation. Hence the major theoretical problems which Camus faced and failed to overcome.

The question of how is Reason to be limited in reality naturally emerges. The concept of the Absurd cannot answer the question while existentialism and irrationalism do not consider it substantial at all since they reject the reality of Reason. My concept can easily answer the question, while noting the shortcomings of the absurdist concept:

1) Camus proceeds from Kant’s Critique of Pure Theoretical Reason. I have shown that the notions of Pure and Absolute Reason are synonymous.

2) In Camus’s case there is no other form of rationality except the classical and that is why he sees Reason as necessarily and insurmountably contradictory. I have shown that every Absolute notion is necessarily contradictory and this gives me reason to confirm the truth of Camus’s idea that if Reason is Absolute, it should be immanently contradictory and self-limiting. Since Camus sees no other Reason except Absolute Reason, it is perfectly logical that he will fail to overcome its contradictory nature. Yet I have shown that apart from classical Reason and actual infinity which specifies the former’s logic, there is a nonclassical type of rationality determined by potential infinity. In the form of critique, non-classical rationality limits Absolute Reason and overcomes its contradictoriness. The answer to the aforementioned question which provides a way out of the maze for the absurdist concept: the Absolute notion of Reason is self-limiting while the relative notion of Reason, which is equivalent to nonclassical rationality, limits Absolute Reason.

I have discussed the essence of the concept of the absurd because Camus adapted The Devils for the stage and qualified Dostoevsky as an absurdist writer. I think that

my construct of the novel as well as the exposition on the essence of the absurdist concept indicates that:

1) Dostoevsky's concept on the essence of human existence is rational and intuitively contains a non-classical type of rationality.

2) Camus does not have a positive interpretation of Reason and its forms, accepting the relation between Reason and Irrationality (which he calls absurdity) as the essence of human existence.

3) Camus does not overcome the contradictory nature of Reason theoretically while in Dostoevsky one can find the idea of a hierarchy of the types of rationalities.

4) Dostoevsky's concept is more general and in principle different from Camus's.

The last assertion entails the possibility of reconstructing the concept of the Absurd on the basis of Dostoevsky's premise without any problems whatsoever. However, it is not possible for Camus to reconstruct Dostoevsky's rational concept from the premise of the Absurd. Camus's rationality rests on the thesis of the Only Reason which breeds contradiction and remains contradictory while Dostoevsky uses the idea of pluralized Reason. According to this idea, infinitely many types of rationality may exist in principle, each type expressed in a specific logico-epistemological form. Each type of rationality is self-limiting, while the next more general type from the infinite hierarchy of rationalities limits the former and overcomes its contradictory nature.

This shows that Camus lacks linguistic means to reconstruct Dostoevsky's concept. Camus takes Kant's idea of the contradictoriness of Reason but does not understand the other more important idea that Reason has a form of overcoming its contradictory nature. The weakness of Absurdism is evidenced by the fact that Camus cannot fully rationalize from this premise even Kirilov's suicide described, as I have shown, by the classical type of rationality. Camus defines the act of Kirilov's suicide as a subject of existentialism. Undoubtedly heroes like Sisyphus and Oedipus are best suited for an absurdist description. Yet why doesn't Camus even raise the question of Stavrogin's suicide? Obviously he does not draw a principled difference between Kirilov's and Stavrogin's suicides. If Kirilov must proclaim his freedom through his suicide, there is no point in having Stavrogin do the same since his idea will not be original. Stavrogin's suicide will mean anything only if Kirilov's suicide is meaningless. In my construct Kirilov's suicide has a contradictory theoretical reason and is therefore devoid of meaning. To rationalize Stavrogin's suicide, one must reckon whether it is possible to regard it as a form of critique by non-classical rationality of the classical type of rationality. This question cannot arise in principle in the case of Camus and the entire concept of Absurdism.

My thesis is that there is a principled difference between Stavrogin's and Kirilov's suicides. According to Kirilov, freedom is attained through insubordination to God's Supreme Will, suicide being the expression of this insubordination. However, I have shown that the theoretical reason for this act not just fails to reject the existence of

God but even confirms it in another form. That is why Kirilov cannot cast the devils out of himself.

It ensues therefrom that my thesis will be confirmed by the answer to the following question: Can Stavrogin cast out the devils from himself through suicide?

The novel *The Devils* is an interpretation of the epigraph (8: 32 – 36, the Gospel according to St. Luke). This necessitates answering the question why can Jesus cast out devils. I believe that this is possible because Jesus is equivalent to the rational notion of Man. Through a certain reconstruction the Gospel may be said to show how the son of God refutes the existence of God as an Absolute Essence and thus becomes the Son of Man. The essence of the novel is equivalent to this reconstruction because it shows how the Son of Man limits God. If Stavrogin's suicide is not meaningless, he therefore cast the devils out. This, however, is evident only if Stavrogin as an aesthetic type is shown to be a model of the rational notion of Man.

Dostoevsky had to show the genesis of the Devils, i.e. of illusory social theories and the mechanism of their overcoming, through one typical character. What matters is to clarify the intellectual reason for the emergence of the Devils genetically defined by Stavrogin. In this sense the Kirilov-Stavrogin and Shatov-Stavrogin relationships are important.

The story indicates that the Superman theory advocated by Kirilov and necessary for him to materialize his freedom and independence of God was created by Stavrogin. I have shown that the weakness of this theory stems from the absolutization of classical rationality. In his conversation with Kirilov before the duel, Stavrogin refutes the Superman theory when he shows that there is no difference between God-Man and Man-God (Dostoevsky 1956: 215). Stavrogin is well aware that a moral criterion of the difference between good and evil cannot be formulated on the basis of this theoretical stand. The lack of a moral criterion determines the meaninglessness of both Kirilov's principle in life, "everything is alright", and his suicide. Stavrogin rejects suicide theoretically motivated by the Superman theory. Not only does he create the Devils, but also criticizes the absolutization of classical rationality which breeds them. In Dostoevsky's words this means that Kirilov goes and remains insane, while Stavrogin goes insane but starts realizing the rational genesis of insanity.

To have an opportunity to cast the Devils out from himself, Man must create them first. To this end he must discover God beyond himself or absolutely reject God's existence. In both cases an absolute essence described by classical rationality is hypostatized. Through Kirilov, Dostoevsky shows the creation of the Devils via the absolute rejection of God. This theoretical version is criticized through Stavrogin's rejection of suicide. The other way of creating Devils, through the absolutization of God, is shown through Shatov. To put it briefly, Shatov upholds Slavophile ideas of the God-elected people. The essence of the theory is best expressed through the idea of "seeking and discovering God".

In Shatov's view, the basic principle of the Slavophile theory is that God is beyond Man. I have shown that this principle is described by classical rationality only and is therefore contradictory. That is why the Slavophile theory creates an illusory social model. Moreover, this theory is based on the idea of predetermined faith, i.e. through absolute negation of Reason and science.

Classical rationality may come to self-negation if it is absolutized but this negation leads to a non-classical type of rationality rather than to the elimination of rationality. In this sense the Slavophile theory has no theoretical alternative. According to Shatov, the idea of the God-elected people may be implemented only by Stavrogin (Dostoevsky 1956: 227 – 228). This is possible if Stavrogin refutes not just Man's identity with God, the principle of the Superman theory, but also the idea of God beyond Man – the principle of the Slavophile theory. Stavrogin refutes this idea, too.

Another idea which brings forth Devils is that of anarcho-communism and nihilism, which may be defined as the absolute negation of everything existing so that primitive communism, the archetype of the totalitarian state, can be established. This theory destroys both God and Man. In the novel it is aesthetically reconstructed in Shigalyov's theory (Ibid., 365).

Stavrogin refutes this theory as well. He thus creates and refutes the theories which determine the genesis of the Devils. Kirilov, Shatov and Pyotr Verhovensky all believe that only Stavrogin can realize their ideas. In other words, they identify him with the various forms of their existential insanity. Insofar as Stavrogin creates the theoretical reasons for the emergence of the aforementioned forms of insanity, he lacks a moral criterion of good and evil and can therefore be qualified as a villain.

Stavrogin, however, is doomed to create and live through the Devils because this is the only way he can cast them out. The path of Jesus is from God to Man but the Devils themselves are beyond Jesus – in Man. That is why he has to live through and overcome insanity. The only chance for salvation is for Stavrogin to discover God within himself and to limit him, i.e. to identify himself with the rational notion of Man. Stavrogin's first approximation to the notion of Man is expressed through the refutation of the theories based on the absolutization of classical rationality. However, this refutation is not a total refutation of Reason as in the case of Shatov and Verhovensky but a refutation of one form of Reason only. That is why Stavrogin's refutation is not absolute but relative. Had the refutation been absolute, Stavrogin would have turned into an absurdist or existentialist hero.

Stavrogin rejects the existence of God beyond Man. All theories based on this refutation reject the existence of God. The novel refutes the existence of God through the Superman theory. Yet Stavrogin rejects this form of refutation for as I have shown, Kirilov's theory is based on the identity of God and Man. It ensues therefrom that since he does not accept either the absolute rejection of God's existence or the theory of identity, the only possibility left may be formulated

as follows: God is limited. The novel realizes this possibility through Stavrogin's relationship with Maria Timofeyevna, to whom Stavrogin exists in the image of the prince. In one of her conversations with Stavrogin she says that should the need arise, her prince would not make way even to God. (Dostoevsky 1956: 251). This assertion is fundamental to understanding the essence of Dostoevsky's concept since it indicates that God exists but he is not absolute. To perceive the rational notion of Man, Stavrogin must evolve from villain to prince. Thus, 1) Stepan Trofimovitch defines the rational notion of Man through the types of infinities; 2) Maria Timofeyevna specifies the types of infinities through the God-Prince relationships (in this case prince is synonymous with the notion of Man). She shows that God is limited and that Stavrogin must attain this limitation through his identification with the Prince. Only thus can Stavrogin cast out the Devils and cure his insanity.

Stavrogin creates and rejects the Devils. It has been shown that he does not reject the existence of God but just God as an Absolute Essence. This shows that Stavrogin's suicide is not motivated by classical rationality and therefore differs in principle from Kirilov's suicide.

If he could, Stavrogin would have cried out: "I am cured, I am no longer insane!". This is precisely why both can cast out the Devils. Instead, these words are written by the story-teller: "At the inquest our doctors absolutely and emphatically rejected all idea of insanity" (Dostoevsky, 1956: 617).

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