

Title: Dramatizing Dualism: The Use of the Literary Double in Prus' *The Doll*
Author: Justin Wilmes, Ohio State University

Much attention has already been devoted to the conflict between waning Romanticism and nascent Positivism in Boleslaw Prus's *The Doll*. Its hero, Wokulski (and less emphatically other characters), is pulled throughout the novel between Romantic notions of love and Positivist impulses toward science, business and social progress. What has not yet been discussed, to this author's knowledge, is the pervasive use of the literary double in exploring Wokulski's dualism. The true doubles (doppelganger) and quasi-doubles that appear throughout the novel serve as alteregos or projections of Wokulski's psyche. This device is the key organizing principle of the narrative, as the majority of characters seem to exist only in relation to the novel's hero and provide him with either positive or negative insight into himself. Both psychoanalytic and structural readings of the novel underscore Wokulski's quest for identity as seen through doubles. This quest reflects that of a Poland in transition, torn between old and new ideas and social structures, and Wokulski seems to be Prus's attempt to reconcile these conflicting cultural forces.

upthera44@gmail.com