

# Jewish-Christian encounters, suicide and transitory spaces in Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* and Trollope's *Nina Balatka*

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*Of all religions, Judaism counts the fewest suicides, [...]*  
(Emile Durkheim. *Suicide: A study in Sociology* 1897  
(1952, 167)).

Two nineteenth-century novelists, Dostoevsky and Trollope, in novels written in the same year 1866/67, chose liminal spaces for suicides. In *Crime and Punishment* Raskolnikov contemplates suicide by throwing himself off a bridge into the river, while Svidrigailov commits suicide in front of the guarded gate having previously crossed the same bridge. In *Nina Balatka: the Story of a Maiden of Prague*, the eponymous heroine

attempts to throw herself off a bridge into the river. Bridges and gates become transitory spaces invested with symbolic meaning demarcating crossing borders between life and afterlife. The mid-nineteenth century realist novel reflected on the choice of suicide place, and throwing oneself off a bridge became a literary convention (Anderson 1987, Gates 1998; Paperno 1997). While the choice of suicide places to a degree reflected statistics (Shneidman 1984, 11),<sup>1</sup> artistic representation of these scenes invested places of suicide with religious meanings expressed by various symbols. Dostoevsky and Trollope's choice of places of suicides conform to these literary conventions. However, there is one significant and intriguing addition to this typology: both novelists assign Jewish characters salvific roles in trying to prevent Christian protagonists, Svidrigailov and Nina Balatka, from self-destruction. The aim of my investigation is to unveil complex authorial motivations in Dostoevsky and Trollope's choice of these subplots for interreligious encounters.<sup>2</sup>

Paperno's study *Suicide as a Cultural Institution in Dostoevsky's Russia* (1997) argues that in 1860s-1880s culture used suicide as "laboratory for the investigation of crucial philosophical and social problems" (2). Among these problems the most pressing are those of the immortality of the soul, free will and the connection between the individual and God. The sociologist Jack Douglas in *The Social meaning of Suicide* (1967) similarly describes the understanding of suicide as "a means of transforming the soul from this world to the other world" (284). I argue that these problematics are particularly relevant for Dostoevsky and Trollope's suicide scenes. Both writers depict suicide as a practice associated with patterns of symbolic meanings. In particular, they invest Jewish-Christian encounters with moral and eschatological problematics. As famously elucidated by Eliade, in mythological thinking crossing of bridges as well as going through gates are symbolic of traversing "difficult passages" leading to the other world (*Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*. 1964. 482-486). The liminality of suicide spaces and the encoded meanings of suicides create a dynamic in need of deciphering.

There is a good rationale to read the two writers' scenes in the context of the Jewish theme in their work. It is acknowledged that both Dostoevsky (1821-1881) and Trollope (1815-1882) made a significant contribution to the construct of the Jew in nineteenth century literature (Cheyette 1993 23-42, A. Goldstein 1981). As contemporaries, they both responded to the increased political and economic visibility of European Jewry in the second half of the century by expressing their anxiety in novels, and, in the case of Dostoevsky, in his journalistic writing. Dostoevsky notoriously conflated capitalism with the "Rothschild idea". Trollope's (crypto)-Jewish characters also show a desire for economic power. Both writers show Jewish protagonists as eager to occupy spaces in society which were traditionally forbidden to them. Both responded to the rise to political power of Disraeli as an epitome of the Jewish intrusion into new spaces and saw Disraeli's role in the politics of the Eastern Question (1876-1878) in terms of his Jewishness.<sup>3</sup>

Despite this, both Trollope and Dostoevsky's representations of the Jews have an ambivalence that points to a complex perception of Jews and Judaism (Cheyette, Shroyer 2002, Katz 2008). Characteristic of Dostoevsky's attitude to the Jews was his Russian conservative patriotism, which was exacerbated by feelings of rivalry towards Jews as a messianic people. His idea of Russian messianism, based on the notion of Russians as God-chosen people, culminated in his geopolitically territorial statement in 1877 that Constantinople as the gateway to the Holy Land has to become part of the Russian Empire (*Dnevnik pisatelja*, vol. 25, 65). It is at this particular juncture, at the intersection of the two messianisms, where mimetic envy and dislike of the Jews paradoxically meet. Underpinned by his "metaphysical attitude to Judaism" (Shteinberg, *Dostoevskii i evreistvo* 1928, 4) this intersection creates a metaphoric bridge with the symbolic connotations of linkage and separation. Dostoevsky's religious thinking was deeply eschatological (Berdiaev 1971), and "revealed a profound attraction to the complex essence of the biblical spirit" (Grossman, *Isповед' odnogo evreia* 1999, 175). Trollope's representations of Jewish 'racial' differences did not exclude the importance of Judaism as religion.<sup>4</sup> And while his

writing does not show interest in eschatological thought (Super 1988, 190)<sup>5</sup> to the extent of Dostoevsky's work, *Nina Balatka* contains signs of interest in the life/death domain expressed in the subplot of the suicide. I argue that while both Dostoevsky and Trollope create and depict Jewish and Christian city spaces as worlds apart, they employ the symbolism of the bridge-crossing and the closed gate both to denote this gap and to suggest connections between the two peoples and religions. Moreover, the symbolism of place helps to unveil the encoded subtext of acts of suicide.

It is important to stress that the political mood of the 1860s when *Nina Balatka* and *Crime and Punishment* were written differed from the politicised 1870s with its Eastern Question and the Russo-Turkish war in the Balkans. The two novels of 1866/67 reflect the writers' earlier and less politicised treatments of the Jewish theme, while at the same time containing the anxieties which they would develop more graphically in the next decade. Trollope's anonymously published *Nina Balatka* is entirely devoted to Jewish-Christian interaction while *Crime and Punishment* has only one episode involving a Jewish character. Significantly for a novel that has in its centre-plot the murder of a pawnbroker who "is rich as a Yid" (*Prestuplenie i nakazanie*, vol. 6, 53), the pawnbroker is not Jewish. What Dostoevsky would express as a Jewish idea of economic domination in the 1870's is not embodied by a Jewish character in *Crime and Punishment*. Instead, the novel has one enigmatic phantom-like Jew, whose significance is as multivalent as the polyphony of Dostoevsky's poetics at large (Bakhtin, *Problemy poetiki*, 1963).

Scholarship has demonstrated the rise of interest in suicide in the press, literature, law and medicine in England and Russia around the 1860s (Anderson, Gates, Paperno). Characteristic for this period was a new attitude towards suicide stripped off the glorification of heroic suicide associated with classical antiquity found in the earlier classicist and romantic discourse (Gates 83-89, Lilly 1994 402-403). Dostoevsky was critical of suicide because in his theodicy suffering and endurance were necessary conditions of human existence and an important

underpinning of Russian Orthodox Christianity (Berdiaev 1968). Significantly for the purpose of my investigation, it was Job from the Old Testament who epitomised for him the resilience and complex understanding of suffering without losing faith in God's justice.<sup>6</sup> In the early Victorian era in Britain, Job was also used as an "antidote" to the glorification of heroic suicide by pagan philosophers and heroes (Gates 85). While the rhetoric around the suffering of suicide victims was Christian, it was ambivalent because it was grounded in Christian notions of compassion and suffering and yet informed by the view of suicide as a sin (Anderson 263, Paperno 45-73).<sup>7</sup> While the Judaic presence in this discourse is motivated by continuity with Christianity's standing on suicide and is Christianised to suit the contemporary trends in the attitude to suicide, Dostoevsky and Trollope's assigning Jewish characters a salvific role is a significant departure from the literary conventions of the period. Dostoevsky further complicates the Judaic-Christian subtext in the suicide thematics by bringing in a Hellenic motif.

In what follows I focus on the symbolism of Jewish-Christian encounters on the verge of suicide, emblematised by crossing bridges and leading to spaces where protagonists meet in a surrealistically staged atmosphere. In *Nina Balatka* the bridge links the Christian part of Prague and its Jewish area. It is the place which the eponymous Christian heroine chooses for her suicide attempt and which she crosses before her marriage to a Jew. The symbol of separation becomes the symbol of unification and utopian symbiosis of two people(s). In *Crime and Punishment*, crossing a bridge in St Petersburg leads Svidrigailov, Raskolnikov's ontological double, to the place of an encounter with a phantom-like Jew, who guards the gates in a space with blurred borders between the city topography and the surreal world of hallucination. In this space Svidrigailov kills himself in front of the Jew.

Bridges and the gate become symbolic of connection and separation of physical and metaphysical spheres. Jewish characters' attempts to prevent Christian heroes from suicide is a manifestation of their religious knowledge, high moral standing and humanitarian compassion.<sup>8</sup> These ethical acts challenge the negative stereotypes of

the Jews and paradoxically function as counter-narratives to the racialised stereotypes in these texts and beyond.

The eschatological subtext in both novels is valorised by the plots: in both cases the suicidal protagonists are shown as transgressors in religious terms, Nina Balatka as a Christian wanting to marry a Jew, while Svidrigailov is implicated in a suspected murder, making him a criminal and a sinner. In both cases the characters' sins and/or suspected crime are linked to physical love, passion of the flesh, and both texts problematise their transgressions in terms of religious/divine and man-made societal laws. Their encounters with Jews in time and space relate, I propose, to Bakhtin's chronotope of threshold. Chronotopes are endowed with the symbolic meaning in the time space dynamic. The time spaces of encounters on the bridge and in front of the closed gate align with Bakhtin's characterisation of the "threshold" chronotope in the European novel, as the moment of the major break in the characters' life, symbolic of epiphany and resurrection (Bakhtin 1982, 248). The symbolism of space within the internal dynamic of these chronotopes opens the meaning of the cross-religious encounters before the suicide in the two novels.

### **The Jew in front of the gate over the bridge: *Crime and Punishment***

Bridges in *Crime and Punishment* feature prominently as part of the topography of St Petersburg, the city built on water with its rivers and numerous canals (Antsyferov 1978). They semiotically denote the very problematics already encoded in the title of the novel: the crime of murder as a transgression of religious and societal laws committed by Raskolnikov. The very prefix in trans-gression, pre-stuplenie in Russian, is related to the symbolism of bridges, which allow one to step over to the other side of the boundary between good and evil. The fact that Svidrigailov crosses the same bridge as Raskolnikov on his way to commit suicide fits the symbolic topography of bridges in the novel. Yet it does not explain why he chooses this particular part of town as the right place to kill himself, as the last locale of his earthly existence. It is his encounter with the Jew which reveals the emblematics of the place of

suicide. The part of the town has a dream-like appearance, and reality and dreams become blurred in Svidrigailov's perception. The phantom-like Jew becomes one in the succession of other visions which Svidrigailov has in his dreams and nightmares during the night before the suicide, which include Gothicism-inspired seductive female corpses and changelings. This figure of a Jew is one of the most mystifying in Dostoevsky's fiction (Shklovskii 1957 220), and it continues to fascinate commentators; the very strangeness of this episodic apparition denotes his symbolic significance.

The Jew whom Svidrigailov encounters is indeed a bizarre if not a surreal vision: he is described as a fireman dressed in a uniform and having an Achilles helmet on his head. The probability of a Jew employed in the profession of fireman in the St Petersburg of the mid-1860s was very small, because only a few unconverted Jews could live in capital cities outside the Pale of Settlement.<sup>10</sup> This makes the reader focus attentively on the carefully orchestrated theatricality of his attire, which, in combination with his Yiddish-accented speech, creates an uncanny combination of the Judaic and Hellenic. The words he addresses to Svidrigailov in an attempt to prevent him from suicide, while cryptic, reveal the mystical nature of his presence:<sup>11</sup>

*Bah! He thought, 'here is a place, why go on to Petrovsky Island? Here, at least, I'll have an official witness'. He almost smiled at this thought and turned into [Sezhin]skaya street. A large building stood at this spot with a watchtower. With a shoulder leaning against the massive closed gates of the building, a little man was standing, wrapped in a grey soldier's coat and wearing a copper helmet on his head. He cast a drowsy, cold, sidelong glance in the direction of the approaching Svidrigailov. His face wore that look of eternal peevish dejection that is so sourly imprinted on all the faces of the Jewish tribe without exception. Both of them, Svidrigailov and Achilles, scrutinized each other in silence for some time. At last, it struck Achilles as odd for a man not drunk to be standing three steps from him, staring and not saying a word.*

(What does it mean to) Think the Novel?

*"Vat is it, vat is it, now, you vant here?", he muttered, without stirring or changing his position.*

*"Why, nothing brother, good morning," Svidrigailov answered.*

*"Dzis is not dze place".*

*"I am going to foreign parts, brother".*

*"To foreign parts?"*

*"To America".*

*"America?"*

*Svidrigailov took out his revolver and cocked it. Achilles raised his eyebrows.*

*"Vat, vat you're doing, dzis is no place for such prenks [pranks]".*

*"And why, tell me, this is not the place?"*

*"Vai, because dzis is not dze place".*

*"Well, brother, it's all the same. It's a good place; if anybody asks you, just say he said he was on his way to America."*

*He pressed the revolver to his right temple.*

*"No, not here, dzis is not dze place here!" cried Achilles, rousing himself, the pupils of his eyes growing wider and wider.*

*Svidrigailov pulled the trigger. (vol. 6, 394)*

Dostoevsky's Notebooks to *Crime and Punishment* attest that he held some special significance to the symbolism of the place and the Jewish

accent in this scene: “N.B. Vat is it, vat is it, now, you vant here? Dzis is not dze place!... - I am going to foreign parts, brother. - To foreign parts?” (vol. 7, 197).

It is clear that the notion of space and foreign lands in this meeting point of ethnicities and cultures holds some hidden significance. The collage of cultures which includes Hebraic, Hellenic, contemporary American and Yiddish in the concrete topography of nineteenth century St Petersburg mixes the real and the symbolic, creating a complex symbiosis which commentators have found challenging to decipher (Katz).<sup>12</sup> On the one hand the notion of ‘place’ relates to the reforms of the 1860s when the new law of 1861 was passed that allowed Jews with university degrees and wealthy merchants and financiers to live in cities outside the Pale. Dostoevsky the journalist welcomed this change as it was expedient for him at the time to establish a reputation of a writer who followed the route of progress (Goldstein 32-48).<sup>13</sup> As the fireman in the uniform he guards an official building, and as such represents law and order, and in Frank’s words fulfills his “civic duty” (Frank 2002, 302). It is in this capacity that Svidrigailov first chooses him as an official witness to his act. The preoccupation of the Jewish character with the place in this context is historically motivated and realistic. Yet the representation of the scene is surreal and calls for a careful re-reading.

Russian-Jewish philosopher Aaron Shteinberg suggested that in this scene Svidrigailov meets the Wandering Jew, the phantom-like figure that represents the eternity of the Jew in the European imagination. As such, he teaches Svidrigailov that “this is not the place to die or rebel against ‘the law’ of life and its immutability” (Shteinberg 104). America functions in Dostoevsky’s world as the land of possible escape from criminal justice: Raskolnikov anticipates fleeing to America as a fugitive of justice, but does not. Instead, he embarks on the road of remorse, repentance and suffering along the lines of what Dostoevsky believed was the defining moral message of Russian Orthodox faith and the novel itself. Svidrigailov rejects that route and, by shooting himself, deprives himself of salvation (Shneidman 44-45). The Jew’s protestations about the inappropriateness of this place to die can be interpreted as

him having a higher knowledge of what is the right place to die. For a Jew this place is the promised land – a theme which Dostoevsky reflected on in his autobiographical *The Notes from the House of the Dead*. In it a comic Jew Isai Bumshtein regularly performed a Jewish prayer for the return to the promised land. In *Crime and Punishment* Jerusalem is mentioned, and in Kasatkina's interpretation it signifies salvation associated with Raskolnikov's redemption. As such it is juxtaposed with pagan antiquity emblematised by Svidrigailov's heathen lifestyle (Kasatkina 2016). This binarism, she suggests, is expressed in the city's topography: when Raskolnikov attempts to confess his sin publicly the crowd mockingly calls his behaviour an act before a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Svidrigailov's paganism is emblematised by the name of the hotel in which he stays, "Adrianapolis". Dostoevsky, Kasatkina reminds us, uses mockery to express profound ideas. This reading importantly notes the Hellenic motif, yet it does not add to the standard interpretation that pagan Svidrigailov commits suicide while Raskolnikov embarks onto learning to accept life as a Christian.<sup>14</sup>

While for Kasatkina Jerusalem in the context of the religious juxtaposition is emblematic of "metaphysical essence" of Christianity, I suggest that it additionally valorises the Judaic subtext problematised in the figure of the Jew/Achilles. By emphasising the comical connotations, referring to the puny Jew as "Achilles", <sup>15</sup>Dostoevsky stresses that the Jew might not have the appearance of the ancient Greek hero, but he epitomises something far more profound. Achilles he might not be, but he knows something that puts him above the Greek hero – and that something, in the context of Svidrigailov's decision to end his life, relates to the afterlife. As a Wandering Jew the bizarre-looking Jew is immortal, something that the Ancient Greek warrior was not. Indeed, in Ancient Greek mythology Achilles was mortal because of the fault he was created with – the weak spot in his foot, proverbially known as Achilles' heel. Moreover, in Homer's *Odyssey* Achilles' spirit in the Land of the Dead famously complains that he would rather be a slave but alive than the greatest of the dead (verse 11).

The combination of the Hellenic and Hebraic presents obviously more than a comic device. It can imply both religious synthesis and juxtaposition if taken in relation to the famous statement of St Paul that in Christianity “There is not Greek or Jew”. In this respect it evokes the archetypal symbolism of borders and border-crossing between religions, ethnicities and cultures, albeit under the umbrella of Christianity. Svidrigailov’s addressing the Jew/Achilles as “brother” three times in the passage signifies this notion both ironically and seriously. The young Dostoevsky in 1840 considered the possibility of Homer to be of equal importance to Christ because “he gave the ancient world the order of spiritual and earthly life of the same power as did Christ” (“M.M. Dostoevskomu”. Vol. 28/1, 66). He even suggested that Homer could have been God-sent like Christ. In 1861 in polemics against utilitarians he stated that Homer’s worldview exemplified the ideal of “eternal harmony” not only in aesthetics, but also in religiosity, something that the irreligious mid-nineteenth-century society had lost (“G-n G-ov i vopros ob iskusstve”, Vol. 18, 97). Dostoevsky thus used the Hellenic thematics to his end, since his idea of eternal harmony incorporated the notion of universal brotherhood of people (Mal’chukova 1994). The Jew/Achilles construct has echoes of his ideal of universal brotherhood which resonates throughout all his writing in the paradoxes of his polyphonic poetics. Yet this Jewish-Hellenic character speaks with an unmistakably Jewish voice. It implies that Homer might have made a large contribution to European culture and civilisation, but the Judeo-Christian tradition gave humanity the spiritual foundations for life and afterlife (Shestov 1951).<sup>16</sup> The Jew in the novel protests against the suicide because like Job in the Old Testament he did not lose his faith in God.

More can be understood of the religious symbolism of the Jew-Achilles if it is taken in the context of the history of ideas, especially in relation to Matthew Arnold’s theorising of the Hebraic and the Hellenic in *Culture and Anarchy* (1867).<sup>17</sup> In this formerly unexplored context, I propose that the symbolism of the Jew/Achilles can encode the paradox of juxtaposition and synthesis of Judaic and Hellenic world views. Arnold’s *Culture and Anarchy* both reflected and elaborated on the

notions of Judaism's emphasis on law and morality and the aestheticism of pagan antiquity. And while Arnold rehabilitated Hellenism as a worldview desiring the love of God almost to the same degree as Hebraism, he at the same time showed Hellenism's reluctance to miss out on what life has to offer:

At the bottom of both the Greek and the Hebrew notion is the desire, native in man, for reason and the will of God, the feeling after the universal order — in a word, the love of God. But, while Hebraism seizes upon certain plain, capital intimations of the universal order, and rivets itself, one may say, with unequalled grandeur of earnestness and intensity on the study and observance of them, the bent of Hellenism is to follow, with flexible activity, the whole play of the universal order, to be apprehensive of missing any part of it, [...]. The governing idea of Hellenism is spontaneity of consciousness; that of Hebraism, strictness of conscience (paragraph 183) (*Culture and Anarchy*, 1994, 103).

If we consider that the split between the Hellenic and the Hebraic was conceptualised at the time around the attitude to strictness of conscience,<sup>38</sup> the appearance of the phantom Jew at the scene of the suicide stands for the voice which forbids such an act. Of note is Dostoevsky's own respect for the Jews' observances of religious laws expressed in *The House of the Dead*. Isai may have been depicted as a comical little Jew, but the Russian Christian prison inmates respected him for adhering to the prayers prescribed by Jewish law. Shteinberg used this example as an argument of Dostoevsky's respect for Judaic laws and their strict observance by religious Jews. Like Isai, the phantom Jew also stands for the strictness of the law and conscience. In this context, Svidrigailov's sensual nature and the carnality of his transgressions - all of which are the result of his lust for life - fit the exemplary features of the Arnoldian Hellenic "apprehension of missing" and reluctance to "sacrifice" "the whole play of the universal order".

This also explains the very composite structure of Svidrigailov's phantom: that of Jew and Achilles. Svidrigailov's first name, Arkady, in this context is not accidental; as a name of Greek origin it embodies the

European imagination's concept of earthly paradise, Arcadia. As somebody who lived his life in the style of a Hellenic pagan, enjoying it to the full, Svidrigailov, I suggest, is eager to see a Hellenic hero in his cathartic moment between life and death. If Svidrigailov's phantom is one of his doubles in the novel structured on doppelgangers (Jones 2005 253), a hallucination as an embodied projection, is he Achilles or a Jew? The phantom turns out to be not Achilles as he metamorphoses at a closer look into a Jew with a Yiddish accent; an eternal Jew at that,<sup>19</sup> someone who repeats as a religious incantation that "this is not the place" to die. This Jew, I argue, is Svidrigailov's nightmare, the phantom produced by his guilty conscience, the very epitome of Arnoldian Hebraic "strictness of conscience". As a phantom, the Jew in front of the closed gates to the locked house can be read as the very embodiment of Freudian uncanny, the "un-homely", the projection of the unconscious.<sup>20</sup> Freud wrote in "The 'Uncanny'" (1919) that in literature the uncanny is a much more fertile province than in real life, and maintained that "an uncanny effect is often and easily produced when the distinction between imagination and reality is effaced, as when something that we have hitherto regarded as imaginary appears before us in reality, or when a symbol takes over the full function of the thing it symbolizes, and so on" ("The Uncanny" 367). Moreover, in this context of the uncanny "there is a doubling, dividing and interchanging of the self" ("The Uncanny" 356).

Fittingly, when Svidrigailov first looks at the guard's figure in the thick mist of the street, he looks at him in a frozen stasis as if looking into the mirror, or into the face of the double. If the figure was that of Achilles, it would indeed make him Svidrigailov's double, onto whom Svidrigailov could project his lust for life. But the Jew in Achilles's helmet turned out to be Svidrigailov's dividing double, the projection of his internal fears, and what he had to say confirmed the reality of moral rules. Hence the Yiddish accent of the Wandering Jew – the detail that gives the quasi-realistic tone to the phantom, thus affirming the embodied reality of Hebraic morality and conscience.

Eschatological meaning of Svidrigailov's encounter with Jew/Achilles is evidenced by Notebooks to the novel, in which Svidrigailov maintains that a person in an unhealthy psychological state "can come into contact with phantoms and other worlds [drugie miry]" (vol. 7, 165). In this context, the space that the Jew guards as a gate-keeper has metaphysical symbolism of the threshold chronotope. The actual place is "a house with a watchtower", but it is also a zone of conflicting views between him and Svidrigailov. Kasatkina suggests that the space can denote entry to hell considering that the tower is associated with fire. In her reading the Jew/Achilles connotes the figure of Christ himself who, as somebody who conquered death, warns Svidrigailov against suicide. I suggest that the tower is a more paradoxical image in line with the complexity of the Jew/Achilles construct. The deliberate authorial tactics blurs the border between the real city topography and the product of imagination. On the one hand, it is known that the watchtower was part of a real building in St Petersburg (Grossman 58).<sup>21</sup> Yet, the tall watchtower in the novel, I suggest, evokes the imagery of the Tower of Babel. Read as a trope, it connotes separation and unity of people and cultures – and as such corresponds to the emblematics of the composite image of the Jew Achilles. The word "kalanča" used in the novel for the watchtower was originally applied in Russian to defense towers of fortresses.<sup>22</sup> This tower thus can denote not only a fire station watchtower, but a generic tall tower of historic importance. The actual watchtowers in St Petersburg were built during the nineteenth century, and architecturally they competed in shape and height with ecclesiastical buildings, such as churches and cathedrals.<sup>23</sup> The Jew's static posture in front of the gate leading to this 'Tower' is evocative of permanency and eternity. His incantation about the "place" in this context might refer not only to the earthly Jerusalem, but also to the heavenly one. From the Jew's perspective the space before the locked gates is not suitable for a sinful act of suicide because the space can be imagined as a passage to the "other-world". From Svidrigailov's perspective, I suggest, the space in front of the vertical tower can be appealing because the tower signifies human hubris and, as such, parallels his own arrogant rejection of afterlife. Yet, in line with

paradoxes of polyvalent poetics, the tower embodies ascent rather than the annihilation encoded in the symbolism of going down the river under the bridge – “a journey” that Svidrigailov rejects in spite of its haunting presence in the novel. In the context of Dostoevsky’s mythologising of St Petersburg as a fantastic place that can evaporate as fog,<sup>24</sup> the space that the Jew Achilles guards can be imagined as the liminal space demarcating the border between life and afterlife, this and “other worlds”. As a paradoxical place that unites and separates the Tower is a variation of the overall emblematics of the bridge. The scene is invested with eschatological signifiers, all of which contribute to the sense of mystery and mysticism underlying the scene of suicide.

It is clear that Dostoevsky resorted to the literary tradition of comic representation of the Jew, concealing his serious anxieties around questions which his protagonists famously dubbed as “accursed”: whether there is God and immortality.<sup>25</sup> It can be further argued that the hybridity of the construct helps Dostoevsky secure various possibilities in the domain of beliefs in afterlife. David Goldstein maintained that no matter how grotesque the form in which this phantom appears, “his ghostlike presence represents an eerie challenge to the messianic role of the Russian people that Dostoevsky would like to preempt for them” (54).

Yet Russian messianism paradoxically coexisted in Dostoevsky with the dream of universal harmony and brotherhood of peoples. In this respect, is it plausible that, behind the façade of quasi-Gothic urban grotesque in the figure of the Yiddish speaking Wandering Jew in Achilles’ headgear, there are signs of the attempt to create a “universal man”, albeit in a camouflaged and stylised way? In today’s terminology it is tempting to read this figure as a prototype of cultural hybridity.

In his later years, in 1877, when Dostoevsky the journalist defended himself against accusations of disseminating anti-Jewish views he declared his support for Russian Jews’ right to civic freedoms, including the right to settle outside the Pale of Settlement in the series of articles on “The Jewish Question” in *Diary of a Writer*. One subchapter had subtitle “Long Live the Brotherhood!” and was followed by the subchapter “Funeral of ‘the Universal Man’” in which Dostoevsky retold the story

narrated to him by his Jewish correspondent. It described the funeral of a righteous man, a German Christian doctor who used to help poor Jews of Minsk, and at whose funeral rabbis said prayers next to the priests of Christian denominations. Dostoevsky noted that as the location of multi-ethnic encounters between Jews, Russians, Germans, Lithuanians and Poles, Minsk was a fitting place to start the movement to conquer "prejudice" (Vol. 25, 92) and stand as an example of "brotherhood" of nationalities (Vol. 25, 90). He stated that this case already has in it the beginnings of the resolution of the Jewish question. In this context, Svidrigailov's addressing the Jew soldier as "brother" in *Crime and Punishment* can be viewed as an early example of the idea of "brotherhood".

Yet an eschatological orientation of the Jewish-Christian encounters is markedly present in the 1877 narrative about the funeral of the Christian doctor in *Diary of a Writer*. It can be argued that the story attracted Dostoevsky not only as a positive example of interfaith and intercultural encounters, but also because of the symbolism of the burial. Cemetery is a liminal space, and burial is a rite of passage associated with transition (van Gennep 1960). Burial is a symbolic threshold between this and the other worlds. As such it echoes the Svidrigailov - Jew chronotopic encounter in *Crime and Punishment*. Dostoevsky's emotive description of the funeral scene focuses on the place next to the grave, the space emblematic of the border and the entry into a different domain. Significantly, it is this space that becomes a space of inter-religious reconciliation and even unification in his description: "The pastor and the rabbi were united in the mutual love, they almost embraced each other above this grave, in the full view of Christians and Jews" (Vol. 25, 92).

The citing of prayers by both Christian clergy and Jewish rabbis at the eschatological threshold reflects a transgressive middle stage of the rite. It can reflect not only the uncertainty associated with rites of passage but also Dostoevsky's own hesitation as to which of the two religions possesses the ultimate knowledge of the afterlife. It is not in vain that he states in his subchapter "Status in Statu. Forty Centuries of Existence"

that in spite of the forty centuries of Jewish history “times and seasons” for “the final word of the humankind about this great tribe [plemia]” are still to come (Vol. 25, 81). This authorial italicising of “vremena i sroki”, “times and seasons” is overtly eschatological and messianic.

Apart for these eschatological dimensions, symbolic encounters in liminal spaces can be associated with changes that require the move between different statuses. As such they are concerned with the way in which people are socially ordered within society. Such ordering can refer to the status of religions and ethnic or racialised communities and the funeral scene can imply a shift in the status of the Jews in Russia. Yet, this change is not unconditional in the context of the late 1870s. Brotherhood, Dostoevsky states, has to be mutual, and he asks contemporary Jewry to be less arrogant towards simple Russian people. He also states that enterprising Jews have to stop taking economic advantage of Russians. The Jew in the 1866 novel stood at the threshold as he was admitted to the Russian society as serviceman. He also guarded the gate leading to the other world. The heterogenous liminality of the threshold becomes a shared feature of the Jewish-Christian encounters in this story from *Diary of a Writer* and in *Crime and Punishment*.

In line with this heterogeneity, the eschatological thematics becomes politically tendentious in Dostoevsky’s journalistic writing. Moreover, the preoccupation with eschatological spaces grows into the geopolitical desire to acquire Jerusalem as the ultimate liminal space. In March 1877, concurrently with the article on “The Jewish Question”, Dostoevsky published a series of articles on the Balkan War, one of them entitled “Once more sooner or later Constantinople has to be ours” (vol. 25, 65). In “The Jewish question” he supported Russian Jews’ right to civic freedoms, yet, significantly, he also stated that the self-proclaimed secularisation of contemporary educated Russian Jewry does not appeal to him, because it is difficult to imagine a non-religious Jew. He also stressed that simple Russian people have the deepest respect for the Jewish faith. Religious Jews and Judaism thus are the object of respect for both Dostoevsky and the Russian Christian people. However,

Dostoevsky's own promotion of Russian people as God-bearing people was underpinned by rivalry between the two religions and peoples. In the political climate of the Balkan War his Russian messianism was translated into a combination of political, military and Christian religious expansionism. This amalgamation, termed by Mochulsky as "Christian imperialism" (1980 463), was in fact Russian Orthodox chauvinistic imperialism. By wanting to adjoin Constantinople to Russia, Dostoevsky stated that even Greeks as a nation and as Eastern Orthodox Christians will not be trustworthy if in charge of this territory, because they will not be fair to the Balkan Slavs. He maintained that only Russians as true Orthodox Christians can install the political climate of true brotherhood, both as leaders in Christian religion and in the international politics in the region. (The attack on Greeks adds a special irony to the ideals of "brotherhood" embodied by the Hebraic-Hellenic Christianised hybrid of his artistic imagination, and explains why the hybrid was a ghost-like phantom.)

Notably, Dostoevsky describes Constantinople as the centre of the Eastern world, and Russia as the centre and leader of the Eastern world. Moreover, he stresses that Constantinople is the gateway to the whole Eastern world. At this juncture, this notion of the whole Eastern world connotes also Jerusalem. While he states that Constantinople has to become Russian forever, in his other article of 1877 he notes that Russian people support Russia's wars with Turkey because Jerusalem is under Muslim domination (vol. 25 214-218). Constantinople is thus a gateway to the very birthplace of Christ, the Holy Land.

The Jew in St Petersburg of the 1860s guarded the gate to a mysterious, eschatologically significant space. At the end of the 1870s Dostoevsky wants Russia to possess the key to Constantinople, to take it from the Ottomans, who at the time controlled the Holy Land. Through gateway to the East, Russia would obtain the key to earthly Jerusalem. With all the concern about the immortality of the soul, Dostoevsky's complex Utopian eschatology leaned towards imagining paradise on earth, "earthly Jerusalem", and departed from the Russian Orthodox Church's teachings of paradise as "heavenly Jerusalem" (Leont'ev 1968

89). In Shteinberg's formulation of 1923, Dostoevsky's "Palestine had to become Russia so that Russia could become Palestine. [...] Dostoevsky leads Russian chiliasm" (Shteinberg 1923 141).

While his Jew in St Petersburg in 1866 might have been a phantom, he was also an uncanny symbiosis of the agenda which would be unveiled ten years later. His geographical, topographical and eschatological emblematics reflected the complex cultural space which he occupied in Dostoevsky's and wider intellectual imagination. A collage of European urban Gothicism, religious messianic competition, and sociopolitical reality, this complex cultural construct has the fluidity which paradoxically ensures its survival across time and space.

### **The two maidens on the bridge in *Nina Balatka***

While Dostoevsky had no close contact with Jews during his lifetime, Trollope was friendly with the very Jews who for Dostoevsky emblematised the materialist Jewish idea – the Rothschilds. Trollope was friends with Baron Meyer Rothschild, with whom he regularly hunted in the latter's lavish Berkshire estate, Meltmore, in 1873. Meyer Rothschild was an example of the Jew who, without converting to Christianity, became a member of the English landed gentry, thus entering the space hitherto reserved for that class by the right of inheritance. While Jews in Russia were still on the margins of society and had a phantom presence in the 1860s and 1870s, their presence in England's social, economic and political arena was both real and becoming more significant in the 1870s. While Trollope depicted (crypto)Jewish characters in his 1870s novels in an English setting (Super 235, 326, 359),<sup>26</sup> in his 1866/67 *Nina Balatka*, he took the setting to a European Catholic city, Prague. In doing so, he created an urban setting aligned to Dostoevsky's St Petersburg with its real/surreal liminality.

Commentators noted this surreal quality of Trollope's Prague which functions as a locus for interaction between members of two families – Christian and Jewish (Cohen 1976 84, Cheyette 29).<sup>27</sup> The symbolic setting thus calls for the interpretation of its symbolic meaning. Within the symbolism of the setting, special prominence is given to the

bridge over the Moldau that separates the Christian part of Prague from the Jewish quarters.<sup>28</sup> The Christian maiden Nina fell in love with a handsome and wealthy Jew, Anton Trendellsohn, and while the novel ends in their marriage, Nina has to overcome many obstacles in order to marry a Jew. Like the Jew- fireman in St Petersburg, Anton is located across the bridge. Here the bridge emblematically falls into the typology in English mid-Victorian literature where bridges were a paradoxical urban symbol of circulation and access; yet passing from one bank to another frequently involved hardship (Nocoletti 2016).

The novel inverts the stereotypes of the greedy and unscrupulous Jew-dealer and honest Christian victims, showing both Anton and his father as humane, ethical and fair-dealing businessmen. He is charitable to Nina and her father, while Nina's wealthy relatives are shown as dishonest and scheming. Typically, while taking advantage of Nina's father's poverty, they unjustly make slanderous accusations against Anton. More importantly, they intrigue against Nina's involvement with Anton, and predict that she will end up throwing herself into the river. Nina's suicide attempt is the result of Anton taking offence at Nina's suspicion of his dishonesty in business dealings with her ailing father and the ostracization she experiences from the Christian community. With her father dead and her engagement suspended, she decides to commit suicide.

Nina chooses the bridge as a place for suicide, and while mid-Victorian literature and art depicted bridges as common places for female suicides, this particular bridge is a locus for intervention in suicide. In *Crime and Punishment*, the guilty murderer Raskolnikov often stops at bridges, looking into the water and contemplating suicide. In Dostoevsky's novel, Raskolnikov instead saves his soul by confessing his crime. In *Nina Balatka*, a Jewish maiden saves the Christian girl Nina from throwing herself into the river. The setting of the scene is dramatised by a number of symbolic attributes that call for deciphering. Nina does a number of charitable deeds before her intended throwing herself into the river, which aligns her behaviour with that of Svidrigailov in *Crime and Punishment*. She gives her last money to the friar collecting

on the bridge. The bridge is a setting for Christian religious emblems: in addition to its being adorned with statues of Catholic saints, at the time it is a stage for the performance of Catholic ritual:

*They were singing vespers under the shadow of one of the great statues which are placed one over each arch of the bridge. There was a lay friar standing by a little table, on which there was a white cloth and a lighted lamp and a small crucifix; and above the crucifix, supported against the stonework of the bridge, there was a picture of the virgin with her Child [...]. (Nina Balatka 114-115).*

Trollope's detailing the bridge with ecclesiastical attributes can be viewed in terms of the convention in depicting female suicides who plunged into the river found in mid-Victorian literature and painting. As Barbara Gates elucidated, the imagery of the women who were found in water under bridges carried symbolic connotation.<sup>29</sup> Thus, women were depicted under arches formed by the bridge and these oval-shaped spaces resembled the shape of eggs to symbolise woman's role in life as a giver of life at the same time suggesting the cycle of life and death. Water itself could be viewed as a female fluid associated with the reproductive cycle which came to an end. Nicoletti further observed that the iconography in the representation of female suicides included a composition framed by an arch, a moonlight setting, a fall from Blackfriars or Waterloo bridge, allowing St. Paul's Cathedral to be moralistically included in the background (Nicoletti 2016). In this context, Trollope's choosing the bridge's architectural and religious decorations in a moonlight setting echoes the stylistics of suicides yet not allowing the suicide to take place. Monumental stone statues of saints parallel the function of St Paul's Cathedral as a reminder of Christian motifs in the scenes, and they include not only moralisation on sin but also the notions of suffering and compassion.

In the highly symbolic scene Nina understands that her suicide would be a sin and prays that the saint on the bridge in the form of the statue – St John of the Bridges – will interpose on her behalf and save her from suicide. What drives her to suicide is the abandonment – a motif in the stereotype of mid-Victorian female suicides; yet, her inner conflict

relates to the issues of interfaith love and marriage. A virgin, Nina falls out of the typology of the mid-Victorian fallen women, yet, as a maiden who fell in love with a Jew she has been symbolically polluted by emotional contact with the religious and racialised male Other. Importantly, her hope that St John will help to deliver her from suicide is based on the thought that she no longer is going to marry a Jew and therefore will remain a Christian. Yet she admits that she has never heard of a case when even this most charitable saint of the Bridges has saved a suicide. Dramatically, the desired intervention comes from a Jewish maiden, who stops Nina from making the fatal act:

On a sudden, at the very moment that Souchey and Rebecca were in the act of passing beneath the feet of the saint, the clouds swept by from off the disc of the waning moon, and the three faces were looking at each other in the clear pale light of the night. Souchey started back and screamed. Rebecca leaped forward and put the grasp of her hand tight upon the skirt of Nina's dress, first one hand and then the other, and, pressing forward with her body against the parapet, she got hold also of Nina's foot. She perceived instantly what was the girl's purpose, but, by God's blessing and her effort, there should be no cold form found in the river that night; or, of one, then there should be two. [...] Whether her [Nina's] life was due to the saint or to the Jewess she knew not, but she acknowledged to herself silently that death was beyond her reach, and she was grateful (*Nina Balatka* 120-121).

Trollope creates the time space dynamic at this encounter which is in line with Bakhtinian chronotope of threshold: "sudden", "the very moment" is aligned with the place on the bridge under the saint's foot. The bridge functions as a liminal space in the life of the heroine, but it also is a Utopian space, where religions meet, embodied by Jewish and Christian protagonists. Metaphorically, this time space is a threshold of a new relationships between the two religions. Yet the reader is fully aware that at this threshold it was not the saint, but a Jewish maiden, Rebecca, who saved Nina's life. If there was a miracle, it attests that the God who helped them was one for both religions. Of note is that the Christian manservant Souchey does not act to save Nina. Rebecca's moral

superiority is especially notable because her heroic deed departs from the conventions in representation of suicides in mid-Victorian fiction as almost none of them show rescue attempts.<sup>30</sup> The scene is also gender-specific and, as such, it gives a positive evaluation of Rebecca's deed. Rebecca's act is particularly noble because she could have been Anton's fiancée, yet she consistently supports Nina through the novel in a sisterly way, thus rewriting not only racial but also gender stereotypes of female sexual rivalry. Her moral firmness is of note because already in the first meeting with Nina she was critical of Nina's readiness to throw herself into the river if Anton was to stop loving her. Importantly, Rebecca's Jewishness implicitly makes her immune to the fate of the mid-Victorian Christian female suicides both in life and representation.<sup>31</sup>

As I argued earlier following Eliade's interpretation of bridges as liminal spaces, the semiotics of the bridge denotes not only separation and difference, but also transitions, linkages and unity. And indeed, at the end of the story about the love of a Christian maiden and a Jewish man, Nina and the Jew are united in marriage, although they have to leave Prague to be able to be together. Moreover, a strict Catholic priest tells Nina that "her case as a Christian would not be hopeless were she to marry the Jew!" (*Nina Balatka* 105), alluding to her soul's afterlife. In the Utopian end the couple leave for an unidentified place described as the greatest city in the world where they can live together without being prejudiced against, and importantly, as a Jewish couple, since Nina, in Trollope's description, anticipates converting to Judaism albeit hoping for the blessing of the saints. This ambivalent end poses a number of questions, embedded in the British nineteenth-century narratives: Is Nina's implied future conversion to Judaism the way to achieve equilibrium between the husband and wife, or on a symbolic level, the way to harmony between the two religions, (Catholic) Christianity and Judaism? Is Nina's submissiveness to the Jew the way to show the threat which Jewish men pose to Christian maidens (Baumgarten 1996<sup>32</sup>) or an inversion of British literature's assimilatory and hegemonic convention to depict Jewish maidens as submissive in their love of Christian men symbolising Christianity's superiority over Judaism

(Valman 2007, 51-84)? Or is it the way forward in the relationships between the two sibling religions, with the recognition of the equality between the junior and the senior ones? In Brian Cheyette's view Anton "wishes to avenge Christian 'prejudices' by marrying Nina Balatka" (33), and this shows the duality of Trendellsohn's notions of equality – "one bounded by his Jewishness the other by his union with a Christian" (31). Yet Cheyette's assertion that this union is "an idealised model for the ambivalent assimilation of the Jewish racial 'other'" (32) into Christian society does not explain the symmetry of Nina's ambivalent assimilation into Jewishness and Judaism. Trollope's Nina overcomes the Victorian stereotype of passive female suicides which, as shown by Gates, was partly informed by Christianity's beatification of submissive death (Gates 126). She learns to assert her will with the support and guidance provided by the Jews: Rebecca, Anton's wise and kind father, and Anton himself. In this context Nina's case can be viewed schematically as polemics against suicide as a Christian "cultural institution" of the Victorian era contrasted with a (quasi)Judaic affirmation of life and, by implication, afterlife.

The episode with Nina's attempted suicide on the bridge is emblematic of ethnic and cross-religious symbiosis. Yet in line with the semiotics of bridges, the space is also symbolic of the ambiguities around the issues of racial and religious assimilation which involves separation from the old beliefs and finding fulfilment in new spiritual and, in this case, economic opportunities. Nina's anticipated conversion to Judaism was dramatised in the suicide attempt scene in line with the suicide problematics theorised by scholarship: the immortality of the soul, free will and the connection between the individual and God. The suicide plot played out on the bridge shows that Trollope considered not only 'racial' but also deeper religious aspects of Christian-Jewish encounters.

Regarding Trollope's later novels, Paul Delany observed that his vision of the late Victorian establishment is "not as narrowly ethnocentric as it appears at first" (1992 776). Many (crypto)Jews in these novels came from continental Europe and, thanks to their wealth, found the way into

the English establishment. Anton in *Nina Balatka* is predicted to be wealthy in the new place - which is probably London - but unlike some of the 'Jews' in the 1870s novels, and unlike Disraeli who converted to Christianity, Anton remains a 'Hebraic' Jew. And it is Judaism that Nina may convert to, albeit with the authorial prediction of the couple's future economic prosperity. In the context of conversion the Anglican dean's remark in *Is He Popenjoy?* (1875) "whether any good is ever done by converting a Jew" (chap. xlv) should be treated as a profound question, partial answers to which, I suggest, can be found in *Nina Balatka*.

### Conclusion

Both Dostoevsky and Trollope chose Jewish characters to intervene in Christians' suicides. Both chose liminal spaces for these encounters, blending realist plots with the surreal to stress the fragility of the possibilities of such encounters in real life. Both mythologised encounters using bridges, gates and the chronotope of threshold to imply that the Jews' presence was not accidental at this point of exit from life and entry into the other life. Both conceptualised Jews as people concerned about life and death. It is this eschatological sphere that has a phantom-like presence behind the writers' complex representations of Jews in the novels. This presence at the time was summarised by Arnold: "our race will, as long as the world lasts, [...] return to Hebraism" (27). Significantly, Arnold from 1850s rethought his attitude to the ancient suicides as heroic, and fittingly it was the thoughts on immortality which motivated his change of opinion.<sup>33</sup>

By endowing Jewish characters with certain moral authority and adherence to tradition as regards to suicide, both writers expressed an attitude that was formulated by Durkheim in his famous *Le Suicide* (1897). This study of sociology of suicide closed the nineteenth century, and using statistical data from 1860s onwards argued that relatively small proportion of suicides among the Jews has to be explained by Jewish communities having to practice "greater morality" (*Suicide* 56) because they were under hostile observation by surrounding populations. While Durkheim stressed that the Bible contains no law

forbidding man to kill himself, he admitted that “the very nature of Jewish beliefs must contribute largely” to this “immunity” (*Suicide* 160) to suicide. For Durkheim constitution of the Jewish society is “existence of certain number of beliefs and practices common to all the faithful, traditional and thus obligatory” (170). Another important factor is collective life leading to “preservation values” (170). The Jew’s advantage is in combination of discipline characteristic of “small and ancient groups with the benefits of the intense culture enjoyed by our great societies” (168).

Both Dostoevsky and Trollope’s suicide-preventing Jews share such features with Durkheimian conceptualisations as the sense of moral obligation, deeply-seated beliefs and the sense of community combined with belonging to a broader culture. We can argue that both writers adhered to a certain schematic construct of Jewish collective attitude towards suicide and conceptualised Jewish “immunity” to suicide taking religious, moral and social factors into account. Strikingly, both made Jewish characters try to prevent suicides in the wider outside communities and thus extend their moral care to Christian neighbours.

Notably, this schematic construct was not based on knowledge of rabbinical literature, the gap also evident in Durkheim’s observation that rabbinical teaching supplied “omissions” to the Bible but that “they do not have the authority” of “the sacred book” (*Suicide* 170). George Eliot, who studied rabbinical views on suicide, considered the justification of suicide as religious martyrdom in her representation of Jewish Mirah in *Daniel Deronda*. But even here Mirah anticipates suicide in the absence of her father who in her historical imagination could kill her to save her from moral apostasy – something that, Eliot believed, Jews in Mainz did during the first Crusade (Irwin 1996 165).<sup>34</sup> Eliot, however, spares Mirah from this heroic suicide in line with the ethos of the contemporary literary convention.

Dostoevsky and Trollope’s representation of suicide thematics shows their complex novelistic conceptualisation of Jewishness and Judaism that goes beyond the political stereotypes of the 1870s period. It can be argued that Trollope’s anonymity allowed him to radically invert and subvert petty anti-Jewish stereotypes. By assigning his Jewish hero

the same first name as his own, by having Anton sign his letter by the initials "A. T.", Trollope makes sure that the reader notices that the Jew's initials are the same as his own. This is, as Mullen argues, significant, and shows the psychological underpinnings of Trollope's own desire to be accepted into the English establishment, both as a social outsider by birth and as commercial writer by occupation (Mullen 1990 470). The quest is for the place which the new socioeconomic reality made to be more available for both racial and class outsiders and newcomers.

As realist writers whose financial well-being was entirely dependent on the volume of publications, Trollope and Dostoevsky have a lot in common with 'other' class and racial contenders for their place in society. Trollope entered the circles of the privileged through hard labour and the production of innumerable pages. Vernon argues that nineteenth-century novelists were peculiarly obsessed with money because they found in the rise of paper money a parallel with their own project of mastering the so-called 'real' world of objects and desires (Vernon 1984 33-34).<sup>8</sup> Not unlike bankers, they wanted to convince the public that their tokens – printed paper – had real value. Both Trollope and Dostoevsky used the "Jewish Question" for some two decades to cash in on the public interest, while in good capitalist fashion they also stimulated and created this interest. From this point of view (like the Jewish protagonists in their novels) they were indeed interested in stopping their literary creations from committing suicides, as their life stories translated into more pages that could be turned into paper money. In this sense "The Rothschild idea" after all had created common spaces, both real and symbolic, for Jewish and Christian interactions.

Both texts show that both writers assumed the roles of pontifices, bridge builders between people and religions. Both writers also showed that as the people of the Book, the Jews' place in the realist novel transcends not only time, space and culture, but challenges the borders of realism itself.

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- <sup>1</sup> In the 1840s and 1850s in his correspondence Dostoevsky mentioned twice that he would throw himself into the river from the bridge out of desperation (Shneidman).
- <sup>2</sup> Trollope was the most read and discussed English writer in Russia in the 1860s. His novels were immediately translated into Russian and were seen as best example of realism. See Proskurin, 11-15.
- <sup>3</sup> Lopez in *The Prime Minister* is Trollope's response to Disraeli's success. See Keveson Hertz, 1981, 372; Cheyette, 27-28. Dostoevsky used the image of black tarantula for Disraeli in his *Diary of a Writer* in 1876. He maintained that Disraeli's politics in the Middle East was "partially" influenced by his Jewish roots (Vol. 24. 106-112.) All quotations from Dostoevsky are from this edition, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*. Leningrad: Nauka. 1974.
- <sup>4</sup> Trollope was familiar with Arnold's concept of the Hebraic to be discussed later in the article. See Cheyette, 14-42.
- <sup>5</sup> In 1864 Trollope said that the planned new periodical *Fortnightly Review* should publish nothing that questions the divinity of Christ. See R.P. Super. *The Chronicler of Bassetshire*, 190.
- <sup>6</sup> Grossman uses Dostoevsky's long fascination with the story of Job as example of his respectful attitude to Judaic thinking.
- <sup>7</sup> In England and in Russia discussions were often linked to the issue of "temporary insanity" which allowed the church to conduct Christian burial; this reflected the conceptualisation of suicide as sin and/or crime. See Anderson, 263-311, Paperno, 45-73.
- <sup>8</sup> A study of the attitude of Christians and Jews to suicide shows that Jews especially find suicide unacceptable in religious terms. See Domino et al., "Jewish and Christian Attitudes to Suicide", 201-207.
- <sup>9</sup> Shklovky tried to find a parallel in Goethe's treatment of suicide by Verther. (*Za i protiv*, 220). Goldstein insists on its high symbolic significance as a phantom who tortured Dostoevsky himself because of his preoccupation with the Jewish messianism, 53. Katz notes that Ivanits's idea that the character represents the Devil which Christians are supposed to see before suicide does not work because the phantom tries to save Svidrigailov. Katz, 165.
- <sup>10</sup> Katz notes that from 1837 there was a soldiers' synagogue in St Petersburg and there was a probability of encounter with a real Jew. This however does not negate the highly symbolic setting of this encounter in the novel.
- <sup>11</sup> Dostoevsky theorised cases of suicide in religious terms and saw them as acts of rejection of beliefs in the immortality of the soul. See "O samoubiistve i vysokomerii". Vol. 24. 52-55.

- <sup>12</sup> Paperno does not deal with this character.
- <sup>13</sup> Goldstein showed that as editor of *Vremia* Dostoevsky established a liberal reputation and supported the liberation of the Jews (32-48).
- <sup>14</sup> For Shneidman this suicide is a warning to those who live outside the principles of Christian principles of Russian Church.
- <sup>15</sup> On the stereotype of a puny Jew in Russian literature see Mondry. *Exemplary Bodies*, 2009.
- <sup>16</sup> Shestov in his *Athens and Jerusalem* maintains that Dostoevsky's position in the question of the free will and knowledge of truth was oppositional to dominant Greek Aristotelian dialectics and was programmatically based on Scriptures. Shestov. *Afiny i Ierusalim*. 196-197.
- <sup>17</sup> Joseph Frank notes in his Foreword to *Dostoevsky and the Jews* "Mathew Arnold might have been pleased by this combination of the Hebraic and the Hellenic", but does not develop this point. Frank, ix.
- <sup>18</sup> Dostoevsky was interested in Arnold's views on education (Zohrab. "Public Education in England on Pages of *Citizen* (1873-1874)", 2006. He could have been familiar with Arnold's ideas from conversations with Turgenev and Herzen in 1860s.
- <sup>19</sup> Wandering Jew in Russian is 'Eternal Jew', *Vechnyi zhid*.
- <sup>20</sup> On "Uncanny" in Dostoevsky's "The Double" see Zvedeniuk. 104-124.
- <sup>21</sup> A.G. Dostoevskaja identified it as a building in S'ezhinskii street. See Grossman. *Seminarii po Dostoevskomu*. 58.
- <sup>22</sup> *Kalancha* is from *kale*, of Turkic origin referred to Turkish watchtowers near Azov from 17th c. See "Kalancha". *Entsiklopedicheskii slovar'*. Vol. 20. 1890. 455.
- <sup>23</sup> Dostoevsky was critical of the eclectic style of St Petersburg's architecture that he studied professionally. See Antsyferov, 139.
- <sup>24</sup> Dostoevsky described St Petersburg as a space that can evaporate in *The Adolescent* (Antsyferov. 146). Of relevance is traditional Russian culture's image of the town Kitezh, a legendary utopian place that evaporated into the thin air.
- <sup>25</sup> These questions are asked in *The Brothers Karamazov*. For Judaism and Dostoevsky in the context of Levinas' ethics see Vinokur. *The Trace of Judaism*. 35-60.
- <sup>26</sup> Trollope caricatured Disraeli in *Phineas Finn*, in *The Way We Live Now*. See R.H. Super 235, 326, 359.
- <sup>27</sup> Cohen notes that the bridge denotes separation in the novel. See a discussion in Joan Mandel Cohen, 84, and in Cheyette, 29.
- <sup>28</sup> It is mentioned 25 times in the novel.

<sup>29</sup> The tradition started from Hood's poem "The Bridge of Sighs" (1844) which was frequently republished with illustrations including the famous print by Gustave Dore (1878). See Gates, 135-147.

<sup>30</sup> This convention is in contrast with the situation in Victorian era when the Royal Humane Society was setting up receiving stations around bodies of water, trained to resuscitate and instructed the public not to assume that the drowned body was irrevocably dead. See Anderson.

<sup>31</sup> Mirah in Eliot's *Daniel Deronda* is a Jewess who is saved from attempted suicide by drowning in the Thames by Daniel who himself is a symbol of positive Christian-Jewish encounters. Her suicide is a complex trope of Christian passivity and Judaic prevention of apostasy. See Valman.

<sup>32</sup> On Anton's physical seductiveness see Baumgarten, 44-62.

<sup>33</sup> Arnold removed his earlier poems on ancient suicides, "Courage" on Cato and "Empedocles on Etna" from the 1853 edition of *Poems, Second Series*. See a discussion in Gates, 85-87.

<sup>34</sup> See references to Leopold Zunz's (1857) on Jewish martyrdom in history and Mirah's references to Jews who were forced to take their lives in Ed. Jane Irwin. *George Eliot's Daniel Deronda Notebooks*, 165. On the history of suicide in Judaism see Sidney Goldstein's discussion in *Suicide in Rabbinic Literature* on the interpretation of suicides in Biblical, Exegetical and Talmudic literature, which shows that at times suicide was considered a heroic and noble option.

<sup>35</sup> Vernon. *Money and Fiction*, esp. 33-34.

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